



Learning to Study the Word

Steps to Better Bible Study:

- 1) Observation – What is there?
- 2) Interpretation – What does it mean?
- 3) Application – How does it apply to me?
- 4) Putting it Into Practice – Journaling for Better Bible Study

Common Mistakes People Make in Bible Study:

- 1) Not reading well
- 2) Reading and jumping straight into application
- 3) What do you “think” that means? – The Sunday School Approach
- 4) Cherry-picking verses to prove a point – not considering the surrounding context
- 5) Reading things into the Bible – eisogesis not exegesis
- 6) Reading commentary BEFORE studying the Bible for yourself
- 7) Believing they can’t study the Bible well

Steps to Better Reading:

- 1) Read prayerfully – 1 Corinthians 2:14, Luke 8:10
- 2) Read, read, read, and then read again – aloud, prayerfully, with another person
- 3) Read in multiple translations of the Bible – understand their translation philosophy
- 4) Understand what type of literature you are reading – prose, poetry, wisdom, historical, eschatological, etc.
- 5) Practice with other types of reading – Mortimer Adler, *How to Read a Book*

Steps of Observation:

- 1) Who
 - a. Who is mentioned?
 - b. What is said about them?
 - c. What do they say? What do they not say?
 - d. Who wrote the passage?
- 2) What
 - a. What is happening in the text?
 - b. What are the events? What order do they happen in?
 - c. What happens to the characters?
 - d. What is the passage trying to argue or the writer trying to communicate?
- 3) Where
 - a. What is the location? What type of place is it?
 - b. Where are the people going?
 - c. What is the topography?



- 4) When
 - a. When did the events take place?
 - b. When in relation to other events in Scripture?
 - c. When in relation to other events in history?
 - d. When was the passage written?
- 5) Why
 - a. Why is this included?
 - b. Why is this passage placed in this location in the text?
 - c. Why does this person say this? Why not that?
- 6) Wherefore
 - a. So what?
 - b. What difference does this passage make?

Resources:

- *Living by the Book*, Howard Hendricks
- *Read the Bible for All it's Worth*, Douglas Fee
- *How to Read the Bible for Life*, George Guthrie

Practice Passage – Psalm 23