

How To Do A Bible Study: Part 3

Greetings

Well, good evening to all of you. Thank you for joining me again for our CEP, Christian Education Program on how to study the Bible. This is our third or fourth, third session in our four parter, and I want to remind you that how to study the Bible is a super important skill, useful for evangelism, for discipleship for helping brothers and sisters in Christ. I think this is something that all of us need to learn. And my goal is to just give you a little kickstart, a kind of encouragement to embark upon a journey of personal discovery, on how to read the Bible yourself and to teach the Bible for others.

Introduction

I hope you recall that I give four principles about how we can have good Bible studies, content, clarity, connection, and conviction, we have spent the bulk of our time really looking at the first of these four principles. And that is content. Because after all, giving the right content is of paramount importance. So, content here is about giving people what God is communicating in His Word. And in order to get to the right content, we really need to have some foundational principles. I've shared with you what they are. Number one, we need to have the correct word meaning. Number two, we need to have the right context. Number three, we need to have the right comparisons. And then number four, we need to have the right connection. Now correct word meaning I've shared with you the resource from Blue Letter Bible. I hope you can use that regularly to find out what the meaning of each word really is, especially for interesting or difficult words. And then for context, I hope you would learn to read a little bit more before this verse and read beyond this verse so that you get the right context setting, circumstance to better appreciate what this verse that you're looking at really means.

Content: Comparison

But today we're looking at comparison. Comparison is based on the understanding that the Bible is one book inspired by the Holy Spirit. And sometimes when he mentioned something in the beginning, he might say something about what he said in the beginning, right at the end. And when you are comparing these two passages together, you get a more complete understanding of this verse or this subject that you're looking at.

So better for me to illustrate, we come back to this question I have set with for you before, in Genesis chapter three, verse one, "Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast" (Genesis 3:1). Now, if you read Genesis three, they will not tell you who this serpent is. It does not. But this is the beauty of comparing Scripture with Scripture. In Genesis three, it does not say, but God does say who this serpent is at the end of the Bible, in the book of Revelation, and also in Second Corinthians 11. So, we read in Revelation 20, that he says, "And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan" (Revelation 20:2). So here we go, here you have it. The Bible tells us that the serpent is Satan, is the devil himself. So, we are left in no doubt that when we read Genesis three from now on,

we know it's Satan trying to tempt Adam and Eve. Here you go, you get answers. When you compare Scripture with Scripture. Again, Second Corinthians 11 says, "The serpent deceived Eve by his cunning" (2 Corinthians 11:3). And in verse 14, we read, "for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14). So, the Bible is a book that can help interpret itself, if we are diligent to search.

A second example, you read numbers 20 and verse eight. Remember the story of how God commanded Moses to speak before the rock. And you shall bring forth water from the rock. Now when you read this, you say, well, nothing special. I read about a rock, but I don't see anything much in it. And when you read numbers, you don't see any identification or special identification about the rock. But you know what the rock is when you compare Scripture in numbers 20 with Scripture in First Corinthians 10. For Paul said, "For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4). So next time you read the story of the rock in numbers 20, you will say, ha, I know what this rock is, it is Christ. Comparing Scripture with Scripture.

I think I'll give you something even more familiar. In Exodus 12, we read about the Passover lamb. And God instituted this ceremony about slaying the lamb, smearing its blood on the doorposts to save Israel. Why? Because this Passover lamb is meant to be a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. How do you get that? Because I read in First Corinthians five that "Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed" (1 Corinthians 5:7). Comparing Scripture with Scripture, I understand now that the reason why God gave Israel this ceremony, this rule, this ritual, is so that Israel will learn about what Jesus will do. Like the lamb, he will be sacrificed. Like the lamb, his blood will be shed. Like the lamb, his blood will be the means by which we are protected from death. Like the lamb, he will be the savior, from the judgment and wrath of God to come. What a beautiful way to read the Bible: Scripture comparing Scripture. So, you want to know the Bible well? Get the correct word meaning, understand the context, have the practice of comparing Scripture with Scripture. That gets better as you read more and more of the Bible and remember more and more of the Bible, you will compare much more effectively with time. All right.

Content: Connection

And then number four, is connection. Now connection is where you try to understand why this verse is here. You know it, the first three principles help you understand what this verse means. But connection now helps you understand, having understood what the meaning is, you now want to understand why. Why is it here? What is it here for? How does this contribute to the overall intent of the author? I think that's why I want to say that this is a principle to connect with other verses, other passages to enrich a particular idea or theme or teaching from God. So, connection asks the questions, why? Why here? What is it here for? Now, this takes a whole lifetime to learn, but I just give you some examples.

Number one, Genesis chapter four, verses 16 to 26. I use this example because I just preached about this in, in our Sunday sermon series. I said that Genesis four, 16 to 26 is like a blind spot in the Bible. Many people just read and ignore it, forget about it. But the richness of this text comes when I asked the question, how is this text that seemingly is just about names and a particular family? How is this passage enriching the idea of what God is saying throughout the book of Genesis? So, when I looked at it from that angle, I suddenly realized, Genesis 4:16 to 26 is not just an irrelevant record of some

names, but it is actually a flashing out a detailing of the life of Cain and the legacy that follows, the children, the descendants he has, and the kind of culture and city and lifestyle he's going to end up with. And contrast that with the children and legacy and culture of the people of Seth's line, who calls upon the name of the Lord, that becomes rich. And it only makes sense when you ask, why here, what is it here for? You see, it's so much more enriching when you read the Bible that way. Why? How is this connected? And when you ask those questions with good, godly curiosity, you get to see a different angle and layer of understanding in the Bible.

Same thing for Genesis chapter five, we looked at that, as well as the church. And I realized that this is actually a passage that talks about waiting because remember, Genesis 3:15, God promised the Savior, it is not Cain, not Abel, not Seth. Who is it? That's the question that begs to be answered. And so, Genesis five is actually giving us 1500 year history of offspring and son and descendant, after offspring, son and descendant, because they're all waiting for the Messiah. And whilst we are waiting for the Messiah for the Savior, God teaches us important lessons about death, and about a man who walked with God and didn't die, and about how God is using his people to preach a message that will call men to repentance. Now, that all is so rich, when you understand how it connects with Genesis one to four, Genesis six and onwards.

Okay, maybe one last example, and that is Romans chapter 12. Now, Romans 12 is just a classic passage to learn about connection, why here? What is it here for? I skipped one to two because it's familiar to us one to two is understanding that we are to present ourselves a living sacrifice, we are to worship God because we understand the mercies of God. Paul says, "I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God, that you present yourself as a living sacrifice". So, the connection is, I am, and I want to give my life to God, because of Jesus, that's verses one and two. But verses three to eight connects even more. Verses three to eight talks about how we are to use our spiritual gifts to serve one another. Now on its own, that's all it means. But when you connect verse three to eight to verse one to two, oh, it makes such a tremendous theological point. And it is this. What does it mean to worship God? Just to come to church and sing. I think what Paul is explaining here is the worship of God begins when we love and serve His people. How? By using our gifts. Wow, where did you get that? Well, when you ask that question, why here? What is it here for? In other words, I now see that when I serve my brothers and sisters in Christ, I serve them not because of them alone, I serve them because of God, I serve them, because I see that this is what worship looks like, to me. This is what worship is all about. I can't serve my invisible God, but I can serve the visible Church of God. And when I serve them, it is worship and I worship because God has first given to me his son. So, what this means is when we understand the gospel, it transforms the way we relate to one another, because of worship.

How rich is this, and all that comes when we understand connection. So, if we would understand the parts of the Bible, our wisest course is to get to know the whole. So, I want to encourage you to read the Bible, every word, every sentence, every phrase, every chapter, every book, every part of the Bible. And when you read the Bible, read also the books, and read the portions, read the chapters, with a phrase, right down to the word. When you go from small to big, big to small, you can understand the Bible a lot better that way.

Useful resources for Bible Study

So these are the four principles to help you get the good and right and faithful content. I hope this is useful for you. Let me share with you now some resources I use that are free, which are easily accessible to you, that you can use for yourself to embark on a life of Bible study. Take a look with me.

Well, I've already shared with you some resources earlier on, and one of it is BLB. It's the Blue Letter Bible. It's a simple website that helps you understand the words or meaning of words and so on. I will not rehash this. But let me show you other resources, which I found useful. For some of you who may want to have overview of the Bible. Like I said, it's helpful to get overviews. I think this has been something that is easy for me, Bible project. You can just go to learn the Bible for free online. It's free, and you have videos. I think this is nice, because it's all created in very simple video formats, which you can watch and learn and enjoy together so you can take time to explore this. It tells you about Genesis, Revelation, the book of Daniel, different biblical books. You can watch all the animation on video. So all I'm doing is just to show you that is easy to get to Bible project and it gets you right there. All right. So you have all these commentaries in animation from Genesis one and so on.

Okay. Another thing I would like to share with you is something I use for even my own sermons. And, for example, you want to study the book of Genesis. I will type in the word Genesis. And then I'll have preceptaustin as one word. So look at this preceptaustin. Alright. And having done this, I go Google search. It will lead me to all the commentaries and sermons in the book of Genesis. So, these are the commentaries that are free for you I would say, not all of them are easy to use and read because some are ancient. But there will be those that after you have explored can be very helpful. I use John MacArthur, John Piper. There are many other good people whose commentaries are listed. Take your time, explore it, find out for yourself, which one suits you the best. So, that's preceptaustin. Now I think it's difficult to navigate within the website itself. This is somewhat complicated. So I've always done this, the book I want then presetaustin. So for example, Romans presetaustin, it will then give you a list of commentaries you can look at, okay, so these are free stuff. These are websites that contains all or many of the sermons in one place, so it's easy to use.

And lastly, I will suggest to you maybe if you like, is our own church website, Gospel Light Christian Church, and you can see our sermons and all our transcripts are here, you can check out past series. So, take your time to explore Gospel Light's resources as well, they are free for your use. Alright, so these are the useful resources I use and you can use. I hope this is helpful.

Conclusion and prayer

Well, I hope this is useful and easy for you. And I hope you that you would be able to avail yourself to embark on a life journey of digging into the Bible. Next week, we will look at the other three principles of Bible study. But I look forward to catching up with you in our Q and A's session right after this. Let's close in a word of prayer. Father, thank You for this time that we can learn to study the Bible. Bless your people. Thank you for their passion for their desire for their hunger for their humility. Help them to handle the Bible well in their lifetime and help them to be a blessing to others in teaching and doing Bible study with others well. Thank you, we ask in Jesus' name, Amen. See you right after this