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DEDICATED TO SHEREE
A CONSECRATED AND GIFTED DAUGHTER

"EVERY MAN NEEDS A DAUGHTER"

*As a reminder to him of the deep, sweet mystery of womanhood through
all of its stages;*

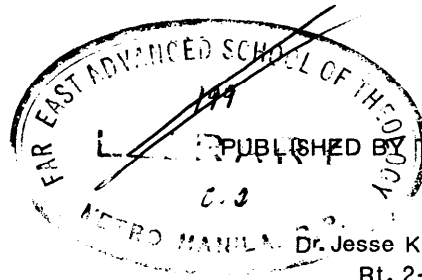
*As a challenge for him to ever be the protector of feminine tenderness
trust, and virtue;*

*As an opportunity for him to contribute to the molding of his own ideal
of a true lady;*

*And most of all to make him feel, inspite of his limitations, that he is
the greatest dad of all.*

All of these, and many other delights, has my daughter given to me.

*Jesse K. Moon
Father's Day 1974*



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FOREWORD

This distinctive treatment of Hermeneutics, or the art of biblical interpretation, offers the potential for uniting the Christian community on a solid biblical basis.

It is evident that the Lord Jesus continues to make ample provision for the redeemed; particularly as He furnishes each generation with able ministers who are diligent in the Holy Scriptures.

The author of this book is a very capable pulpiteer and possesses the educational requirements for a proper presentation of this noble subject. He has been seasoned as a professor on the college faculty, has proved himself as a successful executive, and has been effective as a pastor and evangelist.

We highly recommend How to Study and Interpret the Bible to all earnest seekers of truth as it is revealed in Christ Jesus.

E. R. Anderson, Superintendent
North Texas District Assemblies of God

PREFACE

The purpose of this book is to assist Bible students to fulfill the charge which is given by the Apostle Paul in II Timothy 2:15 (Amplified Version). "Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing-rightly handling and skilfully teaching-the Word of Truth."

The author has received manifold and urgent requests from ministerial students in Bible College, as well as from lay teachers, for the kind of help which is offered here. What the Bible student needs is hermeneutical help that circumvents a lot of history and 'archaic terms, and gets forthrightly into a presentation of the essentials of how to study and interpret the Bible. There is an obviously slim choice and short supply of such helps in evangelical circles.

Every effort has been made to set forth, in brief and simple style, only the "basics" so as to not confuse the beginning Bible student with nonessential information, and so as to not burden the advanced Bible student with low priority material. Effort has been made by the choice of descriptive, clear language, and by the careful, logical organization of the material, to avoid the need for space-consuming illustrations.

Appreciation is due Doctor George Flattery, President of International Correspondence Institute, in Brussels, Belgium for permission to use much of the material which was prepared initially, by the author, as the introductory chapter of the I. C. I. New Testament Survey correspondence course. Gratitude is also expressed to Miss Debbie Botsford, faithful and efficient secretary.

May the Triune God who inspired and enabled the writing of this little book now make it an abundant blessing to all who sincerely desire to know His Blessed Book.

Jesse K. Moon, Dean and Campus Pastor
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HOW TO STUDY AND INTERPRET THE BIBLE

Paul indicated the necessity of special preparation for the study and interpretation of the Scripture when he wrote "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth"(II Tim. 2:15).

In this book we will endeavor to help you to learn the basics of Bible study. This will involve a brief consideration of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the science governing the principles and methods of interpretation. The word "hermeneutics" derived from the Greek messenger god Hermes who supposedly carried the messages of the gods to mortals. Hermes came to be seen as the god of speech, writing, science, art and invention. Hermeneutics applies to all literature, including Scripture.

THE NEED FOR HERMENEUTICS

Principles and methods of interpretation must be utilized in the study of Scripture for the following reasons:

1. The Scriptures are both divine and human.
The divine message of spiritual and eternal truths is conveyed in human thought concepts and languages. The human language is strained in the effort to convey and the human mind is hard pressed in the effort to comprehend the message. Therefore principles and methods of interpretation are required to insure the most accurate understanding of the divine message by the human recipients.
2. The Scriptures are both local and universal.
The divine message was delivered originally in oriental concepts, languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek), symbols, and figures. This message was intended for universal reception. Therefore it had to be translated into other oriental languages with the usual problems of translation and interpretation. With the necessity of translation of the Scriptures into occidental languages the problems of translation and interpretation were increased. Therefore principles and methods of interpretation are necessary for the fullest understanding of the local message in its universal application.
3. The Scriptures are both ancient and eternal.
The divine message was delivered in an ancient culture at a time

in history from 2,000 to 3,500 years prior to our day. Nonetheless the message was intended for all people of that point in time as well as for people of all of time and eternity. Every successive culture has had its own peculiar problems in adapting the message which was given initially to an ancient culture. Therefore principles and methods of interpretation are required in order to separate the eternal message from its cultural expression.

4. The Scriptures are both unified and diverse.
The divine message is united in the one purpose of human redemption, and in the one person of Jesus Christ. The scarlet thread runs from Genesis through Revelation, and throughout Christ is preeminent—first in prophecy and then in fulfillment.

Although the Scriptures are unified they are also very diversified. The diversity is to be seen in the multiple authorship. Around forty authors including statesmen, kings, prophets, priests, shepherds, poets, fishermen, taxmen, theologians, and etc. were penmen of the Scriptures. Their diverse personalities, vocabularies, styles, and emphases appear. The diversity is also to be seen in the variety of recipients, points of origination, and purposes of the sixty-six books. In addition, the diversity can be seen in the multiple types of literature which are incorporated within the Scriptures. There is history, poetry, prophecy, typology, hymn, riddle, symbol, allegory, parable, letter, sermon, theological discourse, dialogue, and etc. And, finally the diversity is to be seen in the 1,500 year time span over which the Scriptures were written. Therefore principles and methods of interpretation are required in order to glean the message intended in both the unity and the diversity of the Scriptures.

5. The Scriptures are both objective and subjective.
The divine message has been conveyed in objective, written form. This written Word of God is quickened or made alive for the recipient by the Holy Spirit. Thus it is both "letter" and "Spirit", it is both objective and subjective. Principles and methods of interpretation are required in order to allow the correct blending of the objective and the subjective. That is, the illumination of the "letter" by the "Spirit" with the "letter" still maintaining primacy.

In addition to the importance of using correct principles and methods of interpretation, it is necessary that the interpreter of Scripture work from

the correct presuppositions.

BASIC CONVICTIONS FOR BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

Every student and interpreter of the Scriptures, no matter how earnestly he strives to be objective, works from several basic presuppositions or convictions about the Bible. The biblical interpreter will enter his study with the following basic convictions about the Scriptures:

1. The Scriptures are inspired.
In II Tim. 3:16 we read "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The words "inspiration of God" are the translation of the compound Greek word theopneustos which is derived from theo "God" and pneustos "breathed". The word theopneustos is passive both in meaning and usage and should be translated "breathed of God" and literally means "that which is breathed out by God." (See also Acts 1:16; Heb. 3:7; II Pet. 1:21)
The inspiration of Scripture can be defined as the influence of the Holy Spirit upon chosen human authors by which they produced from written sources, oral data, personal experience and divine revelation the written expression of God's redemptive plan for humanity. The divine influence included all of Scripture in its degree. Correct biblical interpretation will work from this conviction.
2. The Scriptures are supernatural.
Since the Scriptures were "breathed out by God" they are superior to the natural even though they were written by human beings. The Holy Spirit miraculously revealed truths which at times were not even comprehended by the human writers, and influenced even to the choice of words (from the writer's vocabulary) the accurate expression of God's message. Thus the acceptance of the prophetic, the astounding, and the miraculous in the biblical record will not prevent, but will rather insure, correct biblical interpretation.
3. The Scriptures are authoritative.
Due to the mode of the production of the Scriptures (divine inspiration) they are unique, indispensable, and authoritative for humanity. Corporate or individual conscience, church tradition, and all other forms of literature are secondary and the Scriptures are

primary for faith, guidance, and practice. The biblical interpreter comes to his study of the Scriptures with this conviction about its authority.

4. The Scriptures are trustworthy.

It is held that divine inspiration applies only to the autographs of the Scriptures and does not extend to subsequent reproductions or to translations. However the process of reproduction, translation, and textual restoration have generally been so blessed of God that we can study in the confidence that we now have Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts which are very faithful to the original texts. As an example, it has been calculated by reliable New Testament textual scholars that the difference between the autograph and our best extant Greek text is not more than a thousandth part of the whole. Thus about one half of a page of the total of five hundred is in dispute as to the correct reading. From this Greek text there are accurate translations into various languages. Therefore the biblical interpreter can approach his work with the conviction that the Scriptures are trustworthy and not one major truth will be misunderstood because of textual variations.

5. The Scriptures are knowable.

The very act of God in giving the Scriptures to humanity is an indication that He intended for His redemptive plan to be understood and experienced by human beings. There is such an abundance of biblical support for this conviction that we will not quote it at this point. We will simply observe that the biblical interpreter must approach the study of God's Word in the conviction that the Scriptures are knowable. This is true even though we have raised certain problems relative to biblical interpretation and presented five reasons for the use of principles and methods in interpretation.

Having considered the need for hermeneutics and the basic convictions necessary for biblical interpretation we will now examine the basic qualifications of the interpreter.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS OF THE BIBLICAL INTERPRETER

We can approach the basic qualifications of the biblical interpreter under three main divisions:

1. Spiritual Qualifications
2. Intellectual Qualifications
3. Educational Qualifications

God has arranged that the understanding of the Scriptures be more than just an intellectual process. The mental faculty is involved but the fullest comprehension involves the spiritual faculty of man as well. Biblical interpretation involves the very heart and experience of the interpreter himself. Because of this at least the following spiritual qualifications are important to the interpretation of the Word of God.

Spiritual Qualifications

1. The interpreter must "be born again."

Christ said to Nicodemus (a religiously and politically educated man) "...except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." (Jno. 3:3) By this statement Jesus meant that he could not enter into, nor could he understand the nature of the Kingdom of God. If Nicodemus needed to be born again in order to comprehend spiritual truths, so do we.

Paul indicated that the unsaved cannot understand the things of God. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor 2:14). The unsaved person with the help of the Holy Spirit can understand just enough of the gospel to call upon Christ for salvation and only after entering experientially into saving grace can he expect to go on to the fullest understanding of the biblical message. Biblical interpretation is most productive out of the context of Christian life. The interpreter must "be born again."

2. The interpreter must be Spirit-filled.

We have clear statements about the illuminating and teaching role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer in many passages of Scripture. John 16:13,14 says, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come, He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Paul also plainly shows the importance of the Holy Spirit in the comprehension of spiritual things (Read I Cor, 2:8-16). The carnal person (non-Spirit-filled) can have a limited understanding, but only the Spirit-filled Christian can understand the "deep things of God." Biblical interpretation is most productive out of the context of a Spirit-filled life. The interpreter must "be filled with the Spirit."

