

# Principles of Biblical Interpretation

by R.A. Torrey

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*To accurately interpret the Bible, one must first get right with God and then follow principles of contextual interpretation.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:18, Matthew 5:18, John 16:13, Acts 17:11, Romans 15:4, 1 Corinthians 2:12-13, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Timothy 2:15, Hebrews 4:12, 2 Peter 1:20-21

**Topics:** "Surrender to God", "Biblical Interpretation"

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## Description

R.A. Torrey emphasizes the critical principles of biblical interpretation, urging believers to first align their hearts with God through surrender. He stresses the importance of seeking the true intent of Scripture rather than personal desires, and highlights the necessity of using accurate texts and understanding the precise meanings of words. Torrey advocates for interpreting verses in context, considering the author's intent, and recognizing the distinctions between different audiences in the Bible. He concludes by affirming that the Holy Spirit serves as the ultimate guide in understanding Scripture.

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## Transcript

from Dr. R. A. Torrey's

The Importance and Value of Proper Bible Study

(New York: George H. Doran Co., 1921), pp. 55-90.

1. Get absolutely right with God yourself by the absolute surrender of your will to Him.
2. Be determined to find out just what God intended to teach and not what you wish Him to teach.
3. Get the most accurate text.
4. Find the most exact and literal meaning of the text.
5. Note the exact force of each word used.
6. Interpret the words used in any verse according to Bible usage.
7. Interpret the words of each author in the Bible with a regard to the particular usage of that author.

8. Interpret individual verses with a regard to the context.
9. Interpret individual passages in the light of parallel or related passages.
10. Interpret obscure passages in the light of passages that are perfectly plain.
11. Interpret any passage in the Bible as those who were addressed would have understood it.
12. Interpret what belongs to the Christian as belonging to the Christian; what belongs to the Jew, as belonging to the Jew, and what belongs to the Gentiles, as belonging to the Gentiles.
13. Interpret each writer with a view to the opinions the writer opposed.
14. Interpret poetry as poetry and interpret prose as prose.
15. The Holy Spirit is the best interpreter of the Bible.

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