

The BBI BULLETIN

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Training Workmen that Need Not Be Ashamed

THE INSTITUTE UPDATE

As we neared the end of 2007 it looked like the **Berean Bible Institute** was going to finish the year in the red. Throughout the year giving had been down and most months we were not able to meet expenses. But, our God is faithful and in answer to prayer there were enough donations made to the ministry of **BBI** in November and December to overcome the deficit so that we finished the year in the black. We thank and praise God for all of those who responded to the need and contributed to the ministry to help make this possible.

A badly needed upgrade that must be done before long is the replacement of the eight large cathedral windows in the **BBI** Chapel area and one even larger window in the front of the building. They are very old, inefficient, drafty, single pane windows that are in great need of maintenance. We could caulk, paint, and do what repair we can to them and get by for a while before doing it again. Or, we can replace them with new energy efficient windows with maintenance free outside trim.

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Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

INTERPRETING GOD'S WORD

By Dr. W. Edward Bedore

The work of interpreting the written word is called "hermeneutics." Biblical hermeneutics is the application of the rules and principles of interpretation to the Bible. The goal of Biblical hermeneutics is to discover the meaning of what has been written in the Bible.

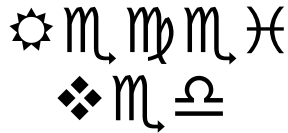
It seems that there are many who do not understand the vital importance of the consistent use of proper principles of Bible interpretation and that the failure to apply those principles is the cause of much confusion in the professing church today.

Almost everyone uses the basic principles of interpretation on a regular basis in their daily life. The principles are the same for interpreting the Bible as for any other written material. They are the basic rules for understanding language. However, many of those who constantly apply these rules, or principles, in their day-to-day communications in speaking, reading, and writing seem to set them aside as unimportant when reading the Bible. This often results in a misinterpretation of Scripture, which is something we want to avoid. The following are some guidelines for interpretation that serious Bible students will find helpful.

A proper approach to the Scriptures:

I. A Biblical Approach—By Biblical we mean that we believe that the Bible is the inerrant, revealed Word of God and the basis and final authority of all sound doctrine.

(continued on page 3)



FROM FLORIDA:

"Thank you for your faithfulness, not only in standing for pauline truth but in training others for grace ministry."

FROM WISCONSIN:

"Dear Pastor Bedore, I have been blessed many times with some of your students at our church...when we were in between pastors. Thank you for your faithfulness in teaching the Word, rightly divided. Enclosed is a check to help wherever it is needed."

FROM WEST VIRGINA:

"Dear BBI Thank you again for helping to train up the next generation of grace pastors teachers and church leaders....Best Wishes for 2008!"

FROM MINNESOTA:

"Keep up the good work! I pray for you everyday."

FROM THE PHILIPPINES:

"I am blessed with your Bible Institute. Training for the ripe harvest of a dying world. In such times as this we need to help prepare workers for tomorrow. I was happy to view your

THE BULLETIN BOARD

News & Announcements



The BBI Graduation & Awards Ceremony will be held on Saturday, May 10th, 2008. We invite you to come for this exciting time at BBI.



Midwest Grace Fellowship Spring Conference

Location: Bethany, MO

Dates: May 30th-June 1st, 2008

Theme: "Transformed into His Image"
Romans 12:1-2

Contact: Pastor Ken Lawson: (217) 498-6958; Dan Heyle (660) 425-6853.



40th Annual Berean Bible Fellowship Conference



Location: Cedar Lake, Indiana

Dates: June 14th-19th, 2008

Theme: "Stand Fast in the Liberty"

Contact: Pastor Floyd Baker :
(812) 490-4156.



Register now for the Fall Semester!



Classes start August 18th, 2008. For more information, class schedule, application, or a Handbook & Course Catalog, contact BBI: (262) 644-5504, E-mail: bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.com, or check out our website: www.bereanbibleinstitute.org

Our goal is to equip men and women to stand for and defend the truth of God's Word!

ARE YOU READY?

Only one life; 'twill soon be past.

