

HOW TO RIGHTLY APPLY THE HOLY BIBLE

- I. A CHRISTIAN SHOULD APPLY THE BIBLE TO HIMSELF EVERY DAY.
- A. A Christian should Put what He has Read in the Bible into Use for daily Living (Jas 1:22; Mat 4:4).
- B. A Christian should Prepare Himself in six Ways before He Reads the Bible:
1. He should prepare himself in attitude by being willing to not look for mistakes in the passage (Mat 22:23-30).
 2. He should prepare himself in humility by being willing to be taught by God (Psa 119:18).
 3. He should prepare himself in prayer by being willing to ask God for understanding (Mat 7:7-8; Mark 9:23-24).
 4. He should prepare himself by having an open mind and being willing to accept what is read (Acts 17:11).
 5. He should prepare himself by listening to the Holy Spirit and being willing to be guided by the Holy Ghost (John 16:13; 1 Cor 2:12-14; Isa 28:9-10).
 6. He should prepare himself in intention (reason) by being willing to grow spiritually to be more like Jesus Christ (1 Pet 2:2, 21-22; Eph 4:11-15).
- C. A Christian should Look for six Things while Reading the Bible.
1. He should look for “the general idea” (its scope) of what the passage is all about (the *Rapture*, the Kingdom, the Church, the Coming of the Lord, salvation, prayer, fasting, etc.).
 2. He should look for “the context of the passage” (Its specific meaning) by reading it and gathering the facts found in it.
 - a. Find out who is writing or speaking.
 - b. Find out to whom the passage is being written or to whom the speaker is speaking (1 Cor 10:32; Acts 2:36; 15:7; 1 Cor 1:1-2).
 - c. Find out what God’s position is in the reading (2 Sam 11:14-15, 26-27) and *what* is being written or spoken about (the specific idea) (Luke 18:1-8; 9-14).
 - d. Find out when the events of the passage took place, either on Old Testament grounds or on New Testament grounds (Heb 9:16-17; Mat 27:50).
 - e. Find out to where (the time period to which) the speaker or writer is referring (the present, the past or the future) (Rev 1:19)
 - f. Find out why the passage was written or spoken (the reason or purpose) (Luke 18:1; John 20:31; 1 John 5:13).
 3. He should look for “unfamiliar words” in the passage and look up their definitions in a dictionary.

4. He should look for any “symbolic, figurative or typical language” in the passage.
 - a. *Symbolical* language uses something that stands for something else.
 - b. *Figurative* language describes one thing in terms that normally indicate another thing.
 - c. *Typical* language uses the likenesses of one person or thing to suggest another person or thing.
 - d. Always take the plain literal meaning of a reading whenever possible.
 - e. Whenever the plain literal meaning of a reading is not possible to be taken, look for the literal truth that the passage intends to bring out (show).
 5. He should look for “the theme” in the passage.
 - a. The theme is the central truth that God wants understood (forgiveness, prayer, fellowship, etc.).
 - b. The passage should be read over and over until the theme is understood.
 6. He should look for “promises to be claimed” in the passage.
- D. A Christian should Determine (find out) and Put into Practice what He has Learned from the Reading (make a present day application).
1. This is done by asking himself, “What promises are there for a Christian to claim in the passage?”
 2. This is done by picturing himself in the passage.
 - a. He should look for commands to be obeyed.
 - b. He should look for good examples to be followed.
 - c. He should look for bad examples to be avoided (kept away from).
 - d. He should look for sins to be forsaken (given up).
 3. This is done by praying for God to reveal the areas in his life where these changes need to be made:
 - a. Relationships: family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, fellow-believers, roomies, bunkies, etc.
 - b. Disagreements: marriage, children, work, barracks, neighborhood, etc.
 - c. Personal Matters: fears, hopes, dreams, goals, death, sickness, thoughts, pressures, disappointments, wants, etc.
 - d. Different Situations: solving everyday problems, debt, incarceration (doing time), unemployment, handling money, etc.
 - e. Personal Weaknesses: dishonesty, sexual desires, envy, selfishness, habits, desire to control others, pride, gossiping, cheating, overeating, no self-respect, lying, hatred, jealousy, prejudice, twisting the truth (deceit), etc.
 - f. Personal Needs: to be more like Jesus Christ, to have time for responsibilities, to obtain the ability to do something, to have the energy to do things, to get money to do things, to get materials to do things, to get someone to help, to get knowledge to help, to get an education, etc.

- g. Personal Responsibilities: to God (fellowship), to family (spend time), to other Christians (charity, love), to Church (attendance, giving), to home (upkeep), to work (duties), to community (vote, volunteer, PTA), to oneself (rest, health, prayer, Bible study), etc.
 - h. Personal Opportunities: to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, to serve others, to learn, to teach, to show Christian love, to witness, etc.
4. This is done by praying for God to help him make the changes he needs in his life that have been brought out in the passage and in prayer.

