

Some Guidelines on The Use of Pre-printed Materials

1. The principle of scriptural review, Acts 17:10-12, Col. 2:4, 2 Pet. 1:12, Jude 17-18, 1 John 4:1. Is the material consistent with Biblical truth? Biblical truth always sets the standard by which other resources must be measured (see also Deut. 13:1-5, Gal. 1:6-9).
2. The principle of limited acceptance, Titus 1:12-14, don't forget that while a non-Biblical author may be right, he isn't inspired. Don't overindulge in an author's intent or interpretation. Use his truth and insights selectively.
3. The principle of Bible study, Rom. 15:4, the scriptures are our source of learning. Other materials may help us understand portions of scripture, gain new insights and see new angles of interpretation, but the scripture itself is where the elements of our learning are set down. We mustn't let other materials become an end in themselves or limit our understanding of scripture. Rather than discuss a commentator or other author's intent, center discussion on the scripture text which has the power to save yourself and your hearers. The purpose of legitimate Bible study aids is to focus attention on the Bible for the sake of learning from it effectively. If the aid becomes the focus of discussion, rather than leading toward an understanding of scripture, it has failed its purpose.
4. The principle of preparation, 2 Tim. 3:10, 2:15-16, no matter how a Bible study is presented, diligent effort is needed to gain the full benefit of the Word. Familiarity with the material to be covered is very helpful to both the teacher and the student. If study questions have been prepared, they should be answered. If passages have been announced in advance, they should be read ahead of time. Be ready to participate in discussion for the edification of the church (1 Cor. 14:26, Rom. 14:19, 15:14).

Some Guidelines on The Use of Quotations*

1. Identify your source if you are using the quotation to establish authority for some point. Keep the identification as brief as possible. If your primary interest is the content of the quotation rather than its source, or if awareness of the source might prejudice the audience, it is permissible to omit the identification and generalize with something like "someone has said ..." But don't pretend to be the source of someone else's statement!
2. Keep your quotations short. Long passages of quoted material can become boring to an audience. Try using a series of shorter passages in lieu of one long one.
3. Be sure of the audience's feelings towards an author if you are using a quote to establish credibility. Very similar quotes from someone who is respected and someone who is distrusted might elicit very different audience responses to the point being made.
4. Avoid the use of verbal quotation marks. Saying "quote" and "unquote" sounds stilted and trite. Quotations can be set apart by introducing them verbally (so and so said ...) and bracketing them with a slight pause. Most often our tone and inflection alters somewhat when quoting others as well.
5. Try paraphrasing quotations whenever possible. "According to _____" or "_____ says that..." or "I remember _____ spoke of this."

* From Public Speaking by A. Duane Litfin, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1981, pp207-208.