

APPENDIX BACKGROUND:

A Journey's Foundational Dilemma and a Possible Answer:

The writer of the Book of Hebrews reacted negatively to the maturity level of his readers. At a time when they should have been instructors of others, they still needed explanations of the most elementary truths of God. Fast forward to today: Believers all across the globe, having the wealth of knowledge at their fingertips, are found to be a modern day Hebrews. Instead of solving the crisis of a lack of biblical understanding, we are instead recreating the same environment that the author of Hebrews found. David Dawson, in his book, "The Priesthood of the Believer"¹ explains that God in a miraculous way released the Hebrews from Egyptian bondage yet instead of obeying God they sought to place themselves back under slavery. "At Mt Sinai, their fathers had rejected God's plan for them to become a nation of priests, choosing instead to follow a system of their own devising. Their creedal system had brought them full circle ----back into the same bondage God had sought to deliver them from 1500 years earlier."

Now...fast forward to the NT. When Jesus came, He released Jew and Gentile alike from the bondage of sin and the Levitical Law. Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish these things but to fulfill them." (*Matt 5:17*) Now seeing and understanding the Truth of Jesus' words, the early apostles saw as their mission to turn the world upside down with this Truth that would change lives. They now recognized that they were no longer servants but kings and priests with all of the rights and privileges that were bestowed upon them through the Holy Spirit. The Apostle John wrote: "and from Jesus Christ – the faithful witness, the firstborn from among the dead, the ruler over the kings of the earth. To the one who loves us and has set us free from our sins at the cost of his own blood and has appointed us as a kingdom, as priests serving his God and Father" (*Rev 1:5-6*).

B. A Journey's Church Dilemma and a Possible Answer:

1. Clergy/Laity?

How did our church move from a "kingdom" of priests serving God, to a "kingdom of clergy" who now leads the church? What happened to the laity or the body of religious worshipers irrespective of position? To unearth this dilemma we search through history and find several men and councils that began this subtle change.



a- ***Clement of Rome***: an early church father who elevated the church leaders' functional role into a positional role. This occurred at or near the time of the writing of the book of Revelation. Clement, whom many believe was the successor to Peter, is listed as the first, then the second or the third successor. This has been a controversial issue because as early as the first century there were presbyter-bishops yet no evidence for a monarchical episcopacy in Rome. Later using his authority, he wrote a letter to the Church at Corinth regarding the removal of certain presbyters that

¹ Dawson, David, "The Priesthood of the Believer", ETS Ministries, Greenville, TX, ©2008.

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had been deposed. This letter is the only genuine extant writing. “He asserted the authority of the presbyters (elders) as rulers of the church, on the grounds that the Apostles had appointed such. It was read in church, along with other epistles, some of which would later become part of the Christian canon; and is one of the oldest Christian documents still in existence outside the New Testament. This important work was the first to affirm the apostolic authority of the clergy.”² “If Clement had spoken in his own name, they would surely have noted expressly that he wrote not as Bishop of Rome, but as an aged "presbyter" who had known the Apostles. Clement evidently writes officially, with all that authority of the Roman Church of which Ignatius and Irenaeus have so much to say.”³ Historical records indicate that Clement wrote this while one of the apostles was still alive and his letter is thus the first great non- inspired Christian document. It is interesting indeed that it shows the fourth pope interfering to put another apostolic church in order.”⁴



b- **Origen**- 100 years after Clement, Origen began to refer to a class of clergy as “kleros”. They were elevated to this position and the importance was not on what they were to do, that is follow the command of making disciples, but who they were positionally.

