

## **Dear Church: How to Study the Bible, Part 2**

### **A Bible study for individuals, groups or classes**

#### **Background scripture:**

Acts 17: <sup>11</sup> Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

#### **Podcast Sections:**

- 0:00 Introduction. Review of last week's program
- 0:51 Boundaries on studying the Bible
- 2:39 The first boundary: Uniqueness, looking to make our understanding unique
- 2:50 Sometimes the meaning is clear, we make it too complex
- 4:42 It's tempting to try to come up with new understandings
- 7:58 The second boundary: Institutionalism, using the Bible to prove our beliefs
- 9:18 Sometimes we come to the text asking the wrong questions
- 12:20 Bible advice for teens heading to college
- 15:06 The third boundary: Making sense. Does it make good sense in the context of scripture?
- 17:33 The wrathful God of the Old Testament versus the mellow God of the New Testament
- 18:00 Jesus didn't restrict certain types of people from the Church
- 20:30 If you hear a teaching that doesn't make sense, go to the Bible to test it

#### **Discussion questions:**

1. After listening to the first two programs on Bible study, do you think Bible study is easy? Is it easy to understand the Bible?
2. Chris and Sam discussed how Bible study can go wrong if you start study in the wrong state of mind. They mentioned using the Bible to prove our belief is true instead of seeking the truth (7:58); trying to view verses in a brand new way that no one has thought of before (2:39 and 4:42); and focusing on the wording in a single passage, even if your understanding doesn't fit the surrounding verses or the Bible as a whole (15:06). What other approaches to study have you seen that can lead you to wrong results?
3. Chris gave advice for teens heading to college where they may find new perspectives to Christianity and life (12:20). When we find a startling, different teaching in the Bible, how should we react?
4. Chris and Sam discussed how some people have trouble connecting the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New Testament (17:33). Has this been a problem for you? Do you have advice for people trying to reconcile the Old and New Testaments?

Bonus question:

5. After answering questions #2 and #4, consider a passage from 2 Peter 3, verses 16b-17 (below). How can we avoid being confused by people twisting scripture?

### **Scriptures related to this study**

2 Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! 6 I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test.

Romans 15: 4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Psalms 119: 33 Teach me, O LORD, the way of your statutes; and I will keep it to the end.

34 Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart.

35 Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it.

36 Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!

37 Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways.

38 Confirm to your servant your promise, that you may be feared.

39 Turn away the reproach that I dread, for your rules are good.

40 Behold, I long for your precepts; in your righteousness give me life!

2 Peter 3:16b There are some things in them [Paul's writings] that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. 17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. 18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.