3. The interpreter must sincerely desire to understand the Scriptures. According to the Scripture we should:
 - (1) Pray to be taught the Word of God (Psa. 119:12,13,33,66).
 - (2) Love the Word of God exceedingly (Psa. 119:97,113,159,167).
 - (3) Delight in the Word of God (Psa. 1 :2).
 - (4) Esteem the Word of God above all else (Job 23:12).
 - (5) Receive the Word of God with readiness of mind and search it daily (Acts 17:11).

Thus the interpreter of the Scriptures must love the truth, be teachable, and with intense desire seek to understand the deep things of God.
4. The interpreter must reverence God and His Scriptures, Our finiteness requires that we approach the supernatural revelation of the infinite God with **reverence, humility**, and trust. That He would be concerned to reveal His redemptive work to His fallen, sinful, limited creatures should remove our prideful skepticism and irreverence as we come to the Scriptures, As we approach the Scriptures reverently their message will open up to us.
5. The interpreter of the Scriptures must be consecrated. Complete subjection to the Lordship of Christ is necessary for the fullest understanding of God's Word. Our whole being--spirit, mind, and body must be consecrated to God. The test of Christ's Lordship is by the standard of His Word--not imagination, feelings, conscience, or profession--but by the Scriptures. (See Mt. 7:21-23; Lk. 6:46; Jno. 14:15; 15:14,15). Thus the Bible becomes the standard for judging our lives and not our lives, or some independent criteria the standard for judging the Scriptures. The Bible is the standard for **faith, guidance and practice** and only when we accept it as such will it speak its fullest message to us. The interpreter must approach the Scriptures from a sanctified life, and in more than an academic way. He must "follow the Light as it is shined upon his pathway." The interpreter must respond to the revelation given and his response must be one of obedience if the revelation is to be increased. The truths of the Bible evade the disobedient and engage the obedient. (See Psa. 119:67,133; Mt. 2:24; Lk. 8:21; 11:28; Jas. 1:22-25; Rev. 22:18,19).

For years I have practiced what I call "Praying the Bible through". In my judgement this approach is far superior to just "reading" it through. I just kneel daily with the Bible open and

start reading where I stopped the previous day. I have no set amount to cover in a given session. I may "pray through" one verse or I may "pray through" an entire book. When I come to a truth that I can't understand I stop and pray for the Spirit's tutorship. When I come to a truth that inspires me, I stop and praise the Lord. When I come to a truth that convicts me or in which I fall short, I stop and pray for the ability to obey that truth. I do not read on until I have made an appropriate spiritual response to each portion of the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit quickens to me. I am convinced that the interpreter will only truly understand the Scriptures when he knows them experimentally,

6. The interpreter of Scriptures must be honest. The interpreter must come to the study of the Scriptures without prejudice if he is to understand its message. The basic presuppositions or convictions which were presented early in this study are not to be construed as prejudices. They are presuppositions which are derived from the Scriptures themselves by all who come to them in honest inquiry.

The interpreter must be honest intellectually. This means that he must allow the Scriptures to speak for themselves and not impose his notions upon the Scriptures.

The interpreter must be honest spiritually. That is he must be open to both the letter and the spirit of the Scripture. We can so easily rationalize our attitude, behavior, and state of being when we miss the mark. We blame **circumstances, others**, and even God. This rationalization colors our interpretation of the Scriptures. We must, like David, recognize that God requires us to have an honest spirit. The Psalmist said, "...Thou desirest truth in the inward parts..." (Psa. 51:6). Also Jeremiah tells us that God wants us to internalize the truth. He says, "...I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts..." (Jer. 31:33). Only the interpreter who is intellectually and spiritually honest will be able to accurately interpret both the letter and spirit of Scripture.

7. The interpreter of Scripture must have the habit of prayer and meditation.

The Bible student must recognize that, in addition to following correct guidelines and methods of **interpretation**, he must look to the One who gave the Scriptures, for illumination, in order to understand them. This illumination generally is received as the stu-

dent of the Bible spends much time with it in prayer and meditation. While much knowledge can be gleaned in brief sessions and with "shortcut methods" the sweetest and deepest truths are revealed to the person who studies in prayerful dependence, and persistent meditation.

- a. The interpreter of Scripture must be active in Christian service. The biblical interpreter cannot live in an "ivory tower" if he wants to have the fullest understanding of God's Word. It is only as we move among people and know their nature, needs, hurts, sins, and aspirations that we can come to the Scriptures to ask the right questions. It is only the one who is leading people to Christ and is ministering to their needs that can search from the right motives, and have the right priorities by which to achieve an integrated and dynamic understanding of the divine message. The best understanding of the Scriptures require an appropriate combination of theory and practice. The interpreter of Scripture who is active in Christian service will be driven to the blessed Word to find the answers for those to whom he ministers.

This is a good juncture at which to go back over the **preceding** eight spiritual qualifications of the interpreter. Read each of them carefully. If you have time memorize the first sentence of each numbered paragraph. Also become very familiar with at least one supporting Scripture for each one (where I have given a Scripture or reference). If I have not given a Scripture or reference you might add one of your own choice. Spend some time in prayer asking our mutual Father to enable you to bring these spiritual qualifications to your study of the Holy Word.

Intellectual Qualifications

1. The interpreter of Scripture needs to be intelligent. This does not mean that the less endowed intellectually cannot be saved or gain any knowledge of the Scriptures because **they** surely can. Almost everyone has enough intelligence to understand the rudiments of salvation. God can, and sometimes does miraculously give revelation beyond some person's natural mental capacity, but He generally works within the limits of the person's intelligence. (This is not speaking about the supernatural operation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit which are not limited by the natural endowments). The natural gift of intelligence, when dedicated humbly to God, becomes an asset in the interpretation of the Scriptures.

2. The interpreter of Scripture must be systematic. The student of the Bible cannot approach his work on a sporadic basis or with a haphazardous method. He must follow a consistent time schedule and utilize an organized method of study. Much more will be said about method later in favor of a further word here about the scheduling of time for study. There is no easy, convenient time for study in any aspect of Christian Ministry. And yet, it is imperative that ministers plan their daily schedule so as to include time for study. This is a matter of adjusting our priorities since each of us have the same twenty-four hour allocation of time each day. There should be planned segments of time set aside which are long enough to really get into the study, and which will be interrupted only by true emergencies.
3. The interpreter of Scripture must do his study with diligence and patience. Any type of scholarship requires diligence, but the complexity and profundity of the Scriptures require special diligence if one is to know its message in its scope and depth (See II Tim. 2:15).

Patience in study is most essential if one is to get the most from the biblical message. Time is required in order for the seed of truth to germinate and grow to full fruition.

4. The interpreter of Scripture must possess logical abilities. He must possess the ability to survey, outline, analyze, summarize and synthesize. More will be said about each of these logical processes later but for now a further word about the ability to synthesize. Synthesis is the logical process of drawing the true view out of two apparently opposing views. This requires the tendency toward correlation of two views rather than the polarization of them. This is basically the product of a mental ability called prudence. Prudence is discretion, good judgement, or cautious practical wisdom. The interpretation of Scripture requires such logical abilities.
5. The interpreter of Scripture must possess imagination. By imagination I refer to the ability to project one's thought into the past or future—the ability to conceptualize what life was like in the cultural, geographical, political, and religious world in which Moses lived, or the ability to visualize what life will be like in the setting described for the Millennium. Such ability to project one's self mentally gives the biblical interpreter a dimension

sion that is required if he is to truly conceive the divine message.

Educational Qualifications

Whether from the classroom, or by independent study the Bible scholar will be a better interpreter of Scripture if he has a broad education in at least the following:

1. General education.
The interpreter of Scripture needs an understanding of vocabulary, literature, arts, sciences, psychology and anthropology.
2. Historical education.
The interpreter of Scripture needs an understanding of ancient oriental history, politics, philosophy, geography, customs, and arts.
3. Theological education.
The interpreter of Scripture needs a working knowledge of the original Biblical languages of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

BASIC AIDS FOR BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

The primary source for Bible study is the Bible itself. It is most important that the interpreter keep this ever in mind and not allow himself to be drawn into the study of good books (secondary sources) about the Bible to the exclusion or near exclusion of the Bible itself.

Having established the priority of the Bible as the primary source for Bible study the interpreter of Scripture is then urged to take advantage of the many excellent aids to biblical interpretation. Any serious study of the Bible will call for the use of several basic reference aids which follow:

1. Bibles
 - (1.) Original Language Texts.
Those who have a working knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages will want to have for the Hebrew O. T., Biblica Hebraica, R. Kittel (Stuttgart, 1937), and for the Greek N. T., Novum Testamentum Graece, K. Aland & E. Nestle (25th ed., Stuttgart, 1963).

Lexicons are also helpful for interpretation for the original languages. For the Hebrew, Student's Hebrew Lexicon, edited by Benjamin Davies, (Zondervan, Grand Rapids,

1960), and A Hebrew and English Lexicon for the Old Testament, edited by G. R. Driver (Oxford, 1906, 1952). For the Greek, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature translated by F. Arndt & F. W. Gingrich (Chicago, 1957) also to be recommended is A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, G. Abbott-Smith (3rd ed., Edinburgh, 1937, 1948), and The Analytical Greek Lexicon, (Harper & Brothers, New York).

Grammars are also helpful to the interpreter who works from the original languages. Among Grammars the following are note worthy. For the Hebrew, Hebrew Grammar by Gesenius (2nd ed., Clarendon, Oxford, 1959). For the Greek, A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, F. Blass & A. Debrunner, (Chicago, 1961) trans. & edited by R. W. Funk; A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament H. E. Dana & J. R. Mantey, (New York, 1948); A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research, A. T. Robertson (Broadman, Nashville, 1947).

Original Language Concordances worthy of note are: for the Hebrew, Concordance of the Hebrew and Chaldean Scriptures, B. Davidson, (rev. ed., London, 1876). For the Greek (Nestle's Text) Hand. Konkordanz zum ariechischen Neuen Testament, Schmaller, (13th ed., Stuttgart, 1963), and for Westcott & Hort Text, A Concordance to the Greek Testament, J. H. Moulton & A. S. Geden (2nd ed., New York, 1900). Also to be recommended are: The Englishman's Greek Concordance, compiled by G. V. Wigram & J. B. Smith (9th ed., London, 1903), and Greek-English Concordance, (Scottdale, Pa., 1955).

- (2.) Translations and Versions.

For the Bible scholar who does not know the original languages, God has providentially arranged that the Scriptures be translated into other languages. Some languages have many fine translations and versions. Where this is the case the biblical interpreter should read several good versions and in the process he will generally be able to get the accurate meaning of difficult portions by discovering a common reading among several versions. Over three hundred English versions of Scripture have been published. One

new translation of the New Testament which appeared in 1973 is most outstanding. This is the New International Version. I have placed the basic data about the most important English versions in the following chart in order that you may get acquainted with them.