Origen’s theology was based upon this premise: “The distinctive mark of the Catholic is to belong to the Church, to depend on the Church outside of which there is no salvation; on the contrary, he who leaves the Church walks in darkness, he is a heretic.”⁵ Origen’s one area in which he was dogmatic was allegorism. “He considered that certain narratives or ordinances of the Bible would be unworthy of God if they had to be taken according to the letter, or if they were to be taken *solely* according to the letter. He justified the allegorism by the fact that otherwise certain accounts or certain precepts now abrogated would be useless and profitless for the reader: a fact which appeared to him contrary to the providence of the Divine inspirer and the dignity of Holy Writ.”⁶ Origen struggled with the Trinity and the theory so widespread in the 5th century. “It will then appear that the subordination of the Divine Persons, so much urged against Origen, generally consists in differences of appropriation (the Father creator, the Son redeemer, the Spirit sanctifier) which seem to attribute to the Persons an unequal sphere of action, or in the liturgical practice of praying the Father *through* the Son in the Holy Ghost, or in the theory so widespread in the Greek Church of the first five centuries, that the Father has a pre-eminence of rank (*taxis*) over the two other Persons, inasmuch as in mentioning them He ordinarily has the first place, and of dignity (*axioma*) because He represents the whole Divinity, of which He is the principle (*arche*), the origin (*aitios*), and the source (*pege*).”⁷

² Wikipedia

³ <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04012c.htm>

⁴ <http://www.cfpeople.org/Books/pope/POPEp4.htm>

⁵ <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11306b.htm>

⁶ Ibid

⁷ ibid



c- *The Council of Nicea:* A.D. 325. Of all that the council representatives spent time working on; the most positive and worthwhile was "... the settlement of the Christological issue of the relationship of Jesus to God the Father; the construction of the first part of the Nicene Creed; settling the calculation of the date of Easter; and promulgation of early canon law."⁸ Emperor Constantine, a *supposedly* converted Christian, brought together church leaders to "resolve escalating quarrels and controversy mounting to a bitter degree of disunity among the church leadership concerning theological issues."⁹ In particular, Constantine wanted once and for all the question resolved: ***"Who is the Christ"***. The council determined that several of the questions that needed to be addressed were in regard to the divinity of Christ, his position as co-equal or co-eternal with the Father, what is the relationship of the Trinity to the church's teachings. Constantine decided that a creed would establish this as a doctrine that all of Christianity would follow and obey and would be called the "The Nicene Creed" after the place in which this council was held. The end result of this Council is that they affirmed the Apostle's teaching of who Christ is. He is "THE" One true God in Deity and Trinity with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The Nicea Council results were both unfortunate and fortunate:

- a. Unfortunate: The Emperor had earlier stated that anyone who refused to endorse the Creed would be immediately excommunicated. This came about when Arius, Theonas, and Secundus refused to adhere to the Creed. Constantine exiled them to Illyria and excommunicated them from the church.
- b. Unfortunate: Meletius was forbidden to exercise authority and to ordain new clergy. All of his rights and prerogatives were removed from him. Meletius in defiance joined the Arians causing greater dissension before.
- c. Unfortunate: This council is most noted for the twenty new church laws called "canons" which became unchanging rules of discipline. An example of one is exceptional authority acknowledged for the patriarchs Alexandria and Rome or the Pope for their regions. From this we can see that the "church" has moved into the realm of "THE" Church by defining the church as a clerical order thus widening the gap between clergy and laity¹⁰. The laity were thus distinguished as just being religious worshipers whereas the clergy became the authoritative body of church leaders who made decisions for the laity.
- d. Fortunate: The most positive outcome was that the church, by developing this Creed, established what the church believed wholeheartedly and firmly, in fact so much so that they were willing to die for it. This Council, although fraught with dissensions by a minority, did in fact establish the biblical foundation of the

⁸ Wikipedia

⁹ <http://www.gotquestions.org/council-of-Nicea.html>

¹⁰ Dictionary: Laity: – those persons who are religious worshipers but not a part of the clergy. NET Bible Dictionary says: This word has come to mean those not ordained to sacred work, possibly in error. [Rev. 1:6, 5:10](#)

