

**Lesson 4 – How Reasoning from the Scriptures Exposes Deception**  
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**Introduction:** The willingness to reason is a great challenge to every Christian.

- A. “Lazy thinking” or worldliness is much easier than the kind of thinking that requires energy, time and effort to discern what is right and what is wrong. **(Heb 5:14)**
1. One can call Jesus is Lord and even proclaim that they follow the Bible but in reality be in a very different place. **(Lk 6:46)**
  2. Many deceptions must be overcome before one takes the Bible seriously!
  3. When one decides to pursue truth then there will be a new group of obstacles.
- B. How can the Bible help us see truth and overcome error? **(1 Jn 4:1, 5-6)**
1. God expects us to be completely committed to what is “written.”**(1 Cor 4:6)**
  2. The greatest enemy to Satan is the written word when properly handled. In this We should follow the example of our Lord! **(Mt 4:4, 6, 7, 10)**

**I. We must let the words of God subdue our will**

- A. There is only one kind of heart that will find God's truth and be saved.
1. Jesus challenged all to find the truth. He set the example in emptying Himself and only teaching and practicing what He received. **(Jn 8:28-32; 7:16-17)**
  2. Truth has not changed nor the way to find it. **(Jn 3:19-21)**
  3. Satan prefers to poison the mind through lust, pride and by ridiculing those who have such a faith! **(Lk 8:5, 12; Mt 13:22)**
- B. I must regard these words as perfect and without error. **(1 Thess 2:13)**
1. We cannot change our ways unless we have this confidence! **(2 Sam 22:31-33)**
  2. What kind of power changes the stubborn will of man?
  3. We can be changed if we truly have the will to “hear!” **(Lk 8:18; Deut 29:2-5)**
  4. Those who question the inspiration or inerrancy of the scriptures create doubts and confusion. They ridicule “certainty!” **(Prov 22:19-21; Lk 1:4; 3 Jn 11-12)**
- C. We all must develop a principled approach to know the truth and to overcome our natural prejudices. **(Lk 6:47-49)**
1. Men scoff the idea of finding “truth.” **(Jn 18:37-38)**
  2. We can rightly recognize that each man must go through a struggle to find truth. This principled process involves change, personal effort and time.
- D. Jesus often let men struggle with apparent contradictions! **(Jn 1:45-46; 7:41-43)**
1. They had to dig deep or quit! Jesus also gave them more proof! **(Jn 5:36, 39-42)**
  3. John the Baptist had struggles and went to Jesus with his doubt! **(Lk 7:19-20)**
  4. He already had a strong faith and had expressed it. **(Jn 1:31-34, 35-37)**
  5. Jesus quotes scripture and gave him more evidence! **(Lk 7:21-23; Isa 35:3-6, 61:1)**
- E. These principled struggles allow us to become “grounded.” **(Col 1:23; 2:6-7)**
1. It is not uncommon to hear those make comments that "I used to believe this, but I was never challenged to test it." Some cast off truths in their shallowness.
  2. While this problem is one that is more prevalent amongst young people, I am finding more adults making drastic changes because they were never grounded.

## ***II. Identifying and overcoming our natural biases***

A. The first step to overcoming a problem is to recognize it! Consider this list of “cognitive biases” and try to find Bible examples of them!

What is a Cognitive Bias? A cognitive bias is an error in cognition that arises in a person’s line of reasoning when making a decision is flawed by personal beliefs.

1. Anchoring or focalism - The tendency to rely too heavily, or "anchor", on one trait or piece of information when making decisions (usually the first piece of information acquired on that subject). **(Jn 7:41-43)**
2. Availability cascade - A self-reinforcing process in which a collective belief gains more and more plausibility through its increasing repetition in public discourse (or "repeat something long enough and it will become true").
3. Bandwagon effect - The tendency to do (or believe) things because many other people do (or believe) the same. Related to groupthink and herd behavior. **(Jn 7:48)**
4. Bias blind spot - The tendency to see oneself as less biased than other people, or to be able to identify more cognitive biases in others than in oneself. **(Rom 2:17-23)**
5. Confirmation bias - The tendency to search for, interpret, focus on and remember information in a way that confirms one's preconceptions. **(Jn 5:40-45)**
6. Courtesy bias - The tendency to give an opinion that is more socially correct than one's true opinion, so as to avoid offending anyone. **(Mk 11:30-33)**
7. Curse of knowledge - When better-informed people find it extremely difficult to think about problems from the perspective of lesser-informed people. **(Jn 7:49)**
8. expectation bias - The tendency to believe, certify, and publish data that agree with their expectations for the outcome of an experiment, and to disbelieve, discard, or downgrade the corresponding weightings for data that appear to conflict with those expectations.
9. Framing effect - Drawing different conclusions from the same information, depending on how that information is presented. **(Mt 11:18-19)**
10. Groupthink - The desire for harmony or conformity results in an irrational decision-making. Group members try to minimize conflict and reach a consensus decision without critical evaluation of alternative viewpoints by actively suppressing dissenting viewpoints, and by isolating themselves from outside influences. **(Acts 4:16-17)**
11. Reactance - The urge to do the opposite of what someone wants you to do out of a need to resist a perceived attempt to constrain your freedom of choice (see also Reverse psychology). **(Gen 3:3-5)**

B. What are some keys to overcoming our biases?

1. By having humility that allows a fair hearing of differing views and “inconvenient truths.” **(Mt 26:21-22)**
2. By having a principled approach to Bible study that often asks to be corrected and to be taught. “Teach me your way!” **(Ps 27:11; 86:11; 119:33)**
3. By developing relationships with spiritual men that can give needed council and challenges. **(Prov 27:17)**
4. By being a part of a local church with a spiritual leadership that directs each member to a true worship that opens our hearts for change. **(2 Tim 4:2-4)**

## ***III. Let all issues of life be framed by Bible teachings and examples***

A. What Bible passages relate to the issues I am facing?

1. Rather than being stirred to an irrational emotion, I must seek to understand both the current issue and the proper Bible passages that apply!
2. How do we react to “racism or white supremacy?” **(James 2:1; Gal 2:11-13)**
3. Some use deceptive definitions that confuse or have an opposite meaning!

B. Some want to discourage you with questions and have no desire for answers.

1. It is very easy to raise questions and doubts about anything! **(Mk 12:22-24)**
2. Satan knows that throwing up “clouds of dust” will stop many from further study.
3. Let us never give up opening our hearts and finding God’s truths for all things!