

How to Study the Bible

Exegetical Study

- I. Get Ready
 - a) Pray
 - b) Adjust your attitude
 - c) Gather your tools
 - d) Open your Bible
- II. The Six Contexts
 - a) Literary Context

What kind of book are you studying from? (see Bible Book Chart)

Why is this important?

- i) Law – has some history but mostly direct commands for the Jewish Nation. Shows Character of God and what is important to Him
 - ii) History – Shows narrative and examples both good and bad. Also shows Character of God and what is important to Him
 - iii) Poetry – Shows us a lot of the character of God and the various writers. It also includes a lot of figures of speech.
 - iv) Prophecy – Gives us God’s communication to His people and other nations. Tells a lot about the future. There is a lot of symbolism in prophecy
 - v) Gospels – Gives us the life of Christ before the Church started during a time that is still under the law
 - vi) Epistles – The epistles give us the teaching of the Bible to the Church
- b) Immediate Context
 - i) Read Read Read
 - (1) Read it at the beginning of your study to get an idea of what you’re studying. Reading the passage in different versions will help.
 - (2) Read it the second time to ask questions and observe
 - (3) Read it a third time after your study to understand it and summarize what you learned
 - ii) Observe
 - Ask the following questions:
 - (1) Is anything emphasized?
 - (2) Is anything repeated?
 - (3) Is anything explained?
 - (4) Is anything related?
 - (5) Are there any key words used – Wherefore, Therefore, But, Yet, And
 - (6) What is the main point of the passage?
 - (7) What points are used to support the main point of the passage?

iii) Define

(1) Look up all of the key words in the passage

c) Chapter Context

i) Read Read Read

ii) Observe

iii) Define

d) Book Context

i) Who was this book written to

ii) Who was it written by?

iii) When was it written?

iv) What were the circumstances under which it was written?

v) What are the major themes of this book?

vi) What is the outline of the book?

e) Author Context

i) Looking at the main theme of the passage, what else has this author written about this subject?

f) Entire Bible Context

i) Looking at the main theme of the passage, what else is written in the Bible about this subject?

III. Apply

- S Sins to confess
- P Promise to claim
- A Attitude to change
- C Command to obey
- E Example to follow
- P Principle to apply
- E Error to avoid
- T Truth to Believe
- S Something to pray about or praise God for

IV. Present

You should always share what you have studied.

Don't worry about getting all of these points down. You will grow in your studying as you continue to grow in the Lord. You will also grow in your knowledge of the Word as you continue to study. The most important part of studying is found in getting ready, reading and observing, and making application.

Topical Study

- I. Get Ready
 - a) Pray
 - b) Adjust your attitude
 - c) Gather your tools
 - d) Open your Bible
- II. Gather information
 - a) Search the Bible for your topic
 - i) Do a word search
 - ii) Gather scriptures that you already know
 - b) Search other resources for your topic
 - i) Use the internet
 - ii) Use commentaries
- III. Context

Read all of your verses in their context

 - a) Literary context
 - b) Immediate context
 - c) Chapter context
 - d) Book context
 - e) Bible context
- IV. Outline
 - a) Plan
 - b) Group similar passages together
 - c) Write out subtopics
- V. Prepare for presentation

What we study should be shared with others.

Week One

2 Timothy 2:15 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁵Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

- I. Overview of Exegetical study methods (see outline)
- II. Get Ready (take a short amount of time to talk about each one of these)
 - a) Pray see James 1:5
 - b) Adjust your attitude
 - i) You don't know everything
 - ii) God's ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts higher than our thoughts Isaiah 55:9
 - iii) Get rid of preconceived ideas
 - c) Gather your tools
 - i) Bible
 - ii) Concordance
 - iii) Theology book
 - iv) Survey books
 - v) Computer programs
 - vi) Access to the Internet
 - d) Open your Bible. You should always read from the Bible before looking at a commentary or looking up what someone else has to say about a passage. Read it first then listen to others.
- III. Context (This week we will look at the first context)

Literary Context - What kind of book are you studying from? (see Bible Book Chart)

1. Law – has some history but mostly direct commands for the Jewish Nation. Shows Character of God and what is important to Him.
 - a. The law lasted from the time of Moses until the time of the Church (about 1500 years)
 - b. We are no longer under the law but under grace instead (See the book of Galatians and Acts chapter 15)
2. History – Shows narrative and examples both good and bad. Also shows Character of God and what is important to Him
 - a. Look at the example of Joseph (Genesis 39)
 - b. Look at the examples of David
 - i. David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17)
 - ii. David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11)
3. Poetry – Shows us a lot of the character of God and the various writers. It also includes a lot of figures of speech.
 - a. Figures of Speech Involving Analogy or Comparison
 - i. Simile - an explicit comparison using words such as "like" and "as"

1. Psalm 1:3 - the righteous will be like a tree planted by streams of water
 - b. Metaphor - an implicit comparison by direct association
 - i. Psalm 119:105 - God's word is a lamp
 - c. Hyperbole - deliberate exaggeration for sake of effect; not trying to be factual
 - i. Psalm 119:136 - My eyes shed streams of water.
 - d. Personification/anthropomorphism/zoomorphism
 - i. Personification – Entities represented with human features
 1. Proverbs 1:20 - wisdom shouts in the streets
 - ii. Anthropomorphism - God represented with human features
 1. Psalm 139:16 - God's eyes see
 2. Isaiah 7:18 - God whistles
 - iii. Zoomorphism - God represented with nonhuman features
 1. Psalm 91:4 - God shelters with his wings
4. Prophecy – Gives us God's communication to His people and other nations. Tells a lot about the future. There is a lot of symbolism in prophecy
 - a. When was the prophecy written
 - b. When was the prophecy fulfilled
 - c. Is the prophecy yet to be fulfilled?
 - d. Was the prophecy partially fulfilled
 - e. Was the prophecy or is the prophecy to be fulfilled more than once
5. Gospels – Gives us the history of the life of Christ
 - a. This is during a time that is still under the law
 - b. We should harmonize the gospel accounts (look up what the other gospels say about the passage)
6. Epistles – The epistles give us the teaching of the Bible to the Church
 - a. Epistles give direct doctrine to believers and the Church

Break into groups

Decide on a passage of scripture that your group will study exegetically.

Read through the passage together.

Discuss what kind of literature it is and why it is important.

Keep notes on important finds in the passage and its literature type

Next Week we will study our passage and look at its immediate context.

Suggested passages for exegetical study:

1 Corinthians 13:1-7

Proverbs 31

1 Corinthians 5:9-13

Proverbs 1:1-6

1 Corinthians 12

Acts 17:1-9

Matthew 28:16-20

Acts 17:16-34

Psalms 3

Matthew 20:1-16

Psalms 1

Luke 17:7-10

Psalms 8

Pick your own but ask Tom or Jeff

Psalms 13

Week Two

1. Overview and recap from last week
2. Immediate Context
 - a. Read Read Read
 - i. Read it at the beginning of your study to get an idea of what you're studying. Reading the passage in different versions will help.
 - ii. Read it the second time to ask questions and observe
 - iii. Read it a third time after your study to understand it and summarize what you learned
 - b. Observe

Don't try to read your opinion into the verses. Let the scripture guide where the study goes.

Ask the following questions:

 - i. Is anything emphasized?
 - ii. Is anything repeated?
 - iii. Is anything explained?
 - iv. Is anything related?
 - v. Are there any key words used – Wherefore, Therefore, But, Yet, And
 - vi. What is the main point of the passage?
 - vii. What points are used to support the main point of the passage?
 - c. Define
 - i. Look up all of the key words in the passage
 1. Use concordance
 2. Bible Program
 3. Internet www.blueletterbible.org is a good site to use
3. Break into groups and use what you have just learned

Week Three

- I. Chapter Context
 - a) Read – read the entire chapter or chapters surrounding the passage.
 - b) Observe
 - i) Ask the following questions:
 - (1) Is anything emphasized?
 - (2) Is anything repeated?
 - (3) Is anything explained?
 - (4) Is anything related?
 - (5) Are there any key words used – Wherefore, Therefore, But, Yet, And
 - (6) What is the main point of the passage?
 - (7) What points are used to support the main point of the passage?
 - c) Define – Look up key words and verses
 - d) Outline – outline the chapter(s) surrounding the passage you are working on. Ask yourself: Where does my passage fit into the chapter(s).
- II. Book Context use survey books or the internet (www.blueletterbible.org)
 - a) Ask the following questions
 - i) Who was this book written to?
 - ii) Who was it written by?
 - iii) When was it written?
 - iv) What were the circumstances under which it was written?
 - v) What are the major themes of this book?
 - b) Outline the book and ask yourself: Where does my passage fit into the book?

Week Four

- I. Author Context
 - a. Looking at the main theme of the passage, what else has this author written about this subject?
- II. Entire Bible Context
 - a. Looking at the main theme of the passage, what else is written in the Bible about this subject?
- III. Apply
 - S Sins to confess
 - P Promise to claim
 - A Attitude to change
 - C Command to obey
 - E Example to follow
 - P Principle to apply
 - E Error to avoid
 - T Truth to Believe
 - S Something to pray about or praise God for
- IV. Present
 - a. You should always share what you have studied.