

How Can I Get More Out of My Bible Reading?

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9Marks: Church Question Series

Lesson 3: Focus #2 A Few Tips for Better Bible Reading

Homework review: Read the rest of the booklet. Read Colossians 2. Read several passages from BFM2000 Family Article.

Q. *Share something you read from the Bible this week, what it means, and how you are applying it to your life.*

Q. *What are some of the practical things you do to get more out of your Bible reading?*

I. Keep three questions before you as you read

1. What is the Bible all about?
2. What is the book all about?
3. What is this passage all about?

Illustration: a picture on the wall: view the whole picture; part of the picture; a fine detail of the picture

II. Principles for Better Bible Reading

A. Understand the Bible's Big Picture

1. Keep in mind the overall storyline of the Bible as you read:
Creation, Fall, Israel, Salvation/redemption, Church, New Creation / Restoration
Short version: Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration
God, Man, Christ, Response
The Story of Redemption/ The story of redemption in Christ
2. Keep in mind the various covenants found through the Bible to know where you are at in the story:
Adamic, Noahaic, Abrahamic, Davidic, New covenant...

Bottom Line: The Bible is a story. *"God is establishing His kingdom through covenants, climaxing in Christ, all for His glory."* P. 37.

B. See What's There (Observation)

1. Read the Bible fast.
 - a. In one sitting as fast as you can read the book of the Bible.
 - b. Read it multiple times.
 - c. Write a one sentence summary of the chapter.
 - d. Write a one sentence summary of the whole book.
2. Read the Bible slowly.
 - a. Take a paragraph and write it out by hand.

- b. Take note of the context. Context is king.
 - c. Look for repeated words. They tend to form a theme.
 - d. Look for commands / imperatives.
 - e. Look for commentary by the characters in story.
 - f. Look for key words.
 - g. Look for how other authors of Scripture understand passage
 - h. Let clear parts interpret less clear parts.
 - i. Memorize Scripture helps in understanding (never memorize a Bible verse).
3. Ask good questions of the text.
- a. Who are the main characters and what are they doing?
 - b. What is the main point of the parable?
 - c. What are the main themes of the passage?
 - d. Does this passage teach doctrine?
 - e. What does the text reveal about God? About Man? About sin?
 - f. Does the passage contain commands? What are they?
 - g. Does the passage contain promises? What are they?

C. Understand the Meaning

- 1. What did the author mean when he wrote these words?
- 2. Knowing the different types/genres of the Bible will help you understand the meaning
- 3. Read in context. Each verse in light of the passage, in light of the chapter, in light of the book, in light of the whole book.
- 4. Look up key words to determine their specific meaning. Not to Webster's.
- 5. Identify figurative language.
- 6. Correlate your study of passage with other related passages.
- 7. Use other tools

Bottom Line: *We are to draw from the text what the author meant to say to his readers.*

D. Apply truth to life

- 1. What does God want me to believe?
- 2. What does God want me to love?
- 3. What does God want me to desire?
- 4. What does God want me to do?

Remember, the Bible is meant to shape our minds, our affections, our yearnings, and our actions.

We want to be a Community of Bible Readers

As Christians who are devoted to God and devoted to one another.

We gather together to worship Christ. Worship and prayer.

We grow together to know Christ. The Study of God's Word.

We go together to proclaim Christ. The proclamation of the Gospel.

Homework:

- a. Read Colossians 3. Apply the principles you learned in this lesson.
- b. Read Colossians 3 in more than one translation.

Colossians 2:6-15 Outline / paraphrase

Therefore,

*As you received Christ Jesus as Lord

So walk in him

Rooted and built up in him and established in the faith

Just as you were taught

Abounding with thanksgiving.

*See to it that no one takes you captive

By philosophy and empty deceit,

According to human tradition,

According to the elemental spirits of the world

And not according to Christ.

For in him

The whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,

And you have been filled in him

Who is the head of all rule and authority.

In him also you were circumcised

With a circumcision made without hands

By putting off the body of the flesh

By the circumcision of Christ,

Having been buried with him in baptism,

In which you were also raised with him through faith

In the powerful working of God,

Who raised him from the dead.

And you,

Who were dead in your trespasses

And the uncircumcision of your flesh

God made alive together with him,

Having forgiven us all our trespasses,

By canceling the record of debit that stood against us

With its legal demands.

This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

He disarmed the rulers and authorities

And put them to open shame,

By triumphing over them in him.

*commands

X connector words

Y how connectors

Two commands: Walk/live/abide in Jesus Christ; Guard your faith/gospel

1. Look for clues to a book/chapter/passage's general theme or idea
2. Grasp the structure of a book/chapter/passage (the skeleton under the flesh)