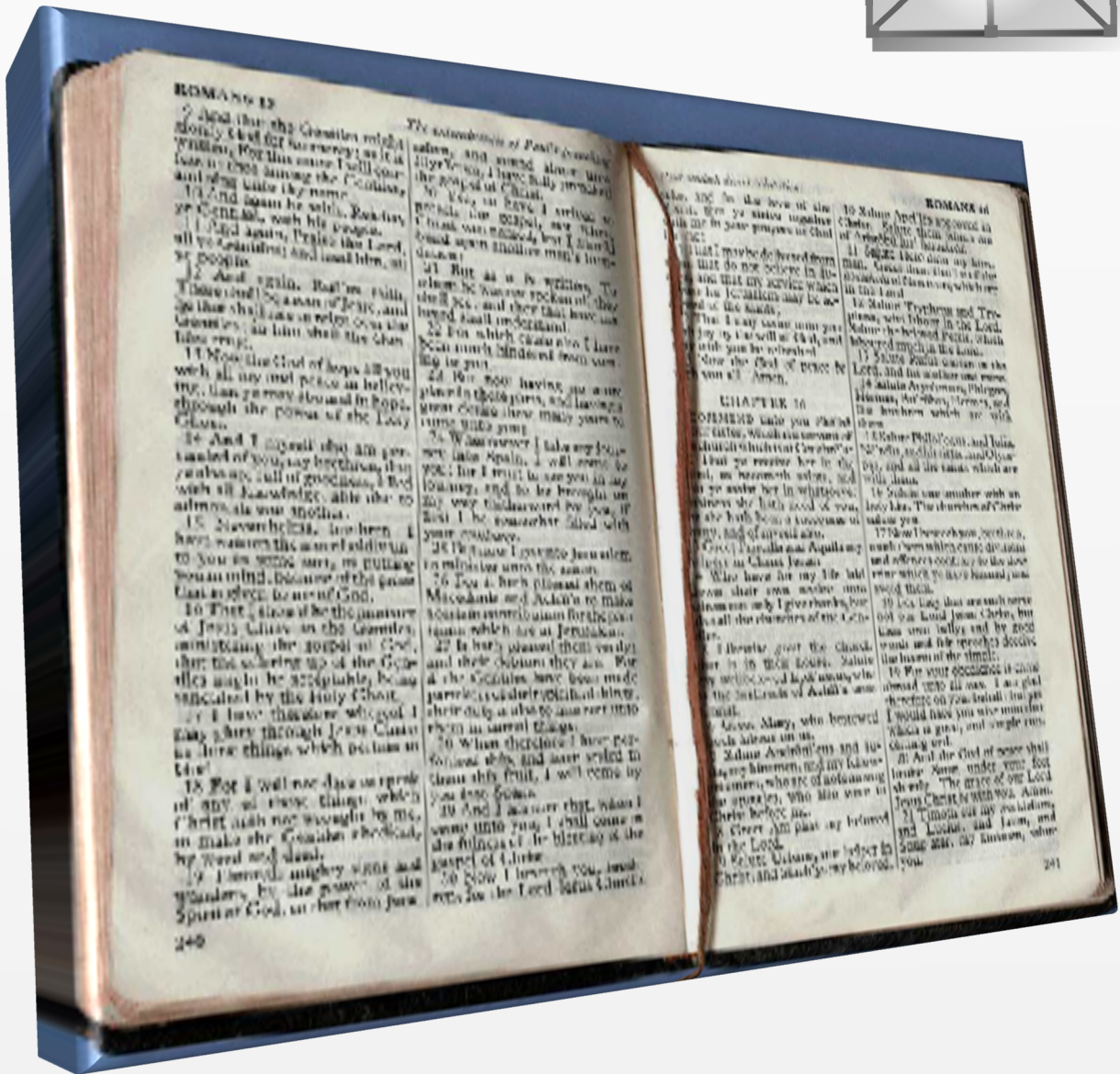
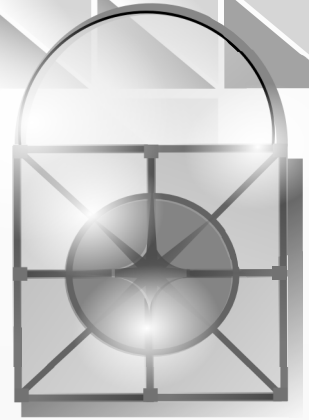


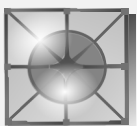
# Why So Few Understand The Bible



Why do so many individuals, capable of understanding almost any other book say:

I just CAN'T understand the Bible?