II. HOW TO LEARN FROM LUKE 15:1-32 WHAT IS TO BE APPLIED TO YOUR LIFE:

- A. You should Look for “the General Idea”: Receiving Repentant Sinners into One’s Fellowship (vs.1-2, 32).
- B. You should Look for “the Context.”
 - 1. Who is speaking? The “he” in verse 3 that is speaking is Jesus Christ (Luke 14:3).
 - 2. What is God’s position? God is against those that do not rejoice when someone repents (see vs.7, 10, 32 & cf. John 12:49-50).
 - 3. Who is being spoken to? Jesus Christ is speaking to Jewish Publicans, sinners, Pharisees and Scribes (vs.1-2).
 - 4. What is being spoken about? The joy and rejoicing of finding lost things (vs.5-7, 9-10, 32).
 - 5. Why was it spoken or written? Because the Pharisees and Scribes murmured (complained) when Jesus Christ received and ate with sinners (undesirables) (vs.1-2).
 - 6. Is the passage on Old or New Testament (covenant) grounds? The event took place before the New Testament went into effect (Heb 9:15-17).
 - 7. To what time period was the speaker referring (past, present or future)? Christ was referring to the present (during His lifetime) (v.2).
- C. You should Know the Meaning of the Following “Unfamiliar Words” to Help You Understand the Passage:
 - 1. Repent, “to be so sorry about one’s sins that he turns to God for forgiveness” (v.7).
 - 2. Diligently, “refusing to give up” (v.8).
 - 3. Fain, “eagerly; readily; willingly” (v.16).
 - 4. Entreated, “pleaded; coaxed; begged” (v.28).
 - 5. Meet, “appropriate; fitting; proper” (v.32).
- D. You should Note the “Symbolic, Figurative or Typical Language” Found in Verses 24 and 32.
 - 1. The “Prodigal Son” (the younger son) was neither physically dead nor actually lost.

2. The Prodigal Son represented the sinners and Publicans of verse 1 who were both spiritually dead and spiritually lost.
 3. The Prodigal Son was a type of those who broke the Fifth Commandment of the Law of Moses (see v.21 & cf. Exo 20:12).
- E. You should Know “the Central Theme” that God Wants You to Know in the Passage, “One should be happy that sinners have come to repentance” (vs.5-7, 10, 23, 32).
- F. You should Know “the Promise” that can Be Claimed by a Christian, “True repentance is always accepted by God” (see vs.7, 32 & cf. Luke 17:3-4; Pro 28:13; 1 John 1:9).

III. PUT INTO PRACTICE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM **LUKE 15:1-32** BY MAKING A PRESENT DAY APPLICATION TO YOURSELF.

- A. A. Look for “Commands to be obeyed.”
- B 1. You should rejoice (be happy) when someone gets saved (vs.6, 9).
- C 2. You should welcome back those who return to fellowship with God and other D believers (see vs.20-23, 32 & cf. 2 Cor 2:5-10).
- B. Look for “Good Examples to Follow.”
1. You should draw near to Christ when you have sinned (v.1).
 2. You should look for those who are lost and those who are out of fellowship with God or with other believers (backsliders) (vs.4, 8).
 3. You should have compassion (a feeling of sympathy) for those who are lost or out of fellowship (v.20).
 4. You should turn to God in times of need (vs.17-20).
 5. You should humble yourself before God (vs.18-19).
 6. You should confess your sins to God as soon as possible (v. 21).
- C. Look for “Bad Examples to Be Avoided.”
- E 1. You should not complain or get upset when others are trying to reach the F lost or backsliders (v.2).
2. You should not use what is given to you by God for selfish reasons (vs.12-13).
- G 3. You should not look to the World for happiness (vs.13-14).
- H 4. You should not go to the World for help in times of need (vs.14-16).
5. You should not be bitter or angry when the lost or backsliders return to God (repent) (vs.25-32).
- D. Look for “Sins to Be forsaken.”
1. Complaining (murmuring) (v.2)
 2. Covetousness (desire for wealth) (v.12).
 3. Riotous living (partying) (v.13).

4. Backsliding (leaving the Christian life; out of fellowship with God and I other Christians) (vs.13, 18, 21).
5. Envy (jealousy) (vs.25-30).

E. Pray for God to Help You to “Make the needed Changes in Your Life” that have Been Brought out in the Passage.

IV. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING A CHRISTIAN CAN DO EACH DAY, AFTER PRAYING AND READING THE WORD OF GOD, IS TO RIGHTLY APPLY THE BIBLE TO HIS PERSONAL LIFE.