Trinity: the deity of The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit under one Godhead, in three co-equal and co-eternal Persons.¹¹



d-**Jerome**: A.D. 340. Jerome, an influential church leader, promulgated the error of a distinction between two groups: clergy and laity. This essentially then moved the church from “giving counsel to giving guidance, then direction and finally to managing and controlling every aspect of church life”¹² One factor that caused Jerome and the church great friction was his unusually biting tongue which he chose willingly not to curtail. Others resented his open indignation towards the priests of the day and women in particular. Jerome’s particular vehemence was felt towards those who taught that the Virgin Mary was a virgin “only” until after the birth of Christ. Jerome believed otherwise and wrote a book on the subject in 393AD. Later Jerome denounced a Gallic priest who was denouncing celibacy and the veneration of the saints calling them idolaters and worshipers of ashes. He believed that the martyrs “pray for us”¹³ thus promulgating the doctrine of praying to the dead so that they in turn pray for us in heaven. “He told Paula, (*a wealthy woman who paid Jerome to live near to her so that he might study the scriptures*) after the death of her daughter Blesilla, “She now prays to the Lord for you, and obtains for me the pardon of my sins.”¹⁴ This doctrinal point being taught by Jerome removes the sanctity of Jesus Christ as the divine mediator between man and God and is unscriptural. This teaching then is a point of confusion within the church and is in opposition to the words of the Apostle Paul: “For there is one God and one intermediary between God and humanity, Christ Jesus, himself human.”[1Tim 2:5]

Jerome was a “firestorm” in his day and yet in all of this we must stop and also praise Jerome for he labored over the scriptures and the church regards him as “the” greatest of all doctors in clarifying the Divine Word due to the places in which he resided, the languages he spoke, the teachers under whom he sat, and his willingness to live a celibate life so that he might devote himself to the translation of these scriptures.

2. Error or Design?

A misunderstanding, clerical error, or a simple grammatical entry has added a complication. Historically it has been said that the insertion of a comma after “saints” in the KJV Eph 4:11-12 “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for

¹¹ <http://www.gotquestions.org/council-of-Nicea.html>

¹² Dawson, David; *The Priesthood of Every Believer*, ETS Ministries, Greenville, TX. ©2008

¹³ http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=10

¹⁴ *ibid*

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the edifying of the body of Christ.” changed the church’s standards and roles originally designed and implemented by God. **No one knows why this happened.** *We are wise to stop here and remind our selves that where we are not instructed in scripture we are not to place judgment but rather seek truth. However, that being said, an insertion of this comma has fueled the idea of an elevated clergy who are responsible for doing the work of the ministry rather than the laity.* Thus returning to the OT we find that Deut 29:29 is wise counsel: “Secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those that are revealed belong to us and our descendants forever, so that we might obey all the words of this law.” David Dawson writes that this little grammatical entry and/or clerical addition, either by design or error, has made the gifted men [*of the clergy*] responsible for three things

1. equipping the saints;
2. the work of the ministry;
3. edifying the Body of Christ.

This scriptural alteration thus structured the church and effectively abandoned the scriptural idea of the priesthood of the believer. The result is that our enemy, “the devil, like a roaring lion,” (1Pet 5:8) has sought to encourage and change the church into a “kingdom of clergy” where those in ecclesiastical authority do everything for the saints. By excluding the comma after that single word, the verse gives us the understanding that the Holy Spirit desired. It results in those gifted men [*of the clergy*] having just **one** responsibility: To equip the saints. The Reformers believed in the perspicuity of Scripture—that the most important doctrines of Scripture were clear enough for any layman to understand. This was and is in contradistinction to those who believe that the Scriptures have a hidden meaning that can only be found by the institutional Church’s magisterial authority. As we can see from the translations below only the KJV has the comma insertion after the word saints.

A Word of Caution: We must be cautious in our determinant of which translation is the “only authorized” version. To help us, Dr. Dan Wallace has written “the history of the English Bible¹⁵ and a lengthy paper on the KJV.¹⁶ He writes: “...the Bible is the Word of God, inerrant, inspired, and our final authority for faith and life. However, nowhere in the Bible am I told that only one translation of it is the correct one. Nowhere am I told that the King James Bible, [*NKJV, NASB, NIV, or the NET emphasis added*] is the best or only ‘holy’ Bible.” Using that as our premise, we thus take time to review here the different translations of just this set of verses and for you the reader to ascertain the Holy Ephesians 4:12

¹⁵ Wallace, Dan “[History of the English bible](#) “

¹⁶ Wallace, Dan. “[Why I Do Not Think the King James Bible Is the Best Translation Available Today](#)” Bible.org