Lesson 1



# WHY do so FEW really UNDERSTAND the Bible?

Why do we find such confusion -- such disagreement as to what it says? Why don't the hundreds of differing church denominations and sects AGREE on what their acknowledged textbook SAYS?

WHY do so many individuals, capable of understanding almost any OTHER book say: "I just CAN'T understand the BIBLE"?

Take a recognized textbook on biology. Show this book to ten different biology professors from ten different colleges and universities. Ask them what it says. They'll all give you the same answer. People do not disagree as to what books actually say -- except when it comes to the one Book of ALL the books the Holy Bible! Did you ever stop to think of that?

But take the Holy Bible to ten different ministers or to professors of theology from ten different religious denominations, and ask them what God's Book says -- and you'll probably receive ten different answers!

Didn't you ever wonder WHY?

## Purpose of the Bible

WHAT are we? Were we put on earth for a PURPOSE? And WHAT is that purpose?

WHY are human lives empty, discontented, unhappy? How may human life become HAPPY, FILLED with interest, ABUNDANT, successful, prosperous? WHAT is the real cause of wars, and THE WAY to world peace?

WHAT lies on after death -- what is THE WAY to a happy, abundant, ETERNAL life? No book ever written, except the Holy Bible, reveals this FOUNDATION of all knowledge.

Are THESE questions important? One might ask, is anything ELSE important? You can find the answers to THESE questions ONLY in this one divinely inspired, sacred volume and yet

almost NO one has ever found the answers so PLAINLY written there!

Here is the Book that, in spite of the human perversion of it, has CHANGED more lives than all other books combined! And yet -- it is THE BOOK THAT NOBODY KNOWS!

The Bible is the most Misunderstood book of history! The most twisted, distorted, misrepresented, maligned and lied-about! What's Wrong?

## Why Is the Bible Misunderstood?

Here is the answer -- and it is very plain!

The answer lies in the fact that people have NOT BEEN WILLING TO OBEY the precepts of this holy, divine Word and therefore this world has LOST ITS WAY. In so doing it has not only lost PEACE, and HAPPINESS, and PROSPERITY, but it has also lost the knowledge of the PURPOSE of the Bible -- it doesn't know what the Bible really IS!

Stop and think! Would a Creator, having supreme intelligence, wisdom and love to think out, to plan, design, and bring about ALL CREATION -- this earth, and all life and life-functions upon it -- have left His created beings in IGNORANCE of HIS PURPOSE -- the PURPOSE of their being here -- THE LAWS that would bring them PEACE, and HAPPINESS, and JOY, and everything good?

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S DIVINE REVELATION OF BASIC NEEDED KNOWLEDGE which mankind is not otherwise capable of finding out!

Absolutely no tools or instruments of science can ever tell you if there is life after death -- the PURPOSE of your being alive -- where you are going -- or the WAY to a happy, abundant life, or to universal PEACE. Our scientists, our world leaders and our statesmen have failed UTTERLY

to tell us these answers, or to lead us into the universally desired PEACE with happiness, and JOYOUS living!

God Almighty did NOT hide from human minds these all-important truths. He made them accessible to mankind. HE COMMITTED HIS TREASURE-HOUSE OF BASIC KNOWLEDGE TO WRITING. He revealed THE WAY TO PEACE and everything the human heart desires!

Now, WHY do so few understand the Bible? WHY do all the different church denominations disagree as to what it says?

We find the answer in II Tim. 3:16-17: "All scripture" not just those few verses or PARTS of sentences you wish to apply to suit your desires, but -- "ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God." It is ALL inspired -- EVERY Scripture is inspired by the Eternal GOD -- "and is profitable for" WHAT? "... is PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

So the Scriptures are PROFITABLE for the purpose of REPROVING, of CORRECTING us! But how we do resent being reproved and corrected! How many people do you know who are even WILLING to be corrected where they are in error -- to be REPROVED for the wrong things they do!

