

Allowing Scripture to Reshape What You Believe

*Learning to Read God's Word in Context
and Develop Convictions
Grounded in Truth*

A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

"Your word
is a lamp to
my feet and
a light to
my path."
Psalm 119:105

THE REAL-LIFE STRUGGLE

Have you ever read a familiar Bible verse and realised you may have misunderstood it? Perhaps you have repeated it for years, but now you wonder if it means what you thought. We can unknowingly interpret Scripture through our experiences, fears or familiar teachings. This can lead to assumptions that are not actually supported by the passage. Learning to read God's Word in context helps us develop convictions grounded in truth.



DISCOVER THE TRUTH

Scripture is God-breathed and is given to teach, correct, reprove and equip us (2 Timothy 3:16-17). To understand the Bible faithfully, we must read passages in their context, recognise different kinds of biblical writing, distinguish description from instruction, and interpret Scripture in harmony with its wider teaching. The Bereans examined the Scriptures daily to see if what they heard was true (Acts 17:10-12), and we too are called to test what we hear and allow God's Word to shape our thinking.

2 Timothy 3:16-17
Nehemiah 8:1-8
Luke 24:25-27, 44-47
Acts 17:10-12
2 Peter 3:15-18

THREE STEPS TO RENEW YOUR THINKING

1

IDENTIFY THE BELIEF

Choose a familiar belief or verse you have often used. Write down what you believe it means and where you learned that interpretation.

2

EXAMINE THE CONTEXT

Read the entire passage. Consider who was speaking, who was being addressed, what surrounds the verse, and what kind of writing it is. Use a reliable translation or study Bible if helpful.

3

APPLY THE TRUTH

Consider how the passage should reshape your beliefs and response. Allow God's Word to correct assumptions, deepen your understanding and lead you towards faithful living.

A RENEWED UNDERSTANDING

Old thought:

If a Bible verse feels meaningful to me, my interpretation of it must be correct.

Renewed understanding: Scripture has meaning within its original context. I can receive personal encouragement while allowing careful study of God's Word to correct and reshape my beliefs.

PAUSE AND REFLECT

- 1 Are there biblical beliefs I have accepted because they were familiar, rather than because I have examined the passages for myself?
- 2 When I read Scripture, do I first ask what the passage means, or do I immediately look for how it relates to my situation?
- 3 Have I used a Bible verse to reinforce an assumption about God, myself or others without considering the wider teaching of Scripture?
- 4 What do Nehemiah 8:1-8, Acts 17:10-12 and 2 Timothy 3:14-17 teach me about understanding God's Word?
- 5 What is one familiar passage I would like to examine more carefully?

A PRAYER OF RESPONSE

Heavenly Father,
Thank You for giving us Your Word.
Please help me to approach Scripture with humility, a desire for truth and a willingness to learn. Give me wisdom to understand passages in their context, discernment to recognise my assumptions, and courage to allow Your truth to reshape what I believe. Protect me from pride, help me test what I hear, and lead me to grow in understanding and faithful living. May Your Word be a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
In Jesus' name,
Amen.

NEXT STEP

Continue exploring *The Garden Study* and discover more articles to encourage a life increasingly shaped by God's truth.