

Introduction

It is our belief that the Bible can be understood.

And it is our desire that you would possess the tools to allow the Bible to change your life.

- ***Three Essential Components to Bible Study***
 - ***Observation***
 - *What does it say?*
 - ***Interpretation***
 - *What does it mean?*
 - ***Application***
 - *How does it apply to my life?*

We've titled this, "Bible Study Basics." Some call this the Inductive Bible Study Method others use the word Hermeneutics (GK – hermēneūō) meaning to interpret, explain, or translate from one language to another (cf. Jn 1:38, 42, 97, Heb 7:2 & LXX Ezra 4:7)

It is the science (principles) and art (task) by which the meaning of the biblical text is determined.

Biblical hermeneutics is primarily about making Christ known to you & through you.

Importance of Proper Bible Study

- *"The Bible was not written to satisfy your curiosity but to conform you to Christ's image. Not to make you a smarter sinner but make you like the Savior. Not to fill your head with biblical facts but to transform your life."
- Living By the Book, Hendricks & Hendricks*
- *To draw near to our Lord, Creator, and Redeemer (Jn 5:39, 6:63)*
- *To stimulate faith (Ro 10:17)*
- *It sanctifies us (Jn 17:17)*
- *Proper Bible study provides the structure for us to understand what the Bible says while guarding us from putting our understanding on the Text.*
 - *Exegesis discovers the meaning from the text*
 - *Eisegesis puts human understanding into the text*
- *Proper Bible study reveals God's will for our lives (Ro 12:1-2)*
- *Consistent Bible study increases our maturity level (2 Pt 3:18, 1 Pt 2:2)*
- *Maturity directly impacts our effectiveness (1 Thess 5:11, Heb 10:24)*
- *It guards us from bad bible teaching (Eph 4:14)*
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LAYING SOME GROUNDWORK:

Gaps between us & the Bible

- ***Time Gap***
 - *The NT was written almost 2k years ago while the OT extends to the beginning of time*
- ***Geographical Gap***
 - *No biblical events took place in our geographical location*

- **Cultural Gap**
 - o Eastern biblical cultures were very different from our modern Western culture
- **Language Gap**
 - o The Scriptures were originally written in Hebrew & Greek with a small portion in Aramaic
- **Literary Gap**
 - o There exists numerous genres in the Bible:
 - o OT = Historical narrative, Law, Poetry, Prophecy & Wisdom.
 - o NT = Gospels, History, Letters & Prophetic literature.
- **Supernatural Gap**

The Bible is a human book and a divine book.

Supernatural Gap

*The Bible is a **human** book
while also a **divine** book.*

The Bible was written by human authors, but these authors were inspired by the Holy Spirit to record God's message. (2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pet 1:21)

In order to truly understand/interpret the Bible the student must be born again.

- *Referring to non-believers, Paul writes...*
- *2 Cor 4:4 "...whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe..."*
- *1 Cor 2:14 "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*

Scripture's aim is not merely information but transformation.

LAYING SOME GROUNDWORK:

The Holy Spirit in Bible Study

- *We must be born again (2 Cor 3:18)*
- *We must depend on the Author & our Teacher (2 Tim 2:7, Jn 16:13)*
- *We must be willing to obey if we expect Him to reveal (Jn 14:21, Ro 12:1-2)*
- *The Holy Spirit inspired these 66 books written by approximately 40 different authors over 1,500 years focused on ONE theme, the person & work of Jesus Christ in the gospel. (Lk 24:25-27, Jn 16:14)*
- *The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible, teaches us to understand it, and empowers us to obey what He has revealed to us. (2 Tim 3:16, Col 1:6, Ro 8:13, Gal 5:16)*

*Methods are many principles are few,
methods may change principles never do.*

There are numerous types of Bible study:

Book studies, word studies, character studies, topic studies, covenants... But every Bible reading/study must include Observation, Interpretation, & Application in that order.

You'll receive handouts for different methods to try on your own.

Observation: What do I see?

Have you ever listened to a sermon and thought, "How did I not see that?" or "How did the teacher get so much out of that?" The answer comes down to observation: they observed the text carefully. Like a detective at a crime scene.

Pray for illumination: Ps 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may see Wondrous things from Your law.

Read the passage several times in your preferred Bible translation

Read prayerfully, carefully, slowly & repeatedly

- This takes time, concentration, & commitment.
- **The Bible does not yield its riches to the lazy.**
- Prov 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.

