

# GOING DEEPER

SIMPLE HELPS TO BIBLE STUDY

A. J. CRICK



BIOGRAPHY AND EDITING

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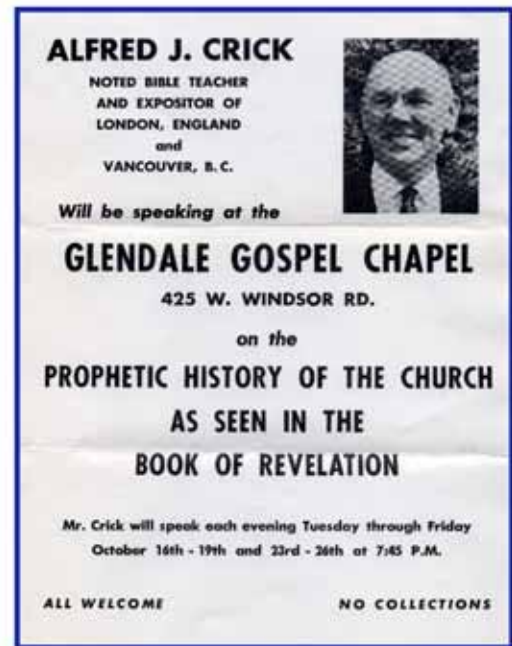
## A PORTRAIT OF A MAN OF GOD

Confident in the seemingly infinite scope of the Internet, I searched for the name Alfred J. Crick. Nothing! Enlisting the help of someone better at this than I, I was once again hopeful, although not as confident as before. He found a reference which seemed to indicate that at least one other person was

looking for information on him. It was hard to believe that someone who had impacted my life so much when I was a teenager and young adult had been so little noted and remembered. Then I thought of those words in the Bible:

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. (1 Cor. 3:12-15, KJV).

I realized that while Alfred Crick may not have been that famous on this earth, in Heaven his reward is great; and even now his work continues, both in Heaven and on earth, in the lives of people who were influenced by him and in the multiplication of that influence. In speaking of the fame of this earth as a measure of success, Mr. Crick once said of our Lord: "He was the Lord of the insignificant as well as the mighty."



For twelve years, from the age of fifteen to twenty-seven, I attended a small church which was associated with the Plymouth Brethren. Started by J.N. Darby in England, the Brethren were known for their emphasis on Bible study and worship. Many great names were at one time or another connected with this movement. Names like Harry Ironside, who later became pastor of the Moody Church in Chicago; Arthur Pink, noted Bible commentator; and George Mueller who is so well known for his orphanages and the leap of faith which started his work and sustained it: these are examples of the greatness which sometimes came out of this relatively small denomination. They would have denied that they were a denomination. They were simply a group of people who met together in the name of the Lord. They did not have a pastor as such, but certain people from within any specific meeting or assembly, as they called themselves, were used to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to teach from various parts of the Bible. Often, too, people with special teaching gifts would come to a specific geographical area or assembly and teach a series of meetings. This is how I first encountered Mr. Crick.

In those days it was usual in most evangelical churches to attend two services in the morning on Sunday, one Sunday night, one mid-week, and if there were special meetings they could run from Tuesday night through Friday. With the Brethren, worship services centered around a weekly communion service on Sunday which involved true worship for who God was, not just praise for what He had done. Other services consisted of teaching and/or preaching. Sunday was truly the Lord's day. Yet at the end of that day I often felt so refreshed that I was reluctant to leave it behind. In John 21 Christ commanded His disciples to "Feed my sheep." Sheep who are truly fed come back for more. They want more than a quick Saturday night service in order to save Sunday for fun. They want more than a TV preacher as a pastor!

Creeping into the organized Christian church today is the belief that one bases one's doctrine on experience rather than having doctrine as the foundation of one's experience. With many of the same people, hymns are viewed at best as boring, while some go so far as calling them an unnecessary crutch! Of the latter, C.S. Lewis would have questioned if they had ever even had a toothache! We are indeed beginning to show the signs of spiritual malnutrition. Spiritual malnutrition leads to dullness of spiritual interest as well as discernment, and ultimately to heresy and even apostasy.

