



GOD IS GOOD MINISTRIES

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20th Annual

Frank Ray Conference

Sunday School Teacher's
Certification Course

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Teacher's Certification Class

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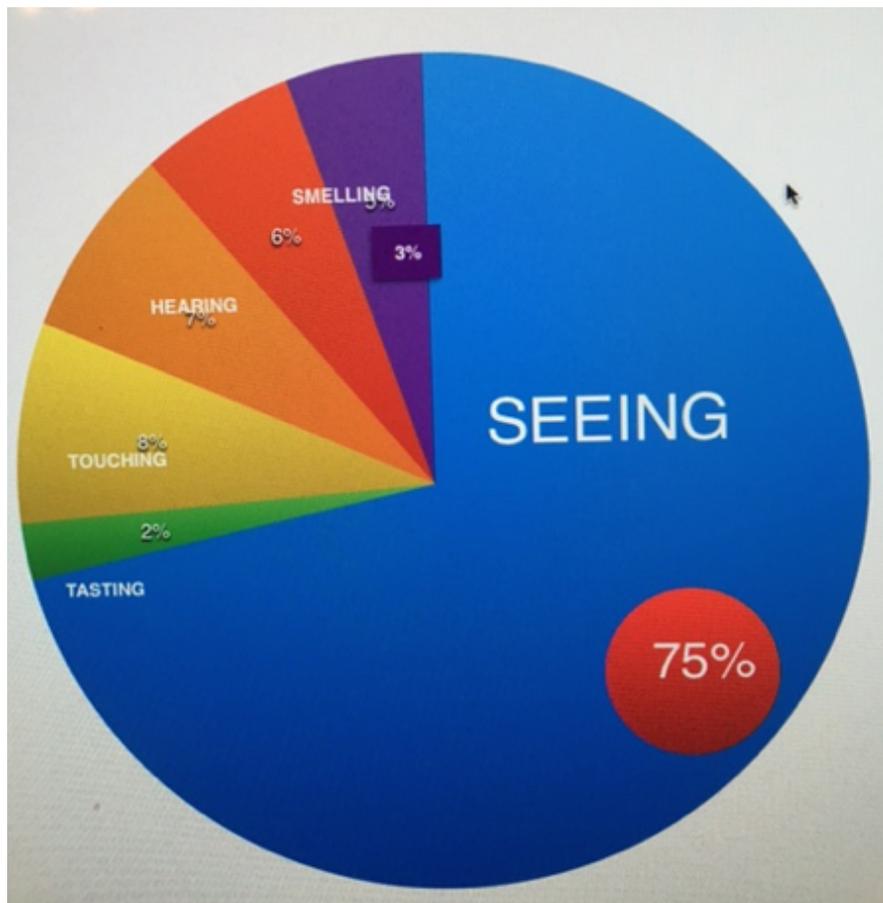
Introduction

Grasping God's Word introduces you to the process of reading, interpreting, and applying the Bible, a process that J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays refer to as the "Interpretive Journey." The journey starts with a call to careful reading, because this is where we determine what the biblical text meant in its original context (*their town*). Before we study to apply that meaning to our lives (our town), however, we need to measure the width of the river that separate us from the world of the text. Once we have crossed the river, we will be able to apply the meaning of the Bible in relevant and reliable ways.

We will study to read with more insight and understanding. Superficial reading needs to be replaced by serious reading. This teacher's certification class will show you how to observe smaller sections of the text, looking for things like repeated words, contrast, comparisons, list, figures of speech, influential verbs, nouns, and conjunctions.

Have you ever seen a Bible "parked" in the rear window of someone's car? That's common where I come from. A guy will come out of church, hop into his car, toss his Bible in the back, and leave it there until the next Sunday. That's quite a statement of the value he places on God's Word. In effect, when it comes to Scripture he's functionally illiterate six out of seven days a week. The Bible is owned, read on occasion, even taken to church—but not *studied*. Why is it that people do not get into Scripture for themselves, to understand it and see it make a difference in their lives? I want to suggest three benefits you can expect when you invest in a study of God's Word, which are available nowhere else. And frankly, they're not luxuries, but necessities.

Teaching and Lesson Preparation



LESSON PREPARATION

I. Pray

Read the Text

- Read it repeatedly
- Read it from several Scripture versions
- Read it every day of the week
- Read the chapter before and the chapter after

II. Answer Your Questions

- ___ Jot down questions you have about the text
- ___ Define words
- ___ Is there a place on the map you should locate?
- ___ Begin reading other Bible helps.

III. Determine the Message

___ How can the students use the Bible precepts in every day life?

- ___ List all important ideas in your text
- ___ Group or Summarize your ideas
- ___ State the message of the text in one sentence

* NOTE The message for one class might be different than that for another

* NOTE Don't try to make the Bible say just what you want it to say

IV. Consider your plan

___ A good lesson has structure, an outline, a sense of direction

___ Each part of the lesson should logically lead lead to the next part

VI. Choose Your Methods

- ___ Consider your time
- ___ Consider your room
- ___ Consider your materials
- ___ Consider your students