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- **NET**© 4:12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, that is, to build up the body of Christ,
- **NIV**© 4:12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up
- **NASB**© 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;
- **ESV**© 4:12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,
- **NLT**© 4:12 Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.
- **MSG**© 4:12 to train Christians in skilled servant work, working within Christ's body, the church,
- **BBE**© 4:12 For the training of the saints as servants in the church, for the building up of the body of Christ:
- **NKJV**© 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,
- **NRSV**© 4:12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,
- **KJV**© 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

So now your question back to the author of this course is: how shall I as this journey participant determine which of the above translations is the better or the best or the truest translation? Dr. Wallace clearly points out in his article on the history of the Bible, that we must remember that all are “translations”. Of all of them, *only* the KJV remains with this comma. Although the KJV is an excellent translation, today's scholars and theologians alike see that as an error that needed correcting. Out of all the translations the ***NET Bible translation stands alone*** in giving the reasons why a grammar insert or a word insert is chosen and why that choice would be preferable. No other version has that as a premise and a foundational principle. We should note here as well that **even though all are “translations” all key doctrinal issues remain unchanged.** The issue under discussion here is with the one verse in Ephesians where we see that the key work of the ministry had been altered from the church of the laity doing the work of the ministry to the church of the clergy doing the work of the ministry.

C. A Journey's Dilemma: Role Reversal and a Possible Answer: Another problem arose of role reversal as those in leadership began to see themselves as a student of the Word and that the saints/flock were to merely assent to what they determined as truth. As one author noted: “Some church leaders aren't altogether sure they want their people to think. They figure they've already done the thinking for their people. All their followers need to do is obey them---without question.”¹⁷ However, according to scripture, God in His divine plan, anointed each believer with the Holy Spirit equally and thus all have the Teacher dwelling in them and as such can ascertain truth. It is due to this role

¹⁷ Schultz, Thom & Joani; “Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church: and How to Fix it”; chapter 5 “Make People Think”; ©1996

reversal in the area of leadership control that there has been a vacuum in the believer's abilities to study and understand truth for themselves. Perhaps it may stem from this idea: their teachers often themselves do not know how to study the Bible! **The answer is that all believers, clergy and laity, need to know how to study and to interpret God's Word so that they can practically implement it into their lives and help those within their sphere of influence learn the same "how to study" skills. We are all called to share the gospel message and to disciple!** (Matt 28:18-20)

D. A Journey's Dilemma: Denominational Persuasion and a Possible Answer: Another dilemma is that in today's churches teachers often are given a curriculum that presents scripture through the lens of that particular denomination and carries with it the slant of that persuasion. Dialog, pictures, crafts are completed by the publishers. Often teachers who follow word for word are parroting instead of thinking and processing what the Holy Spirit would have them to learn for themselves and their students. Why? They have not been taught to study the passage, to develop critical thinking skills. *It is really not their fault!* The church is failing in preparing their teachers to "study." The church is preparing the teachers to implement skits, crafts, and to utilize the pattern in the curriculum guide. But, God did not design a denomination; He designed that His Word alone would equip each new believer to carry forth the truth through the order of thinking and processing His Word. As we said earlier, God set up the order of pastors and teachers to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry. Our answer to this dilemma is simple: it is imperative that we equip people to find truth for themselves and not be biased by the study of another. Jesus said if we know the Truth we will be set free.

The question then is this. Why do we want to be in "bondage" to another's thinking when we have the greatest teacher of all; the Holy Spirit! Today as in days past, it seems that the church has placed their students and teachers back under the "Levitical Law" with the idea that only those who have a theology degree or seminary education have the "right" answers. Instead of feeding our people, we are wrapping them in the gift-wrap of "think as I think, respond as I respond". In contrast Dawson encourages us to challenge today's church to stop telling people what they should believe, and help them instead begin to read the Word of God for themselves, so they can begin to experience God speaking directly to them!¹⁸

E. The Journey's Scriptural Mandate

As it has been said, studying is God's tool for revealing Himself to us through His "angel's food" or His Word. That is our premise and our foundation. But, now we need to have a reason for what we will be learning not only for ourselves but more importantly to

¹⁸ Dawson, David; "ETS Introductory Guide", p 6.

fulfill Paul's command that he gave to Timothy: share what we have learned with others. So how does one accomplish this lofty goal?

