

LESSON 4
 (1955, 1965)
 AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
 BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
 Why Do So Few Understand the Bible?
 About Our Cover ...

Why is it so few people really understand the Bible? Too few find its pages OPEN to them revealing its life-saving message. This rare 1,000-year-old Greek manuscript is part of the collection of the Ambassador College libraries. It is a carefully preserved copy of the four gospels, painstakingly written by hand on vellum or sheepskin. The cover of the manuscript -- shown on page 3 of this lesson -- is green silk brocade with a pattern of red and silver. This manuscript originated in a Greek monastery in Southern Italy only about 900 years after the death of Jesus Christ.

an open letter from THE DIRECTOR Greetings! -- fellow students of God's Word:

Today we are living in the last days of this age -- the time of the DEATH THROES of man's civilization! Never has there been a time like this!

You need to realize you're living in an age when you -- yes, YOU -- are being THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION AT ANY MOMENT!

We are ACTUALLY living in the time of which Paul spoke when he said, "This know ... that in the LAST DAYS PERILOUS TIMES shall come" (II Tim. 3:1).

That time is NOW!

You are actually WITNESSING that climactic time of which so many prophecies speak -- that time of atheistic, godless, defiant man, trembling on the brink of nuclear holocaust -- that time marking the END OF THIS AGE, and the approach of the glorious UTOPIA of the World Tomorrow!

You need DESPERATELY TO KNOW HOW you can SURVIVE this hazardous time of threatening worldwide conflict -- to know HOW TO LIVE ON OVER INTO that wonderful World Tomorrow!

THAT'S WHY YOU NEED THIS COURSE SO BADLY!

NOWHERE ELSE can you find the plain, simple, step-by-step information you so DESPERATELY NEED to help you SURVIVE! NOWHERE else is such precious, life-saving INFORMATION AVAILABLE!

In no other Bible Correspondence Course will you find the clear-cut, concise, straight-to-the-point information you MUST have! It affects YOU, PERSONALLY!

God has said there is only ONE way out -- only ONE method of escape! He is freely GIVING you that way -- IF YOU WANT IT!

No other Bible course in this world even DARES to reveal the future as does this course. Why? ONLY this Work -- which GOD is using -- dares to preach the true gospel of His kingdom to the world as a "WITNESS." Only this Work is willing to be corrected by the Bible and that's why only this Work REALLY UNDERSTANDS Bible prophecy!

We have ONLY BEGUN to make plain the truly AMAZING and absolutely ASTOUNDING revelations God has stored in His Holy Word

-- the Bible! I hope you are taking advantage of this priceless opportunity to study His Word -- NOW! And I hope you will, BY ALL MEANS, CONTINUE this vital course in Bible study.

God is NOW giving you, IN ADVANCE, the opportunity to PREPARE YOURSELF for the catastrophic events which He reveals will soon engulf this world. He is giving you precious time to ACT on this Bible knowledge!

As I write this letter as Director for Mr. Armstrong, more than 70,000 students are enrolled in the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course WORLDWIDE! They are people from all walks of life -- common laborers, farmers, housewives, college students, lawyers, doctors and men in high offices of government.

Here are a few excerpts from the hundreds of letters our ENTHUSIASTIC students write, expressing their appreciation for the Bible Course. I want to share them with you.

A Missouri student writes: "Dear Mr. Armstrong: Of all the things I had set for myself to accomplish during this year, I feel that my study of the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course has been by far the most worthwhile." This student is beginning to acquire a knowledge of the true values of life.

Here is another from Iowa: "I'm still studying in the second Bible lesson and what a wonderful help they are. I find I'm just learning how to read and study the Bible. It's funny how one can read the Bible and yet miss so many of its meanings. That's why I say 'I'm just learning to read it.'" People have no conception of what the Bible will reveal to them until they are TAUGHT HOW to study it.

A very well-educated person commented: "Since I had the advantage of a good deal of this world's education, I feel qualified to make this next statement. Although the Correspondence Course is written so that anyone who can read the Bible can easily do the work; in quality and thoroughness of instruction, it is easily the equivalent of courses given for college credit by the better colleges and universities. It is really superior to these courses. This is God's course, written by God's ministers."

One of the hundreds of MINISTERS enrolled in our Bible Course writes Mr. Armstrong as follows: "I have been in the ministry for fifty years and went to Moody Bible Institute, but I have learned more in your Correspondence Course than in all my life's study. I have a better understanding of my Bible, for all of which I thank you and your staff."

Another person with this world's religious education writes: "I have completed 17 lessons and have gotten more from them than I ever got out of courses in the theological school. There I was working for grades and had to either conform or flunk out. I read "THE PLAIN TRUTH", "U.S. News and World Report" and your pamphlets. The farther I get along the easier everything falls in place. I can't begin to tell you of the changes that have taken place in my understanding."

A zealous student from Kansas comments: "I wish to thank you for sending me "THE PLAIN TRUTH" magazine and for enrolling me in your Bible Study Course. I have completed the first four lessons and the test. I can hardly wait for the next lesson. I didn't realize that Bible study could be so interesting. I pray that God will help me to put aside my old beliefs and to accept His Truth."

Finally comes this interesting quote from a student in Missouri: "I want to write and tell you that I enjoy my Bible Course very much. After doing the first lesson and reading "THE

PLAIN TRUTH" magazine and LISTENING to WORLD EVENTS, I see that you are absolutely right."