VII. Write your Lesson Plan

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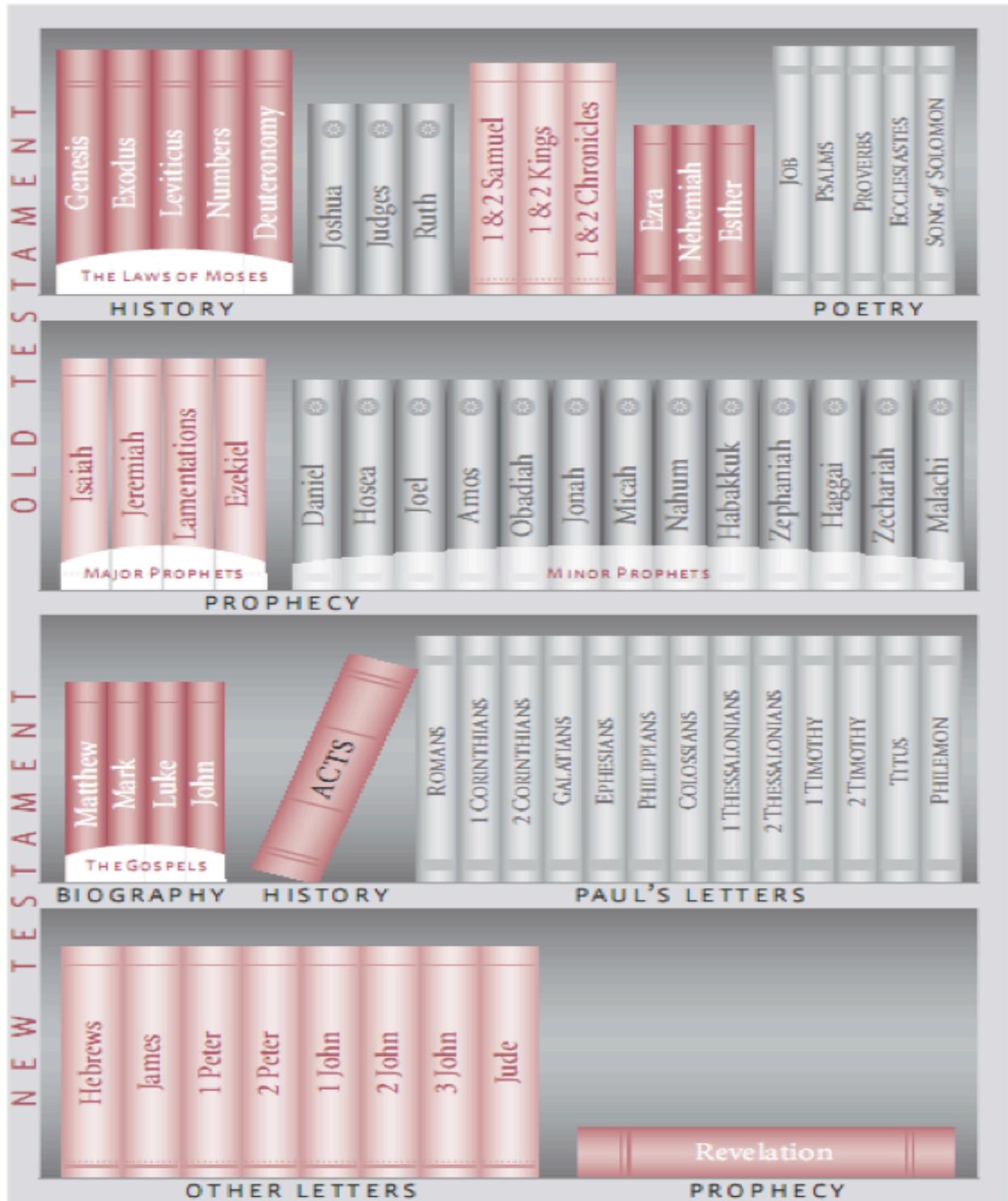
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Consider your students

VII. Write your Lesson Plan

66 Books of the Bible



How to Study the Bible

How do you teach the Bible? First, you need to relax. You cannot do it! Teaching the scriptures well is outside of a human's ability. For we did not write it and we cannot interpret it accurately. Only the author of Scripture can accurately teach it. Your goal must be to let Him use you to teach. On the other hand, you must know it. The goal is the presence of the Lord. The first thing you need to get in your mind is that a Bible study is a type of discipleship.

What is a disciple? A person who follows the master around lives with him, and learns to do what the master does by observation and osmosis is called a disciple. Your Bible study must be designed to produce disciples. This means they are going to follow your lead. Bible teachers must remember the following verse: My brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers, because we know that we teachers will be judged more strictly. **[James 3:1 Many versions]**

Discipleship One of the major things lacking in the modern church is the concept of discipleship. It is often assumed that Christian believers just grow up naturally. But there is nothing natural about it. Being born from above with the new life of God is a radically different life. You will see the growth from babe to a child, to youth, to young adult, to an elder in every believer—if they live long enough. This type of relationship takes time. We all start with the baby/parent level of relationship. That's good for the baby—not so good for the parent. Now I know you all love babies. That is not what I am talking about. Our relationships with babies are joyful and hopeful. You meet the

baby's needs and begin the long process of teaching the baby how to relate. The joy of a baby is innocence and potential. There is a very strong hope of an eventual satisfying relationship with a mature human, but a baby is simply not capable of most aspects of the relationship. We grow into the child/parent level. This can take anywhere from two to forty years. A few people never grow past babyhood. That's a tragic thing. The plan is that the child increasingly partakes in the relationship. Gradually the child becomes an individual—not just in inherited characteristics, but also in character. We start to see the first hints of their individual gifts, specific talents, and desires. It becomes possible to talk with them and reason with them. After a long time, the child grows into a teenager and the relationship really begins. This young adult/parent relationship is where the hard work begins. This is where the child starts to understand responsibility, duty, and honor. They begin to be forced to deal with character and morality issues like lust, greed, power, and so on. They begin to think about the vision for their life. Life goals first appear. Physical maturity makes the development of real and useful skills possible. Like-minded people are found to enrich a person's life. Careers take shape. Youthful goals are reached, and more realistic lifestyles are developed as the child assumes responsibility for the direction of his or her life. The baby has become an individual adult: hope is realized for good or ill.

Basics of the Journey

The ultimate benefit of firsthand Bible study is that you will fall in love with the Author. You see, it's hard to fall in love by proxy. Sermons, books, commentaries, and so on—can be wonderful resources for spiritual growth. But they are all secondhand. If you want to know God directly, you need to encounter His Word directly.

Yet even Bible study can become an end if you let it. One of the great problems believers have today is that often we know more about the Scriptures than we know about the God of the Scriptures. But my Bible tells me: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Corinthians [2:9](#) kjv).

Costs

But there are costs involved. The riches of God are free, but they are not cheap. Bible study places several expectations on you. Let me mention two.

Openness to study

Scripture does not yield its fruit to the lazy. Like any other discipline of life, Bible study pays off in proportion to how much of an effort you make. The greater the investment, the greater the reward.

Openness to God

As I said earlier, the ultimate aim of Bible study is to know God. The question is, do you want to know Him intimately? Is that what you're after? If so, He promises to honor your diligence in the Word.

For example, notice what [Psalm 1:2](#) says about the person who wants to be “blessed” by God: “His delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night.” Everyone wants God’s blessing. But are we “delighting” in His Word and making it a central focus of our mind “day and night”?

Outline this passage below with the

1. **Delightful People Are Deliberate People** - 1:1

1. They Are _____ With Whom They _____ - 1:1a
2. They Are _____ With Whom They _____ - 1:1b
3. They Are _____ With Whom They _____ - 1:1c

2. **Delightful People Are Dedicated People** - 1:2,3

1. They Are _____ - 1:2
2. They Are _____ - 1:3a
3. They Are _____ - 1:3b
4. They Are _____ - 1:3c
5. They Are _____ - 1:3d