VERSION	AUTHOR	DATE	SOURCE/S	VALUE/S
Wycliffe Bible	John Wycliffe	1380-1385	Latin Vulgate	First full Bible in English. Helped spark the reformation.
Tyndale N. T.	John Tyndale	1525	Latin Vulgate and Erasmus' Greek text, and ancient manuscripts	Accurate, good English. Influenced all later English versions.
Coverdale's Bible	Miles Coverdale	1535	Basically Tyndale, also Vulgate, and other versions	First complete printed Bible. A simple and melodious version.
Matthew's Bible	John Rogers	1537	Tyndale and Coverdale	First revision of Tyndale's Bible. Basic of later revisions—the Great Bible, Geneva Bible, Bishop's Bible, and King James Version.
The Great Bible	Miles Coverdale	1539	Matthews, Coverdale, and Tyndale Bibles	Large-sized volume for reading desks in churches. It was the first "authorized" version.
The Geneva Bible	N. T. by Wm. Whittingham, O. T. by various scholars	1557 (N.T.) 1560 (O.T.)	Great Bible, other versions	First to use verse divisions, first to omit the Apocrypha. First to use simple Roman type, making it small and usable.
King James Bible	Various Oxford and Cambridge scholars	1611	Textus Receptus, and many translations	Accurate translation by a large body (47) scholars. For over 300 years the most popular English version. It

(3.) Reference or Annotated Bibles.

There are many good reference or annotated Bibles available today. These contain a cross-reference system which enables the student to consult related Scriptures. They also contain footnotes and marginal notes explaining difficult words, giving word studies, topical studies, and etc. Some of these Bibles contain extensive appendices of subject indexes, name indexes, concordances, maps, historical charts, topical studies, and etc. These reference or annotated Bibles are very helpful but they should be taken for what they are—the editor's commentary on the Scriptures.

(4.) Concordances.

Concordances in the Bible scholar's own language afford much aid in biblical study. These list the passages of Scripture where a given word is located. They are arranged like a dictionary in alphabetical order. In English the following concordances are noteworthy. For the King James Version, Crudden's Complete Concordance to the Old and New Testaments, edited by A. Adams, C. H. Irwin and S. A. Waters (Philadelphia, 1949); Analytical Concordance to the Bible, R. Young (New York, 1879-1894, rev. 1910); The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, James Strong (London, 1903). For the A.S.V., A Complete Concordance to the American Standard Version of the Holy Bible (New York, 1922); and for the R.S.V., Nelson's Complete Concordance of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, compiled by J. W. Ellison (New York, 1957).

In addition to help in locating each reference where a word is used, Young's and Strong's concordances incorporate Hebrew and Greek dictionaries which enable the Bible student who is limited to English to gain some understanding of Hebrew and Greek word meanings.

(5.) Topical Textbooks.

Similar to concordances but under topical arrangement, topical textbooks give the Bible student a tremendous amount of aid. Two outstanding such books are: The New Topical Text Book, R. A. Torrey (Fleming H. Revell, New York, 1935), and Topical Bible, Orville J. Nave (Topical Bible Publishing House, 1903).

(6.) Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

The interpreter of Scripture will need to make frequent use of a good dictionary and encyclopedia in his own language.

In addition a dictionary of the Bible and an encyclopedia of religion will be of great help in Bible study. The following are recognized as generally trustworthy: Dictionary of the Bible, J. Hastings, (5 vols., Edinburgh, 1898-1904; 12th impression, 1936); Revised in one volume and edited by F. C. Grant and H. H. Rowley (New York, 1963); The New Bible Dictionary, edited by J. D. Douglas, et al (Grand Rapids, 1962); The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible, edited by H. S. Gehman (Philadelphia, 1944); Unger's Bible Dictionary, M. Unger, editor (Moody, Chicago, 1957); The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, James Orr, General editor (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1952).

(7.) Theological Dictionary

Theological dictionaries and wordbooks offer valuable help in understanding the meanings of important biblical words.

These are a complement to grammars, lexicons, and concordances. To be recommended are: Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, trans. by G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, 1964-65); Biblico-Theological Dictionary of New Testament Greek, H. Gremer (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh); A Theological Wordbook of the Bible, edited by Alan Richardson (New York, 1950); A Companion to the Bible, edited by J. J. von Allmen and trans. by H. H. Rowley (New York, 1958); Bible Key Words, (New York, 1949-64); and A New Testament Wordbook (London, 1955); and More New Testament Words (London, 1958) by Wm. Barclay; Word Studies in the New Testament, M. Vincent (4 vols., New York, 1897-1900); and Wuest's Word Studies, Ken. Wuest (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1950).

(8.) Bible Atlas and History.

Baker's Bible Atlas, Chas. Pfeiffer (Grand Rapids, 1961); The Oxford Bible Atlas, edited by H. G. May (London, 1962); Hammond Atlas of the Bible Lands (Maplewood, N. J., 1956); Atlas of the Bible, L. H. Grollenberg, trans. & edited by M. H. Reid and H. H. Rowley (New York 1956); Historical Geography of the Holy Land, Geo. Smith (New York, 1895); A Bible Atlas, Hurlbut, (Rand McNally & Co., New York, 1954).

(9.) Biblical Culture and Archaeology.

Aids such as the ones below are indispensable in knowing the background of biblical, social, religious, civic, and domestic customs. Manners and Customs of the Bible, Jas. Freeman (Logos International Plainfield, N. J., 1972); Bible Manners and Customs, Geo. Mackie (Revell, New York); Archaeology and Bible History, J. P. Free (5th ed., Scripture Press, Wheaton, 1956), Archaeology and the Pre-Christian Centuries, J. A. Thompson (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1958).

(10.) Commentaries.

Commentaries are just what the word denotes—comments or interpretations of the Scriptures. They are by style critical, expository, theological, homiletical or devotional, and some combine all of these approaches. There are a multitude of commentaries some by single authors and others by a host of scholars; some in a single volume and others in massive sets. They are also quite varied in their worth and should be used with great discretion. The following are noteworthy: The Pulpit Commentary (Funk and Wagnalls, New York); Clark's Commentary (Abingdon New York); Matthew Henry's Commentary, (Fleming H. Revell Co.); Lange's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures (Zondervan, Grand Rapids); The Greek New Testament (Lee & Shepard, Boston); An American Commentary on the New Testament (Amer. Bap. Pub., Philadelphia); The Evangelical Bible Commentary (Zondervan, Grand Rapids); The New Bible Commentary (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids); The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids); Word Pictures in the New Testament (Harper, New York); The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids).

The interpreter of Scripture should seek to understand his passage with the use of grammars, Lexicons, concordances, and cross references before turning to the commentaries. Only after making an original study should he consult the comments and interpretations of others.

Before purchasing aids from the suggested list above, or from any other recommendations, spend a great amount of time checking the content, style, and format to be sure that the book pleases you. The options are as varied as are personal tastes and needs. Once careful selection is made you will receive immeasurable help from these aids in the interpretation of Scripture.

BASIC TECHNIQUES OF NOTE KEEPING

It is very important to keep notes of your studies. These Bible study notes can be preserved in the following ways:

1. In a Study Bible.
You should secure for yourself a study Bible which has good paper and a wide margin. Do not be reluctant to mark this Bible and add notations of important data. Use a pen with permanent ink so as to not smudge the pages. Develop a marking system to suit your own needs. Some of the following suggestions might help you:
 - (1.) Use underscoring, circling, brackets, parentheses, and etc. to mark important passages, persons, places, dates, truths, and etc.
 - (2.) Use a color-coding system to mark major doctrines. Examples; use red ink to mark references to the atonement, green for resurrection, etc.
 - (3.) Use symbols to mark certain significant truths. Examples; use the symbol of a dove to mark references to the Holy Spirit, a cross to mark references to salvation, a steeple to mark references to the church, etc.
 - (4.) Use a system of footnotes of your own. This will enable you to add important notations and references of your own, or reference to other sources of information on that Scripture or subject.
2. In Notebooks.
Secure a loose leaf notebook, preferably 8½" x 11" so that the pages will be transferable to standard 8" x 11" file folders. Install a divider for each study you are making and keep careful notes of your studies, and bibliographical data in this notebook. When a study is completed or set aside for a while you may leave it in your notebook and install it on a shelf in your study and begin a new notebook for other studies. Or, if you prefer, you may transfer the study notes to file folders in a file system and use the notebook for your next studies.
3. In a Filing System.
Develop a filing system so that you can index, file, and preserve,

in an accessible manner, your studies, sermons, clippings, articles, bibliographical data, and references to material in periodicals and books. This filing system should utilize letter-size manila folders in an alphabetical order. The topics should include each of the books of the Bible, each main division of theology, each division of the minister's work, each department of the church, each important religious topic, and other areas of interest to you. In order to not break the narrative on how to study and interpret the Bible, I have included "The Basic Process of Filing" as an appendix at the end of the book.

BASIC METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

There are two basic methods of study. These are the deductive and inductive methods, and they apply to both biblical and extra-biblical study. There are assets and liabilities in each method. The interpreter of Scripture must know these in order to maximize the assets and minimize the liabilities as he draws from each method in his study of the Scripture. The use of one method exclusively will not produce the fullest understanding of Bible truth.

The deductive method, as a logical process, reasons from a general principle to a particular conclusion. It begins with an hypothesis and seeks verifying proof. When using this method the biblical interpreter begins with a topic, doctrine, or idea. He then searches throughout the Scriptures for any support or "proof" which can be found for that topic, doctrine, or idea. The assets of the deductive method are that it lends itself to synthesis and correlation. The liabilities of this method are that the interpreter may fall prey to subjectivity, preconception, and unobjective "proof-texting," i.e., reading the interpreter's theology into the Scriptures. The deductive method usually adapts readily to the synthetical approach (explained below) and the topical type of Bible study.

The inductive method, as a logical process, reasons from the particulars to a general conclusion. In direct contrast to deduction, induction begins with the "proof" (Scripture) and draws the "hypothesis" (general conclusion) from the Scriptural data. The assets of the inductive method are that it lends itself to objectivity and analysis. The interpreter can let the Scripture speak its own message and avoid the extremes of subjectivity and preconception. The inductive method adapts readily to the analytical approach (explained below) and the expository type of Bible study.

BASIC APPROACHES TO BIBLE STUDY

There are two basic approaches to Bible study. These are the synthe-

tical approach and the analytical approach, corresponding to the deductive and inductive methods respectively.

The synthetical approach attempts to achieve an overview or panorama of the entire Bible, or of a whole book of the Bible. Synthetical (from synthesis) refers to the combination of parts or elements into a complex whole. This can be illustrated from science. In chemistry synthesis is the uniting of elements into a compound, As an example Hydrogen plus Oxygen equals Water. The synthetical approach to Bible study highlights the unity of Scripture. It can be readily conceived of as the "telescopic approach" to Bible study.

In the synthetical approach to the study of the Scripture the following stages are involved:

1. Survey the whole.
Read the book, or passage straight through in the interest of getting a general impression or overview of its message. Do not stop reading to study the details, Write this general impression down in a brief paragraph.
2. Establish the theme.
Read the book or passage again in the interest of finding its main theme. In the same reading look for the sub-themes in the natural divisions of the book or passage, These divisions will not necessarily parallel the chapter, paragraph or verse divisions of the various versions. Write down the theme and sub-themes in the order of their occurrence.
3. Observe the outstanding data.
Read the book or passage once again in the interest of locating and learning as much as you can from the book or passage about the outstanding data which it contains. This data includes: the author and his stated purpose for writing, persons, places, dates, doctrines, topics, and etc. List these outstanding data and briefly note any information given about them within the book or passage. Later you will research these items throughout the Scriptures and in the secondary sources.
4. Outline the content.
Utilizing the material and knowledge gathered in the three readings of the book or passage, outline its content. This step will reveal the natural structure of the content. The interpreter should not force his own structure on the author's message, Watch for

natural transitions, key verses, abrupt changes in subject matter, repetition of topics, terms and words. This outline can be a sentence, phrase, or word outline.