Are you studying like this student? Do you recognize the vital necessity of WATCHING world events? Do you see how world news is literally fulfilling Bible prophecy? Are you heeding the admonition of Jesus Christ: "WATCH ye therefore, and PRAY ALWAYS, that ye may be accounted WORTHY TO ESCAPE ALL THESE THINGS that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man"? (Luke 21:36.)

You cannot watch world events unless you make DILIGENT EFFORT to keep up with world news! I strongly urge that in ADDITION to reading your daily newspaper, you subscribe to a leading WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINE! The students at Ambassador Colleges find that "U.S. News and World Report" gives them an excellent bird's eye view and ANALYSIS of important world events. Among other useful weekly news magazines are "TIME" and "Newsweek".

But remember, these news media can only give you the latest information on what has ALREADY happened! They can't PROPHECY. Only God can reveal the future in advance. And the coming lessons you'll be receiving will make those prophecies plain, understandable.

Meanwhile, instead of receiving another lesson next month, you will receive an examination. This is a SIMPLE test. The PURPOSE for this test is to help you REMEMBER the things you have learned in the previous lessons. It will also help us to know whether you are interested in CONTINUING this valuable course of Bible study. The vast majority who have taken the time to study the first four lessons, pass their exam VERY EASILY!

Remember Jesus' admonition to "WATCH"! Pray that God will GUIDE YOU AND YOUR FELLOW STUDENTS in understanding the scriptures referred to in each lesson. And ask Him to HELP you live by His Word daily. God will bless you abundantly if you truly submit yourself to Him in willing obedience. In Jesus Christ's Name, Dr. C. Paul Meredith, Director

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

WHY do so FEW really UNDERSTAND the Bible?

Why do we find such confusion -- such disagreement as to what it says? Why don't the hundreds of differing church denominations and sects AGREE on what their acknowledged textbook SAYS?

WHY do so many individuals, capable of understanding almost any OTHER book say: "I just CAN'T understand the BIBLE"?

Take a recognized textbook on biology. Show this book to ten different biology professors from ten different colleges and universities. Ask them what it says. They'll all give you the same answer. People do not disagree as to what books actually say -- except when it comes to the one Book of ALL the books -- the Holy Bible! Did you ever stop to think of that?

But take the Holy Bible to ten different ministers or to professors of theology from ten different religious denominations, and ask them what God's Book says -- and you'll probably receive ten different answers!

Didn't you ever wonder WHY?

Here, certainly is the enigma of the ages! The most

important, yet the least understood Book of ALL the books! Year after year, the world's BEST SELLER -- the Book owned by more people than any other. The one Book that has lived in spite of every effort to stamp it out, down through the ages -- and still outsells all others! -----
 ----- PHOTO: The Bible is the world's best seller. However, to most people it is a CLOSED book full of enigmas and symbolism. -----

The one Book which has FORETOLD, centuries in advance, the very chaotic and uneasy conditions of the world today -- THE ONE BOOK THAT EXPLAINS THE MEANING of this perturbed condition -- that opens before us to behold IN ADVANCE, the WONDERFUL, PEACEFUL, HAPPY WORLD that is coming TOMORROW!

The one Book that predicted, in advance, the rise and fall of specific nations and governments -- that reveals the DESTINY OF THE WORLD!

No mere HUMAN-devised book could reveal such things! If you want to know the most necessary, basic knowledge of all life -- the very FOUNDATION of all right knowledge -- WHERE WOULD YOU GO? Purpose of the Bible

WHAT are we? Were we put on earth for a PURPOSE? And WHAT is that purpose?

WHY are human lives empty, discontented, unhappy? How may human life become HAPPY, FILLED with interest, ABUNDANT, successful, prosperous?

WHAT is the real cause of wars, and THE WAY to world peace?

WHAT lies on after death -- what is THE WAY to a happy, abundant, ETERNAL life? No book ever written, except the Holy Bible, reveals this FOUNDATION of all knowledge.

Are THESE questions important? One might ask, is anything ELSE important? You can find the answers to THESE questions ONLY in this one divinely inspired, sacred volume! -- and yet almost NO one has ever found the answers so PLAINLY written there!

Here is the Book that, in spite of the human perversion of it, has CHANGED more lives than all other books combined! And yet -- it is THE BOOK THAT NOBODY KNOWS!

The Bible is the most MISunderstood book of history! The most twisted, distorted, misrepresented, maligned and lied-about! WHAT'S WRONG? Why Is the Bible Misunderstood?

Here is the answer -- and it is very plain!

The answer lies in the fact that people have NOT BEEN WILLING TO OBEY the precepts of this holy, divine Word -- and therefore this world has LOST ITS WAY. In so doing it has not only lost PEACE, and HAPPINESS, and PROSPERITY, but it has also lost the knowledge of the PURPOSE of the Bible -- it doesn't know what the Bible really IS!

Stop and think! Would a Creator, having supreme intelligence, wisdom and love to think out, to plan, design, and bring about ALL CREATION -- this earth, and all life and life-functions upon it -- have left His created beings in IGNORANCE of HIS PURPOSE -- the PURPOSE of their being here -- THE LAWS that would bring them PEACE, and HAPPINESS, and JOY, and

everything good?

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S DIVINE REVELATION OF BASIC NEEDED KNOWLEDGE which mankind is not otherwise capable of finding out!

Absolutely no tools or instruments of science can ever tell you if there is life after death -- the PURPOSE of your being alive -- where you are going -- or the WAY to a happy, abundant life, or to universal PEACE. Our scientists, our world leaders and our statesmen have failed UTTERLY to tell us these answers, or to lead us into the universally desired PEACE with happiness, and JOYOUS living!