3. **Delightful People Are Destined People** - 1:4-6

1. They Are _____ - 1:4
2. They Are _____ - 1:5
3. They Are _____ - 1:6

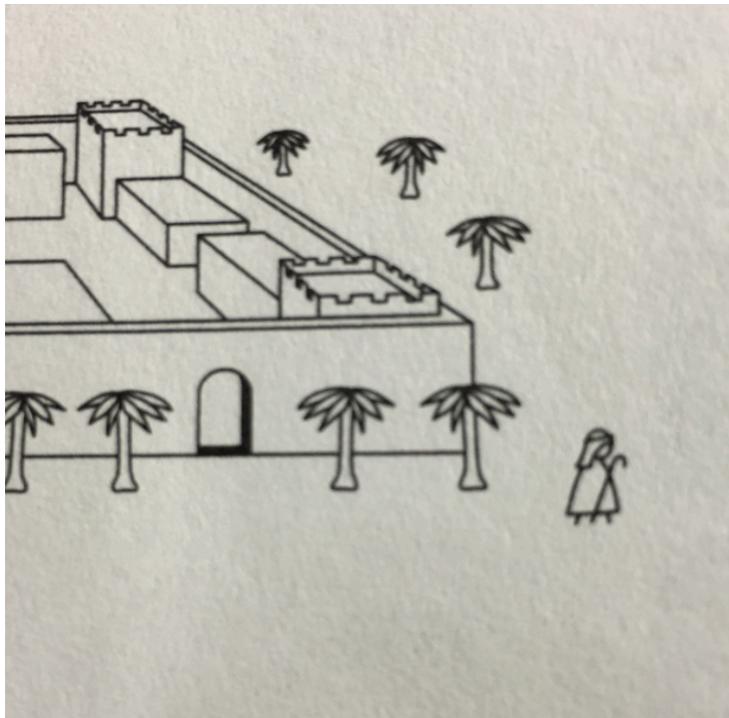
- | | | |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| • Productive | Step | Progressing |
| • Careful | Cautious | Stand |
| • Protected | Patient | Planted |
| • Sit | Prepared | Practical |
| • Prosperous | Conscious | |

step 1

Grasping the Text in Their Town

Question: What did the text mean to the biblical audience?

The first part of step 1 is to read the text carefully and observe it. In step 1, try to see as much as possible in the text. Look Look, and look again, observing all that you can. Scrutinize the grammar and analyze all the significant words. Likewise study the



historical and literary contexts. How does your passage relate to those that precede it and those that follow it?

After completing all this study, synthesize the meaning of the passage for the biblical audience into one or two sentences. That is, write out what the passage meant for the biblical audience. Use past tense verbs and refer

to the biblical audience. For example:

God commanded the Israelites in Joshua 1 to

Paul exhorted the Ephesians to.....

Jesus encouraged his disciples by

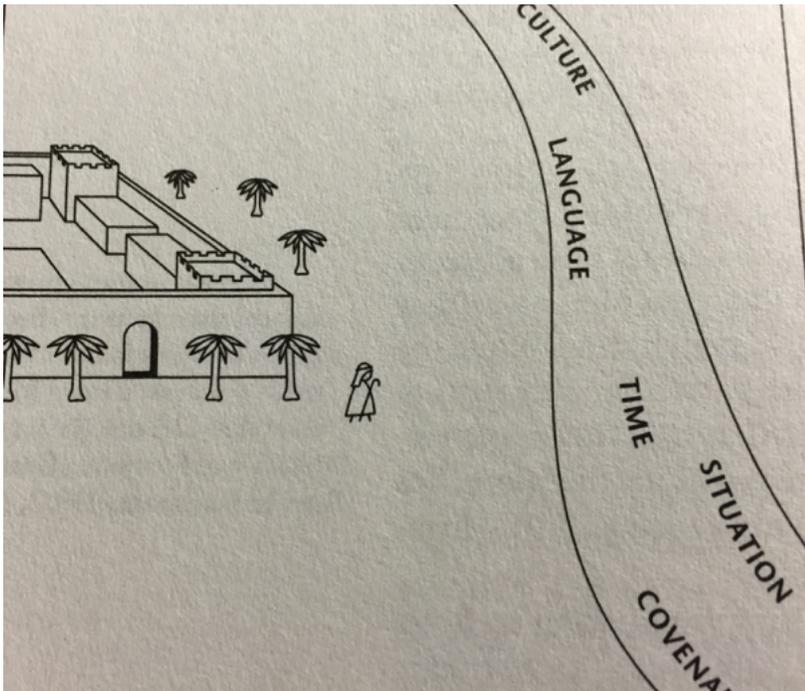
Be specific. Do not generalize or try to develop theological principles yet.

Measuring the Width of the River to Cross



Question: What are the differences between the biblical audience and us?

As mentioned above the Christian Believer today is separated from the biblical audience by differences in culture language, situation, time, and often covenant. These differences form a river that hinders us from moving straight from meaning in their contact to meaning in ours. The width of the river, however, varies from passage to passage. Sometimes it is extremely wide, requiring a long substantial bridge for crossing. Other times, however, it is a narrow creek that we can



easily hop over. It is obviously important to know just how wide the river is before we start trying to construct a principlizing bridge across it. In Step 2 you will take a good hard look at the river and determine just how wide it is for the passage you are

studying. In this step, you look of significant *differences* between our situation today and the situation of the biblical audience.

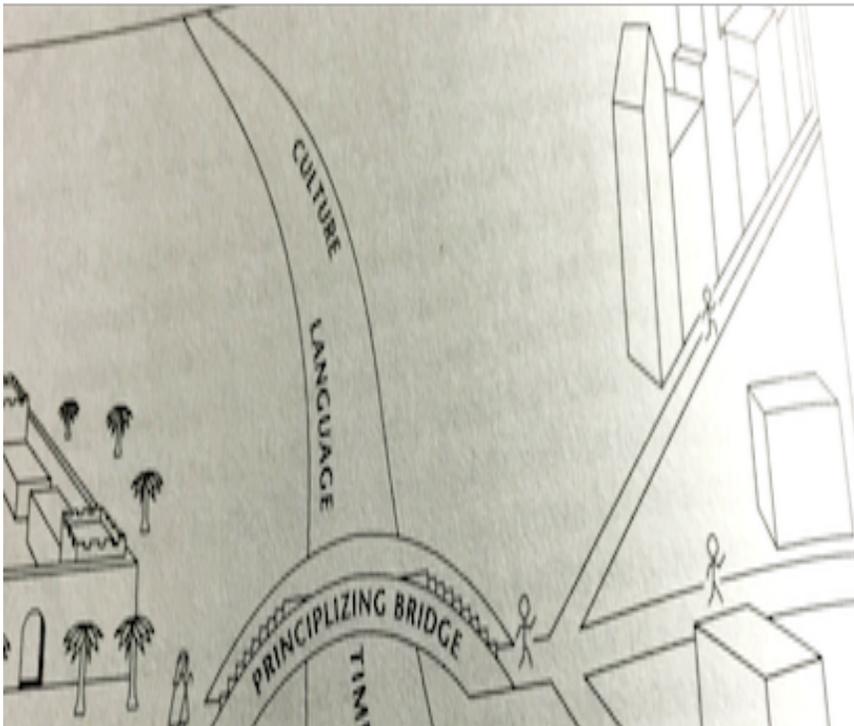
Crossing the Principlizing Bridge

step
3

Question: What is the theological principle in this text?