Where does it begin? As a believer in Christ, one must seek heavenly wisdom and spiritual preparation. It is in this "classroom" we are developed to better communicate the spiritual principles of scripture. What we learn helps us meet personal needs as well as the needs of others that God has placed in our sphere of influence. In contrast to heavenly wisdom taught by and through the indwelling Holy Spirit; earthly wisdom, gleaned from secular sources, is seen in the examples of learned men who were wise in their own eyes but lacked the spiritual wisdom so needed to know the truth of the scripture. They remind us of Nicodemus in John 3, who as "THE" teacher of Israel was, as Jesus noted, spiritually ignorant. He could observe learning principles but could not see God's foundational truths as he lacked spiritual discernment and wisdom. God's Word reveals man as he is: depraved and without hope and therefore he dwells in spiritual darkness. It is God's Word and His Holy Spirit that shows us the Master Plan for knowledge and wisdom from beginning to end. In His plan we see each one created in the image of God (mind, body, spirit) and then understand His plan for our learning and development in the areas of intellect, spirit, emotions. Apart from this understanding of the Master Plan, all learning is incomplete and why we fall short of the glory of God that He wants for His children.

Paul wrote to Timothy: "Make every effort to present yourself before God as a proven worker who does not need to be ashamed, teaching the message of truth accurately." (*2Ti 2:15*). This means we are commanded by God to study and then in turn to share what we have learned with another. We, who are believers, are anointed with the Holy Spirit the same as any curriculum writer, any pastor, and any theologian. Even though each learner or student may be anointed we must also remember that just as the scholars and theologians sit and listen to the still small voice of God so should we. They are experts in areas we are not, and therefore we will benefit from their expertise because they have spent their lives reading, meditating and gleaning the words of God. *However*, that being said, we have no excuse that we are not competent for the Holy Spirit's anointing guides us into hearing, learning and then being able to disseminate and apply the scriptural principles God has placed within His Word. He would have us know the truth so that we will be changed from the inside out.

F. The Scriptural Goal:

If we look at first century Christians who turned the world upside down there were no denominations, no quarterlies, no curriculum, only believers and the apostolic leaders. They had the revealed Old Testament as well as the indwelling Holy Spirit; we now have the addition of the New Testament as well as the indwelling Holy Spirit. We can follow their example in listening to the Word, meditating upon it, seeking understanding and then relaying what we have learned to others so that we too can "turn the world upside down". When we "study" as the early believers did, comprehending and

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seeing the truth of what God said was true, we can then grow closer and become more like Christ.



Starck

In looking through history we are given glimpses of how this is proven out practically. Examples are found in the works of Calvin and Luther. One that may be unfamiliar to the 21st century student is “Johann Friedrich Starck, a favorite author of evangelical Germany in the era of Pietism.”¹⁹ Starck [b.1680] wrote an entire book of Daily Prayers and Devotionals titled “Starck’s Prayer-Book”. An example of the impact the scriptures had upon his life is seen in one section of a prayer he composed found in Book I, Morning, Noon, and Evening Devotions, p19.

Almighty God, Thy Word is cast like seed into the ground; now let the dew of heaven descend, and righteous fruits abound. Let not the foe of Christ and man this holy seed remove; but give it root in every heart to bring forth fruits of love. Let not the world’s deceitful cares the rising plant destroy; but let it yield a hundredfold the fruits of peace and joy. Oft as the precious seed is sown, thy quick’ning bestow that all whose souls the truth receive its grace and power may know. Amen.

The truth of the matter is that each of these men spent time at the throne of the very Almighty God and learned from Him the same as we. They knew that the very words of God came to them not by men but by the power of the Holy Spirit. Peter explained: “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.” (2Pe 1:21) This inspired word has four distinct purposes: “teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” (2Tim 3:16). It is because of those principles that they and we may do as Paul said in Col 1:28 “...proclaim him by instructing and teaching all people with all wisdom so that we may present every person mature in Christ”. In addition, Jesus promised us, “[...]the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and will cause you to remember everything I said to you.” (John 14:26).