God Almighty did NOT hide from human minds these all-important truths. He made them accessible to mankind. HE COMMITTED HIS TREASURE-HOUSE OF BASIC KNOWLEDGE TO WRITING. He revealed THE WAY TO PEACE and everything the human heart desires!

Now, WHY do so few understand the Bible? WHY do all the different church denominations disagree as to what it says?

We find the answer in II Tim. 3:16-17: "All scripture" -- not just those few verses or PARTS of sentences you wish to apply to suit your desires, but -- "ALL scripture is given by inspiration of God." It is ALL inspired -- EVERY Scripture is inspired by the Eternal GOD -- "and is profitable for" -- WHAT? "... is PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

So the Scriptures are PROFITABLE for the purpose of REPROVING, of CORRECTING us! But how we do resent being reprovved and corrected! How many people do you know who are even WILLING to be corrected where they are in error -- to be REPROVED for the wrong things they do! Humanity Resents Correction

People Do NOT LIKE to BE REPROVED AND CORRECTED! They love PRAISE - they like FLATTERY -- but reproof and correction they surely HATE! Now do you see why it is so hard for so many people to understand the Bible, and to agree on just what it says? The Bible is God's great spiritual MIRROR. IT SHOWS UP EVERY FLAW IN OUR THINKING, reveals every spot on our characters. It pictures us AS WE REALLY ARE -- AS GOD sees us, not as we like to THINK we are, or as we like to have other men look upon us!

"For the Word of God," we read in Heb. 4:12, "is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword" -- IT CUTS DEEP, and it CUTS BOTH WAYS, "... and is a discerner of the thoughts and INTENTS of the heart." Yes, it opens up and exposes and LAYS BARE THE INNER SOUL OF MAN!

When your little children do things that are wrong -- that you have forbidden -- do they usually admit it freely and frankly? Do they say: "Father, I cannot tell a lie. I did it! -- or do they usually DENY it as long as possible, then try to cover it up, excuse it, JUSTIFY it, or place the blame on somebody else? Yes, it's just human nature.

WE are all only little children grown up; and so, when our heavenly Father speaks to US, through His Holy Scriptures, and reprovves and rebukes, and corrects us, we usually do not like to ADMIT our errors, our faults, our wrong ways.

Too often, men have applied some different meaning to Scriptures that reprovved them -- they have passed right OVER SOME Scriptures that corrected and rebuked them or they have ignored them utterly, and have studied diligently to find some OTHER SCRIPTURE, or portion of Scripture, into which they could read a

meaning THAT WOULD JUSTIFY THEIR COURSE! And so men began, centuries ago, to INTERPRET the Bible! God's Word has become twisted, wrested, perverted.

Almost every false and counterfeit meaning imaginable is read INTO it, instead of drinking the natural meaning -- the plain, simple INTENDED meaning out of it! Today we have hundreds of human INTERPRETATIONS of the Bible. You NEVER HEAR OF HUNDREDS OF INTERPRETATIONS OF A CERTAIN BIOLOGY TEXTBOOK IN HUNDREDS OF COLLEGES! WHY? BECAUSE BIOLOGY TEXTBOOKS DO NOT REBUKE AND CORRECT MEN!

Instead of acknowledging the truth, repenting of the sin, having it legally justified by the blood of Christ, men seek to JUSTIFY THEIR OWN ACTS BY PERVERTING THE SACRED AND HOLY WORD OF GOD!

The MOST DIFFICULT thing on earth for the average person to do is to ADMIT IT and CONFESS IT and REPENT OF IT when he is wrong. OH how hard that seems to be! Almost the rarest thing in this world is a person who will ALWAYS acknowledge it when he is wrong, repent, and turn the other way. This world is FULL of people who PROFESS to be willing to do this. But the one who DOES it is a rare jewel.

Under God's inspiration, Paul continued to say, in II Tim. 4:1-4, that the time truly has come when the MANY do not endure SOUND doctrine. Men have turned away their ears from the TRUTH and have turned to FABLES! Yes, fables PALMED OFF AS the truth of God's Word! ISAIAH prophesied that in these latter days men would demand, "Preach not unto us RIGHT things, PREACH UNTO US SMOOTH THINGS -- PREACH DECEITS" (Isaiah 30:8-11). Yet Another Reason

Here is another reason why the Bible is not understood. Did you ever stop to think that KNOWLEDGE can be transmitted to the human mind, naturally, ONLY THROUGH FIVE CHANNELS? The ONLY means by which the mind can receive ANY KNOWLEDGE, naturally, is through the eye, the ear, the nose, the mouth, or the sense of feeling -- the five physical senses. But the Bible reveals SPIRITUAL things -- and SPIRITUAL THINGS CANNOT NORMALLY BE SEEN, nor heard, nor tasted, nor felt, nor smelled. And so the NATURAL human mind is INCAPABLE of understanding these spiritual revelations.

Then notice I Cor. 2:14: "The NATURAL man (that is, the natural-born, unconverted mind), "receiveth not the things of the SPIRIT of God: for they are FOOLISHNESS unto HIM: neither can he know them, BECAUSE THEY ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED!" -- revealed by GOD'S SPIRIT; for it says in the 10th verse, "God hath REVEALED them unto us BY HIS SPIRIT." And then again, you read that it is "the SPIRIT of Truth" which "will guide you into all Truth" (John 16:13).