5. Correlate the study.
Using marginal references, a concordance, and a topical textbook, read the related Scripture references in order to correlate the message discovered in the book or passage with the truths presented elsewhere in Scripture. Write down the significant Scripture references and note the ways that they qualify, modify, or supplement the message of the book or passage being studied.
6. Confirm the interpretation.
Turn now to your secondary sources in order to check your interpretations with all of the fine aids for Bible study which we considered under "Basic Aids For Biblical Interpretation". This step is delayed until the last in order to encourage originality in study, and direct dependence upon the Holy Spirit. This is the point in synthetic study at which you can learn relevant introductory, cultural, chronological, geographical, and historical information that may not appear in the Scriptures.

This is also the juncture at which you will do any word studies or detailed study which may be necessary. However, in-depth study moves the interpreter into the analytical approach to Bible study.

The analytical approach attempts to achieve a detailed understanding of a given part of the Scripture. Analytical (from analysis) refers to the reduction of a complex whole into elements or constituent parts. This can also be illustrated from science. In chemistry analysis is the separation of a compound into its constituent parts. Thus Water equals Oxygen plus Hydrogen. The analytical approach to Bible study highlights the diversity and depth of Scripture. It can readily be conceived of as the "microscopic approach" to Bible study.

The most complete biblical interpretation requires both the synthetical and analytical approaches. While these two approaches do have their distinguishing characteristics they overlap in practice. In a sense the analytical approach begins where the synthetical approach stops. I am describing each approach with sufficient scope so as to allow either to be an option. The synthetical approach being the best option for survey and the analytical approach being the best option for detailed study.

Analytical Bible study involves the following stages:

1. Introduction of the passage.

In this first stage of analytical study the interpreter seeks to learn all he can, first from the passage and then from secondary sources, about the following introductory data:

- (1) Biographical information about the author.
- (2) Purpose, theme, and literary form of the passage.
- (3) Date, place, and historical circumstances of the writing.
- (4) Historical, geographical, religious, and cultural circumstances of the recipients.

Much of this introductory information can be discovered by utilizing the well-known "Five W's and an H" i.e., by asking Who?, Where?, What?, When?, Why? and How? After setting this introductory information down the next stage is:

2. Setting the passage into context.

This second stage involves showing how the passage under study relates to the book, and how the book relates to the Bible.

3. Translation of the passage.

Before any meaningful study of the biblical passage can be made the interpreter must determine the true text. This is best accomplished by making a translation from the most accurate original text available.

If the interpreter does not have the ability to do his own translation from the original text he can build himself a version by comparing his passage in several good versions and using word studies, concordances, dictionaries, and commentaries, in his own language, to derive an accurate version of the passage.

4. Overview of the passage.

After achieving an accurate translation or version of the passage the interpreter gives an overview of the passage. This is a preliminary survey noting high points; significant doctrines, topics, events, persons, places, difficulties, and etc.

5. Outline of the passage.

In this fifth stage the interpreter should endeavor to discover and set forth the author's structure, not force the author's message

into his own mind set or preconceptions. It is preferable that the interpreter analyze the passage carefully and prayerfully in order to derive the outline. If help is needed, commentaries may be utilized in order to build an outline from several others,

6. Detailed study of the passage.

This stage of the study is to follow the principles of hermeneutics (given later in this booklet) and is to be exegetical i.e., verse by verse and word by word. It is to include at least the following items, taking them just as they come in the order of their Scriptural arrangement.

- (1) Literary and grammatical (word) studies.
- (2) Theological (or doctrinal), and topical studies.
- (3) Biographical, chronological, geographical, psychological, cultural, political, and etc. studies.
- (4) Homiletical studies.
- (5) Practical (ethical) studies.

In the detailed study the interpreter should get the most he can from the passage by observation, analysis, meditation, and interpretation before turning to secondary sources. He should then discretely utilize all of the aids mentioned under "Basic Aids for Biblical Interpretation" in order to get the maximum fruition in Bible study.

7. Correlation of the passage.

Analytical Bible study, while concentrating on the minute examination (microscopic) of a passage, must not conclude without correlating (telescopic) the truths of the passage with those of the chapter, book, and Bible as a whole. This is in keeping with the biblical hermeneutical principle of comparing Scripture with Scripture.

8. Summaries, conclusion, and applications of the passage.

In this stage of study summaries, conclusions and applications of the detailed study are to be set forth. The summaries should include at least:

- (1) Summaries of word studies.
- (2) Summaries of doctrinal and topical studies.
- (3) Summaries of homiletical studies.
- (4) Summaries of practical (ethical) studies.

These summaries may be made by paragraph, outline, diagram or chart.

The applications should include personal and Christian service categories. As has been indicated earlier under "Spiritual Qualifications for the Biblical Interpreter", the interpreter must respond to the revelation of truth by obeying it in his own life. Out of each Bible study there will be: exhortations to obey, promises to receive, truths to believe, attitudes to adopt, examples to emulate, actions to avoid or perform, and sins to shun.

We also suggested in "Spiritual Qualifications for the Biblical Interpreter", that the interpreter must be involved in Christian service if he is to get the fullest revelation of truth. Once the truth is received the interpreter is obligated to share it by witnessing, preaching and teaching.

BASIC TYPES OF BIBLE STUDY

There are many types of Bible study. Twelve basic types are presented here as affording sufficient variety to enable the interpreter to discover the fullest meaning of the Scriptures.

1. Biographical study.

The biographical type of Bible study is one of the easiest, most enjoyable, and most productive. The study of the lives of great persons is most productive of inspiration and guidance, and the Bible which mentions 2,930 persons affords the greatest biographical study. Biographical Bible study involves the following stages:

- (1) Collect the biographical data.
Using a concordance, search every Scriptural reference to the person being studied.
- (2) Make a biographical sketch.
Assemble all essential data about the person including: the meaning of the person's name; their ancestry; the time, place, and circumstances of their birth, life and death.
- (3) Do a character study,
Analyze their relation to God, their relatives, others of their own day, and to us; analyze their strengths, weaknesses, crises, successes, failures, contributions,
- (4) Indicate the lessons.
Show the benefits which can be derived from the study of the person's life in terms of inspiration to be received, examples to be emulated, truths to be believed, and mistakes to be avoided.

2. Book study.

The book type of Bible study is basic because each biblical book is a self-contained unit with a distinct message, set of personalities, style, vocabulary, and etc. The synthetical approach, which was presented in detail earlier in the booklet, is the best approach to the book type of Bible study and need not be repeated here.

3. Chronological study.

In chronological study there are two important aspects-time studies and dispensational studies.

In order to gain the fullest understanding of the biblical message it is necessary to be able to locate the passage, person, or topic being studied in its appropriate time context. This means relating the passage, person or topic to important persons, movements, events, and etc., which preceded, followed, and were contemporaneous with it. The study should include both biblical and extra-biblical chronology.

In time studies the interpreter should be observant of time statements of both New Testament events and dates in secular history, also chronological connectives such as after, before, then, when, while, until, and etc.

Dispensational studies are important due to the fact that God has dealt with mankind on certain bases during various eras of time. By dispensation we mean the various ages or epochs into which God's dealings with mankind are divided. Bible scholars generally distinguish seven dispensations, each marked off by time boundaries (usually climactic events), moral tests, conditions for pleasing God, transgressions, and etc.

The interpreter of Scripture must know the above features of each dispensation in order to correctly understand the biblical message, otherwise the interpretation will be characterized by confusion and contradiction. An understanding of the key features of each dispensation can be achieved by personal search of the Scriptures and by reading one or more of the special studies on dispensations.

4. Cultural study.

Since the divine message was delivered in an ancient oriental culture at a time in history from 2,000 to 3,500 years prior to our

day, the interpreter must acquaint himself with that culture. He should search both the Scripture and outside sources to learn as much as possible about social, political, anthropological, and other cultural information related to his biblical study.

5. Devotional study.

Devotional study is basically fulfilled by praying, reading, meditating, and memorizing. If the Bible student is to mature spiritually and morally he should approach each type of Bible study which he does in a devotional spirit and also do much devotional study as such. The following approach to devotional study is recommended.

- (1) Preface the study with a time of praise for God's blessings and prayer for His enlightenment. Maintain a prayerful spirit throughout the study.
- (2) Read the passage prayerfully.
Devotional study is readily fulfilled by what I have called "Praying the Bible Through". After choosing a passage which is rich in spiritual and moral content begin reading. When you come to a truth you don't understand, stop and pray for the Spirit's tutorship. When you come to a truth that convicts you or in which you fall short, stop and pray for the ability to obey that truth. Do not read on until you have made an appropriate spiritual response to each truth that the Holy Spirit quickens to you. Read the devotional passage slowly and silently one time and then read it again aloud.
- (3) Meditate upon the passage.
Do not rush through the devotional study. Meditate upon the truths which the Holy Spirit has revealed. Meditate upon the truths which are to be believed; promises to be received; exhortations to be obeyed; attitudes to be adopted; examples to be emulated; actions to be avoided or performed; and sins to be shunned.
- (4) Memorize the "golden texts".
The most inspiring and helpful truths and verses should be committed to memory for perpetual spiritual benefit. Only the parts of God's Word that we have hidden in our hearts will give us that instantaneous inspiration, guidance, and strength which we need in daily life.

6. Geographical study.

An understanding of biblical geography is essential to correct interpretation of the Scripture. The interpreter should search the Scriptures first, and then turn to the secondary sources mentioned under "Basic Aids to Biblical Interpretation", in order to learn as much as possible about the following geographical data.

- (1) Location of the populace and the effect of geography upon the people-upon their dress, housing, travel, vocations, economy, etc.
- (2) The location of towns and cities-their elevation, surrounding topography, population, etc.
- (3) Countries and districts-their boundaries, size, topography, resources, climate, quality of soil, crops, bodies of water, and etc.

7. Grammatical study.

Since God chose to reveal His message in an historical setting and in human language we are required to follow what is called the "grammatico - historical" interpretation which would be utilized with any other document in order to understand its historical setting and grammatical communication. Historical study will be treated separately following this section on grammatical study.

Since language consists primarily of words, it is necessary, first of all, to know the meaning of biblical words. Biblical words should be studied with respect to their

(1) Etymology

Etymology means the study of the derivation (components and formation), and of the historical change in the meaning of words. This type of study is reserved for the linguistic specialist rather than the average minister. However, you will find much help in this area of study in "Basic Aids for Biblical Interpretation" numbers 1, 7 and 10.

(2) Common use

The etymological study of a word will help to show its derivation and evolution of meaning, but it remains to discover its common use, (usus loquendi) in the Bible. The common use of a word may be quite different than its historical or classical meaning. The common use of a biblical word may be discovered by studying: the context of the word; the writer's definition of the word when given; the use of the word in contrast or opposition; its use in parallel passages; its use in biblical poetic parallelism.