This is perhaps the most challenging step. In it you are looking for the theological principle or principles that are reflected in the meaning of the text you identified in Step 1.

Remember that this theological principle is a part of the meaning. Your task is not to create the *meaning* but to discover the meaning intended by the author. As God gives specific expressions to specific biblical audiences, he is also giving universal theological teachings for all of his people through these same texts.



To determine the theological principle, first recall the differences you identified in Step 2. Next, try to identify any similarities between the situation of the biblical audience and our situation. For

example, consider Joshua 1:1-9 again. Recall, of course, the

differences that we identified in Step 2. But then note the similarities between the biblical situation and our own:

We are also the people of God, in covenant relationship (new covenant); while we not the leaders of Israel, nonetheless many of us are in leadership positions in the church; we are not invading the Promised Land, but we are seeking to obey the will of God and to accomplish what he has commanded us to do.

The theological principle that you derive should not only be present in the passage, but it must also be congruent with the rest of Scripture. We can summarize the criteria for formulating the theological principle with the following:

The principle should be reflected in the text.

The principle should be timeless and not tied to a specific situation.

The principle should not be culturally bound.

The principle should correspond to the teaching of the rest of Scripture.

The principle should be relevant to both the biblical and the contemporary audience.

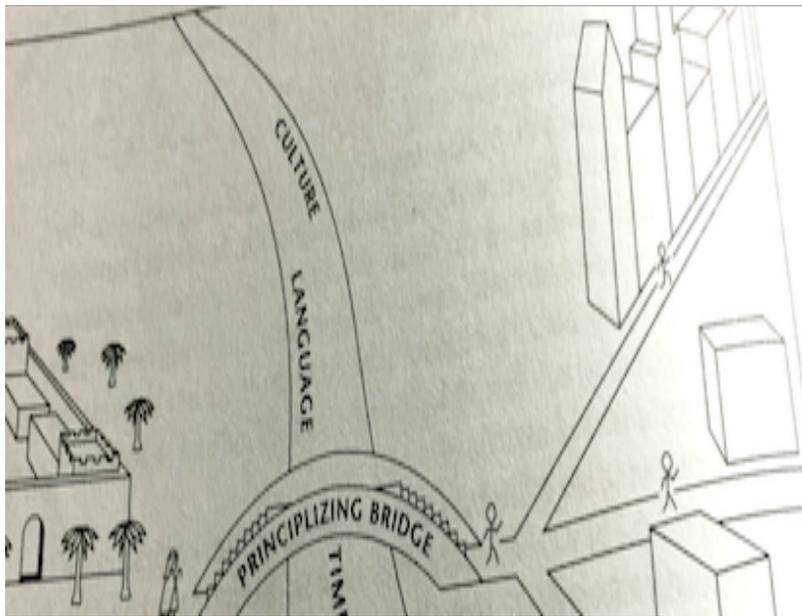
Write out the theological principle (or principles) in one or two sentences. Use present-tense verbs

Step 4: Grasping the Text in Our Town



Question: How should individual Christians today apply the theological principle in their lives?

In Step 4 we apply the theological principle to the specific situation of the individual Christians



in the church today.

We cannot leave the meaning of the text stranded in an abstract theological principle.

We must now grapple with how we should respond to that

principle in our town. How does it apply in real-life situations

today? While for each passage there will usually only be a

few (and often only one) theological principles relevant to all

Christians today, there will be numerous applicational

possibilities. This is because Christians today find themselves in

many different specific situations. Each of us will grasp and

apply the same theological principle in slightly different ways, depending on our current life situation and where we are in our relationship with God. In our illustration, we have tried to show the different applications possible by showing different individuals on different streets.

So, the Interpretive Journey as a whole looks like this:

Step 1: Grasp the text in their town. What did the text mean to the original audience?

Step 2: Measure the width of the river to cross. What are the differences between the biblical audience and us?

Step 3: Cross the principlizing bridge. What is the theological principle in this text?

Step 4: Grasp the text in our town.

Christians today apply the theological principle in their live

An Example - Joshua 1:1-9

Let's make the formal trip from the Old Testament passage to life today in order to illustrate how the Interpretive Journey works.

OVERVIEW

Step 1: What did the text mean to the biblical audience?

The Lord commanded Joshua, the new leader of Israel, to draw strength and courage from God's empowering presence, to be obedient to the law of Moses, and to meditate on the law so that he would be successful in the conquest of the promised land.

Step 2: What are the differences between the biblical audience and us?

We are not leaders of the nation Israel (although some of us may be leaders in the church). We are not embarking on the conquest of Canaan, the Promised Land. We are not under the old covenant law.

Step 3: What is the theological principle in this text?

To be effective in serving God and successful in the task to which he has called us, we must draw strength and courage from his presence, we must also be obedient to God's Word, meditating on it constantly

Step 4: How should individual Christians today apply the theological principle in their lives?

There are numerous possible applications. Here are a few suggested ones.

Spend more time meditating on God's Word and by listening to Christian music as you ride in your car.

If God calls you to a new, scary ministry, such as teaching teens or young adults, then be strengthened and encouraged by his empowering presence. be obedient, keeping a focus on the Scriptures.

An Overview of the Process

Obviously learning to fly takes a lot more than just handing the controls to someone and shouting, “Have fun.” It requires skills that take years to develop fully. Apart from that experience, you’re taking your life in your hands.

The study of God’s Word is no different. Learning to do it properly is a process that can’t happen overnight. Yet that’s exactly what we do with new Christ-followers when we tell them to get into the Scriptures, hand them a Bible, and expect them to take it from there. No wonder so many give up in frustration.

In this chapter I want to give an overview of the Bible study process. First, I want to define what *method* in Bible study involves. Then I’m going to show the big picture of where the method leads and where you’ll end up by following it.

There’s Method to the Madness

I propose a three-step approach that will guarantee life change—three crucial steps carried out in a particular order.

1. Observation

In this step, you ask and answer the question, *What do I see?* The moment you come to the Scriptures you ask, What are the facts? You assume the role of a biblical detective, looking for clues. No detail is trivial. This leads to the second step.

2. Interpretation

Here you ask and answer the question, *What does it mean?* Your central quest is for meaning. Unfortunately, too much Bible study begins with interpretation, and furthermore, it usually ends there.

But I'm going to show you that it does not begin there. Before you understand, you have to learn to see. Nor does it end there, because the third step is...

3. Application

Here you ask and answer the question, *How does it work?* Not, Does it work? People say they're going to make the Bible "relevant." But if the Bible is not already relevant, nothing you or I do will help. The Bible is relevant because it is revealed. It's always a return to reality. And for those who read it and heed it, it changes their lives.

Once again, there's nothing to beat prolonged personal exposure to the Bible. It's vital. Without it, you'll never be directly involved with what God has to say.