Since the Bible is God's Word (it distinctly says "THY WORD IS TRUTH"), then it requires the HOLY SPIRIT to OPEN UP to the human mind this marvelous revelation of God. Understand: The Holy Spirit WITHIN is the key which alone can unlock the doors to scriptural understanding.

Thus, as this Scripture has said, WHEN WE RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT - - when the mind becomes spirit-led, then, through this SUPERNATURAL PROCESS of God, spiritual knowledge is REVEALED, and the spiritual mind can begin to UNDERSTAND! REPENT and BELIEVE

The conditions in the Bible for receiving God's Holy Spirit are basically TWO -- REPENT, and BELIEVE. But, repent means MORE than being sorry. It means a complete yielding to the will of God, AS THAT WILL IS EXPRESSED IN HIS WORD! It means a complete willingness to accept, and TO DO what Scripture teaches, NO MATTER WHAT THE COST, THE PERSECUTION, THE SACRIFICE, OR THE EFFORT!

Jesus said, as recorded in John 7:16, 17: "My doctrine is not mine, but HIS THAT SENT ME. If ANY MAN WILL DO HIS WILL, he shall KNOW of the doctrine." Yes, there is a condition: You must surrender to the will of God if you would come to understand the Bible.

Many are like the man who once said, "I wouldn't do anything I thought was wrong for the world!" He was sincere, but the BIBLE says, "There IS a way which seemeth RIGHT unto a man, but the end thereof ARE THE WAYS OF DEATH!" (Prov. 14:12.) Therefore, since death is the penalty of sin, then the ways that SEEM RIGHT to the natural mind of man MUST BE THE WAYS OF SIN.

God's whole purpose is to rescue men from this FALSE way that appears so alluring -- this way that seems RIGHT -- and yet ends up in despair, and suffering, and death!

We read from Psalm 111: 7, 8, 10: ALL His commandments are SURE. They stand fast FOR EVER AND EVER and are done in truth and uprightness. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do His commandments!"

We can see now why men do not understand the Bible. They are not yielded to the Eternal's will -- they are filled with the fear of MEN, instead of the fear of GOD. They tremble at the thought of what PEOPLE say -- but we had all better begin to tremble at the WORD OF THE LIVING GOD.

TRUTH is REVEALED. It is revealed by GOD's spirit -- and that involves a SUPERNATURAL ACT of God. The terms and conditions are utter surrender -- REPENTANCE, and FAITH.

David had understanding. And David said, "THY WORD is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). Today's generation is like that of Jesus' day, of which He said, "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness, rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

Yes, the Bible is light -- a lamp unto our feet -- a light unto our path. Surely the world is in gross darkness. You Can Begin to Understand Your Bible

How then, can you understand the Bible?

Here is HOW you may begin this THRILLING, soul-satisfying adventure.

HERE is how YOU can begin to really UNDERSTAND the Bible.

First, SURRENDER to God, and the authority of His Word. Forsake YOUR ways -- YOUR thoughts -- and those of this world's society.

Study to find TRUTH -- to show yourself approved unto God. Ask God for guidance -- ASK Him to reveal the true meaning. Then BELIEVE GOD -- BELIEVE His Word -- accept it in its plain, NATURAL meaning, just as you would accept any other book in which you had confidence. Be careful to PROVE all things.

Be cautious -- avoid jumping to hasty conclusions, or taking things carelessly for granted.

And above all -- do not try to INTERPRET the Bible. DON'T

take the interpretation of any MAN or CHURCH. THE BIBLE INTERPRETS ITSELF.

God would not have us shut up our ears and our minds from HEARING what is being preached -- even though it differs from what you have been taught. When the apostle Paul came to Berea, the Bereans found he was preaching something utterly DIFFERENT than that which they had been taught and had believed. They did not know whether Paul was a FALSE prophet, or a man sent FROM GOD. We read of them, in Acts 17:11: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind" (that is, without prejudice) "and SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER those things were so." STUDY WITHOUT PREJUDICE -- but BE CAREFUL -- PROVE all things -- search the SCRIPTURES WHETHER those things be so. The Purpose for This Lesson

THIS PARTICULAR LESSON IS TO SHOW YOU HOW TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE. It is devoted entirely to giving you methods explaining HOW TO GRASP THE LESSONS WE ARE GOING TO PRESENT IN THE FUTURE. These methods of Bible study are like TOOLS in your work. You will use them often. For this reason this lesson is printed FOR REFERENCES on how to study. Refer to it often!

Use the time you have set aside for this lesson in familiarizing yourself with its contents.

You will undoubtedly purchase a Bible Concordance. Familiarize yourself with this valuable tool.

And be sure to REVIEW THE THREE PREVIOUS LESSONS. As you review the previous lessons, APPLY to them any new ideas you learn here. For instance, you may want to MARK your Bible. Then, when the next regular lesson comes out, you will find yourself better equipped than ever for studying this fascinating Course!

Now for the actual method of Bible study. But remember, the right SPIRIT -- the RIGHT ATTITUDE -- full SUBMISSION to scriptural dictates, BEING WILLING TO BE CORRECTED and reprov'd -- that is the MAIN THING. Necessities for Bible Study

GOD wrote the Bible. He INSPIRED men to pen it (II Tim. 3:16). It is GOD'S MESSAGE TO MAN! Locked Up Until Now!

Bruce Barton, the author, has called the Bible "The Book Nobody Knows" -- and he has been right UNTIL NOW! This lack of understanding is the very cause for so many religions today -- they CANNOT agree on what the Bible teaches. There is a reason for this.