In contrast to what passes for biblical teaching today, Alfred Crick was probably the best Bible teacher I have ever encountered. A few others came close. Today, however, I personally find deep Bible study something which can be found only rarely except in old books. Like the Apostle Paul who was a tentmaker as well as major teacher/preacher in the early Church, Mr. Crick earned his own way. He was an engraver by trade. He did not isolate himself from the duties and obligations of this world. During World War II, for example, he was stationed on rooftops as a lookout, a "spotter," for enemy planes. He was married to a wonderful woman, Margaret; and by the time I knew him, he had grandchildren with whom he was very involved.

One story which illustrates his humanness as well as his sense of humor revolved around those grandchildren. On one occasion when he was expecting a visit from them, he went out to the store to buy soda pop, as he called it. In England at that time, at least, soda pop could only be bought in a liquor store. As he stepped out of the store with two large bags of bottles in his arms, his ruddy cheeks undoubtedly made him look even more suspicious. A prim looking woman with a quick step and a glance which seemed to take in all around her looked at him and then at the bags bulging with bottles. With a look of utter disgust she drew her coat more tightly around her.

With impish glee Mr. Crick looked straight at her and hiccuped loudly. With a look of horror the woman walked rapidly away.

Mr. Crick once told me that part of his survival was always to have a sense of humor. When he wrote me letters he would sometimes sketch small comical figures on the envelope. As a Bible teacher, however, he spoke with authority; and resonating throughout his life and speech was an awesome sense of reverence and worship toward God.



Like the great Charles Haddon Spurgeon Mr. Crick was never ordained nor did he go to seminary. Yet was fluent in Greek, self taught, and he studied his Bible eight hours a day after his retirement. This background of thorough biblical knowledge showed in his preaching. Furthermore his methods of Bible study were something he loved sharing with others. This little booklet on Bible study arose from that desire. Even more gratifying to him was the one to one time he spent with individuals teaching them how to do effective Bible study. As one of the recipients of that help I remember looking with awe at his Bible. It was loose leaf, and so he could insert his thoughts on blank pages next to the text. What he wrote in that Bible was printed in perfect lettering consistent with his background as an engraver.

With the lack of foresight of youth I never asked him much about his life in England. I don't know when he was born. I only know that his wife wrote me when he died which was shortly after my father's death in 1973. I know



*From left: Alfred Crick, my father and mother, Margaret Crick.*

that they lived in South Hampton, England, because I almost visited them there one summer. I know that their marriage was a long and happy one. But everything I really know is from bits and snippets here and there, in between questions about various passages in the Bible.

Several decades have gone by now since I stood with my mother at the bottom of a long gangplank and waved "goodbye" to Alfred and Margaret Crick, dwarfed by the size of the huge ship as they stood on the deck waving and smiling back. The scene became etched in my memory for life because somehow even then I knew deep inside that this time they would not come back.

Perhaps they felt this too. Only recently I found an old letter from them, written from where they were in Canada, telling of their travel plans home to England. It contained a poignant request: "We hope to make a brief call at Los Angeles on this ship. Please note that on July 3rd we will be arriving at 8:00 a.m. and leaving again at 2:00 p.m. the same day. It would be such a joy to us if you could call at the dock and just say 'hello!' and 'goodbye!'" It was not a request they had made before.

For years Alfred J. Crick and his wife Margaret had come from England to hold Bible studies which I attended. With his wife he had endeared himself to many, not least of whom were small groups of young people scattered here and there who learned how to do real Bible study from him. I remember one occasion when my parents and I took them to the ocean for the weekend, and Mr. Crick and I had a chance to take a long walk by the harbor, both talking, his answering my questions.

Now my mother and I were at another harbor to say "Goodbye." As I stood there I wanted to remember what they looked like on that bright crisp day. For me it was the end of a very important mentoring, a very special friendship. It was a transition.

It is hard to face the impermanency of life. Yet in the constant change which we automatically encounter we are reminded that change is inevitable until that final transition into eternity.

Change means new and new is always scary. If the change is devastating, then it is obvious why the experience creates fear. The loss of a loved one, the loss of a job, sudden poverty, a loss of medical insurance: all of these changes will obviously produce fear. But even good change can create anxiety simply because it is new.