### Humanity Resents Correction

People Do NOT LIKE to BE REPROVED AND CORRECTED! They love PRAISE -- they like

FLATTERY -- but reproof and correction they surely HATE! Now do you see why it is so hard for so many people to understand the Bible, and to agree on just what it says? The Bible is God's great spiritual MIRROR. IT SHOWS UP EVERY FLAW IN OUR THINKING, reveals every spot on our characters. It pictures us AS WE REALLY

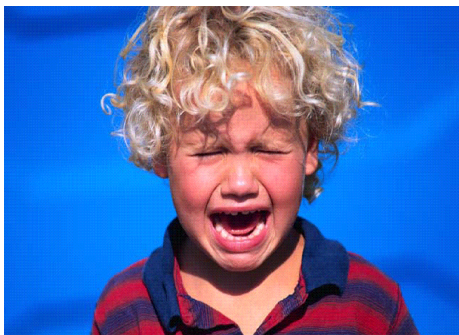
ARE -- AS GOD sees us, not as we like to THINK we are, or as we like to have other men look upon us! "For the Word of God," we read in Heb. 4:12, "is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" -- IT CUTS DEEP, and it CUTS BOTH WAYS, "... and is a discerner of the thoughts and INTENTS of the heart." Yes, it opens up and exposes and LAYS BARE THE INNER SOUL OF MAN!

When your little children do things that are wrong -- that you have forbidden -- do they usually

admit it freely and frankly? Do they say: "Father, I cannot tell a lie. I did it! or do they usually DENY it as long as possible, then try to cover it up, excuse it, JUSTIFY it, or place the blame on somebody else? Yes, it's just human nature.

WE are all only little children grown up; and so, when our heavenly Father speaks to US, through His Holy Scriptures, and reproves and rebukes, and corrects us, we usually do not like to ADMIT our errors, our faults, our wrong ways.

Too often, men have applied some different meaning to Scriptures that reproved them -- they have passed right OVER SOME Scriptures that corrected and rebuked them or they have ignored them utterly, and have studied diligently to find some OTHER SCRIPTURE, or portion of Scripture, into which they could read a meaning THAT WOULD JUSTIFY THEIR COURSE! And so men began, centuries ago, to INTERPRET the Bible! God's Word has become twisted, wrested, perverted.

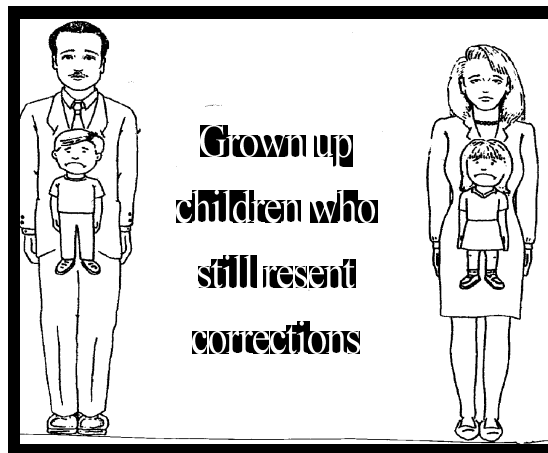


**Just saying "No" can be a grievous form of correction for a child**

Almost every false and counterfeit meaning imaginable is read INTO it, instead of drinking the natural meaning -- the plain, simple INTENDED meaning out of it! Today we have hundreds of human INTERPRETATIONS of the Bible. You NEVER HEAR OF HUNDREDS OF INTERPRETATIONS OF A CERTAIN BIOLOGY TEXTBOOK IN HUNDREDS OF COLLEGES! WHY? BECAUSE BIOLOGY TEXTBOOKS DO NOT REBUKE AND CORRECT MEN!

Instead of acknowledging the truth, repenting of the sin, having it legally justified by the blood of Christ, men seek to JUSTIFY THEIR OWN ACTS BY PERVERTING THE SACRED AND HOLY WORD OF GOD!