God said, "For precept must be upon precept ... line upon line ... here a little and there a little: FOR WITH STAMMERING LIPS AND ANOTHER TONGUE will I SPEAK to this people (Isa. 28:10-11).

The dictionary defines "stammering" as the making of PAUSES in speaking. God has written the Bible with GAPS or PAUSES BETWEEN RELATED MATERIAL -- material which MUST BE BROUGHT TOGETHER before its meaning becomes clear. Later, when you come to understand God's PLAN, you will know WHY He did this.

Even Christ, in His day, spoke in PARABLES TO CLOUD THE MEANING (notice Mark 4:11-12 and also Mat. 13:11-13).

NOW Revealed!

But was there to be a FUTURE time when the TRUE message of the Bible could become known to those willing to be corrected?

Yes! But when?

God told Daniel to "Seal the BOOK even TO the time of the end: [when] many shall run to and fro [through the pages of this BOOK], and KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED" (Dan. 12:4).

IN THE TIME OF THE END BIBLE KNOWLEDGE WAS TO BE INCREASED! Moffatt translates "the time of the end" as "the CRISIS at the close."

The whole world is now approaching chaos -- we are NOW entering the WORLD-CRISIS, at the CLOSE of this age! God said that at this crisis time -- NOW -- "None of the wicked shall understand; but the WISE SHALL UNDERSTAND" (Dan. 12:10). Proper Attitude for Understanding 1. You must ACT on knowledge

Let's get one thing straight right now! If you do not grasp this point, you have NO assurance that YOU will be able to understand this course regardless of all HUMAN effort to make it plain to you. GOD has vowed that none of the WICKED would be able to understand His Word in this closing crisis time, but that the WISE would understand (Dan. 12:10).

Since the Bible reveals that "sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4), those who conduct themselves as though His law is done away, are, in Bible terminology, called "the wicked."

Who, then, are "the WISE" who shall now understand? God says, "The FEAR of the Lord is the beginning of WISDOM: a GOOD UNDERSTANDING HAVE ALL THEY THAT DO -- [we must Do] -- His Commandments" (Psalm 111:10).

What has this to do with your being able to understand this course?

These lessons will reveal to you many things that God commands you to DO. If you FEAR Him enough to begin to build into your life habits of OBEDIENCE to Him (DOING His Commandments) He has said, as we have just seen, that you WILL BEGIN TO BECOME WISE! THE GREATER YOUR OBEDIENCE TO GOD, THE GREATER YOUR WISDOM WILL BE -- you will have less and less trouble in understanding the lessons mailed to you.

If, on the other hand, somewhere along the way, you rebel at some of the things He wants you to do, your wisdom will be cut off.

None can understand by himself. The carnal mind cannot "see" spiritual things. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, BECAUSE THEY ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED" (I Cor. 2:14). Christ said, "The Spirit of truth ... will guide you [the OBEDIENT] into all truth" (John 16:13).

These truths are REVEALED through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit -- and GOD GIVES the SPIRIT ONLY to them that OBEY and keep His commandments (Acts 5:32). The choice is in YOUR hands. 2. You must PRAY

Pray to God that He will give you more of His Spirit -- the Spirit of TRUTH (Eph. 5:17-18).

Christ derived his power from God. He prayed for hours to God -- sometimes all night. Surely we can spend an hour or so a day in such practice -- we are incomparably weaker and less wise than Christ was. WE REALLY NEED HELP! IN YOUR PRAYERS ASK GOD THAT HE OPEN YOUR MIND TO HIS TRUTHS! 3. You must STUDY

This Correspondence Course has been designed with the idea that THIRTY MINUTES A DAY devoted to it will enable the student to finish each lesson in thirty days. We know that anyone should be able to give at least this amount of time to such a valuable subject. There is a time coming, and it is not far away, when many who take this course will be JUDGED by the Word of God -- the Bible. We MUST have a knowledge of its teachings!

The Father commands: "STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED unto God, a WORKMAN that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). We should be preparing ourselves for a high calling in God's service! ----- God's Word Preserved In Spite of Flames! PHOTO: The Bible is a MODERN MIRACLE! Since the persecution of Christians in apostolic times by the Roman Empire, and continuing through the modern book burnings in Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany, man has deliberately tried to destroy God's inspired Word. Each attempt has failed. God's Bible has been preserved for twenty centuries by miracle after miracle. ----- PHOTO: This fine copy of the Tyndale translation is part of the rare-book collections of the libraries of the Ambassador Colleges. ----- PHOTO: A gilt-edged edition of Wycliffe's translation is now available to students of Ambassador College. ----- PHOTO: Vigorous attempts were made to stamp out the Tyndale Translation in England during the Middle Ages. Book burnings were called, "A burnt offering most pleasing to Almighty God" by professing Christians. ----- PHOTO: Under the symbol of religious sanction "Christian" ministers in Prague burnt the works of Wycliffe. Only a few copies escaped. ----- 4. You must BE ZEALOUS

You are going to learn, as you study these lessons, that God IS working out a purpose here below. Each of us must use the minutes, hours, days, and years of conscious life which God has given us, to prepare ourselves to fit into this purpose of His.

We do not have forever to do this, but God has given us ENOUGH time! WE, TODAY, do not even have a lifetime -- WE HAVE BUT A FEW SHORT YEARS to prepare possibly fifteen or twenty -- and even in the latter part of these, conditions will make it more and more difficult for us to study. We live in the time of the "crisis at the close." NOW, while there is a relative calm -- BEFORE THE STORM BREAKS -- is the time to study and prepare

for the future!

