

Lord's Day, Jan. 4, 2009	Genesis 29-31
Monday, Jan. 5	Genesis 32-35; 1 Chronicles 1:28-2:2
Tuesday, Jan. 6	Genesis 36-39
Wednesday, Jan. 7	Genesis 40-42
Thursday, Jan. 8	Genesis 43-44
Friday, Jan. 9	Genesis 45-47
Saturday, Jan. 10	Genesis 48-50

Lord's Day, Jan. 4, 2009	Genesis 20-22; Matthew 6:19-34
Monday, Jan. 5	Genesis 23-24; Matthew 7
Tuesday, Jan. 6	Genesis 25-26; Matthew 8:1-17
Wednesday, Jan. 7	Genesis 27-28; Matthew 8:18-34
Thursday, Jan. 8	Genesis 29-30; Matthew 9:1-17
Friday, Jan. 9	Genesis 31-32; Matthew 9:18-38
Saturday, Jan. 10	Genesis 33-35; Matthew 10:1-20

Birth of John the Baptist	Luke 1:57-80
Announcement of Jesus' Birth to Joseph	Matthew 1:18-25
Birth of Jesus	Matthew 1:24-25; Luke 2:1-7
Proclamation of the Angels	Luke 2:8-14
The Shepherds' Visit	Luke 2:15-20
Witness of Simeon and Anna	Luke 2:21-38
Visit of the Wise Men	Matthew 2:1-12

I would like to recommend that you read **The Fourfold Gospel** by J. W. McGarvey in concert with the Life of Christ plan. See me if you need a copy.

Scripture Marking Plan for

Understanding the Bible

Directions for marking: Using appropriate marking medium, mark the chain of Scriptures in your Bible. Write "Understanding Bible" on a flyleaf and then the first verse (index verse). Turn to this first verse in your Bible and mark it. Then write the abbreviation UB in the margin or somewhere near the verse. Then write the next verse in the chain to turn to. Continue marking in this fashion until the entire chain is marked. Study the commentary notes and try to remember the main points to share with those you teach.

Marking symbol: UB

Index verse: Ephesians 5:17

Scripture chain: Mk. 7:14; 2 Tim. 3:15-4:4; John 12:47-48; Mt. 7:20-21; 2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Peter 3:15-16; Mt. 4:1-11; Prov. 2:3-5; Acts 17:11; 1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Cor. 1:10.

Problem: How would you respond to the following statements:

"You can prove anything by the Bible!"

"Well, my preacher says . . ."

"Well, I don't understand it that way."

"Our church teaches . . ."

"It doesn't matter if we disagree, so long as we are sincere."

Commentary: We often encounter people who say the Bible cannot be understood. Some unbelievers claim that the Bible can be twisted to mean anything you want. On the other hand, some religious people believe that understanding and interpreting the Bible is a task that is best left to highly trained theologians. Other religious people actually believe that it is o.k. to hold differing views about what the Bible teaches, so long as one is sincere. Those among the cults often insist that the Bible cannot be understood without additional help from their leaders and/or their “inspired” books (Mormonism, Christian Science, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Catholics).

Both Jesus and the Apostle Paul admonished us to understand what they were saying (**Mark 7:14; Ephesians 5:17**). They would not deliver such a command if it was not within man’s power to obey.

2 Timothy 3:15-4:4 is a lengthy passage that makes several points relative to this study. First, Timothy had learned the Scriptures from the time he was a child. The Greek word *brephos* literally means “a babe in arms” or “small child.” Second, the Scriptures are “God-breathed” (inspired) and are profitable for, among other things, “teaching” (doctrine). Third, we must preach the Word because men will be judged by God one day according to the Word. It would be good here to point out Jesus’ words in **John 12:47-48**. Finally, we are warned that men will turn away from the Word. This is where you want to introduce **Matthew 7:20-21**, which teaches that men will be lost for not doing God’s will. God’s will is revealed in the Scriptures, therefore those who disobey God’s will are those who disobey what the Scriptures teach.

Call attention to Paul's admonition in **2 Timothy 2:15**. If one

can rightly divide the Word, it is implied that one could wrongly divide it. The New International Version reading of this verse makes Paul meaning clear: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and one who correctly handles the word of truth.”

Peter teaches that there are hard things to understand in the Bible (**2 Peter 3:15-16**). But it is the unlearned and unstable who wrest the harder to understand portions of Scripture and in doing so, they destroy themselves spiritually. A couple of observations are in order. First, Peter does not say that there are things that *cannot* be understood. On the other hand, sometimes one is willfully ignorant of the truth (**Matthew 4:1-11**--Satan even quotes Scripture!). Second, we can understand the Bible better by applying ourselves to diligent study of the Word (**Proverbs 2:3-5; Acts 17:11**).

Finally, make the point that Truth is consistent and harmonious. It cannot contradict itself. Therefore, it is impossible for the truth to mean different things to different people. In Scripture, God is speaking to man, and God intends for man to understand His Will and obey that Will. The Apostle Paul taught the same thing everywhere (**1 Corinthians 4:17**). The Lord does not want His people to be divided in their understanding and practice of His ways (**1 Corinthians 1:10**).