

## **HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE?**

### **Part 4 – Time and Prayer Principle - Handout**

G.L.I.T.C.H. **G** – Grammar; **L** – Literal; **I** – Inspired, Inerrant and Infallible; **T** – Time and Prayer; **C** – Context; and **H** – History and Culture.

**G – rammar** – 1) Words and Sentence Structure. Context determines meaning of words.  
2) Written Languages. 3) Styles of Languages – Genre.

**L – iteral** –1) Interpret a text in its Normal, Natural Sense – **face value**. Take the regular meaning of words, knowing there may be symbols, history, figures of speech, etc. and put it in the **context** in which it was written.

2) The Bible often explains and interprets itself. Ask questions. What does this word mean? What is the main idea? Who wrote this? To whom was this written? Is this historical narrative or figurative language?

**I – nspired, Inerrant, Infallible** –**How** we view Scripture partly determines how we interpret it. We also learned that we all have assumptions. We cannot escape this. One of the hardest, but wisest things you can do as an individual and particularly as a Christian, is to ask yourself what presuppositions you have and if they are **true or just opinion**. We need to ask ourselves hard questions and ask God to take away our assumptions.

**A)** Inspired – God breathed, from God through man; written by men, Authored by God. 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Peter 1:19-21, 3:15-16.

**B)** Inerrant – without error in the original documents and we have very accurate copies. There are more manuscripts for the New Testament than for **ALL** other ancient documents combined! That doesn't include the numerous biblical quotes from church fathers!

**C)** Infallible – incapable of being wrong, because it's from God. John 14:6, 17:17.

## T – ime and Prayer

There are 4 things for us to recognize:

1) It takes a lifetime to grow in Christ. Becoming a mature Christian doesn't happen overnight. The Bible calls a new Christian a baby. When a **baby is born**, he or she is not mature immediately.

2) It takes much prayer to understand God's word. Since the Holy Spirit wrote the Bible and is the True Teacher, we **need** to ask for His assistance. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 "...pray without ceasing..." Jeremiah 33:3 (the Lord says) "Call on Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." Use this for studying.

3) Prayer leads to loving obedience –prayer is thanking God and asking Him for our needs and direction, but prayer is also admitting we can't do it and shows dependence on the Lord for EVERYTHING. It's asking, "Lord help me to understand! Give me wisdom for this situation or decision. Father, what choice should I make?"

4) Read the Bible slowly. We don't often think of this, and when we are in a **rush**, we read quickly. Think about the text. Psalm 119:27-28 "Make me understand the way of Your precepts; so shall I meditate (think upon) on your wonderful works. My soul melts (drops) from heaviness (grief); strengthen me according to Your word."

Isaiah 6:1-3.

Matthew 17:1-8.

Also when you read, as you think about the words, put some emotion and emphasis on the words. Listen to an audio Bible with someone who does this. It can really be encouraging to hear others read Scripture, because their emphasis is different than our own. It can bring out some things in the text you may not have thought about.

Another place where time and prayer are very important in studying the Bible, is because there are difficult passages in Scripture. There are things that are difficult, even based on the original languages, and it takes time and prayer to **compare Scripture with Scripture, in context**, to understand what is said and what is meant.