As most of you have to make a living and it requires a great deal of your time, you must use your remaining time to the greatest advantage. Above all, DON'T LET THE CARES OF THIS WORLD CROWD OUT THE TIME YOU SHOULD DEVOTE TO STUDY AND PRAYER (Mat. 13:22).

God is making clear for a SHORT TIME now -- just before the close - the message that the Bible REALLY conveys. Let's make the most of this brief period!

Be ZEALOUS in your Bible study! Go far! Dig deep!

God says, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, DO IT WITH THY MIGHT; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave" (Eccles. 9:10). WHAT YOU DO NOW CAN AFFECT YOUR LIFE FOR ALL ETERNITY! (Dan. 12:3.) What You Will Learn

In the lessons of the AMBASSADOR COLLEGE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE GOD IS GOING TO:

1. REVEAL THE TERRIBLE EVENTS IMMEDIATELY AHEAD FOR YOU -- AND INSTRUCT YOU HOW YOU MAY ESCAPE the unprecedented slaughter which the nations are soon to bring upon themselves by their own folly.

2. PROVE HE DOES EXIST and He is going to SHOW YOU HIS OVER-ALL PLAN.

3. GIVE YOU HIS REQUIREMENTS WHICH YOU MUST MEET IF YOU ARE TO HAVE A PART IN FURTHERING HIS PLAN FOR ALL ETERNITY. Written to Aid Retention and Review

1. RETENTION EASY

A LOGICAL SEQUENCE of subjects will be found running throughout the course. Beginning with a description of the world as it is today, the necessity of Divine intervention is next studied. Following this, is the glorious revelation of the world as Christ will make it.

Then we shall go back to the very beginning and learn how God reveals Himself. Who -- WHAT is God? Very few people today know. What IS the purpose He has set Himself to accomplish? Subjects continue to be treated, in order, until ALL phases of the Bible are covered.

The Bible IS logical when its OVER-ALL PATTERN is grasped. BUT its over-all pattern cannot be grasped until all its uncorrelated parts, which are scattered here and there, are FITTED TOGETHER. This course accomplishes just this! This has not been accomplished until NOW! THIS IS WHAT MAKES THIS COURSE DIFFERENT FROM ALL OTHERS. When you have finished the AMBASSADOR COLLEGE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE the Bible will no longer be, to you, the "Book That Nobody Knows", but you will see that even a little child can understand its principles!

Notice the "COMMENTARY" STYLE NOTES which are inserted where the meaning would otherwise not be as clear as it should be. These comments also fill in necessary backgrounds.

The very LOGIC of the Bible, when it is presented by this NEW METHOD, will enable you to RETAIN IN YOUR MIND THE BROAD PRINCIPLES WHICH GOD WANTS PEOPLE TO GATHER FROM IT! 2. REVIEW RAPID

Scattered throughout the written material of the lessons will be found words or phrases printed in two types: LARGE TYPE, such as this, or ITALICIZED PRINT, such as this. These will either indicate the SUBJECT MATTER of the surrounding words or will be used to EMPHASIZE IMPORTANT POINTS.

With these guideposts, you can quickly skim back over a subject and impress the outstanding points again upon your mind. Reviewing can be accomplished rapidly in this manner.

All lesson sheets will have three holes punched in them. A three-ring binder should be purchased at a bookstore or ten-cent store. Keep all material together. In BOOK FORM, you will DESIRE TO REVIEW it often! Use of Time and Material 1. SET TIME ASIDE

You should set aside a definite amount of time for your Bible study and religious worship. You can decide what time of the day is best. Your mind is most likely to be more alert in the morning. 2. DIVISION OF TIME

Mr. Armstrong has divided his time for Bible study into three parts, using one third of that time on his knees in prayer to God, devoting another third of the time to the study of the Bible, and using the remaining third to think over the things just studied. In following this method, God has opened the Bible truths to him. Sometimes he has studied the Bible while on his knees. 3. NO OUTSIDE LITERATURE

RELIGIOUS LITERATURE other than ours should not be studied UNTIL YOU ARE THOROUGHLY GROUNDED in this course and have the whole pattern of the Bible fixed in mind. THIS TAKES TIME. Our Correspondence Course is complete and it leads from one scripture to another and LETS THE BIBLE INTERPRET ITSELF AS IT GOES ALONG. NO LITERATURE CAN DO MORE! It would only confuse you to read other religious tracts at first. It is not recommended as a practice to beginning students here at Ambassador College. 4. SELECTING BIBLE

We recommend, as first choice, that you use the King James Version.

Most people prefer a Bible having heavy black print, large letters, and containing a center reference column. A good selection of maps in the back helps greatly. Many prefer a Bible measuring 6 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches for home use. (Often they carry smaller copies on their person for use during the day.) Most like a thumb index and relatively wide page margins.

A Bible answering the above general description is made by the National Bible Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It is their Number 453 C. It may be obtained from, or ordered through any bookstore. Another edition, Number 452 C, is identical to 453 C, but has NO overlapping cover.

The same type of Bible -- with heavy black print, large letters and center reference column -- may be obtained in London.

Concordances which are found in the back of Bibles are not complete enough, so this should have little weight in your selection of Bibles.

5. READING

First SKIM rapidly over the words that are ENLARGED in the Correspondence Course section you are about to study. This will allow you to obtain a grasp of the general field you are about to cover and will enable you from the very start to draw a better mental picture. THEN study the section.