When I was very little and went to the dentist with my first cavity, I remember his saying right before he gave me a shot of painkiller: "This will hurt a little but it won't last. Then you'll start feeling numb." I braced myself. But because he had warned me, the event was no longer completely unexpected. The pain was not as bad as I had anticipated. The process had been explained. The unknown had become more known and therefore the fear had diminished.

A man who helped train me to be a therapist once told me that every time he traveled and ended up at a new hotel, he always explored the place thoroughly before settling down. That way he made the unfamiliar familiar.

Yet often life presents changes which cannot be explored prior to experiencing them. They are either thrust upon us without warning, much like an earthquake or a tidal wave, or they cannot be understood until they are experienced, like being in an airplane for the first time or being given general anesthesia. Then regardless of whether we feel dread of what we decide is bad change or joyous anticipation of what we perceive as positive, we approach the new situation with tinges of uncertainty simply because it is totally new.

Many years have passed since my mother and I stood and waved at those loved ones on board

ship. Not too long after, they were both with their Lord. My mother has now joined both of them in Heaven, and I believe that from that still more distant vantage point they all still wave and cheer me on. For all of them the transition to Heaven was a good one. It was the great and final transition, and once in Heaven new was no longer scary. For me who was still on earth, the time ahead was untrod territory. It was new. And since the changes which occurred took place on earth, not in Heaven, they were still scary and took a little longer to adjust to.

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## HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

In a desire to stimulate young men and women to develop a gift, we seek to set before the mind of such, some small help in the matter of Bible Study. In the present day it may be easily observed that there is a great lack of teaching ministry. It may well be that amongst those who seek to study and to give themselves to the Word of God there are some whom God may use and call to this work. We would suggest that not every Brother or Sister who desires to study will be thus Teachers of the Word. Over against that we venture to say that none who study will be able to disclaim any profit whatever. In order to raise the standard of Christian living and experience, we must all seek to grow in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Particularly notice the following paragraphs. We would stress the need for development in the practice of real concentration. This will be helped by the suggested methods of Bible reading and by waiting before the Lord. Then there must be also a real heart surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ and the obedient ear given to His commands.

With any method of Bible Study it will be necessary to spend a good deal of time. It is well to remember the saying of David in 2. Sam. 24:24. "Neither will I offer Burnt Offerings unto the Lord my God, of that which doth cost me nothing." So we may expect that some sacrifice will have to be made upon our part. Two things must be remembered:

- (1) The effect upon the student of such study, and preparation of heart essential in order to receive this.
- (2) There is no royal road to knowledge of the Word of God. One must be prepared to find time for regular study. This is not easy. The student must be prepared to train himself in concentration as well as study.

One of the most important purposes in our Salvation, is the pursuit of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. This can be accomplished in two ways: –

- (1) By spending time in the consciousness of the presence of God.
- (2) By devoting the mind and heart to the Word of God where Christ is constantly revealed.

Past experience has proved that, while many exhort the young to study the Bible because it is the Word Of God, very few individuals give any help in formulating a method by which this may be done. We know that Bible schools and colleges do this, and we are not making any attempt to discredit or displace their work. What we are endeavouring to do is to give help to those who are prevented from attending any regular courses.

The student is strongly advised to cultivate the sense of the presence of God. This will require a regular time or times each week, and will be in addition to the quiet time which we will suppose you are already practising. One thing any Bible student must learn is the profitable use of time. Let us acknowledge that much of our prayer life consists in asking God for things. In this deeper way of cultivating the presence of Christ we shall be asking God to reveal Himself to us. This He will do in the knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord, which we desire to cultivate. We must learn to wait in His presence. Just there the mind will commence to wander off, and we are well-advised to seek the art of gently disciplining the mind by bringing it back to God's Word for a brief consideration. Then again, after a short interval, wait upon God. The student is advised not to pursue this indefinitely, but for a period of not more than ten minutes at a time, perhaps once a week. As one progresses it may be helpful to increase guardedly the number of times per week and the length of the time thus spent. The waiting soul will be amply rewarded. "My soul wait thou, upon God."

Now let us turn to methods by which we may assimilate God's precious truth, both for our own and others' benefit and edification.

## **METHOD 1**

There are many dear Christians, who read their Bibles systematically every day. The method we now suggest is to read at far greater length and much more widely than the Daily Reading. This will require constant attention and persistent perusal. Many preachers have reduced their study into preparation for sermons. We suggest regular planned study, just as systematic as Daily Reading should be.

