

# **METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY**

By

W. H. Griffith Thomas, B.D.

Copyright @ 1903

edited for 3BSB by Baptist Bible Believer in the spirit of the Colportage ministry of a century ago

*~ out-of-print and in the public domain ~*

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE NEW TESTAMENT**

As we have already seen, the New Testament is to the Old as a building to a foundation; it is the completion and crown of all that had been foretold and provided. And as with the Old Testament, so with the New, CHRIST is the subject and substance of it all.

The method of mastering the New Testament must be very similar to that employed in the Old Testament, by reason of its structure being also historical. It is based upon facts, and these facts must be known if we would rightly profit by the teaching. It cannot be stated too clearly or emphasized too frequently that no fact or incident of the Bible is without some bearing on the revelation of GOD contained in the Scriptures.

Following the same general plan as before, we will consider first the history and then the teaching.

### **THE CONTENTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

In the New Testament also, the order of the Authorized Version is not chronological, and we shall therefore divide the contents into eight sections, for the purpose of studying it in historical sequence as closely as possible. We shall find that here too we have books of fact and of illustration.

#### *1. The Life of our Lord. The Gospels.*

Four characteristic pictures of the one Saviour. They should be studied separately, and then together, under the guidance of a good harmony. A summary of the harmony is found in most Teachers' Bibles, but a harmony with the full text is of course to be preferred. A good cheap one on the Authorized Version is Fuller's (S. P. C. K., IS. 6 d.), which is careful and accurate, and adequate for all ordinary purposes.

#### *2. The Early Church*

- (a) History. Acts 1-12.
- (b) Illustration: Epistle of St. James.

Study carefully the beginnings of the Church; and see illustrations in the Epistle of the type of its Christianity.

### 3. *Paul's First Journey.*

- (a) History. Acts 13 and 14.
- (b) Illustration. Galatians.

The first missionary work proper is recorded in the Acts, and the Epistle was (almost certainly) written to those in Asia Minor evangelized on this journey.

### 4. *Paul's Second Journey.*

- (a) History. Acts 15:1-18:21.
- (b) Illustration. I and II Thessalonians.

### 5. *Paul's Third Journey.*

- (a) History. Acts 18:22-21:17.
- (b) Illustration. I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Romans.

Galatians appears here again because it illustrates the thoughts then rife in Paul's mind, which are so thoroughly dealt with in Romans.

### 6. *Paul's Captivity.*

- (a) History. Acts 21:18-28:31.
- (b) Illustration. Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, Philippians.

### 7. *Paul's (probable) Release and Second Imprisonment.*

- (a) History. Hebrews, I Timothy.
- (b) Illustration. Titus, 2 Timothy.

### 8. *Closing Years of First Century.*

- (a) A.D. 70-85. Revelation, I and II Peter, Jude.
- (b) A.D. 85-100. II, III, and I John.

For valuable handbooks to the life and work of Paul, consult Findlay's *Epistles of St. Paul* (IS. 6 d.) and Stalker's *Life of St. Paul* (IS. 6 d.). But first let the general facts be mastered from the Bible only. Miss Petrie's *Clews to Holy Writ* covers the New Testament as well as the Old.

## THE TEACHING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

It is very important to study this carefully, for it is full of spiritual profit. There is a beautiful progress of thought from first to last. Note the different aspect in each division and subdivision.

### 1. *The Person of CHRIST.* (Biographical.) The Gospels.

- (a) Working out Salvation.
- (b) Providing materials for faith. John 20:31.
- (c) Founding a Church in the world.

### 2. *The Preaching of CHRIST.* (Historical.) Acts.

- (a) Offering Salvation.
- (b) Affording opportunities for faith.
- (c) Gathering out a Church from the world.

### 3. *The People of CHRIST.* (Practical.) The Epistles.

- (a) Manifesting Salvation.
- (b) Showing results of faith.
- (c) Dwelling in the Church for this world.

### 4. *The Providence of CHRIST.* (Prophetical.) Revelation.

- (a) Completing Salvation.
- (b) Bestowing rewards of faith.
- (c) Ruling over the Church and the world.

For this phrase of Bible study there is a book, a classic on the subject, Bernard's *Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament*, which is one of the books indispensable to all Christians.

It will be seen that CHRIST is the warp and woof of the New Testament.

He is its center, its lines, its circumference.

- CHRIST is the Prophet: let us *hear* Him;
- CHRIST is the Priest: let us *accept* Him;
- CHRIST is the King: let us *obey* Him.

~ end of chapter 3 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>

\*\*\*