After you have finished studying the ASSIGNED material, it is OFTEN HELPFUL TO KNOW THE MEANING OF THE BIBLE VERSES OR CHAPTERS SURROUNDING the matter you have studied. Don't spend much time at this -- GLANCE over it. WHY?

Because more writers than you realize have lifted whole passages of the Bible out of setting and have attempted to use these to prove the reverse of what the passages are intended to convey.

It is VERY IMPORTANT that you become aware of this.

Gradually you will learn you have been GROSSLY MISLED in many things.

LET THE BIBLE BE YOUR GUIDE, NOT MEN!

ALSO, sometimes the surrounding material is so closely related to a verse discussed in the Correspondence Course that it will cast ADDITIONAL LIGHT on the subject. 6. MARKING

Here at Ambassador College, both faculty and students mark their Bibles. They have found it EXTREMELY USEFUL for purposes of review and Bible study.

The idea in marking is to make certain KEY WORDS OR PASSAGES STAND OUT above the surrounding words. These key words or passages, in turn, recall to mind the general thought of the whole subject.

Study the KEY WORDS or phrases which are written in large letters IN THE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE for the purpose of aiding review. This will give you an idea of HOW TO MARK YOUR Bible. You will learn the PRINCIPLE of emphasizing the right words. It may take some time before you master the method to your complete satisfaction, but it will be well worth the effort.

The SIMPLEST METHOD is to use an ordinary pencil and make an UP AND DOWN LINE IN THE MARGIN opposite the material you wish to find again.

The MOST USED METHOD here at the college is to UNDERLINE WITH A COLORED PENCIL THE IMPORTANT PLACES.

Pencils which have been found valuable for this purpose and which may be purchased at bookstores are the Eagle (brand) Prismacolor Number 924 (which is red), or Number 909 (which is green). Scripto pencils into which colored leads can be fitted and which are self-feeding are very popular. A combination red- and-blue crayon pencil can be purchased at most dime stores. Ball-point pens too.

Some will wish to make REFERENCE ADDITIONS IN THE MARGINS of their Bibles. This is best accomplished by use of a pen (fountain pen or other types) with a "BOOKKEEPING" POINT. These vary somewhat in fineness. This is where wide-margined Bibles come in handy. Also SMALL NOTES can be inserted IN THE MARGINS. A small circle may be drawn around any IMPORTANT CENTER OF THOUGHT OR

MARGIN REFERENCE.

Some may wish to INDEX IMPORTANT SUBJECTS in the back of their Bibles. This is best done by writing, or better yet PRINTING, the name of the subject in small letters in the back of the Bible together with ONE reference. Any other references are then written nearest the outer margin at this POINT OF REFERENCE. In this way there is no crowding for lack of room.

You can see that your marked Bible will become very valuable to you. You should PRESERVE this BIBLE. If the cover gives way, it can be rebound at a bindery. The cost will not be too great considering its VALUE to you. If the Bible comes apart, there are binderies which specialize in HAND SEWING. 7. MEDITATE

What is YOUR OBJECTIVE in studying this Correspondence Course? It is to LEARN and RETAIN facts God gives you which will aid you in living. But even more, you are to interweave these God-given facts with the experiences of your daily life in such a way that you will LEARN THE PRINCIPLES OF THE RIGHT WAY OF LIVING.

If you learn these principles you will know the right way to conduct yourself under ALL circumstances. You will not feel the need of an EXACT PARALLEL case in which God said "do this" or "do that." But HOW can you learn to make the application of these principles?

David, God's beloved, gave the ANSWER! He said, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly ... his delight is in the law of the Lord; and IN HIS LAW DOTHE HE MEDITATE DAY AND NIGHT (Psalm 1:1-2).

David RECALLED the events that occurred during the day. He also remembered God's commands -- His "law." And during the spare hours of his time -- during the day, and especially during the evening when he had even more leisure -- he recalled both, and THOUGHT on them -- he DREW BROAD CONCLUSIONS as to what God really wanted. He applied these conclusions! For this reason, he was able to walk "Not in the counsel of the ungodly" to the extent that he became one of those who stood highest in God's good grace. WE MUST DO THE SAME! How should we go about doing this?

Most people can't pour knowledge into their minds and AT THE SAME TIME sort and analyze it PROPERLY. They, like David, will find it helpful to USE THE EVENING OR EARLY MORNING HOURS FOR ANALYZING it. Also, knowledge quickly slips away the first twenty-four hours after it is learned. The rate of loss lessens somewhat after this. If we lose the knowledge we obtain, there is very little use of acquiring it. How can you be relatively sure you will retain the knowledge you learned during the day, until you can analyze it? Here is how!

If you hear or study some religious knowledge during the day, it is advisable that you REVIEW it mentally JUST AS QUICKLY AS YOU CAN after hearing or reading it. PICTURE IT IN YOUR MIND in its real setting as nearly as possible. These two habits will greatly aid you in remembering what you do not wish to lose. (If you can take notes, these will be of much value if reviewed.) PRACTICE THESE METHODS UNTIL THEY BECOME HABIT!

In the evening of each day, or early the next morning, you can group off these newly learned thoughts with SIMILAR thoughts you remember, and draw from them conclusions or principles. ANSWER for yourself such questions as, "WHAT?" "WHERE?" "WHEN?"

"WHO?" "HOW?" and "WHY?" These will about cover the field.

