

Bible Study Methods (2)

Introduction

- A. In the last lesson we considered the importance of understanding the various words in the text we were studying. By use of the concordance we now realize how easy it is to gain a new insight into God's holy Word.
- B. In this lesson we wish to emphasize a type of study which is based on the historical background of the various books of the Bible.
- C. God has given us His Word through the experiences of men and women in the natural/supernatural course of their history.
- D. The question we must learn to ask as we study the Bible, is the following: What was the occasion which led the Holy Spirit to inspire this book, and what was the purpose He had in mind to accomplish through it?

III. Understanding the Bible through Historical Context.

A. Explanation

1. The historical reason why the various books of the Bible were written is what is meant by "occasion." To know the "why" gives one a context or perspective that makes the books easier to understand.
2. The historical purpose to be achieved by the writing of a book of the Bible is what is meant by "purpose." Such a knowledge, coupled with the "occasion," provides the reader with valuable insight for the correct interpretation of the various passages in that book.
3. A knowledge of occasion and purpose can usually be gained from a careful reading of the book in question. Often the reason for writing is given along with some historical references which become valuable information.
 - a. Read Proverbs 1:1-9 and write out the purpose of the book of Proverbs _____
 - b. Read Jeremiah 1:1-3 and write out what you consider to be the occasion of the book _____

 - c. Read John 20:30,31 and write out the purpose for the Gospel of John _____

B. Old Testament Illustrations of Historical Context.

1. Read Ecclesiastes 1:1,12-18; and 12:8-14. From what you know of Solomon, and what you gain from the reading, write out what you would say was the occasion and purpose for the writing of this book. _____

2. Read Hosea 1:1-6 with II Kings 17:1-18 and write out the occasion for the book of Hosea. _____

with an understanding of the book's historical context explain the tragedy in Hosea's family as recorded in chapters 2 and 3.

3. Read Jeremiah 3:6-11. From your understanding of the occasion of the book already gained from 1:1-3 explain the main thrust of this passage. _____

C. New Testament Illustrations of Historical Context.

1. Read John 11:1-12:11. From your understanding of the purpose for the writing of this Gospel (John 20:30,31) state some of the reasons for the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

2. Read Galatians 1:1-9, Acts 15:1-10 and then the rest of Galatians. Carefully watch for any indications of occasion and purpose. Write out what you consider to be the historical context. _____

3. Read Colossians 2:16-23. Write out what you consider to be the false teaching that was influencing the believers in Colosse.

Explain how Colossians 2:10-15'is to be understood in the light of such teaching. _____