The MOST DIFFICULT thing on earth for the average person to do is to ADMIT IT and CONFESS IT and REPENT OF IT when he is wrong. OH how hard that seems to be! Almost the rarest thing in this world is a person who will ALWAYS acknowledge it when he is wrong, repent, and turn the other way. This world is FULL of people who PROFESS to be willing to do this. But the one who DOES it is a rare jewel. Under God's inspiration, Paul continued to say, in II Tim. 4:1-4, that the time truly has come when the MANY do not endure SOUND doctrine. Men have turned away their ears from the TRUTH and have turned to FABLES! Yes, fables PALMED OFF AS the truth of God's Word! ISAIAH prophesied that in these latter days men would demand, "Preach not unto us RIGHT things, PREACH UNTO US SMOOTH THINGS -- PREACH DECEITS" ( Isaiah 30:8-11.



## Yet Another Reason

Here is another reason why the Bible is not understood. Did you ever stop to think that KNOWLEDGE can be transmitted to the human mind, naturally, ONLY THROUGH FIVE CHANNELS? The ONLY means by which the mind can receive ANY KNOWLEDGE, naturally, is through the eye, the ear, the nose, the mouth, or the sense of feeling -- the five physical senses. But the Bible reveals SPIRITUAL things -- and SPIRITUAL THINGS CANNOT NORMALLY BE SEEN, nor

heard, nor tasted, nor felt, nor smelled. And so the NATURAL human mind is INCAPABLE of understanding these spiritual revelations.

Then notice I Cor. 2:14: "The NATURAL man, ( that is the natural-born, unconverted mind,) "receiveth not the things of the SPIRIT of God: for they are FOOLISHNESS unto HIM: neither can he know them, BE-

CAUSE THEY ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED!" -- revealed by GOD'S SPIRIT; for it says in the 10th verse, "God hath REVEALED them unto us BY HIS SPIRIT." And then again, you read that it is "the SPIRIT of Truth" which "will guide you into all Truth" ( John 16:13).

Since the Bible is God's Word ( It distinctly says "THY WORD IS TRUTH", then it requires the HOLY SPIRIT to OPEN UP to the human mind this marvelous revelation of God. Understand: The Holy Spirit WITHIN is the key which alone can unlock the doors to scriptural understanding.

Thus, as this Scripture has said, WHEN WE RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT -- when the mind becomes spirit-led, then, through this SUPERNATURAL PROCESS of God, spiritual knowledge is REVEALED, and the spiritual mind can begin to UNDERSTAND!

## REPENT and BELIEVE

The conditions in the Bible for receiving God's Holy Spirit are basically TWO -- REPENT, and BELIEVE. But, repent means MORE than being sorry. It means a complete yielding to the will of God, AS THAT WILL IS EXPRESSED IN HIS WORD! It means a complete willingness to accept, and TO DO what Scripture teaches, NO MATTER WHAT THE COST, THE PERSECUTION, THE SACRIFICE, OR THE EFFORT! Jesus said, as recorded in John 7:16, 17: "My doctrine is not mine, but HIS THAT SENT ME. If ANY MAN WILL DO HIS WILL, he shall KNOW of the doctrine." Yes, there is a condition: You must surrender to the will of God if you would come to understand the Bible.

Many are like the man who once said, "I wouldn't do anything I thought was wrong for the world!" He was sincere, but the BIBLE says, "There IS a way which seemeth RIGHT unto a man, but the end thereof ARE THE WAYS OF DEATH!" ( Prov. 14:12.) Therefore, since death is the penalty of sin, then the ways that SEEM RIGHT to the natural mind of man MUST BE THE WAYS OF SIN.