Decide immediately how these newly learned principles will guide you in your daily problems that you know are going to come up. Apply these principles constantly! It will gradually become second nature for you to act by them! GOD WANTS YOU TO LEARN DEEPLY EVERY DAY! 8. REVIEW

Reviewing will be very profitable in order to FIX the knowledge you have learned in your mind so you will not forget it -- after two or three weeks, REVIEW ALL YOU HAVE COVERED. On this review, you need only "HIT THE HIGH SPOTS," both when you reread the material and when you turn it over in your mind later. ASSOCIATE ALL OF THE TWO OR THREE WEEKS' MATERIAL TOGETHER IN YOUR MIND. Read lessons IN ORDER for thought SEQUENCE.

You will probably be surprised at the new and better understanding you will obtain by this method. It will help GREATLY in "putting you on your own" in reading and understanding your Bible. 9. OTHER BOOKS WILL AID

You can study the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course without any other books except for a Bible, but THERE ARE SOME WHICH WILL ADD A GREAT DEAL TO MAKING THE BIBLE REAL to you.

A broad knowledge of the customs, social and educational life, history of the people, together with a knowledge of the geography of the country, is a great aid in visualizing and understanding events mentioned in the Bible.

From experience, we know what books will help you most. SOME of these books are MUCH MORE NECESSARY to have than others. (We have no connection whatever with any of the publishers whose books will be recommended here.) The most necessary books will be mentioned first.

A CONCORDANCE IS ALMOST A MUST. Why? Because if you know a few words of a passage you wish to find in the Bible, it will FIND that PASSAGE for you.

It helps in another very important way also -- and this is VERY IMPORTANT! IT UNLOCKS THE MEANING OF THE BIBLE to you. How does it unlock the Bible? In TWO WAYS:

(a) Recall that at the very start of this lesson on "How to Study the Bible" we said that God wrote the Bible with GAPS between related material in order to HIDE the meaning (Isa. 28:10-11). Related material naturally has the SAME subject and often many of the SAME WORDS will be used in each of these passages. By using a CONCORDANCE, which has the words of the Bible arranged alphabetically and tells WHERE they may be found, you can thus BRING RELATED MATERIAL TOGETHER and thereby CLOSE these GAPS and obtain the WHOLE TRUE MEANING of what the Bible has to say about anything!

(b) Now notice the second way. God has used ANOTHER DEVICE to HIDE the meaning of Scripture UNTIL NOW! -- the "time of the end" (Dan. 12:4). He has used SYMBOLS!

A symbol is something which stands for something else. God OFTEN uses symbols which do NOT show clearly what they represent. He speaks (through the Bible) to us "with stammering lips [gaps] and ANOTHER TONGUE" (Isa. 28:10-11) -- a tongue which uses UNKNOWN SYMBOLS. HE has to TELL you what they mean, for only He knows what they represent. Here is how He tells you:

In ANOTHER part of the Bible, He uses the SAME symbolical word and EXPLAINS CLEARLY WHAT IT MEANS there. The lesson? IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF A SYMBOLICAL WORD, TAKE IT TO A CONCORDANCE! ----- PHOTO: Your local library has many good Bible study books. Use them to help you "prove all things." -----

Here is a clear, simple EXAMPLE of what to do: Who is the "great red dragon" of Rev. 12:3? Turning to the concordance and locating the word "dragon," we find the word "dragon" appears in this same chapter in verse 9 also. Turning back to the Bible, we read in verse 9, "The great DRAGON ... called the DEVIL." The symbolical mystery is solved! The "dragon" of verse 3 is the Devil! (Usually, however, the unknown word and the answer are not this close together.)

There are TWO TYPES OF CONCORDANCES: large complete concordances ("Strong's Exhaustive Concordance"), which are especially good for RESEARCH; and much SMALLER, but relatively complete concordances which are easy to carry and are very CONVENIENT to locate passages with. The small "Cruden's Complete Concordance" is very popular and may be purchased for around four dollars.

A BIBLE DICTIONARY is also desirable. "Peloubet's Bible Dictionary" is good. This book describes people, places, and things mentioned in the Bible. It also has chronological tables and maps concerning Bible times.

CAUTION: Because we recommend books, this does not mean we agree with ALL they say. We do say that the good they contain overbalances their errors. On the whole we find them accurate.

BIBLES other than the King James Version are sometimes valuable. We especially recommend the MOFFATT version. Its wording sometimes makes sections clearer than the King James. The new ENGLISH and AMERICAN REVISED versions also aid at times.

A BIBLE ATLAS is a book which specializes in Bible maps. They are very helpful. 10. MISCELLANEOUS

LENGTH OF COURSE: Many months may be required. Equip yourself accordingly. As long as God's people hunger and thirst for His Word, this Course will continue. EXAMINATIONS are given solely to determine your interest. Tests follow every fourth lesson. They are simple and designed to help you pinpoint ideas in your mind.

QUESTIONS: If enough of one kind are received, an article will appear in "THE PLAIN TRUTH" "Short Questions from our Readers" column.

In conjunction with this lesson we urge you to write immediately for a special reprinted article, "TWELVE RULES for Bible Study." This article has been prepared by a faculty member of Ambassador College. It will help you to get the very most from studying your Bible. Read the article carefully! Two Final Thoughts

There are two things you must always keep in mind.

1. Remember, though insignificant scribal errors have crept

in now and then, the BIBLE IS INFALLIBLE.

2. The BIBLE MAKES SENSE. IT MEANS WHAT IT SAYS. REGARD IT AS GOD'S WORD! It deals with places, events, and beings -- actual realities -- and REVEALS knowledge which you need to know, but which you could not otherwise discover. ----- PHOTO: If you have trouble locating a book you need, be sure to ask a librarian for help. -
