

SAFEGUARDS FOR BIBLE STUDY

- I. PRAY -** Invite God's help – 1 Cor.2:10-13; John 15:5; John 16:13
Have a healthy self-distrust – Jer.17:9
Cultivate a love for Bible truth – 2 Thess. 2:9-12
Pray that the Holy Spirit will lead you into the truth – Jn.16:13
Let your prayer be, "Lord, show me the truth, no matter what the cost."

II. MAKE YOUR STUDY CHRIST CENTERED –

The great goal of Bible study is a deeper relationship with, and knowledge of God in general, and Jesus Christ in specific. – John 5:39; 17:3 The mottoes of the Protestant Reformation are best. "*Sola Christus, Sola Fide, Sola Gratia*" We are saved through Christ alone, by Faith in Christ alone, and by the Grace of Christ alone.

III. MAKE THE BIBLE THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY –

"*Sola Scriptura, Tota Scriptura, Prima Scriptura*" – 'Only Scripture, all of Scripture, and Scripture above all.' The Bible is to be the supreme authority in faith and practice for the Christian. Any revelation from God found outside of the Bible (including sanctified human reason); is subject to the Bible's authority. – Is. 8:20; Acts 17:11; 1 Thess. 5:20, 21

IV. LET SCRIPTURE INTERPRET SCRIPTURE –

"*Scriptura Sui Ipsius Interpres*" - Scripture is 'Self-Interpreting' – Scripture best explains Scripture. All Bible truth is unified. The Bible never contradicts itself.

V. INTERPRET THE BIBLE LITERALLY ACCORDING TO ITS PLAIN LANGUAGE –

Unless metaphors, poetry, allegory, figures, types or symbols are clearly indicated.

VI. INTERPRET APOCALYPTIC PROPHECY SYMBOLICALLY –

Unless a literal approach is clearly indicated. With prophecy, symbolism is the rule and literalism the exception.

VII. SPEND THE MAJORITY OF YOUR STUDY IN CLEAR PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE

If you only read apocalyptic prophecy you may go crazy!

VIII. SPEND THE MAJORITY OF TIME READING THE BIBLE IN CONTEXT –

Avoid reading the Bible mostly with a concordance or topically.

IX. THE PRIMARY STARTING POINT IS THE TIME OF THE BIBLICAL PROPHET –

Also study the Bible with its historical context in view. God met the prophet where he was – using symbols that he and his contemporaries would have been familiar with.

X. USE A VARIETY OF BIBLE TRANSLATIONS RATHER THAN PARAPHRASES –

Literal translations made from the original languages are the most reliable for interpretation. Dynamic or Contemporary translations may help with added understanding.

XI. APPLY THE TEXT TO YOUR OWN LIFE EXPERIENCE -

As you walk in the light, God will reveal more light.

XI. CRITICISM OF OTHERS –

Be willing to submit your findings to a jury of your peers, brethren of experience, and trustworthy commentaries.