Early church “students” were excited and hungry for the Word of God. In that day, as we know from history, only the very prestigious could read and/or write. Therefore, the students sat under a “master” and listened to him teach. It was rote memorization and “tests” were recited back to the master teacher. But the true test came as they left the master and entered the “real world”. So too with us today. They had a hunger to listen more diligently, digest and understand what had been taught to them so that in turn they could teach others. When they were persecuted they were scattered from Jerusalem and “... they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.” (Act 8:4) They were capable “teachers” because they “knew” what they believed and why they believed it. They were “... ready to give an answer to anyone who asked about the hope they possessed” (1 Peter 3:15).

¹⁹ Starck’s Prayer-Book, Translated and Edited by W.H.T. Dau, St. Louis, Mo. Concordia Publishing House, 1921.

G. Today's Dilemma and Targeted Objectives

Today we find believers who are hungry but are in a quandary as to know where to begin, for what they are to be looking, and when they find "it" what to do with this new truth. In other words they are hungry but they do not know how to fill that void within their spirit! They know they need to read but where to begin, how to do it systematically, and in ways that will be concrete. Also, there are many in parts of our global community that do not have access to a Bible to read. These believers are in many ways much like the New Testament believers in that they are oral learners. If they do have a Bible, they seem like sheep without a shepherd because no one has shown them where to read, how to interpret or what they are to do with their new knowledge. Paul wrote to Timothy this charge: "[...] *entrust what you heard me say in the presence of many others as witnesses to faithful people who will be competent to teach others as well.*" (2Ti 2:2) Thus it is with this in mind that our first task set before us is to learn how to study this "angel's food" given to us.

Objective 1: As learners, who may become teachers, we should have as a primary objective to move away from the culture around us and move in the direction of thinking and responding in the ways of Jehovah; recognizing the value of scholars yet delaying their instructive wisdom until the Holy Spirit has instructed us.

Objective 2: As learners, a secondary objective should be to familiarize oneself with the (a) the modified inductive study method and (b) the taxonomy of learning designed by Benjamin Bloom which will be discussed further on in our course. A goal in both is to be able to determine such things as the content of a passage, types of questions that will develop higher level critical thinking skills, learn how to make divisions, subject sentences; ascertain scriptural principles and aims; and lastly develop application questions.

Objective 3: Cause the student to learn Exegesis, not Eisegesis

a. exegesis: you, the student learner, draw out the meaning of a given text objectively **exegesis** (*plural exegeses*) A formal written exposition or explanatory essay especially of a scripture or other religious text.

b. eisegesis: you, the student learner, read your own interpretation into a given text subjectively. **eisegesis** (*plural eisegesises*) An interpretation, especially of Scripture, that reflects the personal ideas or viewpoint of the interpreter; reading something into a text that isn't there.

To explain it simply;

Exegesis means that you have objectively analyzed significant words in the text in regard to translation, examined the cultural and historical content; confirmed the limits of the passage and lastly examined it within the context of the text.

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Eisegesis is subjectively explaining in your own words what the passage is saying based on the information you subjectively acquired during your study of this passage and similar passages that treat the same subject matter.

- **Remember this Number One Rule: : “CONTEXT IS KING”!**

Objective 4: Wean oneself from utilizing outside sources such as commentaries and/or other research *at the beginning* of our study. Why not turn to commentaries at the beginning? Why do I have to do so much work on my own? Haven't others already "plowed the field"? Yes, many scholars have spent much time "plowing the field" but to read their thoughts first is to present a biased viewpoint. Commentaries are *their* thoughts and the Holy Spirit wants you to develop 'your' thoughts not theirs. It is much like farming. Do you do better watching or digging as you plant? If you dig, then you have an investment in the plant, but if you only watch the farmer who dug, you have not an investment but rather you must wait until the harvest.

