

How to Study the Bible: The Law of FIRST MENTION

The Bible is God's Word.

2 Tim 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Last time we gathered we talked about how no scripture stands alone. All Scripture must stand in agreement with all other scripture. You will never be done studying the Word of God. All your study will reveal greater treasure and depth.

We talked about the power of the “cross reference.” As you study the scripture in front of you it will cross reference to

multiple places in your Bible. Knowing these references will likely help you better understand the verse in front of you.

Using this cross reference in your Bible is valuable for testing doctrine/teaching.

When testing a doctrine we suggest you...

- 1 Look at the teachings of Jesus.

- 2 Look at the model of the Church in Acts.

- 3 Look for clarity in the Apostle's teaching within the Epistles.

- 4 As you study these New Testament writings they will point you to a foundation in the Old Testament. Search these foundations out.

- 5 If all these scriptures stand in agreement then you have a legitimate bible doctrine.

Today we are going to talk about something that is very useful for understanding your Bible – The Law of the First Mention.

I want you to turn in your Bible to the dictionary... Wouldn't it be great if your Bible contained a dictionary?

You have complex words and themes, and it would be great if we could understand the meaning of these words & themes.

What are some prevalent words that appear in your Bible that are difficult to understand?

Here are some I thought of...

Righteous

Covenant

Altar

Faith
Grace
Salvation
Perfect

Your Bible does contain a dictionary of sorts. This is the phenomenon known as the law of first mention.

The first time an important word is mentioned in the Bible, Scripture gives that word its simplest, most understandable reference from which the others build. The first time a word is used in scripture, it practically serves as a dictionary definition.

The first mention serves as a key to understanding, and also provides a foundation for fuller development later in the Bible.

Where do you find the majority of “first mentions” in the Bible? The Book of Genesis contains almost all first mentions.

We are going to open our Bible to the built in dictionary that is the book of Genesis. We will look through some of the first mentions in scripture.

Light – Genesis 1:3-5

First spoken creation.

Should make us of think of Jesus the first born of creation (Colossians 1:15). John 1 calls Jesus the light that shines in darkness.

Whenever we see the word light used in scripture we should remember the first time light was mentioned.

Blood – Genesis 4:10 (implied Genesis 3:21)

Blood speaks... All blood cries out for judgment except for the blood of Jesus. The blood of Jesus cries out “Father forgive them (Luke 23:34)

The blood shed from the skins to cover Adam & Eve show us that blood is required to cover sin & shame.

Grace – Genesis 6:8

Noah found favor/grace in the eyes of the Lord. No work was attached to receiving this gift of grace. Because of Grace Noah received the good news of salvation from a flood.

Righteous – Genesis 6:9

Atonement – Genesis 6:14

The word for pitch is the word for atonement.

Covenant – Genesis 6:18

Altar – Genesis 8:20

Worship – Genesis 18:2

The word for bow down is worship.

Salvation – Genesis 49:18

The word for salvation is the name JESUS.