Only what's done "in Christ" will last.

(INTERPRETING GOD'S WORD *continued from page 1*)

II. A Literal Approach—By literal we mean that we hold to a literal interpretation of Scripture. This approach of biblical interpretation recognizes the use of figurative language while accepting the natural meaning as the intended meaning. God, who has created man and given language as the means of communication uses **normal language** to communicate with man through His Word which includes both figurative and precise language.

III. A Dispensational Approach—By dispensational we mean that we recognize two distinct peoples of God in the Bible: Israel and the Body of Christ. We maintain that the Bible teaches that God Himself is unchanging and has always dealt with man according to unchanging principles that are in perfect harmony with His nature. But, at the same time it is clear that He has not always dealt with man in exactly the same way throughout history. Most of the Bible was written directly to, and about, the nation of Israel and God's covenant promises to them as His specially chosen people. In contrast, the epistles of the Apostle Paul are particularly addressed to the Church of the present Dispensation of Grace. Understanding the dispensational distinctives that define these two programs is essential to a proper understanding of the Bible.

THE BASIC RULES OF INTERPRETATION

1. The Bible is our first and final authority for faith and practice—Its authority overrides that of philosophy, denominations, traditions, leaders, and emotions.
2. Scripture has but one meaning— Each passage of Scripture has a definite meaning of its own. If Scripture has more than one meaning, we can never be certain of its meaning. It should be understood to mean what it meant to those it was originally addressed to.
3. Scripture explains Scripture— In Bible study, let the Bible speak for itself. Compare Scripture with Scripture, acknowledge differences as well as similarities, and be careful not to add to or subtract from it.
4. Pay attention to context— Give careful consideration to the preceding and following Scriptures of a passage and how they affect it.

5. Pay attention to dispensational distinctives— Prophecy and mystery must be recognized as separate programs, as are Law and Grace.

6. The Lord Jesus Christ is the focal point of all Scripture— Always keep in mind everything in the Bible is in some way related to Jesus Christ and God's overall plan of redemption.

7. Rely on the Holy Spirit to give you understanding (I Cor. 2:11-16)— Human intellect alone cannot grasp the true significance and depth of spiritual truth (also see Eph. 1:15-20; Col. 1:9-10).

GOD'S PURPOSE IN THE BIBLE

- I. God wants us to be life-long learners of the truth (II Tim. 2:15-17).
- II. God want us to be faithful to the truth (II Tim. 4:2).
- III. God wants us to teach others the truth (II Tim. 2:1-2).

REQUIREMENTS FOR A PROPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE

1. Regeneration— A person must be saved to truly comprehend Bible truth.
2. A Desire to Learn— We must want to know the truth.
3. Reverence for God and His Word— We must have a proper respect toward the Scriptures.
4. Reliance on the Holy Spirit— We must realize that we are dependent on God's power and not our own abilities.
5. An Open Mind— We must allow Bible truth to override tradition and presuppositions.
6. A Willingness to Submit to the Truth— The final goal of Bible study is faith towards God and the personal application of Bible truth to one's life.

ARRIVING AT CONCLUSIONS

How we understand the Bible will determine our understanding of what the Bible teaches. In other words, our interpretation of Scripture will define our theology. The use of the proper rules of hermeneutics is vital in this area as a correct theology can only be gained by a correct understanding of Scripture. It is important that we not allow a "logical system of theology" to determine our interpretation of Scripture. What seems "logical" may not be Scriptural at all.

Logic is based on man's reasoning powers. But Scripture is what God has revealed to man. Therefore, interpretation of Scripture, not logical deduction or philosophical conclusions, must be the final factor in establishing Bible doctrine (theology).

EFFORT REQUIRED

Like all worthwhile endeavors, real Bible study requires serious effort. You will only get out of Bible study what you are willing to put into it.

The treasures found in God's Word are greater in value than any of the riches to be found in the world. The most important treasure, the greatest riches, indeed, the abundant wealth of God, is found in the One who is the centerpiece of Scripture: the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:7; 2:4-7; Col. 1:27; 2:2-3).

