

January 8, 2017

Not Too Hard Luke 1:1-4

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

The Bible is the best-selling book of _____ time and it comes today in hundreds of languages. Some think the Bible is too _____ to understand. Is it really? God's way is always a _____. God loves us and He gave us His will in _____ form in the Bible so that every age and every nation could know the _____ and be saved. God wants every person to come to faith and to _____ His will.

Perhaps you've heard people say, "The Bible is not _____ to be understood." Or, "The Bible says different things to different people." Or, "What is important is not so much what the Bible says but what the Bible says to _____." I've heard people claim, "The New Testament addressed the _____ of the first century and really doesn't speak to us at all." Others dismiss God's Word by saying, "It doesn't matter what you believe as long as you're _____ and love Jesus." Then there's the skeptic who says, "You can make the Bible say anything you _____ it to." Some say, "You can just take a passage of Scripture and _____ it to a group of people and there'll be as many interpretations of that passage as there are people in the room."

These charges against the Bible lose sight of God's _____ in giving us His Word. They seem to forget about God's incredible desire to have a relationship with us that lasts for an _____. That relationship means that we can _____ Him and His will. The Lord Jesus promised us, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you _____" (John 8:31-32).

Today's reading is from The Gospel According to Luke 1:1-4.

Is the Bible meant to be understood? The answer is yes, but let's see what the Bible says for _____. Psalm 19:8 says, "The precepts of the LORD are _____, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is _____, enlightening the eyes." Psalm 119:18 says, "Open my eyes, that I may _____ wonderful things from Your law." Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my _____." Verse 125 says, "I am Your servant; give me understanding, that I may know Your testimonies." Verse 130 says, "The unfolding of Your words gives _____; It gives understanding to the simple." Proverbs 6:23 says, "For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; and reproofs for _____ are the way of life."

When people say that the Bible is not meant to be understood, I wonder how they came to that conclusion. Did they get it from the Bible or from _____? Surprisingly, some churches don't want you to read your Bible. These churches worry that if you read your Bible, you'll find

that what the Bible teaches is _____ from what they teach and practice. The Bible has God's _____ attached to it, and it challenges those who vary from it.

The apostle Paul _____ in Scripture that there were people who were misusing and tampering with God's Word. He said, "But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to _____ cunning or to tamper with (that is, twist) God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it's veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has _____ the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Corinthians 4:2-4).

The devil will do anything to keep people from understanding the _____ of God's Word. He'd love to blind people to the _____ so they wouldn't know the truth. If he can tamper with; that is, twist the Word so that you begin to _____ something that is only partially true, he'll do it. He realizes that his message must _____ true or you won't buy into it. If he tells a lie that sounds true, he can lead people astray. If he can tamper with the Word to make his lie really appealing, he will. But, when people _____ the lie rather than listen to God, they are deceived with a counterfeit religion. The devil has supplied plenty of counterfeits today.

We wouldn't know what the truth is and what error is if it weren't for that permanent _____ of truth. The Bible provides that standard of truth for _____ time. God's Word is settled in heaven and does not _____. It's this stability, this solid foundation, that allows Christians to remain _____ to God. God was wise to give to mankind His _____ in written form in the Bible because by giving us the Word, the written Word, we can know the truth which makes us free. The difference between Christ's true disciples and others is that true disciples _____ in the Word of God, and the others _____ away from it.

This is why we must stay with God's Word. God expected ancient Israelite parents to _____ their children the Law of God. God was concerned that a generation might arise that didn't _____ His commandments. **Read what Moses commanded them in Deuteronomy 31:10-13.**

If the Bible were so hard to understand, God wouldn't have commanded all Israel to do this every seven years. Truly we can understand the Bible. The Bible says, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are _____ belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deuteronomy 29:29). God gave us His Word to _____ us.

Read Deuteronomy 30:11-14. God not only wants us to understand it, He also expects us to _____ and _____ it.

The Word of God went out to all Israel. There were all kinds of people _____. They were the smart; they were the not so smart, the conservatives, the liberals, the educated, the young, and the old. Those who didn't know God's Law were expected to _____ the Law and to obey it. My friend, you are not an exception. God wants you to know His will. First Timothy 2:3-4 says, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to

be _____ and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” God doesn’t communicate in riddles, nor does He hold back some secret message only for the select few. God wants everyone to be _____ to know the truth, to be saved, and to live in heaven with Him forever. Jesus, the Bible says in Hebrews 2:9, tasted death for _____ person. Why then would God give us a Bible with the words of life, but give it in such a way that we couldn’t understand it?

