

# Dr. Ernest L. Martin's Home Study Course: PREFACE

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Class of '64 Graduate & former Faculty Member of Ambassador College, England.

These notes, composed from 2013 on, are based on taped Home Study Course made between 1977-98 by Dr. Ernest L. Martin, Ph.D. Former Head of Theology for the Worldwide Church of God; he resigned in January 1974 because of his unresolved doctrinal issues with the administration. Sadly Dr. Martin died in January 2002, a great loss to the world and to those who seek Biblical truth.

## PREFACE TO MY NOTES ON THE Dr. ERNEST L. MARTIN HOME STUDY COURSE

For some months, I have had the opportunity to listen to over one hundred and sixty of Dr. Martin's taped lectures on many different topics and doctrines. This took more than two hundred and fifty hours, and I have learned more in that time than I did in the previous sixty years of what I thought was my personal "Bible Study".

I had thought that the Home Study Course would probably be for beginners, so I left them to the last to listen to the tapes. Without realizing it, I had in many ways left the best to the last! This Home Study Course is wonderful for beginners to set them on the right track, but it is also of incredible value to anyone who has studied God's Word for many years as I have. I have experienced an explosion in the amount I can learn.

Through the years, I have heard quoted the same verses on reading the Bible many, many times: 2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: and 2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

I had learned both these wonderful verses by heart from the beginning of my association with the Worldwide Church of God. Knowing them by heart is one thing, it is quite another to be able to study in such a way so as not to be ashamed of the work you do, especially when you find out **HOW** our studies should have been approached as I have now.

The problem was, despite my many years of study, I had never been told **HOW** to study the Bible. Although I was a member of the WCG for years, became a student at Ambassador College, attended all the four years of many Bible courses, graduated and became a Faculty Member of the Brickwood campus, I was never instructed in any practical or constructive detail concerning **HOW** to undertake my studies of the Bible.

The reason for that was that none of the ministers were themselves familiar with **HOW** properly to study the Bible, so there was no question of their being able to pass this vital information on to members or students! How do I know this? Because if the ministers had had the advantage of taking the Home Study Course you now have free and simple access to, they would certainly have wanted to instruct their congregations and the college students on HOW to approach Bible study in a 'workmanlike' manner.

The principle of 'here a little and there a little' is a true Biblical fact, but was misused by the ministers to encourage members and students to look up the verses that they used to support the many incorrect doctrines of the Church, and thereby to obey the instruction given in 1 Thessalonians 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. The result was a whole group of many thousands of people who only knew what they were told to know! This method of teaching or so-called 'proving' by the Church kept them all in a tragic state of ignorance of the glory, the wonder, the beauty, and the scope of the Holy Bible. Subtle or what?

This way of enslaving minds also kept those thousands firmly in the grip of a false Gospel, which actually denied them the full knowledge of who Christ really Was, the nature of the real life of Christ Jesus, the awesome reality of His sacrifice, and God's amazing purpose for all human beings.

I am not blaming anyone for my period of ignorance. I thank God for my previous associations which brought me to appreciate the Word of God as much as I did then. I am also 'over the moon' as they say that God has opened my eyes wider to be able to appreciate more of the actual Glory of His Word in my later years.

Please begin by carefully studying the Introduction as it contains a summary of the 'tools' Dr. Martin uses and encourages others to have available in their study 'toolbox' in order to become a skilled 'workman'.

The Home Study Course by Dr. Martin is truly a unique masterpiece of instruction in the workmanlike procedures, methods, and the best ways to extract the most out of any time spent in Bible Study.

Accordingly, I urge anyone who has access to this material to make a careful study of all the principles that are outlined, and use them as practical guidelines and a mental backdrop to all their studies of the Word of God.

Brian H. Butler