*Jesus Christ is the primary subject of the Bible.

*Real and absolute wealth is found in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

*The most valuable riches to be found in all the universe are found in Jesus Christ.

The study of the Bible is a life-long endeavor for the believer, an endeavor that is by far more than worth the effort put into it. The dividends are eternal.

ATTITUDE IN BIBLE STUDY IS IMPORTANT

1. Be Determined— Do not let other things distract you.
2. Be Eager— Cultivate a desire to know God's Word.
3. Be Regular— Make Bible study a habit.
4. Be Prayerful— Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes of understanding.
5. Be Willing to Sacrifice— Take the time necessary.

USING THE RIGHT TOOLS

Bible reference and study books can be extremely helpful or extremely harmful to the student, depending on how they are used. They must not be allowed to become a substitute for personal Bible study.

When the Right Tools Can Be Helpful

1. To gain scholarly insights into Scripture.
2. When used to supplement your own work.

3. When used to gain additional facts to aid in understanding.
4. To use for comparison to help in difficult areas.
5. When used to stimulate further thought.

When The Right Tools Can Be Harmful

1. When they are allowed to take priority over Scripture.
2. When they replace personal study.
3. When they are given the same authority as Scripture.
4. When they mislead or there is dependence on them for understanding the Bible.
5. When they can limit further personal study.

STUDY TOOLS

1. A Bible with cross-references and wide margins or a notebook. Take notes and start building your own list of cross-references, adding them to the margin of your Bible or develop a reference notebook. Remember that the cross-references that are found in your Bible are incomplete and sometimes can be misleading.
2. An English dictionary. This is essential to Bible study because in order to understand our Bible we must understand the words that are used in it.
3. A Concordance. Use a complete concordance, *Young's* or *Strong's* is best; *Strong's* is especially helpful because it has a numbering system that many other works are coded to.
4. A Bible Dictionary or Encyclopedia. The background information found in these kinds of references works can be extremely helpful.
5. A Bible Atlas. The historical and geographical information in an atlas can be helpful, especially in understanding the historical books.
6. Commentaries and theological works. These provide the opinions of others on the meaning of Scripture.

All of these can be very helpful, but always remember that the works of men are subject to error. Scripture is our first and final authority. Also, keep in mind that some reference works are much better than others. The theological point of view by which an individual approaches Bible study will be reflected in their final conclusions.

Just because a person has academic credentials and has written a book does not automatically mean that his interpretation of Scripture is correct.

PROCEEDING IN BIBLE STUDY

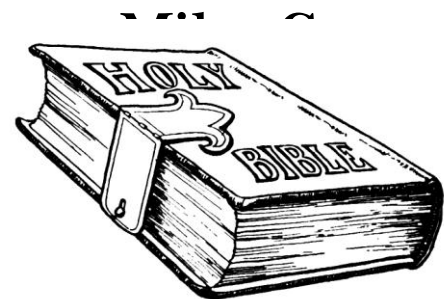
1. Plan to study.
2. Pray—Follow Paul’s example and ask God to guide you in understanding (Eph. 1:15-21).
3. Read—Even if you are studying a smaller portion of Scripture, it is best to read the whole book once if it is small, or at least three chapters if it is a larger book (even more if the context is extended). Read the passage you are studying at least three times before actually beginning your study.
4. Observe—Pay attention and notice what you are reading. Do not be careless in your Bible reading. Look for the following in a passage and think about why they are there and how they affect the meaning:
 - a. Literary form
 - b. Repetition
 - c. Connecting words (and, but, for, since, therefore, when, after)
 - d. Time words
 - e. Location words
 - f. Contrasts and comparisons
 - g. Unknown words
 - h. Core of the sentence (subject, verb, etc.)
 - i. Figurative language
 - j. Sequence (the why or cause, etc.)
 - k. The strange, unusual, and unexpected
 - l. Related entities (persons, places, things, qualities, quantities)
 - m. Grammatical elements (nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.)

