

1. Peter’s inspired testimony

- a) 2 Peter 3:9-18 What encouragement do you find in this inspired testimony by the apostle Peter?
- b) Why do you think Peter admits that some things written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit by his fellow apostle are hard to understand? (v.16)
- c) How should we respond when we encounter texts in the Bible that are hard to understand?

2. Paul’s admonition to Timothy

- a) 2 Timothy 1:5-7 What encouragement do you find in this admonition for your life today?
- b) 2 Timothy 2:15-16 What God-given resources are available to us when we are seeking to rightly interpret the word of truth? John 16:13, Psalm 119:105, Jeremiah 33:3
- c) How does a careful study of the Word of God help us to “shun vain and idle babblings” (2 Timothy 2:16 NKJV)?
- d) Share a time when the Holy Spirit guided you through the Word of God to shun a vain and idle babbling.

3. Strategies for dealing with difficult passages

- a) 1 Timothy 4:12-16 What important insights do you find in Paul’s counsel to Timothy?
- b) James 4:6-10 Why is a humble and teachable attitude important when studying the Bible? (see Psalm 32:8-9)
- c) James 1:5-6 Why is prayer so important when studying the Word of God, especially when examining passages that are hard to understand?

4. Examples of difficult passages

- a) Luke 23:43 Did the repentant thief go to Paradise that day?
- b) Exodus 10:20,27, 11:10 Why would the LORD harden Pharaoh’s heart? Doesn’t He want everyone to repent and be saved? (See also Exodus 8:15,32)
- c) Share a Bible passage that you find difficult to understand. Based on our study today, what approach would you suggest in order to comprehend the text more fully?

5. Discussion questions

- a) Why is it important to keep Jesus as our central focus when studying the Bible, especially when considering difficult passages? John 14:6, 5:39-40, Luke 24:27, John 20:30-31, Hebrews 12:1-2
- b) What God-given promises give you encouragement when you come across difficult passages in the Bible?