Check Different Translations:

- Formal (Literal) Equivalent (Best for studying) –NKJV, KJV, NRSV, NASB, ESV
- Mediating – NIV, CSB, NET, CEB

Functional (Dynamic) Equivalent – GNT, NLT, GW

Observation: What do I see?

Ask the five W's

Who, What, When, Where, Why?

- **Who:** Who are the people in the story? Who is writing? Who is being written to: Jews, Gentiles, or the Church?
- **What:** What is being communicated? What is happening? What caused it to happen? What feelings are involved?
- **When:** When did it happen? When will it happen? When did they find out?
- **Where:** Where are they going? Where did it happen? Where did they come from? Where will it take place?
- **Why:** Why did he say that? Why did he do that? Why did he go there? Why is it important?

You don't have to answer every question, but you'll want to ask a lot of questions. You'll be amazed at what you find!

Observation: What do I see?

Find key words: Look for things that are...

- **Emphasized**
 - Allotted space (Gen 1-11 & 12-50), stated purpose (Jn 20:30-31), order (Jesus' baptism & temptation), movement from lesser to greater or vice versa (2 Sam 11-12)
- **Repeated**
 - Terms, phrases & clauses (Ps 136, Hb 11), characters (Nicodemus/ Barnabas), incidents (Kings/Chronicles), patterns (Judges), NT use of OT
- **Related**

- *Move from general to specific (Mt 6), questions & answers (Ro 6:1, Job 40), cause & effect (Gen 2:17, Proverbs, Phil 4:6-9)*
- *Alike*
 - *Similes (Ps 42:1, 1Pt 2:2), metaphors (Jn 15:1), conjunctions such as “and, as, also” (Gal 2:20, Josh 1:5)*
- *Unalike*
 - *Similes, metaphors, (Ps 1, Jer. 24:8, Hos 6:6-7) conjunction “but” or “yet” (Gal 5:22, Eph 2:4)*
- *True to life*
 - *The human heart transcends time & culture:*
 - *Look for emotions, questions, struggles, problems, temptations, ambitions, goals, motives. Ps 119:143, Mt 14:31, Jn 11:35*

Observation: What do I see?

Prov 20:12 The hearing ear and the seeing eye, The LORD has made them both. The Lord has designed us to seek and search for Him

- *There are times to use commentaries...but not at first.*
- *There is no substitute for the Holy Spirit revealing His truth directly to you.*
- *Write down your observations*
 - *Share what you’re reading/observing with others.*
 - *Ask a friend/family member to join you: You both could study on your own & come together to talk about your findings.*
- *Get a reference study Bible*
 - *Don’t jump to looking at application notes*
- *Free Bible study tools/apps*
 - *Blue Letter – Bible blb.org*
 - *Bible Hub – biblehub.com*
 - *Logos Bible Software – logos.com*

Let’s try it!40 Observations from Romans 12:1-2

(20 observations from vs. 1)

Who is writing (note: ‘I’)?

What do we know about him?

Who is the audience (note: ‘you, your’)?

What details do we know about them?

Has the author been to this location?

What has the author been saying prior?

What does ‘beseech’ mean?

Is there significance in the 'therefore'?

Is anyone called to action?

What are they being asked to do?

How or why should the audience perform this?

What consists of God's mercies (note: plural)?

Do you know of other uses of God's mercy in Paul's writing or elsewhere?

What does 'present' mean?

What does 'living' & 'sacrifice' mean?

What about 'holy'?

Does presenting an acceptable sacrifice sound familiar? (think OT)

What is acceptable vs. unacceptable?

What does 'reasonable' mean?

What does 'service' mean?

(20 observations from vs. 2)

What is the first conjunction in vs. 2?

What are they first told ('not') to do?

What does conform mean?

What does world mean?

What is the second conjunction?

What should the recipients be doing?

Can you define 'transformed'?

How should they do this?

What does 'renewing' mean?

Do you know what 'mind' means?

Are there any other Scriptures which speak on renewing the mind?

Describe the first use of the preposition 'that...' Why is that word there?

What does it mean to 'prove'?

What does the word 'will' mean here?

What 3 adjectives describe God's will?

What does God's 'good' will mean?

What about His 'acceptable' will?

And His 'perfect' will?

What do we learn about God's will? Can we know it? What if we're not transformed?

Do you see any other options besides either conforming to the world or being transformed by renewing the mind?