Our first method then, has to do with reading. We might call it the Telescopic Method. Just as the telescope gives wide field for vision, so this method will give a greater vista for consideration. Many preachers have found it profitable to read a book of the Bible again and again. Dr. Campbell Morgan used to read a passage at least a dozen times before speaking on it. So we counsel the student to

### **READ! READ! READ!**

Take a Book at a time and read it several times. This will result in fixing the subject matter in the mind.

Then go over the Book again, this time slowly and carefully, noting as you move along any striking points. As an example of this, we might suggest that things that appear but once, possess importance. Make a note of such things. Contrariwise, some things occur often, and these should be noted. The inquiring mind will be seeking the reason for such treatment of things. Often an adequate reason will be found in the general character of the Book. We might, also, in pursuit of this method note contrasts and similarities in the treatment of incidents, in the four Gospels, for example.

Look for principles such as Christ the centre of God's purposes. Above all make an endeavor to find in every Scripture something that concerns the Lord Jesus Christ. You might have a questionnaire before you, such as "What does this passage teach about the Lord Jesus?" "Can I learn anything here, concerning worship, service, and Christian living?" We cannot do such study without experiencing a personal impact from what we learn. Let us remember, too, that Christ is the theme of Scripture.

It might also be profitable to ascertain if the Holy Spirit has divided a Book by the repeated use of a phrase or phrases. Our own divisions of any Book must be abandoned if we discover that the Spirit of God has already done this by His own method. Compare Genesis "These are the generations of..." which formula divides that Book.

## **METHOD 2**

This Method is rather the effect produced by a microscope, than the wider range of the telescope. Things under such an instrument as the microscope are found to possess beauties which the telescope has not revealed.

Let us reiterate that time must be given to this. We hope that you will not be discouraged, when we suggest several hours at a sitting. At least two and longer if possible. Small scraps of a few minutes study will be less profitable in the present Method. If you are prepared to work, God will give the increase.

Keep before the heart and mind Christ as the object rather than Christ as the subject. Which means that the mere pursuit of knowledge for its own sake will not give spiritual profit. We are to progress towards the Wonderful Person of the Lord Jesus, and to this end we study.

Our Method now is to find our way in a Book by taking a verse at a time and looking up

every possible reference. It will be well to read the surrounding context with each reference. In Method I the exhortation was to READ. In the present Method we exhort the Student to:

**WRITE! WRITE! WRITE!**

Do this with the marginal references in your Bible, and set them out as the example given below. Use also any alternate renderings given in the margin of your Bible. As you write, God will use His own word for your help and guidance. Rely on the Holy Spirit to be your teacher.

You will observe that comments and an order, very readily suggest themselves to the mind. You will be able in time to furnish yourself with your own commentary.

**EPHESIANS 2**

Eph. 2:1. And you *hath He quickened* who were dead in trespasses and sins.

REFERENCES

Notice "hath He quickened" being in italics, is not in the Greek text, but the thought of quickening has been projected from Chapter 1. The reference given in an Authorized Version (King James) is as follows:  
Col. 2:13 And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him having forgiven your trespasses. (Notice similarity with Eph. 2:1.)  
John 5:24. He that heareth my Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Note "to pass from death to life" is to be *quickened*. Compare also Luke 15:24.

Eph. 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of the world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

I John 5:19. And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. (The course of this world.)

Col. 3:6. For which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. Three thoughts here:

- (a) Course of this world.
- (b) Prince of the Power of the Air.
- (c) Children of disobedience

Note three things with Satan in the *centre!* On each side of him are the course of this world, and the children of disobedience.

Eph. 2:3. Among whom we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh ... by nature the children of wrath even as others.

Titus 3:3. For we ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

We have only followed one or two references here, but enough has been included to enable the student to follow the Method. The above references were taken from an ordinary King James Version (Winston) and can easily be seen to enlarge thought. We advise any student to cultivate neatness and order in compiling any notes. The day may come when we shall be pleased that we gave ourselves to such arrangement; whereas if we write carelessly, we may be glad to destroy our notes at a later date. Write in such a way that you will be happy to keep your notes and even

perhaps to show others, so as to help them.