There is no substitute for firsthand exposure to His Word.

Begin With Observation

Now that you know where you are going, take a closer look at how you are going to get there, at the process itself. Recall that the first step is Observation. That's where you ask and answer the question, *What do I see?* In Observation, you'll be looking for four things:

1. Terms

A term is more than just a word. It's a keyword that is crucial to what an author has to say because it unlocks meaning. For instance, in the gospel by John, the word *believe* appears no less than seventy-nine times, always as a verb and never as a noun. Do some investigation, and you'll discover that John uses *believe* very purposefully. It's a *term* that unlocks his meaning.

The same principle applies to every book in the Bible. Each one is filled with terms. You've got to learn to recognize terms and pay close attention to them, because they are the basic building blocks with which you construct meaning.

2. Structure

Contrary to popular opinion, the Bible is not a collection of random sayings and stories that somehow fell together, willy-nilly. Rather, it's a library of carefully constructed books that display—to those who look for it—two basic kinds of structure.

First, there is *grammatical structure*. I can almost hear the groans: “Do we have to get back into that? I gave that up in seventh grade.” But if you want to learn how to study Scripture effectively, you must learn to read it with the grammar in mind. What is the subject of the sentence? What is the object? What is the main verb? The more you know about grammar, the more you can get out of a passage.

There is also *literary structure*. There are questions and answers. There is a climax and resolution. There is cause and effect. There are many other structuring devices. I'll show you a variety of ways in which the authors have structured their works.

3. Literary form

It's amazing to me how people ignore *genre* when they come to the books of the Bible. They treat them all the same.

Yet there's a vast difference between the Hebrew poetry of the Psalms and the tightly argued epistles of Paul; between the grand, sweeping narrative of Genesis and Exodus, and the simple, poignant stories of the parables. There is allegory and love

poetry, satire and apocalyptic, comedy and tragedy, and much more. The Holy Spirit used each of these forms to communicate His message. So if you want to grasp that message, you must read each kind according to its proper “rules.” I’ll show you how to do that in later chapters.

4. Atmosphere

Reading for atmosphere involves picking up the setting and feelings from the biblical text. What was it like to be in the author’s shoes? For instance, Paul says, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice” (Philippians 4:4). Sounds good. But where was he? In the Ritz-Carlton? Not exactly. He was in a foul-smelling Roman prison. And life looks very different from behind bars.

You want to transport your senses into the passage. If there’s a sunset, see it. If there’s an odor, smell it. If there’s a cry of anguish, feel it. Are you studying the letter to the Ephesians? Then join the church at Ephesus, and listen to Paul as he goes down on his knees to pray (Ephesians 3:14-21). This is an exercise for the imagination, not just the intellect. So it doesn’t take professional training to recapture the atmosphere of a passage of Scripture.

Move on to Interpretation

Observation leads to the second step, Interpretation. Here you ask and answer the question, *What does it mean?* Remember, your central quest is for meaning. I want to suggest three things that will help you get the meaning of a passage of Scripture.

1. Questions

If you want to understand a biblical text, you've got to bombard it with questions. The Bible is never embarrassed to be asked questions. That doesn't mean it will answer all of them. But you still need to ask them to determine if they can be answered. I'm going to give you a series of questions to lob at the text that will help you search for meaning.

2. Answers

Obviously, if you're going to ask questions, you've also got to look for the answers. Where will you find them? In the text. Observation will give you the basic building blocks out of which you will construct the meaning of a passage. The answers to your questions will come directly from your observation process.

That is why I say, the more time you spend in observation, the less time you will need to spend in interpretation, and the more accurate will be your results. The less time you spend in observation, the more time you will need to spend in interpretation, and the less accurate will be your results.

3. Integration

Not only must you ask the text questions, not only must you look for answers, but finally you must put the answers together into a meaningful whole. Otherwise, you end up with nothing but baskets of fragments.

Read, Record, Reflect

Would you like to start gaining more from your time in the Scriptures? Here are three habits to cultivate that will increase your productivity. Use them every time you open your Bible.

READ

This may seem obvious. Yet too many "readers" are nothing but browsers. They turn pages the way they flip through channels on a TV set, looking for something to catch their interest. The Word doesn't lend itself to that sort of approach. It requires conscious, concentrated effort. So read portions of the Bible over and over. The more you read them, the more clear they will become.

RECORD

In other words, write some notes. Jot down what you see in the text. Keep a record of your insights and questions. I don't know how many times someone has said to me, "Pastor, what I have to write down is not very good." Yet the fact is, you can't build on something you don't have. So start where you are, even with very elementary things. Everyone starts at that same place. But be sure to write it down. Use a legal pad or a notebook to record what you see. In your own words, summarize your observations and insights so that later they will come back to you. Doing so will help you remember what you've discovered and use it.

REFLECT

That is, take some time to think about what you've seen. Ask yourself: What's going on in this passage? What is it telling me about God? About myself? What do I need to do on the basis of what I'm reading here? As we're going to see, reflection, or meditation, is vital to understanding and applying God's Word.

Always Keep the Big Picture

That is an overview of where we are going and how we're going to get there. Every time you come to a portion of God's Word, approach it in terms of the big picture:

Observation: What do I see?

Interpretation: What does it mean?

Application: How does it work?

Let's Examine this Old Testament passage.

Genesis 11:1-9

1. And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 2. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. 3. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. 4. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. 5. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men built. 6. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. 7. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. 8. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. 9. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the

LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

- What is the dominate word in this text? _____
- What are the people displaying that catches God's attention?

- What distinguished these people from God's people?

- Is there a principle in the text that will work in the Church today, if so, what is it?

HOW TO READ THE BOOK SENTENCES

Serious Reading and Love Letters Things to Look for in Sentences Example: Hebrews 12:1–2.

If someone invited you over for dinner, what would your expectations be regarding the meal? What kind of meal would you be anticipating? We, personally, are easily satisfied. Give us a nice steak and potato with all the trimmings. Add hot rolls and "a good vegetable. Top it off with apple pie or a blackberry cobbler. But we are not picky. We also love hamburgers, pizza, spaghetti, lasagna, ribs, and a host of various casseroles. What about you? What would you expect at a meal? How would you react if your expectations were not met at all? For example, what if you showed up at some friends' house and they served you nice, soft, mushy baby food? There are some great flavors of baby food that are available strained peas, and stewed prunes good stuff if you are six months old. However, since you are not six months old, you expect something more substantial something you can sink your teeth into. Baby food would be a disappointment (and perhaps put a strain on your friendship!).

