

THE BIBLE. ALIVE. - PART 4

NORTH PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

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THE BIBLE. ALIVE.

Over the past several weeks we've embarked on a journey of Bible discovery. For many of us the pages of God's Word sometimes seem confusing, distant, or hard to apply to everyday life. So we set out with the goal of learning how to observe, interpret, apply, and correlate the most powerful book in the world: the Bible. It is my hope and prayer that you found the Bible coming to life! But just in case there were some gaps in my teaching or your note-taking, you will find in this handout a summary of the basic toolbox for accurately studying and applying God's Word. Enjoy!

THE "WHY" QUESTION

Why should you and I study the Bible?

- ❖ Bible Study is essential to *Spiritual Growth* (Psa. 19:10; 1 Peter 2:2).
- ❖ Bible Study is essential to *Spiritual Maturity* (Heb. 5:11-14).
- ❖ Bible Study is essential to *Spiritual Effectiveness* (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

KEEP THE BIG PICTURE.

- 1) Observation: What do I see?
- 2) Interpretation: What does it mean?
- 3) Application: How does it work? "So what?"

Continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1** Keep the Big Picture
- 1** Roadblocks
- 2** Steps 1, 2, & 3 of Bible Study
- 2** Passages for Practice

THE GOAL? LIFE CHANGE.

"What you believe will determine how you behave."
~ Dr. Howard Hendricks

ROADBLOCKS - CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY TO YOU.

- "I don't have the time."
- "I tried and it just didn't work out."
- "Studying repulses me... it has the appeal of flossing my teeth."
- "I don't know how."
- "I'm just an attender or layman."
- "I don't know Greek or Hebrew."
- "I have doubts about the Bible."
- "It seems like you can make the Bible say just about anything you want it to say."
- "The Bible just isn't interesting to me."
- "I can't seem to make it interesting."
- "I feel guilty when I read my Bible."
- "I feel guilty when I don't read my Bible."
- "The Bible doesn't seem relevant to my life."
- "The Bible seems confusing and hard to understand."
- "The Bible seems boring to me."
- "I don't own a Bible."
- "I don't read, period! It's not just the Bible; I don't read anything."

STEP 1: OBSERVATION.

What do I See? Seeing things as they really are...

"The parts always take on meaning in light of the whole." ~ Dr. Howard Hendricks

- ✚ Find the *Key Terms*.
- ✚ Discover the *Structure*.
- ✚ See the *Literary Form*.
- ✚ Feel the *Atmosphere*.

"We see but we don't observe."
"Seeing always precedes understanding."

continued on page 2

STEP 1: OBSERVATION. CONTINUED...

BASIC TOOLS FOR OBSERVATION:

These points will make the text come alive, bring understanding, and help you “slap on their sandals.” Ask these questions of the text and list them:

- ❖ Context:
 - Who?
 - What?
 - When?
 - Where?
 - Why?
 - Wherefore?
- ❖ Structure:
 - Contrast (“but,” “yet”)
 - Condition (“if...then”)
 - Repetition (“by faith, by faith, by faith”)
 - Basic grammar
 - Q/A
 - Cause/Effect (“therefore,” “so,” “in order that,” “as a result,” “then”)
 - Climax
 - Comparison (“like,” “as”)
 - Correlation (“as...so,” “and”)
 - Explanation or Reason (“because,” “for”)
 - Interchange of Scene
 - Introduction or Summary
 - Pivot
 - Purpose (“that,” “so that,” “since,” “because”)
 - Specific to General

STEP 2: INTERPRETATION.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Basic Tools of Interpretation:

- Ask the right *Questions*.
- Find the *Answers*.
- Discover the *Genre* (type of literature)
- Determine the *Context* (setting).
- Know the Historical & Cultural Context:
 - Political: Who’s Ruling?
 - Geographical
 - Economic
 - Legal
 - Agricultural
 - Military
 - Family - Genealogical
- *Integrate* the pieces into a meaningful whole. What was the intended message to the original audience? What does this mean across all time (theological)?

WHAT’S THE CRY OF THE EXEGETE? “CONTEXT. CONTEXT. CONTEXT!”

“It is always easier to understand what the Bible says than to understand what somebody thinks it meant to say.” – Vance Havner

STEP 3: APPLICATION.

HOW DOES IT WORK? SO WHAT?

APPLICATION STEPS:

- ❖ What difference does it make?
- ❖ Make it clear, connecting, and compelling.
- ❖ State it as an imperative.

“God did not give us His Word to make us smarter sinners, but to change our lives.” – Howard Hendricks

APPLICATIONS??

- ❖ “Meat Offered to Idols?” (1 Cor 10:28)
- ❖ “Remove your right eye...” (Matt 5:29; Mark 9:47)
- ❖ Mode of operation in Acts... (Acts 13:4-5)

Answer this question: Is this Prescriptive or Descriptive?

PASSAGES FOR PRACTICE:

- ✓ Acts 1:8
- ✓ Luke 10:1-2
- ✓ Joshua 1:8
- ✓ Psalm 1
- ✓ Psalm 62:1-2
- ✓ Deuteronomy 19:15
- ✓ Proverbs 3:5-8
- ✓ Jeremiah 23:1-8
- ✓ 2 Corinthians 7
- ✓ Revelation 21-22

EXTRA NOTES:

KEEP THE BIG PICTURE.

- 1) Observation: “What do I see?”
- 2) Interpretation: “What does it mean?”
- 3) Application: “How does it work?” “So What?”

THE GOAL? LIFE CHANGE.

“The purpose of theology is doxology. We study in order to praise.” – Dr. J.I. Packer

“This Book will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from this Book.”

Dr. Howard Hendricks

MORE TOOLS FOR YOUR TOOLBOX

Besides a good, well-bound Bible (hardcopy is preferable) with wide margins for personal notes, a good concordance which matches your translation, a Bible dictionary, and some trustworthy commentaries, here's a book list for further research on how to study and apply God's Word:

