

The Bible in the original languages is the inerrant word of God to us. It does not merely contain truth, but is truth. Although the Bible does not tell us everything, it tells us what God wants us to know, and all we need to know.

II Peter 1:2-4 ***Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.***

II Timothy 3:16-17 ***All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.***

God wants every Christian to be responsible and read and study the Bible for themselves. We are not to be people who come to church to be fed on Sundays by preachers or teachers like baby birds in a nest. Reading the word of God, although important, is not enough. We are commanded to study the word of God ourselves and work hard at doing so. When we study the Bible we are to handle it accurately. II Timothy 2:15 ***Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.***

Many preachers, teachers and other Christians believe faulty interpretations of scripture because they do not follow the rules of Bible Study. Not only is it important to study the scriptures for ourselves, but it is also essential that we apply the scriptural test to writers, speakers, pastors and teachers. There is a vital need to be Berean with Christian books and speakers. The Bereans were people who listened to what Paul had to say and then searched the scriptures to see whether what Paul was saying was true. The result was that many of them believed. ***Acts 17:11-12a Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed,***

The word of God is the litmus test for any teaching or doctrine. Is this what the scriptures say concerning this teaching? Is this teaching a misinterpretation of scripture? God's word, the Bible, is the authority. We must be careful that we do not blindly listen or read without checking it out. Well-meaning Christians can misinterpret the scriptures—just look at all the disagreements between Christians on doctrines. We know from II Peter 1:20-21 that there is only one correct interpretation of scripture. It is our personal responsibility to study scripture to see if what is being said agrees with God's word. ***But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.***

We should not study scripture and be Berean to insist that our view is correct or to place ourselves above others. We should be doing this to find out what God wants us to know and do. Knowledge of scripture and doctrine is important. This knowledge, however, must be accompanied with application to our lives. I Corinthians 13:2 ***If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.*** I Timothy 1:5 ***But the goal of our***

instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Please be Berean and check out what I am saying to you. No teacher should encourage people to believe what they say without checking it out from scripture. Now, it may sound like I am putting down teachers, speakers and books. I am not. God has given teachers to the church ***to equip the saints for the work of ministry.*** Ephesians 4:11-16

1 Corinthians 4:5-7 5 Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God. 6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other. 7 For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

1 John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Colossians 2:18-19 Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, 19 and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.

We want to be interpreting the scriptures the way God intended them to be interpreted. I would not want Jesus to say to me as He did to the Sadducees in Matthew 22:29 ***But Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the power of God.***