When God inspired Luke to _____ a gospel account, he chose this Greek Gentile, Theophilus, a Roman authority, to write to about Jesus. Theophilus had only heard bits and pieces about Jesus. **Read again the text in Luke 1:1-4.** Theophilus apparently wanted to know the truth, and Luke wrote to him with _____ (that is, exact knowledge) the things concerning Jesus Christ. The Bible was written to _____ to us true knowledge, exact knowledge, and the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Read what the apostle John said in John 20:30-31. God gave us this book, the Bible, so that we might _____ in Jesus Christ and by believing be saved and have life in His name. I can’t imagine why, if this is the _____ of the Bible, that God would write something that no one can understand. The fact is, we can understand what we _____ to know to be saved, and go to heaven and live with God forever!

Read what the Bible says in Acts 17:2-4. The Scripture is not some strange _____, but a book that gives life and tells the marvelous story of Jesus Christ.

From this inspired book, we learn the most wonderful _____ of love and sacrifice. To some it may be meaningless, but to us it’s the most meaningful story in the entire _____. I’m so thankful that God chose men and inspired them to _____ that story down in the first century, and He did it so that we could hear and could _____ it as it really happened. The New Testament gives us eyewitness accounts of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, a story of _____ that saves our souls. There simply is no better, no more important, no more meaningful story in the entire world, than the story of Jesus.

The gospel is God’s _____ unto salvation to everyone who believes it, according to Romans 1:16. God knew that He had to _____ Himself to mankind if they were to know and believe in Him and find salvation. We can know some things through observing the universe, but we cannot know the _____ story apart from the Word of God. The Bible says, “For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased that through the foolishness of the message _____ He could save those who believe” (1 Corinthians 1:21). If we want to know the precious _____ about God, we must go to His Word. Our task is to hear it, to believe it, to love it, to obey it, and to share it with others. Oh, thank God for the Bible!

The apostle Paul said, “For we write _____ else to you than what you read and understand, and I hope you will understand it until the end” (2 Corinthians 1:13). Paul wrote no other thing but what the Corinthians could understand, and _____ too can understand the Bible. In fact, we must understand the Word of God and _____ it. Why? Because one day we’ll be

_____ by the written Word of God. The Lord Jesus said: “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the _____ that I spoke is what will judge him at the last day” (John 12:48). You and I will be judged one day by the words that are written in this book. We’ll stand before God and we’ll give an _____ for our lives, and the standard will be these written words.

The Lord Jesus said: “Not everyone who _____ to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, the one who _____ the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter” (Matthew 7:21). For that _____, we must know what the will of God is. We mustn’t let anything keep us from our _____ to the Lord. The purest _____ of God’s will is found in the New Testament. So don’t settle for anything _____ than the Scriptures. They will lead you to an exact knowledge of the Lord’s will, but other things will lead you _____. The Scriptures will give you the unfailing, truth that leads to _____ life. That’s what we need. What kind of God says, “I’m going to judge you by the things _____ in the books?” Revelation 20:11-15 teaches us that we’re going to come before the great white _____, and that the books will be opened, and we will be judged according to the things written in the books, and according to the things that we’ve _____, whether good or bad. Jesus said in John 12:48 that we’re going to be judged by His _____. Why would He give us this book, and tell us we’re going to be judged by these words, but give us a book that is a riddle that people _____ understand? Wouldn’t such a God be a _____? But our God isn’t like that. He gives us a book that we can understand. Our God loves us and wants all men to be _____ and to _____ the truth. Shouldn’t we _____ to know His will? If our knowing and doing the will of God is the difference between eternal life and death, can we afford to _____ what He says?

The apostle Paul said, “Do your best to _____ yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). God wants us to _____ the Bible so that we will know the truth and not be ashamed on the Day of Judgment because we didn’t follow the teaching of the Bible. Proverbs 23:23 says, “Buy truth, and do not _____ it, get wisdom and instruction and understanding.”

I hope you’ll follow those teachings and _____ to Christ. To do that _____ the words of Christ and _____ them. Repent of your sins and _____ the name of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God. Repentance means that you _____ your heart, that you leave sin, that you turn to the ways of God. With love and faith, be _____ for the forgiveness of your _____ as Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16 teach. Romans 6:3 says that when we’re baptized into Christ, we’re baptized into His _____. That’s when we come into contact with the _____ of Christ that cleanses us. Won’t you be baptized, my friend? Won’t you do it today?