

How to Read the Bible

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It is the Word of God:

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An *inspired* Bible provides direct communication from God to the reader.

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Where do you start?

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- Pray: *When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth* Jn 16:13

How to read the Bible

- Obey what you learn:
 - *Now by this we may be sure that we know him, if we obey his commandments.*
 - *All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them*
 - *For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments.*

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- Tradition: “the democracy of the dead”

Comparison

Building	Scaffolding
Knowing God	Knowing about God
Direct communication	Indirect communication
First hand information	Second hand information
Understanding	Background knowledge
Permanent	Temporary

Scaffolding is useful: but is not part of the building

It is not a substitute for a personal encounter with God

(Don't camp out on the scaffolding forever!)

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2. Every passage on the issue gets interpreted on this basis: sometimes with much ingenuity
3. No other interpretation is even considered

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 5. Therefore: the miracles probably never happened
 6. Therefore: miracles cannot happen!
- ... and the circle is complete

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Therefore they assumed that the saved go to heaven and the damned are tortured in hell for all eternity

All Bible passages about the future state of souls are interpreted within this set of assumptions

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- *The wicked are overthrown and are no more, but the house of the righteous will stand*

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- *The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord Rom 6:23*

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- *These will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might 2 Thes 1:9*
- *But by the same word the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire, being kept until the day of judgement and destruction of the godless 2 Peter 3:7*

Conditional Immortality

john Stott, John Wenham, Philip E. Hughes, etc.