(3) Synonyms

Light can be cast upon a word by studying the use made of its synonyms—that is the words which have the same meaning, or some meanings in common while other meanings may differ. Quite often synonymous words have the same primary meaning with each having different secondary connotations. In the study of synonyms it is important to discover the points at which the words have the same meaning and where they have different connotations,

(4) Grammatical use

It is important to identify the word as to its part of speech. Is it a noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction, preposition?

It is important to study the inflection of the word, For nouns and pronouns: person, number, gender, and case; for pronouns: are they personal, relative, demonstrative, or interrogative?; for verbs: person, number, gender, voice, and mood.

It is important to study the grammatical relationship of the word: subject to verb; verb to predicate, modifier and that which it modifies; phrases to other parts of the sentence; dependent to independent clause; and independent clause to independent clause.

In addition to the study of individual words it is necessary to study the larger unit grammatically. This includes:

(1) Literary form

It is important to know whether the passage involves prose, poetry, parable, discourse, and etc.

(2) Structure

Structure refers to the overall design, or organization of the passage. In addition, the study of structure includes a consideration of the relationships between words, **phrases, clauses**, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, and divisions of books.

(3) Construction of ideas

Study the various literary use of ideas to convey the message. The authors convey their ideas by the use of: comparisons, contrasts, repetitions, progressions, generalizations, questions, reason and results,

cause and effect, and etc. In studying the construction of ideas always observe connecting words. Watch for logical connectives such as: for, but, because, likewise, however, therefore, yet, in order that, and etc. Also watch for emphatic connectives such as: behold, indeed, truly, verily, and etc. Chronological connectives such as: finally, after, as, before, then, until, when, while, last of all, and etc. should be observed.

Even the Bible student who cannot work in the original languages can learn a great amount in grammatical study. Don't hesitate to use the items listed under numbers 1, 4, 7 and 10 of the "Basic Aids for Biblical Interpretation." Just a Young's or Strong's concordance gives much understanding about word meanings when their Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek dictionaries are used to the fullest extent.

a. Historical study.

Since the Bible is historical in its setting, correct interpretation of many passages cannot be made without a knowledge of the circumstances in which they were written. It is essential to know both the biblical and extra-biblical history. This historical study should include the significant persons, movements, events, philosophies, and etc. which preceded, followed, and were contemporaneous with the biblical record,

It is important to understand the author's view of history.

It is also necessary to comprehend the historical lesson or data which the passage presents as well as the biblical history which relates to the passage under study.

9. Literary study.

While the Bible is divinely given it is also humanly conveyed. The interpreter approaches it with reverence for its divine character but with recognition also of its human character—it is literature and should be studied objectively as any other literature is studied. The literary study of the Scripture, as with any other literature, should include an examination of its introductory data and its style.

(1) Literary introduction

It is important to learn the most possible, first from the

Scripture and then from secondary sources, about the following introductory data: biographical data about the author; purpose and theme; date, place, and historical circumstances of the writing; historical, geographical, religious, and cultural circumstances of the recipients.

(2) Literary style

Once again, in the interpretation of Scripture, as with any other literature, it is necessary to determine the style (genre) of the literature and interpret it according to the appropriate guidelines. By "the style" is meant the type of writing which the author uses. The principle styles used in Scripture are: discursive style, prose narrative style, poetic style, parabolic style, and apocalyptic style. Each style of literature must be interpreted according to specific guidelines which will be presented later.

In addition to the principle styles of literature mentioned above, the biblical authors make extensive use of figures of speech. These figures of speech include: metaphors, simile, synecdoche, personification, apostrophe, hyperbole, irony, parable, allegory, type, symbol, fable, riddle, and enigma. Figures of speech must be interpreted according to specific guidelines which will be presented later.

10. Prophetic study

A great portion of the Bible is given to prophecy. We should not bypass the study of prophecy even though it is attended with difficulty of interpretation. Prophecy is being rapidly fulfilled and we need to understand it and teach its message correctly to our generation. If we will do so we will find the study and teaching of prophecy to be highly sanctifying and motivating experiences.

The study of prophecy requires the most careful, consistent use of hermeneutics. Special guidelines are required in the interpretation of prophetic style of literature due to its nature and purpose. The following are essential guidelines for the interpretation of prophecy.

(1) Prophecy should be interpreted Christologically.

Christ is the central theme of the Bible. Christ is the key to the interpretation of the Bible in general and of the New Testament in particular. He is most assuredly the key to unlock the prophetic portions of the Scripture,

- (2) Prophecy should be interpreted grammatically. It requires the same principles of interpretation with respect to words, grammar, and context as were mentioned previously under grammatical study (review these principles). In addition let me emphasize that the words of prophecy should be taken literally, rather than figuratively, unless the context and related prophecies would indicate otherwise. Careful study should be made in order to determine if the prophecy is forthtelling (teaching a lesson for the people of the prophet's days) or foretelling (predicting the future).
- (3) Prophecy should be interpreted literally. The language of the prophecy must be carefully studied to determine if it is symbolic, figurative, poetic, etc. Follow all of the principles given previously under literary study.
- (4) Prophecy should be interpreted historically. The occasion of writing, background, and circumstances of the writer and recipients must be carefully considered. Utilize all of the principles given previously under Historical study.
- (5) Prophecy should be interpreted Scripturally. There is usually one meaning of prophecy. Where the Scriptures use symbols they will usually tell you so. If a double meaning (the law of double reference) is required, one applying to the actual person or event and one applying to the figurative or future person or event, the context or other Scripture will give some clue to such interpretation.
- (6) Prophecy should be interpreted in perspective. Take the events of prophecy as viewed in perspective rather than in a systematic or rigidly outlined sequence in the modern sense. In much of biblical prophecy only the main events are given and then through progressive revelation (other prophecy) the details are filled in.
- (7) Prophecy should be interpreted with correlation. The meaning of prophecy must be interpreted in coordination with all other Scriptures and the whole prophetic program. II Pet. 1:20 "...no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private (independent) interpretation."

11. Topical study

The study of the Bible by topics is one of the simplest, easiest, and most productive in the sense of time investment. A great amount can be learned about doctrines and other biblical truth with a minimal amount of time involved. In addition topical stu-

dy is important in that it helps the interpreter to have an overview or coordinated understanding of Scriptural teaching. Just the analytical study of passages, standing in isolation to each other, can lead to distorted and contradictory interpretation.

Topical study can be readily adapted to the study of doctrines, problems, events, persons, places, words, dispensations, and topics. Enough has been said about each of these, under the other types of study, except the study of doctrine and problems. Doctrinal and problem studies are two of the important studies which yield great dividends through topical study.

(1) Doctrinal study

It is most important that the interpreter of Scripture study and know the great doctrines of the Scripture (I Tim. 1:10; 4:3,6; 6:3; II Tim. 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9,13; 2:7; and Heb. 13:9).

The Bible itself is the only source of Christian doctrine, and the only way to avoid false doctrine is to go directly to this primary source with a prayerful, objective, topical study.

The word doctrine comes from two New Testament words. Didache meaning "teaching" and Didaskalia meaning "the practice of teaching". Thus doctrine means "the teaching", or "the instruction". This "teaching" is not given in the Scripture as a "systematic theology" in the sense of modern logical process. The interpreter of Scripture must study the doctrines presented in the Bible and systematize them for himself and for those to whom he ministers. This, when done through topical study, involves studying an individual book or the whole Bible in order to collect, analyze, compare, organize and apply biblical doctrines.

There are two principle ways of doing doctrinal study. One is known as the direct method and consists of studying a word throughout the Scriptures. Examples are: grace, Holy Spirit, law, love, sin, sanctification, and etc. This way of study is characteristically "word" study.

The second principle way of doing doctrinal study is known as the indirect method and consists of studying all ideas or concepts which relate to a given theme as they appear

throughout the Bible. The theme is developed indirectly by examining each word or concept which is related to it. As an example the doctrine or theme of sin could be developed by studying such synonyms as "trespass", "iniquity", and etc. Also by studying such related concepts as "judgement" "atonement" and etc.

The interpreter of Scripture should carefully study all of the major Christian doctrines and not just concentrate on a few which are easily understood, or are personally appealing to the interpreter,

(2) Problem study

The problem-centered approach in topical study is very appealing and productive. It begins with a human problem and searches throughout the Scriptures for the answers or for any truth which relates directly or indirectly to the dilemma. Sample problems for topical study would include:

- How to be saved
- How to know if one is saved
- How to overcome temptation
- How to live the abundant life
- How to be a soul winner
- How to overcome fears
- How to have a sanctified temperament
- How to be filled with the Spirit
- How to live in the Spirit
- How to know and follow God's will
- How to find the right companion
- How to have a Christian home

(3) How to do topical study

Topical study is accomplished in the following steps:

- A. Choose the topic.
- B. List the references where it appears.

With the use of a concordance, topical text book and Bible marginal references make a comprehensive list of the passages where the topic or word is found. The interpreter must be very careful to study all references and be very objective at this point. Otherwise by studying some references and ignoring others (prooftexting) he could "prove" just about anything from the Bible itself.

- C. Analyze the findings.
Study the meaning and use of words, in their contexts, in order to develop the topic. This can be done with the help of various Bible versions, Bible dictionaries, word study books, and commentaries.
- D. Correlate the data.
Compare the data about the topic, discovered in various passages, in order to correlate the truths uncovered. This comparison of parallel passages is an essential part of topical study.
- E. Arrange the results.
Summarize and arrange the results into a logical order and into meaningful divisions of thought,
- F. Apply the truth.

12. Typological study

As we have noted earlier the Scriptures make abundant use of figures of speech such as allegories, metaphors, parables, similes, symbols, and types. The latter is one of God's outstanding mediums through which He has progressively revealed spiritual truths to humankind.

A type is that person, place, event, thing, ceremony, or institution which represents or points to a future person, place, event, thing, ceremony, or institution (antitype) in such a way as to convey spiritual truth.

The word "type" comes from the Greek word tupos and refers to a mark made by a blow or an impression made by a die. The most frequent biblical meaning is a pattern, or in Paul's words "...a shadow of things to come," (Col. 2:17). Tupos is used sixteen times in the original text of the New Testament, but the word "type" is not used to translate tupos in the King James Version. Tupos is variously translated as: "sign"-Matt. 12:39; "print"-20:25; "seal"-Rom. 4:11; "letter"-II Cor. 3:6; "allegory"-Gal. 4:24; "shadow"-Col. 2:16, 17; "pattern"-Titus 2:7; "example"-Heb. 8:4, 5; "figure"-Heb. 11:19.

The spiritual reality or antitype to which the type corresponds is represented variously as follows: "the spirit"-II Cor. 3:6; "body"-Col. 2:17; "things in the heavens"-Heb. 9:23; "the true"-Heb. 9:24; "very image"-Heb. 10:1; "good things to come"-Heb. 10:1; "figure"-I Pet. 3:21; "spirituality"-Rev. 11:8.