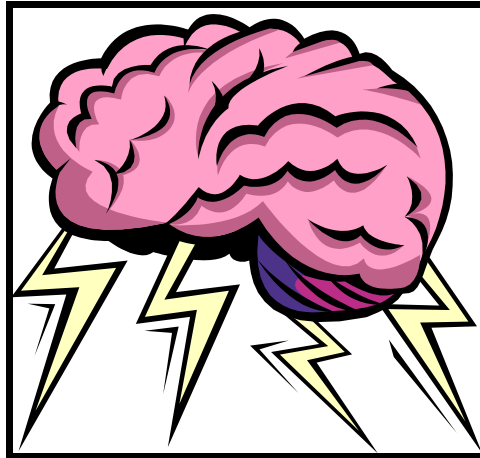
God's whole purpose is to rescue men from this FALSE way that appears so alluring -- this way that seems RIGHT -- and yet ends up in despair, and suffering, and death!

We read from Psalm 111: 7, 8, 10: ALL His commandments are SURE. They stand fast FOR EVER AND EVER and are done in truth and uprightness. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that

do His commandments!"

We can see now why men do not understand the Bible. They are not yielded to the Eternal's will -- they are filled with the fear of MEN, instead of the fear of GOD. They tremble at the thought of what PEOPLE say -- but we had all better begin to tremble at the WORD OF THE LIVING GOD.

TRUTH is REVEALED. It is revealed by GOD's spirit -- and that involves a SUPERNATURAL ACT of God. The terms and conditions are utter surrender--REPENTANCE, and FAITH.



Brain power is not enough to understand God. The added dimension of God's Holy Spirit must be given upon baptism and submission to God will. Only then can a relationship with our maker begin.

David had understanding. And David said, "THY WORD is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" ( Psalm 119:105). Today's generation is like that of Jesus' day, of which He said, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness, rather than light, because their deeds were evil"

( John 3:19)

Yes, the Bible is light -- a lamp unto our feet -- a light unto our path. Surely the world is in gross darkness.

### You Can Begin to Understand Your Bible

How then, can you understand the Bible? Here is HOW you may begin this THRILLING, soul-satisfying adventure. HERE is how YOU can begin to really UNDERSTAND the Bible.

First, SURRENDER to God, and the authority of His Word. Forsake YOUR ways -- YOUR thoughts -- and those of this world's society.

Study to find TRUTH -- to show yourself approved unto God. Ask God for guidance -- ASK Him to reveal the true meaning. Then BELIEVE GOD -- BELIEVE His Word -- accept it in its plain, NATURAL meaning, just as you would accept any other book in which you had confidence. Be

careful to PROVE all things.

Be cautious -- avoid jumping to hasty conclusions, or taking things carelessly for granted. And above all -- do not try to INTERPRET the Bible.

DON'T take the interpretation of any MAN or CHURCH. THE BIBLE INTERPRETS ITSELF. God would not have us shut up our ears and our minds from HEARING what is being preached -- even though it differs from what you have been taught. When the apostle Paul came to Berea, the Bereans found he was preaching something utterly DIFFERENT than that which they had been taught and had believed. They did not know whether Paul was a FALSE prophet, or a man sent FROM GOD. We read of them, in Acts 17:11: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind" ( that is, without prejudice) "and SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER those things were so." STUDY WITHOUT PREJUDICE -- but BE CAREFUL -- PROVE all things -- search the SCRIPTURES WHETHER those things be so.

### The Purpose for This Lesson

THIS PARTICULAR LESSON IS TO SHOW YOU HOW TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE. It is devoted entirely to giving you methods explaining HOW TO GRASP THE LESSONS WE ARE GOING TO PRESENT IN THE FUTURE.

These methods of Bible study are like TOOLS in your work. You will use them often. For this reason this lesson is printed FOR REFERENCES on how to study. Refer to it often!

Use the time you have set aside for this lesson in familiarizing yourself with its contents.

You will undoubtedly purchase a Bible Concordance. Familiarize yourself with this valuable tool.

Now for the actual method of Bible study. But remember, the right SPIRIT -- the RIGHT ATTITUDE -- full SUBMISSION to scriptural dictates,

BEING WILLING TO BE CORRECTED and re-proved -- that is the MAIN THING.

### Proper Attitude for Understanding

#### 1. You must ACT on knowledge

Let's get one thing straight right now! If you do not grasp this point, you have NO assurance that YOU will be able to understand this course regardless of all HUMAN effort to make it plain to you. GOD has vowed that none of the WICKED would be able to understand His Word in this closing crisis time, but that the WISE would understand ( Dan. 12:10.