"If you move straight from your initial reading of a passage to the application of that passage, you will remain tied to your previous understanding of that text. You will rarely see anything new and exciting in the text, and the Bible will become boring for you. Likewise, it is unlikely that you will hear anything new from God, and your relationship with him is likely to be stagnant. God

wants to have deeper and more mature conversations with you, but if you are tied to superficial and surface readings of the Bible or if you always assume that you have already seen and understood all there is, then your relationship with God will tend to stay at the same level. Likewise, any teaching or preaching you do will tend to be flat and boring or a reflection of something other "Bible study is much the same. Plunging into the Word of God is like sitting down at a meal. We expect to eat something nourishing, something substantial, and something appropriate to our maturity level. We want to dig into the real meat. But often we are able only to come up with baby food soft mush for infants. This is not a reflection on the Word of God, which is loaded with meat, but rather a reflection on us and our inability to extract the meat and enjoy it. Indeed, some Christians have become so accustomed to baby food that they no longer desire stronger food. What about you? Do you long to dig deeper into God's Word? Do you long for a more substantial diet? Our goal in this book is to help you to "eat well." So, let's begin.

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond in him we were also chosen [passive], having been predestined [passive] according to the plan of him who works out [active] everything in conformity with the purpose of his will. (Eph. 1:11)

Things That Are Emphasized

The Spirit of God uses several tools to emphasize ideas, events, people, and other material in Scripture. Let me mention four of those tools.



Amount of space

A book can emphasize something by devoting a large portion of space to it. We've seen that in Genesis. It has fifty chapters. The first eleven cover **the creation, the Fall, the Flood, the tower of Babel,** and other details. All of those major

events are compressed into just eleven chapters. By contrast, the writer devotes chapters 12-50 to the lives of four individuals:

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

Through this emphasis, the Spirit of God is teaching us that the most important thing in the book is the family that God chose to be His people.

We see the same thing when we come to the gospels. For example, of Matthew's 1,062 verses, at least 342 of them—one-third of the book—give us discourses of the Savior. That has a major bearing on the purpose of the book. Likewise, some gospels take much more space to cover the crucifixion than they do other events in the life of Christ.

In the epistles of Paul, we frequently find a section of doctrine followed by a section of practical implications based on that doctrine. For instance, in Ephesians, chapters 1-3 tell us what God has done for us. Then chapters 4-6 tell us what we need to do as a result. That's an intriguing balance between theology and practice. The same pattern is found in Colossians. However, in Romans, the ratio is eleven chapters of doctrine to five of implications—which gives us some idea of the emphasis Paul

wants to make there.

So, whenever you observe a portion of Scripture, ask, how much space is given to this subject? What is the writer emphasizing?

TEXT:

Luke 10:25-37

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the

host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, **Go, and do thou likewise.**

Anytime Jesus stamps his approval on the previous activities of an individual, it will do us well to find out what that person did.

The question is what did the man do? He did three things and when he finished doing them, Jesus said “go thou and do likewise.”

First Thing he did was he R_____ his S_____

Secondly, He R_____ S_____ After he

R_____ his S_____

Lastly, He R_____ his S_____ which was part of

R_____ his S_____ after he R_____ his

S_____.

And when he finished doing these three things. Jesus turned to the lawyer and asked Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, **Go, and do thou likewise.**

Things That Are Repeated

There's probably no tool of teaching more powerful than repetition. If I want to make sure that you catch on to what I have to say, I'll repeat it over and over, again and again, time after time. Repetition reinforces. That's why the second clue to look for whenever you come to the biblical text is:



Have you ever noticed how often Jesus repeats things to His disciples? The gospels record at least nine times that He said, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” And when John was recording the Revelation, what do you suppose the Lord told him to write to

the seven churches? That's right: “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

That's a lot of emphases. You get the impression that Jesus wanted His disciples (and us) to pay attention to what He had to say. By constantly using that formula to flag His words, He gave His listeners clues about the significance of His teaching.

Let me mention a few categories of repetition to look for.

Terms, phrases, and clauses

Scripture constantly repeats terms, phrases, and clauses to emphasize their importance. For example, in [Psalm 136](#) we read,

Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.

His love endures forever.

Give thanks to the God of gods.

His love endures forever. ([vv. 1-2](#), niv)

The psalmist repeats *His love endures forever* no less than twenty-six times in this psalm. Why? Did he have nothing else to say? No, he was emphasizing the fact that God’s love endures forever. By the time you get through the psalm, you know the bottom line: His love endures forever. In effect, the psalmist is saying, “What else do you need to know?”

Or take [Hebrews 11](#), God’s Hall of Fame—or Hall of Faith. It’s another classic illustration of things repeated. The phrase *by faith* appears eighteen times. The writer is talking about different people living in different times under different circumstances. But all of them are living the same “by faith” lifestyle.

Again, look how important the little word *if* is to [1 Corinthians 15](#). Paul uses it seven times in [verses 12-28](#), where he is talking about the critical importance of Christ’s resurrection to our faith. *If* emphasizes the fact that everything we believe is conditioned on the resurrection. If that’s untrue, everything about Christianity is untrue.

Things That Are Related

So far we’ve labeled the thumb with things that are emphasized and the index finger with things that are repeated. Now the third clue you need to look for—and this goes on your middle finger—is:



Things That Are Related

By related I mean things that have some connection, some interaction with each other. You see, just because two things are next to each other does not make them related. They've got to work off of each other in some way. There must be a tie that somehow binds them together.

Look for three kinds of relationships in your study of Scripture:

Movement from the general to the specific

This is the relationship between the whole and its parts, between a category and its individual members, between the big picture and the details. We've seen this relationship a number of times before.

Let me give you an illustration out of [Matthew 6](#), a part of the Sermon on the Mount. The chapter begins,

Be careful not to do your “acts of righteousness” before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. ([v. 1](#) niv)

You will have a reward: when you do your righteous act to be seen by men, that will be your reward. But it will not be observed by the Father, Jesus says.

Then He moves from that general principle to three specific illustrations. First in the area of giving ([vv. 2-4](#)), then in the area of praying ([vv. 5-15](#)), and then in the area of fasting ([vv. 16-18](#)).

Cause and Effect

This is the principle of the billiard balls. You strike the cue ball with your cue (that's the cause) in order to knock the colored

balls into the pockets (that's the effect). In Scripture we find all kinds of cause-effect relationships ricocheting around the text. I want to point out a dynamic illustration of that in the latter part of Acts 8:1: "On that day a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem." You are led to ask, what day? Checking the preceding context, you find that it was the day when Stephen had been martyred. That intensified the persecution, and all the believers except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. But verse 4 says, "Those who had been scattered went about preaching the word."

In other words, the persecution was the cause, and the preaching was the effect. The believers didn't stand around, crying, "What in the world is God doing to us now? Here we prayed that He would use us, and now all we've got is persecution." No, they used the pressure as a means of leverage to get the gospel out to the ends of the earth.

Things That Are Alike and Things That Are Unlike

We've assigned things that are emphasized to the thumb, things repeated to the index finger, and things related to the middle finger. So things alike can go with the ring finger, and things unlike with the little finger.