It will be seen in reviewing our definition of types that there are: typical persons, typical places, typical events, typical things, typical ceremonies, and typical institutions. Types can be discovered in the Scripture on the following bases:

- (1) Those which the Scriptures describe as types;
- (2) Those which the Scriptures show indirectly to be types by applying the name of an Old Testament person, place, thing, and etc. to a New Testament person, place, thing, and etc. and;
- (3) Those where a clear analogy can be seen between an Old Testament person, place, thing, and etc. and a New Testament person, place, thing, and etc. The topical method of Bible study is the best approach to the study of typeology.

The following guidelines are essential to the correct interpretation of types.

- (1) There must be Scriptural evidence that the type is divinely intended.
- (2) There must be a clear analogy between a type and an antitype.
- (3) There must be only one meaning in a type, and no type and antitype are expected to have correspondence in all points.
- (4) There must be a future antitype to which the type points or it is probably a symbol, Thus typeology is actually prophetic.
- (5) There must be an ascendance in spiritual revelation from the type to the antitype. The antitype transcends the type.
- (6) There must be no evil person, place, thing, and etc. interpreted as a type of some righteous antitype.

This concludes the section on basic types of Bible study. Before going on to the final section of the book go back over the twelve types of Bible study to be sure that you have a good understanding of them.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

In this final section it remains for us to consider the basic principles of biblical interpretation. Many pointers have been worked into the previous sections as they related to special types of study. The following are basic principles for general biblical interpretation.

1. The Scriptural principle (analogy of faith).
The fundamental principle of interpretation is that Scripture is its own best interpreter. This requires the careful consideration of the context of the passage and the correlation of its message with the whole of Scripture. The teaching of a given passage must be harmonized with the general teaching of the Bible,
 - (1) A passage of Scripture may have only one interpretation with several applications.
 - (2) The most simple and natural meaning of the passage is most likely the true one.
 - (3) If there seems to be two interpretations for a passage take the clearest meaning.
 - (4) If there seems to be two interpretations with equal support accept both and consider them to be a paradox.
 - (5) Study the parallel passages and they will enhance and qualify the message of the passage under consideration.
2. The literary principle.
Interpret the Bible just as you would any other book (so far as it is like any other book).
 - (1) Interpret in the light of introductory data.
This includes biographical information on the author; circumstances of the writing; and circumstances of the recipients.
 - (2) Interpret according to the literary style.
 - (3) Interpret according to the purpose of the book or passage.
3. The grammatico-historical principle.
This is adhering to the principles of interpretation which are required by the rules of grammar and the facts of history.
 - (1) Interpret according to accepted rules of grammar.
This includes: word meanings; literary form; structure; and construction of ideas.
 - (2) Interpret according to the facts of history.

This includes the significant persons, movements, events, and philosophies which preceded, followed and were contemporaneous in both biblical and extra-biblical history.

4. The contextual principle.
Since the original message was conveyed within a given context correct interpretation is dependent upon the restoration of that context as much as possible,
 - (1) Interpret according to the grammatical context.
 - (2) Interpret according to the literary context,
 - (3) Interpret according to the historical context.
 - (4) Interpret according to the cultural context.

Careful study of the context will make many difficult passages plain; remove apparent contradictions; and enrich and fill in the meaning of passages which seem to be unproductive.
5. The figurative principle.
The Bible makes abundant use of figurative language in the attempt to reveal spiritual truths in human terms. This is accomplished by drawing analogies between spiritual truths and familiar objects. The interpretation of figurative passages requires the following:
 - (1) Determine if the language is figurative or literal.
 - (2) The nature of the subject gives a clue as to whether it is to be taken literally or figuratively. Common sense and context are helpful here.
 - (3) Comparison of the literal and the figurative meanings of the passage with other Scriptural teachings will help in the decision.
 - (4) Interpret the passage as literal unless it is clearly in contradiction with the context and the whole teaching of Scripture to do so,

While much more could be added to this booklet on HOW TO STUDY AND INTERPRET THE BIBLE, it has purposefully been kept short and

simple in order to set only the "basics" before the Bible student. While it is hoped that this booklet will only be the beginning of much reading in the area of hermeneutics, the mastery of the principles and methods which are presented here will enable you to have a most productive understanding of the blessed holy Word of God.

HOW TO STUDY AND INTERPRET THE BIBLE

Appendix

BASIC PROCESS OF FILING

Every minister and Christian worker accumulates an abundance of study material in his or her library which must be filed in some systematic way if it is to be preserved and located with ease. There are an abundance of filing systems on the market, most of which are too complex and expensive for the average minister and Christian worker. The following "Basic Process of Filing" is designed with the average minister in mind. It is simple enough to also fit the need of Christian workers and comprehensive enough to be used by ministers with greater than average filing needs. The benefits of the system presented here are:

- (1) **Simplicity**
This filing system does not require special abilities or training on the part of the person who wishes to develop and use it. The materials are located in four places-book shelf/shelves; file drawer/s; notebook/s and; **periodicals**. There are no repetitious card indexes and cross reference systems.
- (2) **Economy**
The details in this book present the whole filing process. There is no need to purchase expensive and overly elaborate instructions, materials, and equipment. You can begin with an **economical** shelf, file drawer (even a heavy weight cardboard box will suffice), a cheap notebook, and notebook paper plus a few letter size (9 x 12 inch) manila file folders.
- (3) **Efficiency**
This process is designed to be as efficient in the expenditure of time, both for filing and finding, as is possible. The user will get the maximum benefit from the minimum effort.
- (4) **Expandability**
The alphabetized system is expandable to a comprehensiveness equal to the needs of the minister from the rudimentary need of early ministry through the expansive need of mature years.

THE FILING SYSTEM

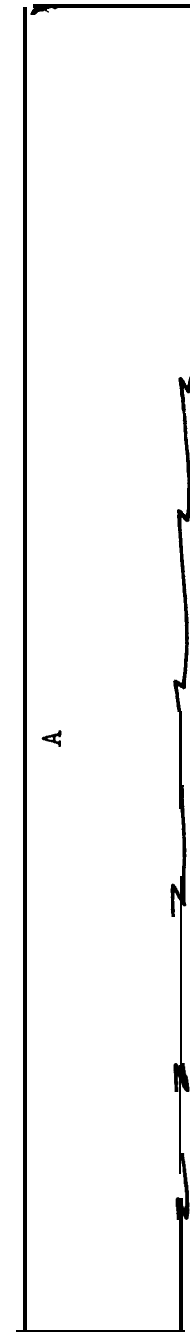
The filing system is designed to gather all of the material on a given topic, and a reference index to material on the topic in books, periodicals, and notebooks, into one folder for easy location. In order to accomplish this

the following guidelines should be followed.

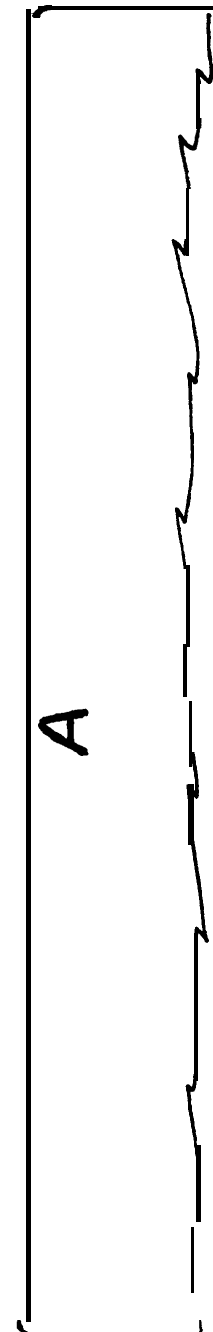
(1) Folders

Purchase, or make from strong cardboard, a file divider for each letter of the alphabet. Distinguish these from the file folders by typing a letter of the alphabet on colored pre-glued file tabs. All of the dividers should have the same color tab. For economy you can print the letter directly on the divider tab with a quickmarker. Print it larger than you will later print the topics on the file folder tabs. The alphabetical dividers can be further distinguished from the file folders by making the divider tabs full cut (the tab the full width of the divider) and the file folder tabs 1/3rd cut (the tab 1/3rd of the width of the folder),

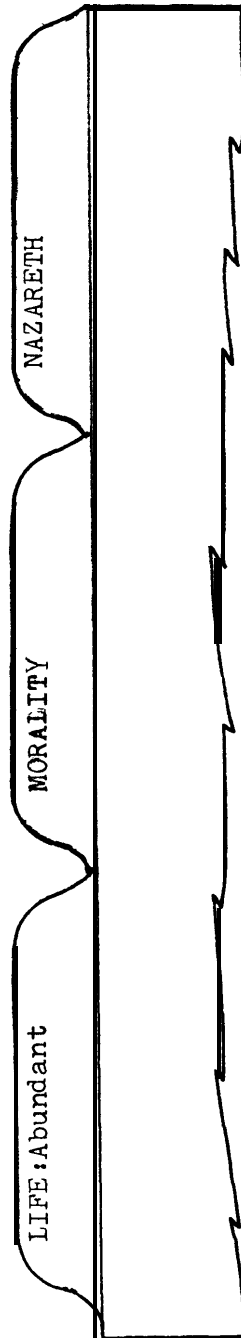
If typed the file dividers will look like this:



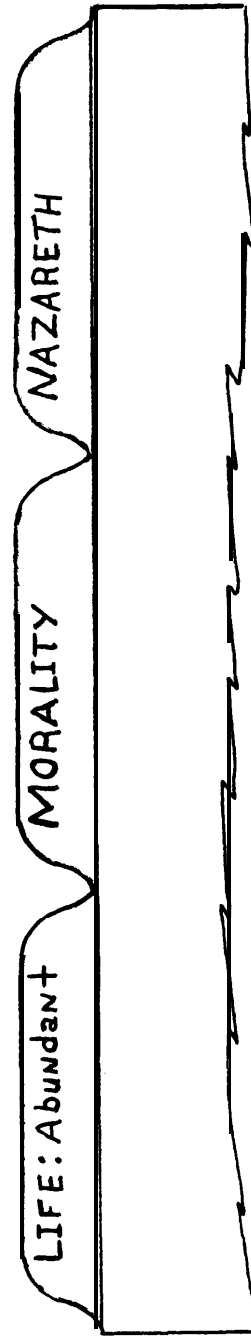
If hand-printed the file dividers will look like this:



If typed the file folders will look like this:



If hand-printed the file folders will look like this:



Purchase at least one hundred fifty folders initially in order to begin the filing system. This will be enough to assign a folder to each of the sixty six books of the Bible; one to each of the fundamental topics of theology; and one to each of the basic departments of the church. Additional folders can be added to the filing system as the need arises.

(2) Arrangement

The entire filing system is arranged by topics, alphabetically, with the exception of the books of the Bible. It is recommended that these be filed behind BIBLE in the alphabetical scheme, but with each book of the Bible having an individual folder which is filed according to the biblical order. Since we handle the Bible daily, and are acquainted with the arrangement of its books, nothing is to be gained by having to learn and follow a different arrangement in filing and finding material.

