

Search the Scriptures.

Dear Bro. Thomas:—It is of the greatest importance that every person acquire the habit of appealing to the Scriptures of truth for the foundation of their faith, and not to any human authority, whether “confessions of faith,” “church standard,” or the opinions of any man even though decorated with D. D., and other collegiate mummery.

Search the Scriptures, for in them are contained the words of eternal life, and these are they which testify regarding the Christ; and all Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Therefore let the word of God dwell in us richly, and every one prove his own work, that he may have rejoicing in himself and not in another, for every man shall bear his own burden.

Every facility which can legitimately be brought to render the investigation of Scripture as easy as the subject will admit of, cannot be too extensively known. Many persons have a great deal of Scripture in their memories which exists as mere verbiage,—they fail to compare Scripture with Scripture—don’t collate so as to eliminate the truth, and consequently miss the prime object of Scriptural study—to know what is the mind of the Spirit. In many instances this arises not so much from a wilful perversion of the word as from the inability to see the truth in a connected form, caused either by the want of a talent to classify and arrange portions of holy writ, lying apart, or from a defective education in youth.

In the hope that every little may be in some measure successful in helping to contend against the delusive fallacy of “*Spiritualizing*” and helping some one *to* use the sword of the Spirit in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints, I transcribe the following, which, if you think worthy, you may give a place in the *Herald*, that unflinching advocate of “the truth.” Fraternally in the one hope,

JAMES FOREMAN.

June 10th, 1859.

RULES OF INTERPRETATION AND DIRECTIONS FOR INVESTIGATING THE SCRIPTURES.

First. Let the Bible define and explain its own terms, figures and symbols.

Second. Give every passage a *literal* construction, unless its own connection and phraseology render such a course absurd, by bringing it into collision with truths elsewhere established by *positive* language.

Third. The proper connection of any given passage is not always that with which it stands *immediately* connected, but those bearing on the *same* subject found recorded *anywhere* in the Scriptures. Select all these texts from where they stand, put them together and you will have all *the truth* revealed on that subject.

Fourth. All passages belonging to any particular subject must contain one or more of the peculiar features of that subject, by which it may be identified as belonging to that subject.

Fifth. The truth in relation to any doctrine must be established by those passages which speak of it in positive and unequivocal language, and those texts belonging to the same subject but which only admit of inferential testimony, no inference should be drawn from them at variance with the truths already established by positive texts.

Sixth. No doctrine should be predicated upon *mere* inference, neither upon one isolated text of Scripture. Any true doctrine will be found interspersed through the whole Bible.

RULES FOR STUDYING THE SCRIPTURES.

First. In any doctrine taught by types or shadows, the anti-type must always correspond with the type, and the shadow with the substance.

Second. In studying the Scriptures, consider that the *New Testament* is a commentary on the *Old*.

Third. Never be afraid of results to which you may be driven by your investigations, as this will inevitably bias your mind and disqualify you to arrive at ultimate truth.

Fourth. Investigate everything you believe: if it is the truth, it cannot be injured thereby; if error, the sooner it is corrected the better.

Fifth. Pursue this course with as much independence as if you were the only one concerned.

Sixth. Rely on no *authority* less than *divine* in so momentous an undertaking.

PROVE ALL THINGS: HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD.

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