Since the Bible reveals that "sin is the transgression of the law" ( I John 3:4), those who conduct themselves as though His law is done away, are, in Bible terminology, called "the wicked."

Who, then, are "the WISE" who shall now understand? God says, "The FEAR of the Lord is the beginning of WISDOM: a GOOD UNDERSTANDING HAVE ALL THEY THAT DO -- [we must Do] -- His Commandments" ( Psalm 111:10.)

What has this to do with your being able to understand this course? These lessons will reveal to you many things that God commands you to DO.

If you FEAR Him enough to begin to build into your life habits of OBEDIENCE to Him ( DOING His Commandments) He has said, as we have just seen, that you WILL BEGIN TO BECOME WISE! THE GREATER YOUR OBEDIENCE TO GOD, THE GREATER YOUR WISDOM WILL BE -- you will have less and less trouble in understanding the lessons mailed to you.

If, on the other hand, somewhere along the way, you rebel at some of the things He wants you to do, your wisdom will be cut off.

None can understand by himself. The carnal

mind cannot "see" spiritual things. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, BECAUSE THEY ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED" ( I Cor. 2:14. Christ said, "The Spirit of truth ... will guide you [the OBEDIENT] into all truth" ( John 16:13.)

These truths are REVEALED through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit -- and GOD GIVES the SPIRIT ONLY to them that OBEY and keep His commandments ( Acts 5:32). The choice is in YOUR hands.

## 2. You must PRAY

Pray to God that He will give you more of His Spirit -- the Spirit of TRUTH ( Eph. 5:17-18). Christ derived his power from God. He prayed for hours to God -- sometimes all night. Surely we can spend an hour or so a day in such practice -- we are incomparably weaker and less wise than Christ was. WE REALLY NEED HELP! IN YOUR PRAYERS ASK GOD THAT HE OPEN YOUR MIND TO HIS TRUTHS!

## 3. You must STUDY

This Correspondence Course has been designed with the idea that THIRTY MINUTES A DAY devoted to it will enable the student to finish each lesson in thirty days. We know that anyone should be able to give at least this amount of time to such a valuable subject. The Father commands: "STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED unto God, a WORKMAN that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" ( II Tim. 2:15). We should be preparing ourselves for a high calling in God's service!

## 4. You must BE ZEALOUS

You are going to learn, as you study these lessons, that God IS working out a purpose here below. Each of us must use the minutes, hours,

days, and years of conscious life which God has given us, to prepare ourselves to fit into this purpose of His.

As most of you have to make a living and it requires a great deal of your time, you must use your remaining time to the greatest advantage. Above all, DON'T LET THE CARES OF THIS WORLD CROWD OUT THE TIME YOU SHOULD DEVOTE TO STUDY AND PRAYER ( Mat. 13:22.)

God is making clear for a SHORT TIME now -- just before the close -- the message that the Bible REALLY conveys. Let's make the most of this brief period!

Be ZEALOUS in your Bible study! Go far! Dig deep! God says, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, DO IT WITH THY MIGHT; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave" ( Eccl. 9:10). WHAT YOU DO NOW CAN AFFECT YOUR LIFE FOR ALL ETERNITY! ( Dan. 12:3.)

## TEST

This multiple choice test is designed to help you review the preceding lesson. It's an enjoyable way of putting to use some of the vital knowledge and understanding you have gained through this lesson.

Select one of the four choices given under each question or incomplete statement. The other three are incorrect--unless stated or indicated otherwise.

Take sufficient time to understand each question or statement, as well as the choices. Try to do as many as you can without referring to the lesson. If you have difficulty deciding on the correct answer, then review the part of the lesson in question. Complete the color coded card and return in the enclosed envelope for grading and next Bible study.

1. Why do so many church denominations always have so many DIFFERENT, but supposedly biblically correct answers to ONE Bible teaching?