(3) Materials

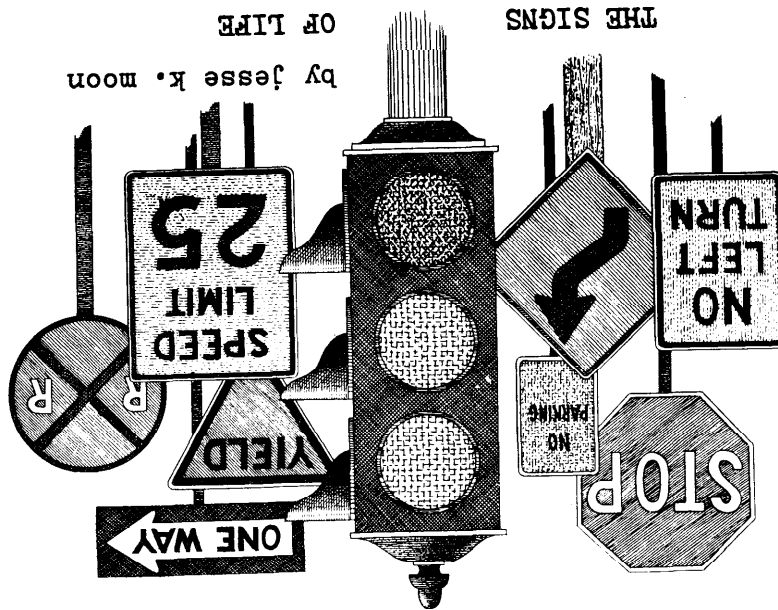
The data to be filed includes studies, **clippings, articles**, tracts, illustrations, quotations, poems, songs, art work—anything file-able which contributes to the topic.

A second type of data which will be filed under each topic is the bibliographical reference sheet.

Every piece of data should have the exact topic, as it appears on the file folder in which it is to be filed, typed or printed on the top righthand corner of the material. This is essential for the refiling of the material after it has been pulled for use.

The tract below is marked for filing under the folder, "SALVATION: The Way to".

SALVATION: The Way to



- (4) Reference Sheet
- Reference to material which is unfiled (books, periodicals, and notebooks) should be made on 8½ x 11 inch notebook sheets or typing sheets and filed at the front of the folder of the topic to which they refer. When the reference is to material which is in books, periodicals, and notebooks which are located in the user's own library an abbreviated reference which gives the author's last name, the title or the article, sermon, etc., the title of the book, periodical, or notebook, and the page number will suffice. Reference to material which is located outside the user's library

should include the full bibliographical data. When you read across material which is significant make reference to it under the most appropriate topic as per the following example.

FAITH

Thomas, "The Difficulties of Faith", Let Us Go On, pp. 152-154.
 Godwin, "Miracles In Missions", Pentecostal Evangel, pp. 12, 13.
 Bell, L. Nelson, "Who Can Believe The Resurrection?" (*Christianity Today*, Apr. 13, 1973 Vol. XVII, No. 14 *Christianity Today*, Inc. Washington, pp. 30, 31.
 Moon, "Whos Who In The Kingdom of God", *Sermon Notebook* #5, p. 40.
 Bible: Hebrews, Chap. 11
 Hauff, "Tested And Triumphant Faith", *Pulpit*, Jan. 1962, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 16-18.
 Shipley, Murray, "The Dependence Of Faith", *Keswick's Authentic Voice*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, pp. 258-260.
 Moon, "Requisites For Rapture", (*Gen. 5:24*), *Sermon Notebook* #1, p. 25.
 Wells & Heath, "Living By Faith", *Church Hymnal*, #162.

(5) Notebooks

You can begin with one looseleaf notebook with divisions as follows:

Sermons
Sermons Working
Bible Studies
Bible Studies Working
Special Studies, Guidelines, Plans
Illustrations, Quotations, Poems
Songs

You will eventually need several notebooks in which to keep a collection of material in the categories listed above. The use of notebooks is recommended so as to make the data which the minister uses day by day portable. Also to concentrate the material so as to make it convenient to browse through in preparation for preaching, teaching, or for use in other types of meetings. As an example the pastor might find it convenient to maintain a notebook in which he keeps a division for each department of the church-Christian Education, Missions, Music, Youth, and etc. Under each division important guidelines, job descriptions, plans, and other data can be kept for easy accessibility and portability. There are also many occasions when the minister will want to carry a series of sermons, Bible studies, songs, etc. as he or she travels.

(6) Periodicals

Periodicals may be kept conveniently either in horizontal stacks arranged chronologically from bottom to top, or placed in cardboard binders by years. Many periodicals issue an annual index which is very helpful in locating material on various topics. Most ministers will not subscribe to enough periodicals to require anything more by way of cataloguing than to just arrange the periodicals on shelves alphabetizing them from left to right by the most significant word in the name of the periodical.

(7) Books

The books in the average minister's library can be catalogued quite simply and efficiently as follows. Arrange the books on the shelves by topics (rather than by author's name). Any arrangement of the topics that the user desires will be suitable as most persons can remember that a given book belongs to a certain topic by logical relationship, and remember the location of the topic in the room through geographical association. Books can

readily be located by this process until the volumes in the library number in excess of three thousand.

The user should decide on his own topical arrangement and then divide the topics on the shelves visually. This can be done economically by the use of "L" shaped pieces of stiff cardboard with the topic printed on the short base of the "L". The long part of the "L" is placed between the books that comprise the meeting point of two topics. An alternate way of separating topics is to cut wooden blocks $\frac{3}{4} \times 4 \times 6$ inches and paint the topics on the edges of these blocks. Install the correct block between the two books that comprise the meeting point of two topics.

The following divisions of the books on the library shelf are recommended as sufficient for the average minister. One may begin with fewer divisions and then add other divisions as books are purchased and the library is expanded. It is not suggested that divider blocks be utilized for each of the subdivisions of the topics given below as the subdivisions are only suggestive of the type of subjects which should be grouped together. Neither are the subdivisions intended to be exhaustive, as those given are furnished as examples.

1. ART (Art, Architecture, Lettering, Mechanical Drawing, Postering, and etc.)
2. BIBLES (Translations and Versions)
3. BIBLE REFERENCE WORKS (Concordances, Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Word Studies, and etc.)
4. BIOGRAPHIES (Bible, Church, Secular)
5. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (Bussing, Curriculum, Sunday School, Teaching, and etc.)
6. CHURCH ADMINISTRATION (Church Govt., Deacons, Depts., Leadership, etc.)
7. COMMENTARIES (Introductions and Commentaries on the whole Bible.)
8. COMMENTARIES (Introductions and Commentaries on the New Testament.)
9. COMMENTARIES (Introductions and Commentaries on the Old Testament.)
10. CURRENT STUDIES (A shelf reserved for books on a topic, or topics which are under study.)
11. ETHICS (General, Christian, Ministerial, and etc.)
12. GEOGRAPHY (Bible, Other.)
13. HISTORY (Bible, Church, Denominational, Secular, and etc.)

14. HOMILETICS (Books on Preaching, Sermons, Sermon Outlines, and etc.)
15. ILLUSTRATIONS (Epigrams, Humor, Stories, Quotations, and etc.)
16. JOURNALISM (Publishing, Style, Writing, and etc.)
17. LINGUISTICS, BIBLICAL (Dictionaries, Grammars, Lexicons, and etc.)
18. LINGUISTICS, GENERAL (Dictionaries, Grammars, and etc.)
19. LITERATURE (American, English, World, Short Stories, and etc.)
20. MARRIAGE AND FAMILY (Communication, Courtship, Marital Counseling, Marital Conflict, Family Devotion, Planning, and etc.)
21. MISC., SECULAR
22. MISC., RELIGIOUS
23. MINISTRY (Minister's Call, Character, Duties, Qualifications, Ministry—New Testament, Types, and etc.)
24. MISSIONS AND EVANGELISM (Bible and Missions, Fields, Missionaries, Personal Evangelism, Revivals, and etc.)
25. MUSIC (Hymn Books, Hymn Stories, Rudiments, Harmony, and etc.)
26. NOTEBOOKS (Personal Bible Studies, Sermons, and etc.)
27. PHILOSOPHY (Ancient, Greek, Modern, Oriental, Religious, and etc.)
28. POETRY (Nonreligious, Religious.)
29. PRAYER AND WORSHIP (Bible Prayers, How To Pray, Prayer Books, and etc.)
30. PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELING (Nonreligious-Gen. Psy., Personality, Schools of Psy., and etc.)
31. PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELING (Religious-Pastoral Counseling, Personality, Psychology of Religion, and etc.)
32. PHYSIOLOGY (Diet, Health, Recreation, Sports, and etc.)
33. PUBLIC RELATIONS (General Public Relations, Church Public Relations, Media Ministry, and etc.)
34. REFERENCE WORKS (General Reference Works-Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Thesaurus, and etc.)
35. RELIGIONS (Cults, Religions, Sects, and etc.)
36. SCIENCE (Astronomy, Geology, Chemistry, and etc.)
37. SOCIAL SCIENCE (Civics, Culture, Economics, Government, Social Work, and etc.)
38. SPEECH (Speech, Speeches, Voice, and etc.)
39. THEOLOGY (Theology Proper-Systematic Theologies, Attributes of God, The Trinity, and etc.)
40. ANGELOLOGY (Angels, Demons, The Occult, Spiritism, Witchcraft, and etc.)
41. ANTHROPOLOGY (Origin, Nature, Fall of Man, Sin, Punishment, Remedy, etc.)
42. BIBLIOLOGY (Hermeneutics, Inspiration, Origin of the Bible, and etc.)
43. CHRISTOLOGY (The Divinity, Humanity, Incarnation, Works, Suffering, Glorification, and etc. of Christ.)

44. ECCLESIOLOGY (The Doctrine, Orders, Ordinances, Organization, Purpose, Services, and etc. of the Church.)
45. ESCHATOLOGY (Armageddon, Heaven, Hell, Judgements, Millennium, Rapture, Resurrection, and etc.)
46. PNEUMATOLOGY (Baptism, Diet, Personality, Works of the Holy Spirit, Fruit of the Spirit, Gifts of the Spirit, Pentecostalism, and etc.)
47. SOTERIOLOGY (Justification, Salvation, Security of the Believer, Redemption, and etc.)
48. TRAVEL (Agencies, Accommodations, Data on Countries, Maps, and etc.)
49. VOCATIONS (Hobbies, Skills, Vocations, and etc.)
50. YOUTH (Devotions, Leadership, Programs, and etc.)

The user will want to arrange the most used, of the fifty divisions which are listed above, nearest his or her desk. I have arranged my study so that divisions number 2, 3, 10, 15, 26, 34, and 17 are located on shelves behind and around my desk and are within reach as I sit at the desk. Divisions number 7, 8, 9, and 39-47 are located next in proximity to the desk. Other religious divisions come next in relation to how much I use them, with the secular subjects and least used religious subjects being farthest away.