Key: Utilize the skills of other scholars last. These are those who have spent hours researching the passage. Glean from them and their research to assist you in your discovery *after you have done “your part”*.

Objective 5: A student as any scholar must have total dependence upon the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit to teach and to reveal the spiritual truths and principles in order that the student and/or the scholar will be conformed to the image of Christ. Paul writes: “whom he (God) foreknew he (God) also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son,” (*Rom 8:29*). This is God's objective and should be ours as well.

Objective 6: Reviewing from our basic foundational principles: We as the student should have as our desire, to become acquainted with the author. “In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (*Col 2:3*) We can be assured that we who know the author of the Book will be given the treasured nuggets of His wisdom. “But if anyone is deficient in wisdom, he should ask God, who gives to all generously and without reprimand, and it will be given to him.” (*Jam 1:5*) We also know that for those who do not know the author, treasures will be hidden from their sight. “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing, among whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of those who do not believe so they would not see the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God” (*2Co 4:3/4*). This is why Jesus spoke in parables. Then the disciples came to him and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" (*Mat 13:10*). Jesus in answering quoted from the book of Isaiah:

Is 6:9: 'You will listen carefully yet will never understand, you will look closely yet will never comprehend. For the heart of this people has become dull; they are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, so that they would not see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.'

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Objective 7: Also a review from our foundational principles our next objective is that one, as a student, must recognize the truth that he/she is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;” (*Eph 5:18*) for as Jensen writes: “The Bible without the Holy Spirit is a sun-dial by moonlight.”²⁰ Think of it in this way. The person without the Holy Spirit is like a lighthouse with a darkened light that is unable to lead a ship to safety amongst the shoals and rocks. So too a person without the light of the Holy Spirit cannot read and understand the Word nor can he/she lead anyone else to “the LIGHT” who is the True Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. “...the heavenly Father gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (*Luke 11:13*).

Objective 8: Our last and final objective is that we should recognize the value of spending time with the Master Teacher and falling in love with Him by reading His Word. Christ said to “follow Me.” However before Jesus sent them out, He spent three years allowing them to observe Him in action and teaching them through example and by word. Then He sent forth trained and skilled workers. As we read we are observing and seeing how Jesus did the Father’s work; “I am doing just what the Father commanded me.” (*John 13:41*) As He was working, he was modeling for the disciples the “how to’s.” He then used the skill of “guided practice” before He sent them out to do His work. If we look at Matt 9 –10 we see five principles that Jesus taught his disciples.

a. Five Principles Jesus Taught - Matt 9-10

1. See the need and to meet the need of men
2. See the “big” picture as well as the “little” picture
3. Be prepared for what may lay ahead; know that the Holy Spirit will be with you in all circumstances
4. Know that you do not minister alone; God is with you
5. Discipleship requires accountability and commitment

We learn these five principles through our first step of reading. Many want to “study” but reading must come first. Reading affords not only pleasure but encourages memorization, understanding, and recall of similar passages so that we become familiar with the author’s intent, purpose, and plan. Reading in context is key as is reading with a pencil. Jotting down thoughts and ideas triggers the brain, to not only recall but to also seal the words and thoughts within the “gray matter”. After you have read it once, read it again with these questions in mind: What does this passage teach me about God, about Christ; about the Holy Spirit, about the doctrines of the church? What does it tell me about sin

²⁰ Jensen, Irving. _____

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and is there a sin I need to confess? What does it tell me about the virtues that I need to emulate and will I? What does it teach me about both the OT and the NT linkage? What is there for me to share with someone that God will divinely bring across my path? Here are some others to add to that basic list:

b. Basics for Reading:

- As you read think and ask yourself what is the main theme of the passage.
- Do other passages come to mind that have a similar theme or idea?
- What questions come to mind as you read?
- What principles (Bible truths that do not change) are in this passage?
- What aim does this passage set for me?
- How can I apply that principle to my life today?

In addition, other authors have offered these suggestions:

- Is there an example to follow?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there a sin that needs confession or a sin to avoid?
- Is there a command to be obeyed?
- What can I offer as a prayer to God based upon my reading?
- What will I do today to cement all I have read into my mind?