

## DIFFERENT WAYS TO STUDY

BY PENN CLARK

**Running Your References** Cross referencing is a useful form of study, where you look up other verses that say something similar. Most good study Bibles will have a center or side column that links the main content of each verse to other verses in the Bible. Perhaps the best Bible in this regard is Thompson's Chain Reference Bible. <http://www.kirkbride.com/> It has over 100,000 links covering over 7,000 topics which help you to navigate your Bible easily and thoroughly. It was the life-long labor of love by its namesake, Dr. Frank C. Thompson, back in the early 1900s. It instantly became the Bible of choice for pastors and preachers.

**Comparing the Synoptic Gospels** - Using the Four Gospels, put together an orderly account of what Jesus said or did. Use cleansing the temple as an example. If you take it beyond just being an interesting study, this search can lead you into several interesting lessons about how to study the Bible by using the harmony of the Gospels.

Another examples of this kind of study is using the Four Gospels to create a chronological account of Jesus calling the first disciples. This study will help you realize that Jesus invitation to complete strangers saying, "Come and follow me". It may help you to see that your how your own calling does not always happen in just moment in time, but a drawing of your soul over time.

**Timeline** - Using every scripture you can find, compose a brief biography of the apostle Paul in chronological order. Give special attention to his conversion and entrance into ministry. You do not have to cover his mission trips. Please do your study in longhand first, and then if necessary, do it on the computer. You will always be glad you got to know Paul better, but you will also learn how to get the complete picture from pulling together scriptures from various places.

**Word Studies** - Do a word study by taking one key word and running all the references you can find about it. You will need a Strong's Concordance to do this accurately.

**Character Studies** - Choose a character to study, perhaps a "little known" person in scripture and try to glean as much from their life as you can. Try to incorporate all the verses about this person in your study.

**Topical** Take a topic and start at its first mention in the Bible and follow it through every book after that, getting an overview of it.

**Verse by Verse** - My first major Bible study as a new believer involved taking apart the Book of First Thessalonians verse by verse. It is something I have never forgotten. It helps you get to know the audience and the heart of the writer better. I would encourage you to do this with the book of Acts to understand how church is supposed to be today.

**Book by Book**- Study First and Second Corinthians to learn about all the various problems in this Spirit-filled church and the solutions Paul gave for them. See how many solutions are commonly taught today compared to the ones we often here taught.

- Using First and Second Corinthians, First and Second Timothy, and the letter to Titus, do a study about church authority. How much authority can one person have? Look for modern concepts like “board-rule” and “Congregational-rule” compared and do a study on elder-rule.

**Different Translations** - Not everyone appreciates the new bible tools like the Eugene Peterson’s “The Message” or “Today’s Living Bible”. You might appreciate it more if you tried doing it yourself. Try taking a difficult passage and putting it into your own words.

**Old Testament as Commentary**- Using only the Old Testament as a commentary, can you figure out what Jesus meant by the “Gates of Hell?”

**New Testament as Proof** - People dismiss the Flood or Noah’s Ark, or the story of Jonah as myths and fables. How would you establish this as being real stories using only the New Testament?

Another example is the story of water coming from the rock. I have even heard it taught that the water in the rock had been stored there by flash floods so that whenever Moses needed water, he could hit the crusty seal that plugged the crack in the rock and it would release thousands of gallons of water that had been naturally stored there. How would you debunk this using just the New Testament?

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