### METHOD 3

Let us now turn to a more advanced Method. It is really a study of the principal words in any passage. This research traces such words in order to ascertain the method of use for each word and the various ways in which such words are translated. We will anglicise the Greek words here so that they may be readily written and copied.

This Method entails the expenditure of much more time and deeper concentration than either of the former Methods. We will again go back to Ephesians 2. For the meaning of the Greek words we have used Strong's Concordance, which the student will find a great help. Again trace back references and read the context. But instead of pursuing references to phrases, now use a good concordance and trace the words in the original language. Number your principal words both in the text and in your marginal notes to correspond.

Number the words as you write and also the Greek to match, thus:

And you (hath He quickened) who were  
dead 1 in trespasses 2 and sins 3. Now the  
references: –

OF ISRAEL

SARDIS

1. Nekrous (root – a corpse): – Dead (lit. or fig.)

John 5:25 The *dead* shall hear the voice of the Son of God.

Rom. 11:25. What shall the receiving of them be but life from the *dead*.

Col. 2: 13. And you being *dead* in your sins...hath He quickened.

Rev. 3:1. Thou hast a name that thou livest and art *dead*.

We have considered the word *dead*. Notice the result here:

DEATH	(a) Individual as in John 5: 25. (b) National as in Romans 11:25. (c) Ecclesiastical as in Rev. 3:1.
	ALL ABOVE.
TRESPASSES	2. Paraptomasin – A sideslip (lapse or deviation), error or (wilful) transgression: fall, fault, offence, sin, trespass.  Ezek. 18:26 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness and <i>committeth iniquity</i> and dieth in them.  Gal. 6: 1. If a man be overtaken in a <i>fault</i> .  Psalm 19: 12 Who can understand his <i>errors</i> ? Cleanse thou me from <i>secret (faults)</i> .
SINS	3. Hamartiais – Sin (properly abstract): – Offence sin(ful): – In the plural, therefore sin in its many manifestations.

**MANY SINS – MANY SIDED.**

References to the word *sins* are very numerous, therefore we do not include them here. You will notice that we have followed three principal words, and we have elucidated some helpful details. Continue this Method and much more helpful material will come to light. Write in the column, as above. When one has pursued one's way through a Book, a great background of truth

has been built up which God can use. We will probably use it in our other studies to further build up truth in our minds.

#### METHOD 4

In each of the former Methods, we have been directed to the contents of a Book rather than a search after individual subjects. There is however a most interesting Method which we might follow to our profit. That would be the STUDY OF DIFFERENT INDIVIDUALS whose names occur in varying degrees of prominence. Some of the lesser known men and women have details recorded which are of intense interest to any Christian. To take a good concordance and note all the references to any one person would be of great profit. To observe some trait of character remarked upon throughout the Scriptures is of great help. The student will have a good collection of reference notes by this Method.

2 Tim. 2:15.

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” In order to avoid confusion of thought it will be necessary to be clear on things DISPENSATIONAL. By the use of this word, we refer to God’s dealings with men during a particular period of time. Of necessity, because of man’s dullness and lack of perception, these Methods of dealing have been suited to each manifestation of God, for the time that then was. Unless these things be understood, we may confuse God’s Methods, with present doctrine. Let us endeavor to keep apart things that differ, and thus *rightly to divide the word of truth*. We shall be saved from many questions which are endless, and from much burning of hearts if we maintain clarity in this subject.

From each of the foregoing Methods, there will be an abundant crop of subject matter. It will be profitable to list subjects as they appear and then to follow them at leisure. For this purpose, a good reference Bible is essential. Nowadays, reference Bibles are so numerous, that the student must be allowed to make his own choice. There are specialized Bibles which give exceptional marginal references and words from the original languages of Scripture.

For any who follow these methods, considerable profit will accrue. Of Method 3. Mr. Harold St. John once said "Any who will follow this Method will find considerable profit and encouragement."

For the English speaking reader who desires some acquaintance with the original languages in which Scripture was written, I strongly recommend

### **STRONG'S CONCORDANCE**

This will be a great help in the study of words and in their etymology. Contemplation of the way in which longer words are put together may yield graphic pictures of God's Truth. Help will be obtained with Greek prepositions from this work.

May God bless you as you cultivate the Method most suited to your requirements, and may the Lord open His rich treasure to you.

– A. J.Crick