

Why You Can't Study Scripture Without Holy Spirit's Help

It is my prayer those of you reading this not only love Jesus but thoroughly enjoy studying His Word. I hope you will learn a simple step through this article, apply it to your life and begin reading the Bible. And while studying Scripture using this one simple step, you will encounter Jesus and never be the same!

The Great Chasm

As a student in Bible college and seminary, I was given tools, "rightly handling the word of truth," (2 Tim. 2:15). Bible study methods and the art of studying Scripture were taught by great professors and scholars. However, I had a hard time combining what the Holy Spirit said in the Bible and what He is saying in the present through spiritual gifts and in my personal time spent with Him.

Most literature said we could not combine both for fear of taking Scripture out of context. There seemed to be a great chasm between studying the Scripture and the present work of the Holy Spirit. Many Spirit-filled denominations and associations are guilty of teaching this disconnect, confusing their ministers in training.

But that is far from the truth. We need both the Spirit and Scripture. Through ongoing study and revelation, I learned that the wonderful Holy Spirit is still speaking through Scripture. The great chasm can be bridged. Not only has He spoken as recorded in Scripture, but He is speaking. Continually revealing Himself to us through the Bible and through present circumstances.

Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Many people tend to think this

only refers to hearing the preaching of the gospel. But it actually refers to preaching and prophesying. It includes the written Word of the past but also the Spirit-empowered spoken word of the present. And what He is saying to us personally, to our churches and movements, will not contradict what He has said in the Bible.

Jesus, the Living Word of God

Our time reading the Bible should be exciting and adventurous. Studying is a treasure hunt and personal encounter with Him. Reading and studying the Bible should be a real encounter with Jesus, the Word of God.

Hebrews 4:12-13 says, "For the word of God is alive, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intents of the heart. There is no creature that is not revealed in His sight, for all things are bare and exposed to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." I thank God we have the written word of Scripture pointing to Jesus. And we should approach our daily study of Scripture as personally encountering our Savior through the Holy Spirit.

The Simple Question

The wonderful Holy Spirit must be included in our study of Scripture. He is the best teacher (Neh. 9:20, John 14:26, 1 John 2:27). Fellowshiping with Him enhances our understanding of the Bible. Increasing our faith as we continue growing in friendship and community with Him and one another.

This week in your Bible study, please continue your observations, interpreting and applying what you've read. But add one simple question to your study. Ask the Holy Spirit directly: "What are you showing me through this Scripture, Holy Spirit?" Then wait on Him, writing down what He says to you.

In the next article in this series, I will share another simple step to add to your Bible study, "Reading the Bible in Community." And in the near future, my ministry will publish a journaling system using the steps shown in these articles. I believe it will help empower you, enhancing your spiritual growth and equipping you to be Spirit-empowered.

To learn more about the work of the Holy Spirit, check out the "Greenelines" podcast below!

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