Similes

The biblical writers give you a number of terms that flag similarities. The two most common expressions to look for are *as* and *like*. They indicate a



figure of speech called a simile, which is a word picture that draws a comparison between two things.

For instance, Psalm 42 begins, “As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for Thee, O God” ([v. 1](#), italics added).

That’s a grabbing image, isn’t it? It creates atmosphere. The psalmist compares his longing for God to a hot, thirsty deer.

1 Peter 2:2, Why study the Bible for ourselves? Peter uses a simile: “*Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation*” (italics added).

Peter draws a poignant comparison between the appetite of a baby for its mother’s milk, and the appetite of the believer for the nourishment of God’s Word.

Metaphors

A device related to the simile is the metaphor, where comparison is made without using *as* or *like*. Jesus says, “I am the true vine, and My father is the vinedresser” ([John 15:1](#)). He’s obviously talking figuratively, not literally. He’s painting a picture that illustrates His relationship to the Father, and, as the passage develops, to believers as well.

Things That Are Unlike

The flip side of comparison is contrast—things that are unlike. We could say that in Bible study, as in love, opposites attract. At least, they attract the eye of the observant reader. There are several ways the biblical writers signify contrast.

Use of *but*

The word *but* is a clue that a change of direction is coming. We’ve seen how crucial a term this is in several passages already. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus repeatedly says, “You have

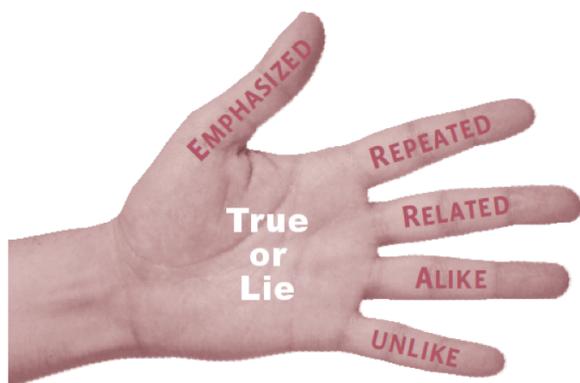
heard that it was said... *but* I say to you” ([Matthew 5](#), italics added).

In [Galatians 5](#) Paul writes, “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident” ([v. 19](#)), and he gives a list. Then in [verse 22](#) he turns around and says, “*But* the fruit of the Spirit is...” and he lists those. So he sets up a contrast between what the flesh produces and what the Spirit produces.

[Acts 1:8](#), a verse we looked at in detail, begins with *but*.

Remember how that led us to go back and look at the context, where we discovered the Lord in a discussion with the apostles? They wanted to know if He was about to establish the kingdom. He replied that it was not for them to know the time for that. *But...* and then comes all that we saw in [verse 8](#).

Later in Acts, Philip begins a citywide evangelistic crusade in Samaria, with great success ([8:5-8](#)). In fact, the response is so overwhelming that the apostles in Jerusalem send Peter and John on a fact-finding mission to check it out. After they finish and are headed back home, [verse 26](#) says, “*But* an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, ‘Arise and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ (This is a desert road)” (italics added).



Again, the little word *but* signals a change of direction. It draws a contrast between Peter and John, who are headed from one city to another, and Philip, who suddenly finds himself commissioned to a wilderness ministry.

Things That Are True to Life

There are two essential components to quality observation. First, you have to learn how to read. Second, you have to learn what to look for. We've seen five clues to look for when you open the Word of God. The sixth, and final, clue goes on the palm of your hand:

The issue here is authenticity: What does this passage tell you about reality? What aspects of the text resonate with your experience?

This is where you need to use your sanctified imagination. You need to look for principles. We obviously live in a culture that is dramatically different from the cultures of the biblical era. Yet the same human condition that the biblical characters experienced, we experience. We feel the same kinds of emotions they felt. We have the same kinds of questions they had. They were real, live people who faced the same kinds of struggles, the same kinds of problems, and the same kinds of temptations that you and I face.

So as I read about them in Scripture, I need to ask myself: What were this person's ambitions? What were his goals? What problem was he facing? How did he feel? What was his response? What would be my response?

Examine and Elucidate this Epistle

1 PETER

SYLLABUS FOR SUFFERING SAINTS

HOW TO HOLD UP—NOT FOLD UP

SALVATION	SUBMISSION	SUFFERING
privileges of salvation 1:2-12	in the state 2:13-17; civil	as a citizen 3:13-4:6
products of salvation 1:13-25	in the household 2:18-25; social	as a saint 4:7-19
process of salvation 2:1-10	in the family 3:1-7; domestic	as a shepherd 5:1-7 as a soldier 5:8-11
DOCTRINE IS DYNAMIC!	THE CHRISTIAN'S LIFESTYLE!	THE CHISEL TO SHAPE THE SOUL!
1:3 2:10	2:11 3:12	3:13 5:11
The DESTINY of the Christian	The DUTY of the Christian	The DISCIPLINE of the Christian

1Peter 1:6-7

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that

perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

Introduction:

Tony Dungy is the former coach of the Indianapolis Colts. His team won the Super Bowl in 2007. He has been an amazingly successful coach in the NFL and he is a Christian. He and his wife experienced tragedy in 2005 when one of their sons committed suicide.

At an awards breakfast in 2006 speaking of the pain that his family went through during the suicide of his son, James, Tony Dungy told about his youngest son, Jordan, who has a rare congenital condition, which makes it impossible for him to feel pain. “He feels things, but he doesn’t get the sensation of pain,” Dungy said.

Tony Dungy said his family has learned many lessons from Jordan. It sounds like it would be good not to be able to feel pain, but it is not. “We’ve learned a lot about pain in the last five years we’ve had Jordan. We’ve learned some hurts are really necessary for kids. Pain is necessary for kids to find out the difference between what’s good and what’s harmful.” Jordan, Dungy said, loves cookies. “Cookies are good, but in Jordan’s mind, if they’re good out on the plate, they’re even better in the oven. He will go

right in the oven when my wife's not looking, reach in, take the rack out, take the pan out, burn his hands, eat the cookies and burn his tongue and never feel it. He doesn't know that's bad for him." Jordan, Dungy said, "Has no fear of anything, so we constantly have to watch him."

The lesson learned, Dungy said, is simple. "You get the question all the time, 'Why does the Lord allow pain in your life? Why do bad things happen to good people? If God is a God of love, why does he allow these hurtful things to happen?'" Dungy said.

"We've learned that a lot of times because of that pain, that little temporary pain, you learn what's harmful. You learn to fear the right things. "Pain sometimes lets us know we have a condition that needs to be healed. Pain inside sometimes lets us know that spiritually we're not quite right and we need to be healed and that God will send that healing agent right to the spot. Sometimes, pain is the only way that will turn us as kids back to the Father.

"Why me?"