The following are important questions to ask when studying a passage: What, when, where, who, why, and how? These are what are known as “the six horsemen of knowledge.” We must always remember not to read more into the Scriptures than is actually there.

5. Take notes—Write down your initial observations, then compare and tie them together later.
6. Think and analyze—Meditate on what the Scripture says. This should bring both answers and more questions to mind.
7. Interpret—Use proper principles of interpretation, and let the Scriptures say what they say.
 - a. Do not “force” your interpretation.
 - b. Do not be “superficial” in your interpretation.
 - c. Do not “spiritualize” the Scriptures to arrive at you interpretation.
8. Make personal application. **What does this mean to me and how should I react?**



“It shall greatly help ye to understand Scripture if thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom and to whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth after.”



Missionary Focus



Kenya

In this issue, **BBI** would like to focus your thoughts and prayers on these Grace missionaries:

THE IMPROSO FAMILY

Gardner, Ledith, and their three children: Keren, Kezia, and Kelly.

Since we heard of the unrest in Kenya, **BBI** has been in prayer for the country and the Grace missionaries there. To give you an update on how things are going, here is an excerpt from the Improso's January 2008 prayer letter:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?" The answer is none. In fact we are declared a winner through all of these situations. Not that we can stop them, but that God's loving purpose in Jesus Christ will be worked out for those that love Him. This is our family's first message of the New Year, 2008. It became so real in the light of Kenya's hurting year-end and New Year. Gardner preached this message to mostly displaced members worshipping in our house. We could not use our usual venue because even churches and schools are being burned by angry mobs. One church of the Assembly of God keeping hundreds of displaced was burned leaving thirty people dead. The church is barely two kilometers away from our church property. Most of the members did not manage to come as they had to run away and hide themselves in forest, police outposts or anyplace they thought was a safe haven.

Kenya got into its worst crisis of all time after its Dec. 2007 national election. The hotly contested result favoring the incumbent government caused ethnic conflicts, killings and destruction of properties. The Rift Valley, particularly Eldoret, where we live, was mostly affected. There has been mediation attempts to find a compromise between the two main political parties which so far has had no real result for getting everything back to normal. This letter was written during the first of a three-day nationwide protest called by the opposition. We could hear gunshots by the police to disperse the protesters. The town center is only a couple of kilometers away from our home. It holds the biggest number of protesters countrywide. Most of these confrontations turn violent.

We had a first hand experience of the tension while traveling home from Nakuru a day before New Year. A group of more than one hundred young men barricaded the central road in a town called Iten, some 50 kms. before Eldoret. This is the most common way of showing protest that results in paralyzing the transportation. As we begged to pass, some of them agreed, but most did not. Those who did not want us to pass took stones and others started banging on our car. Our kids started to cry in panic, while we constantly prayed for the Lord to take over the situation. Just before the first block landed in the windshield, a policeman came and told the crowd to allow us to pass. He advised us to stay in a nearby lodge and promised to give us an escort to Eldoret. We were told that those who did not want us to pass were robbers who took advantage of the situation. We passed the next 50 kms. the next day through over fifty other road blocks. What frightened us most was the sight of burning houses and people with terrified faces along the road. There were also young men waving machetes while chanting war cries. The Lord certainly took over. We were amazed to see many people inside our compound when we reached home. They were displaced families taking shelter with us. We received them with open hands and shared the food and medicine that we had.

It is still uncertain what the country will look like after a couple of months. There is so much bitterness between tribes that only the Lord can heal. We ask your prayers for Kenya and those churches in clash torn areas. Thank you for the many of you, dear friends who already assured us of your prayers. We believe that God has a purpose for us to go through all these before taking our furlough in the Philippines. "

(Note: Since writing this letter, the Improso family has returned safely to the Philippines for an early furlough. They plan to return to Kenya in June.) We are grateful for dedicated missionaries like this family who have given everything to those to whom they have ministered. We thank the Lord for the Improso family, and their wonderful example of Philippians 2:20-21.