A. Because they do not like to be corrected by the Word of God.

B. Because the Bible was written to be understood differently by different denominations.

C. Because some denominations have the power to change the teachings of the Bible.

D. Because the Bible gives several contradictory answers to the same question.

2. Which of the following do people like best?

A. To be told the truth even though it hurts.

B. To be flattered.

C. To be criticized.

D. To admit their errors and weaknesses.

3. Which kind of book gives us the RIGHT answers to all the following questions? -- how man originated? where he is going? how to live happily and successfully? and what the future holds for us?

A. Books written by various religious denominations.

B. Books on evolution and science.

C. "Success" books written by various authors.

D. The Bible.

4. All the scriptures in the Bible were written by

A. various early religious groups.

B. historians who were not religious.

C. men inspired by God.

D. Jews who wanted to gather together the primitive traditions and myths of their people.

5. In their search to understand the meaning of the Bible, human beings have

A. twisted and wrested God's Word.

B. always drunk the true meaning out of the Scriptures.

C. accepted gladly all its doctrines.

D. never been cut by God's Word -- the Bible -- because it is soothing and agreeable to them.



6. People can learn to REALLY understand the Bible if they

- A. accept what the religious leaders of today's world say.
- B. study all the various kinds of religious literature they can find.
- C. attend their different churches regularly.
- D. turn from their way when they see the Bible says their way is wrong.

7. Which ONE of these four statements is TRUE?

- A. God's spiritual knowledge contained in the Bible cannot be understood through any of man's five senses but must be divinely revealed.
- B. The Bible is well understood by most people.
- C. If you just SAY YOU are going to repent, that is all that is necessary -- then God will supernaturally open your eyes so you can understand the Bible!
- D. All you need to do in order to really understand the Bible is to study hard.

8. Can one continue doing as he has in the past if he wishes to understand the Bible, or must he

- A. begin to attend various meetings of religious denominations in order to gain a better grasp of "what they think is right"?
- B. start to set a better attendance record at the church he has always attended in the past?
- C. begin to contribute more liberally to the church into which he was born?
- D. begin to live by the principles which he has proved are revealed in the Bible.

9. HOW should you study?

- A. Do it lazily at the end of a hard day's work.
- B. Take it easy, knowing Christ might not come tomorrow.
- C. Let several days go by without studying, then try to do it all in one day.
- D. With zeal.

11. Which ONE of these four statements about the Bible is correct?

A. It reveals the definite close-knit, logical over-all plan of God for this earth and for its inhabitants.

B. It reveals itself as a book which has many good ideas but does not point out any great purpose for man's existence.

C. It is a book which is written with great literary style but is valuable for nothing else.

D. It has an Old Testament and a New Testament -- neither being related to the other.

12. How should one spend the time which he has set aside for religious purposes?

A. Use ALL for "philosophizing" on what the Bible says, and not look in the Bible to see what it ACTUALLY says.

B. Use ALL for study.

C. Set aside a definite amount of time for EACH of three things -- prayer, study, meditation.

D. Use ALL of it for prayer.

13. Which book, besides the Bible, will be of the MOST value to you in your study of the Bible?

A. A Bible commentary.

B. A Bible dictionary.

C. A concordance of the Bible.

D. A Bible atlas ( for maps ).

14. In what way will a Bible concordance aid you in understanding the Bible?

A. It will bring related material together and also enable you to find the Bible's own explanation of its symbols.

B. It will give complete descriptions of cities and countries.

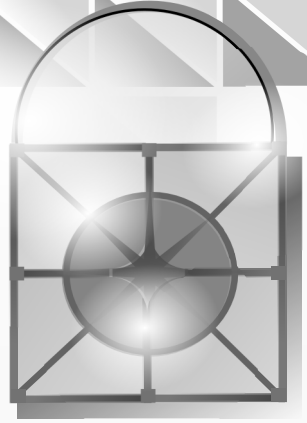
C. It will give a history of the different nations you find mentioned in the Bible.

D. It will give you detailed explanations of Bible verses.



## Is This Real Repentance????

**A Church is filled with emotion and excitement, but true repentance involves unconditional surrender. We love to feel good about ourselves, but the experience of repentance involves facing the reality of our sins. Have you experienced real repentance?**



The word of God is adrift, free falling in a world filled with religious confusion. Who will pick it up and live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God?

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