

5 *Not By Piecemeal*

Simply Read The Bible Start to Finish

If you look on the Internet, typically you are given a wide selection of methods to study the Bible. There is the chapter study method, the biographical method, the topical method, the book background method, the book synthesis method, etc.¹ These are all methodologies built upon piecemeal analysis. It may have a place later. But for those wondering how to start to study the Bible, this is clearly the wrong starting point. It even causes you to overlook the greatest proofs of the Bible's inspiration, as explained below.

Unfortunately, few, if any, 'how to' authors ever insist strongly that you should study the Bible by initially reading it *cover-to-cover*. How would you read any other book? From sections at the end of the book? Or in the middle? If you would not do so with other books, why would you choose to do topical studies of the Bible that cut up snippets from disjointed topic-relevant verses? Or begin in the middle or at the end? If piecemeal analysis fails studying any other book, why would you ever think it will work here as a starting point for analysis of the Bible?

Hence, piecemeal methods are an improper grounding method to study the Bible.

A Spiritual Benefit From A Full Overview First

In fact, let me share one spiritual benefit of this exercise of reading the entire Bible first. One of the amazing proofs of the Bible's validity as God's word is that from the

1. http://www.eachnewday.com/HowToStudyTheBible/the_Bible_study_methods.htm (3/24/08).

beginning all the way to Jesus, it sounds like it comes from *one* voice even though there are dozens of independent authors. The Torah, Prophets and Jesus' words all weave together in a logical well-fitted tapestry. How could this be unless there was a divine origin? Thus, if you study the Bible piecemeal, you lose out on its greatest proof of its validity as God's word.

In fact, the flaw of the piecemeal approach is that it asks you to assume this is God's word without any effort to convince you *rationally* that it indeed is God's word. A cover-to-cover start is the best way to convince the rational mind that here indeed is the word of God.

But why then does the piecemeal approach dominate? Perhaps because the ones teaching you down deep only have a *faith* it is God's word, but do not *believe* it is God's word. Many of those in the Christian church who teach think there is a way of accepting something as true — which they call *faith* — but which at the same time they freely admit the mind cannot give rational assent. ***They, however, have a flawed understanding of faith that the Bible intends to bring about.*** The entire premise of God revealing Himself through *written* words is an ***appeal to reason***. By giving us an amazing text whose validity as God's word can be ***rationally proven***, just like examining the stars reveals an origination point which science calls the Big Bang, the study of the Bible contains its own proof of a divine origin. Hence, if in the Bible we find truly God's word, as I most sincerely believe is present, then we must allow God to convince us by reading His book in the order He revealed it. Indeed, that is *its best proof* for its divine origin: its cohesiveness despite the many different human contributors.