(8) File Topics

The following list of topics should meet the need of the average minister with a little adding and subtracting to meet individual needs. Do not prepare a folder for each topic at once as you may never use some of the topics. Begin your system with the topics which are marked with an asterik plus the other topics for which you already have material and books. Then you can add folders for the topics on which you wish to file material as the need occurs. To do this, when you discover material for which you do not have a folder just turn to the alphabetized list of topics below and pick out the topic which the material fits under best and prepare a folder for it and add it to the file. If the list below does not have a topic which fits the subject of the material which you wish to file just add the new topic to the list in alphabetical order, make a folder bearing the name of the new topic on the tab, and file the material in alphabetical order. I have included in the basic group of topics (marked with asteriks) three expanded topics. One is the "Advance" magazine divisions. "Advance" is the official promotional magazine for the departmental ministries of the Assemblies of God. Assembly of God ministers will find it advantageous to file the pages of "Advance" or index its articles under each division. Ministers of other denominations should set up their file to incorporate the departmental ministries of their

denomination. The second expanded topic which I have included in the basic topics is the books of the Bible. It will be noted that these follow the biblical order. The third expanded topic is "THEOLOGY". The main divisions of theology are listed alphabetically behind "THEOLOGY". If you desire to add subtopics help may be gained by looking at the table of contents in systematic theology books. In the same way help can be gained in developing subdivisions in other topics by looking at the tables of content in books on the main subject. As an example if you desire to subdivide the topic on "PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELING" turn to the table of contents in General Psychology and in books on counseling and you can derive logical subtopics.

You will also find it helpful to make an index of some of the major topics and file this in the front of the folder for the topic. An easy way to prepare such an index is to write down the most important subdivisions as they appear in the table of contents of a good book on the topic. In some cases it might be a permissible timesaver to make a photocopy of the table and file it as your index on the topic. This will be helpful in knowing what a topic deals with and in knowing what to file under a given topic.

FILE FOLDER TOPICS

ABORTION
ABRAHAM
ABSOLUTION (FORGIVENESS)
ABSTINENCE, TOTAL
ADAM
ADDICTION, DRUG
ADMINISTRATION
ADOLESCENCE
ADOPTION OF CHILDREN
ADOPTION, SPIRITUAL
ADORATION (PRAISE)
ADULT
ADULTERY
ADULTERY, SPIRITUAL
• ADVANCE MAGAZINE
• ADVANCE, ADMINISTRATION
* ADVANCE, ADVERTISING
• ADVANCE, AUDIO-VISUAL
• ADVANCE, BENEVOLENCES

• ADVANCE, BIBLE READING
* ADVANCE, BOOK REVIEWS
* ADVANCE, BULLETIN CLIPS
• ADVANCE, CALENDAR
* ADVANCE, CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS
• ADVANCE, COLLEGE YOUTH
• ADVANCE, SERVICEMEN
• ADVANCE, SPEED-THE-LIGHT
• ADVANCE, CHURCH MEMBERSHIP
• ADVANCE, CHURCH **SCHOOL LITERATURE**
* ADVANCE, CONVENTIONS
• ADVANCE, EDUCATION
* ADVANCE, FOREIGN MISSIONS
* ADVANCE, HOME MISSIONS
* ADVANCE, MEN'S FELLOWSHIP
• ADVANCE, LIGHT-FOR-THE-LOST
• ADVANCE, ROYAL RANGERS
• ADVANCE, MINISTERIAL AIDS
• ADVANCE, MUSIC
* ADVANCE, NEWS
• ADVANCE, PENTECOSTAL EVANGEL
* ADVANCE, PRAYER WEEK
• ADVANCE, PUBLIC REALTIONS
• ADVANCE, RADIO
• ADVANCE, SERMON IDEAS
• ADVANCE, SONGS
• ADVANCE, SPECIAL DAYS
• ADVANCE, CHRISTMAS
• ADVANCE, EASTER
• ADVANCE, FATHER'S DAY
• ADVANCE, INDEPENDENCE DAY
• ADVANCE, MEMORIAL DAY
• ADVANCE, MOTHER'S DAY
* ADVANCE, NEW YEAR'S DAY
• ADVANCE, THANKSGIVING DAY
• ADVANCE, VALENTINE'S DAY
• ADVANCE, SPIRITUAL LIFE-EVANGELISM
• ADVANCE, STEWARDSHIP
• ADVANCE, SUNDAY SCHOOL
* ADVANCE, B. G. M. C.
• ADVANCE, CHILD EVANGELISM
• ADVANCE, ENLARGEMENT CAMPAIGN
• ADVANCE, LOYALTY CAMPAIGN
• ADVANCE, V. B. S.

- * ADVANCE, WOMEN'S MISSIONARY COUNCIL
- * ADVANCE, MISSIONETTES
- * ADVANCE, Y. W. M. C.
- ADVENT, FIRST
- ADVENT, SECOND
- ADVERSITY (AFFLICTION)
- ADVERTISING
- ADVOCATE
- AESTHETICS
- AGED (GERONTOLOGY)
- AGNOSTICISM
- AGRICULTURE
- ALCOHOLICS ANNONYMOUS
- ALCOHOLISM
- ALLEGORY
- ALTAR CALL
- ALTAR, FAMILY
- ALTAR, IN JUDAISM
- ALTRUISM
- AMEN
- AMERICA, CENTRAL
- AMERICA, NORTH
- AMERICA, SOUTH
- AMERICANISM
- AMERICAN LEGION
- ANABA PT IST
- ANALOGY OF FAITH
- ANCESTOR WORSHIP
- ANGELOF THE LORD
- ANGER (WRATH)
- ANIMALS
- ANNIHILATIONISM
- ANOINTING
- ANTHEMS
- ANTHEM, NATIONAL
- ANTHROPOMORPHISM
- ANITNOMIANISM
- ANTI-SEMITISM
- ANXIETY
- APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE
- APOCRY PHA
- APOCRYPHAL
- APOLOGETICS (EVIDENCES)
- APOSTASY (BACKSLIDING)

- APOSTASY, OF ISRAEL
- APOSTASY, THE GREAT (FALLING AWAY)
- APOSTLE
- APOSTLES, TWELVE
- APOSTLE'S CREED
- APOSTOLIC AGE
- APOSTOLIC FATHERS
- APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION
- ARCHAEOLOGY
- ARCHITECTURE
- ARIANISM
- ARK OF THE COVENANT
- ARMINIANISM
- ARMOR, SPIRITUAL
- ART AND RELIGION
- ARTICLES OF FAITH
- ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION
- ASCETICISM
- ASTROLOGY
- ASTRONOMY (STARS)
- ATHLETICS (SPORTS)
- ATOMIC
- AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS
- AUTHORITY, SUBMISSION TO
- AUTOMOBILE
- AVARICE
- AWAKENING, THE GREAT
- AWE (REVERENCE)
- BABYLON
- BACCALAUREATE SERVICE
- BACKBITING
- BAPTISM (GENERAL ARTICLES)
- BAPTISM, OF CHRIST
- BAPTISM, MODE OF
- BAPTISM, OF INFANTS
- BAPTISM, OF JOHN BAPTIST
- BAPTISMAL REGENERATION
- BATTLES
- BEATITUDES
- BEAUTY
- BEHAVIOR
- BELIEF & UNBELIEF
- BELIEVERS
- BENEDICT IONS

BENEVOLENCE
 BEREAVEMENT
 BETRAYAL OF CHRIST
 * BIBLE (GENERAL ARTICLES)
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF GENESIS
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF EXODUS
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF LEVITICUS
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF NUMBERS
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF JOSHUA
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF JUDGES
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF RUTH
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF I SAMUEL
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF II SAMUEL
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF I KINGS
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF II KINGS
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF I CHRONICLES
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF II CHRONICLES
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF EZRA
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF NEHEMIAH
 . BIBLE, BOOK ESTHER
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF JOB
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF PSALMS
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF PROVERBS
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF SONG OF SOLOMON
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF ISAIAH
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF JEREMIAH
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF EZEKIEL
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF DANIEL
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF HOSEA
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF JOEL
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF AMOS
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF ODABIAH
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF JONAH
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF MICAH
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF NAHUM
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF HABAKKUK
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF HAGGAI
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF ZECHARIAH
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF MALACHI

* BIBLE, BOOK OF MATTHEW
 * BIBLE, BOOK OF MARK
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF LUKE
 . BIBLE, BOOK OF JOHN
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 THEOLOGY (ECCLESIOLOGY), DISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH
 THEOLOGY (ECCLESIOLOGY), GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH
 THEOLOGY (ECCLESIOLOGY), MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH
 THEOLOGY (ECCLESIOLOGY), MINISTERS IN THE CHURCH
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 THEOLOGY (ECCLESIOLOGY), ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH
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 THEOLOGY (ESCHATOLOGY), ANTICHRIST
 THEOLOGY (ESCHATOLOGY), ARMAGEDDON
 THEOLOGY (ESCHATOLOGY), DEATH - Spiritual, Physical, Eternal
 THEOLOGY (ESCHATOLOGY), ETERNAL LIFE

THEOLOGY (ESCHATOLOGY), FINAL STATE - Heaven, Hell, Earth
 THEOLOGY (ESCHATOLOGY), FUTURE OF ISRAEL
 THEOLOGY (ESCHATOLOGY), FUTURE OF NATIONS
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 THEOLOGY (PNEUMATOLOGY), HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE SPIRIT
 THEOLOGY (PNEUMATOLOGY), NAMES OF THE SPIRIT
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 THEOLOGY (PNEUMATOLOGY), THE SPIRIT IN THE NEW TEST.
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 * THEOLOGY (SOTERIOLOGY), GENERAL ARTICLES
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 THEOLOGY (SOTERIOLOGY), ATONEMENT IN THE NEW TEST.
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 THEOLOGY (SOTERIOLOGY), CONVERSION
 THEOLOGY (SOTERIOLOGY), DIVINE PURPOSE
 THEOLOGY (SOTERIOLOGY), FAITH & LAW
 THEOLOGY (SOTERIOLOGY), JUSTIFICATION
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 THEOLOGY (SOTERIOLOGY), REPENTANCE
 * THEOLOGY (PROPER), GENERAL ARTICLES
 THEOLOGY (PROPER), ATTRIBUTES OF GOD
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 THEOLOGY (PROPER), ESSENCE OF GOD
 THEOLOGY (PROPER), EXISTENCE OF GOD (PROOFS)
 THEOLOGY (PROPER), NAMES OF GOD
 THEOLOGY (PROPER), NATURE OF GOD
 THEOLOGY (PROPER), PROVIDENCE OF GOD
 THEOLOGY (PROPER), SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

THEOLOGY (PROPER), THEORY OF ATHEISM
 THEOLOGY (PROPER), THEORY OF DEISM
 THEOLOGY (PROPER), THEORY OF MONOTHEISM
 THEOLOGY (PROPER), THEORY OF PANTHEISM
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 THEOLOGY (PROPER), THEORY OF THEISM
 THEOLOGY (PROPER), THE TRINITY
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 THEOLOGY, MODERN
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 TY POLOGY
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 VOCATIONALGUIDANCE
 VOLITION
 VOTING
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 WARFARE, SPIRITUAL
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 WILL
 WILLS
 WINE
 WISDOM
 WITCHCRAFT
 WIVES
 WOMANHOOD
 WOMEN, IN THE BIBLE
 WORK

WORKS
 WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
 WORLDLINESS
 WORRY
 WORSHIP
 WRATH, OF GOD
 WRATH, OF MAN
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