If you would like more information about the Improso family and their ministry in Kenya, Africa, contact *Things to Come Mission*: phone: (317) 783-0300, address: PO Box 127, Beech Grove, IN 46107, or check out their web site at <www.tcmusa.org>.

Improso's e-mail address is <gimproso@tcmusa.org>

Student's Corner

Berean Bible Institute is well into the spring semester and, praise God, we have more new students! Please keep them in your prayers as well as our current student body who are making the time and effort to study and attend **BBI** to further serve the Lord. Please remember to keep our instructors in your prayers as well as they give of their ~~time and effort to prepare these students for~~ the work of ministry.

Despite the frigid temperature of -12 degrees the weekend of our Grace Missions Conference, we had a wonderful turnout. We had missionaries from *GMI* and *TCM*, as well as two families that are preparing to go out as missionaries. It is so encouraging to hear of the courage and faith of others who have put their lives in His capable hands and of the trials and blessings they have been through. We would like to thank all of the ladies that brought the delicious homemade soup for the lunch. With the wonderful messages and delicious food, we were warmed from the inside out! We are planning for the **BBI** Grace Missions Conference to be in March next year (hopefully it will be a little warmer!) ~~We hope you can join us. The~~ dates for next year are March 13th and 14th.

Nathan and Julianna Cotner (students of **BBI**) were very happy to welcome Samuel Levi Cotner into their family on Friday, February 15th, 2008. He is a 6lb., 8oz. little bundle of joy. Nathan is a sheet metal apprentice and is attending **BBI** part-time with ~~the ultimate goal of missions. Congratu-~~lations, Nathan, Julie & little Sammy.

BBI will have two graduates this year: Mr. James Francisco and Mr. Randy Brown. They both will have completed the three-year program here at **BBI** and will be receiving a Diploma in Advanced Biblical Studies. We hope that you will come for the graduation to encourage these two men! We will also have five students who will be receiving their first-year Certificate of Basic Bible Studies: Mr. Justin Becker, Miss Laura Foulke, Miss Sarah Foulke, Mr. Patrick Gaetzke, and Miss Sandra Wruk.

(THE INSTITUTE UPDATE continued from page 1)

The first option would only be a temporary fix, would do little to decrease our winter heating bill, and would have to be done again before long. But, if we replace them with new windows, our savings in energy would be significant and the maintenance problem would be solved for many years to come. We believe that this is the course of action we should take.

Since purchasing our building in 2003 we have been able to save tens of thousands of dollars in remodeling and maintenance costs by doing almost all of the work ourselves and with the help of volunteers. But, this window project is beyond what we are able to do "in house," and we are going to have to hire a contractor. Of course, this means it will be a costly undertaking. The windows themselves will have to be custom-built, making them expensive. And, since their location on the outside of the building is very high off the ground, the labor costs will be significant. The estimates that we have received average almost \$30,000. If you would like to give a special gift toward the cost of this project, please designate it to the "window fund." Anything that you are able to do would be helpful and greatly appreciated.

We are looking forward to another fruitful year here at **BBI** and are praying that the Lord will raise up more faithful men to join us to begin training for the work of ministry. We hope that you will join in this prayer for the Lord to provide the monthly financial support needed for **Berean Bible Institute** to operate. The Lord's richest blessings of grace to you as you serve Him.

Because Christ Lives,

Dr. W. Edward Bedore, Executive Director

"But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to good work."

-II Corinthians 9:6-8

The BBI Bulletin is the official newsletter of the **Berean Bible Institute Inc.**, and is sent free of charge to any who request it.

Berean Bible Institute exists as a non-degree granting school of adult education, which endeavors to provide advanced Biblical and doctrinal studies in accordance with the Biblical principle of right division and the revelation of the mystery along with practical training in ministry and leadership skills, in order to help individuals become prepared to do the work of the ministry in local churches, the mission field, at home or abroad, with the overall goal of making the Gospel of Jesus Christ known to the lost throughout the world, the edification of believers, and the promotion of personal Bible study.

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Berean Bible Institute, Inc. admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.



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