If you've never asked that question, just wait. When life becomes really hard, most people will eventually ask, "Why me?"

But this is the wrong question to ask during your dark days. Instead, try asking, "God, what's your purpose in this?"

The Bible says in 1 Peter 1:6-7, “You are temporarily harassed by all kinds of trials and temptations. This is no accident—it happens to prove your faith, which is infinitely more valuable than gold” (Phillips).

Nothing comes into your life accidentally. God does not cause evil. But he can bring good from every single thing, even from evil. Trials reveal your character, maturity, security, values, and faith.

One of the major figures in the Bible is the apostle Paul. He devoted his entire life to serving God. But, in many ways, Paul’s life was worse than you can imagine. He was stoned, shipwrecked, beaten, left for dead, imprisoned, whipped, and robbed.

But he was never bitter. Instead of asking, “Why me?” Peter looked for and trusted God’s purpose. He learned to trust God in his problems, even when he didn’t understand.

What is the secret to his persistence? “This is the reason why we never collapse . . . These little troubles (which are really so transitory) are winning for us a permanent, glorious and solid reward out of all proportion to our pain” (2 Corinthians 4:16-17 Phillips).

You can hold on to hope because God has a purpose and even a reward that exceeds your pain.

When Jesus died on the cross, his followers thought it was a senseless tragedy, a total mistake. But what they couldn't see was God still on his throne, carrying out a bigger purpose.

After Jesus' resurrection, he appeared to the disciples and said, "Peace be with you! As the father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21 NIV).

Just moments before, they could see no reason for their pain. But here was Jesus, telling them that God was giving them a new assignment that was part of a grand purpose.

God's purpose for your life is always greater than your problem, pain or predicament. Trust him. He loves to turn crucifixions into resurrections. He specializes in hopeless situations.

Word Study

WORD STUDY The importance of word study

Word study is a system which allows the reader to look back to the original languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) and determine/translate what the author is saying. It also allows the reader the opportunity to gain an enhanced definition of words written 2000 years ago.

The Problem

The Bible was written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek; conversely, our language is English. Furthermore, in the original text of the Bible, 11,280 different Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic words were condensed in the same 6000 different English words. The problem is, how does one fit 11,000 words into 6000? The answer is obvious: you translate several words from the original language into one English word. The verb “worship” in the New Testament is translated by several Greek words, each of which has slightly different shades of meaning.

1. **proskuneo** (pros-koo-neh'-o)- to prostrate one's self (in reverence). Do homage; used therefore, of the ACT of worship.

Matthew 9:18 (KJV)

¹⁸ *While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.*

2. **sebomai** (seb'-om-ahee)- to revere, to feel awe; used, therefore, of the INWARD FEELINGS (as #1 is of the outward act.)

Acts 18:7 (KJV)

⁷ *And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.*

3. sebazomai (seb-ad'-zom-ahee)- to be shy, or timid at doing anything. Occurs only in Romans 1:25

Romans 1:25 (KJV)

Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

4. latreuo (lat-ryoo'-o)- to serve in official service (for hire, or reward); used of serving God in the externals of worship.

Philippians 3:3 (KJV)

³ *For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

5. eusbeo (yoo-seb-eh'-o)- to be pious or devout towards any one; to act with reverence, respect and honor.

Acts 17:23 (KJV)

²³ *For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.*

6. therapeuo -to wait upon, minister to(as a doctor does); hence, to heal; to render voluntary service and attendance, thus differing from #4



Greek Verb Tenses: Expresses the Kind of Action And Denotes Time.

SYNTAX

Syntax deals with grammatical relations between words. It is the process of and classifying the modes of expression presented by a language. In relations to nouns, the study of nouns include cases, prepositions, adjectives, pronouns, and the article. In relation to verbs, the study of verbs include person, number, voice, mood, tense, infinitive, adverb, conjunction and participle.

Because the verb expresses the action, it is often the most significant element in the expression of thought. Therefore, in doing New Testament word studies, understanding the Greek verb is frequently the key to correct interpretation and application of scripture. The major scriptures of Greek verbs are tense, voice and mood.

1. Tense – expresses the kind of action and denotes time.
2. Voice – expresses how the subject is related to the action.
3. Mood – expresses the relation of the action to reality.

In the Greek language, the important element of tense is the kind of action. The character of an action may be defined from either of three points of view; it may be continuous, it may be complete or it may be regard simply as occurring, without reference to the question of progress. (see chart 1)

TENSES

PRESENT TENSE: continuous action in the present. Expresses an action or state of being that is occurring at the present time. It is primarily progressive or “linear” in that it shows action that is continuing. **EXAMPLE:** “I **extort** therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men:” 1 Timothy 2:1 Paul states that he continuously as well as now exhorts believers in the assembly to pray for all men.

IMPERFECT TENSE: continuing or repeated action in past time. This tense is a sort of moving panorama, a moving picture show.

EXAMPLE: “And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich **cast** in much.” Mark 12:41 The idea here is the casting of money by the rich was action in progress in past time. “And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb **was carried**, whom they **laid** daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple.” Acts 3:2 The idea here is that the man was repeatedly being carried and being laid down at the gate day by day.

PERFECT TENSE: past completed or accomplished action with continuing or abiding results in the present.

EXAMPLE: “And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being was in the transgression.” 1 Timothy 2:14 Paul is stating Eve’s part in the first sin. It was a complete action with results in the present. Eve was in a state of stepping aside from the path of obedience.

PLUPERFECT TENSE: past completed action with results continuing in the past. **EXAMPLE:** “These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews **had agreed already**, That if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.” John 9:22

The Jews completed the process of agreeing in the past and maintained the result of their agreement regarding exclusion from the synagogue.

AORIST TENSE: punctiliar action. The aorist tense states an action as completed without regard to its duration; that is, it denotes the fact of an action without any reference to the length of that action. Compared to the present tense, the aorist expresses the action like a snapshot, while the present tense action is like a moving picture continuing on. **EXAMPLE:** “Whereunto I am **ordained** and an apostle. (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.” 1 Timothy 2:7 Paul states the fact at a point in his life and after his conversion, he was ordained or appointed to the ministry of preacher, apostle, and teacher.

FUTURE TENSE: indefinite action to occur in the future. Indicates continuing on punctiliar action in the future.

EXAMPLE: “Notwithstanding she **shall be saved** in child bearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.” 1 Timothy 2:15 Paul states that in the future child bearing shall be a part of deliverance from her dilemma of her desire to lead instead of follow.



VOICES

In the Greek language, voice shows how the subject is related to the action. (see chart 11)

1. **ACTIVE VOICE:** indicated that the subject produces or performs the action. **EXAMPLE:** “I **extort** therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;” 1 Timothy 2:1
2. **PASSIVE VOICE:** indicates that the subject was acted upon as the recipient of the action. **EXAMPLE:** “Whereunto I am **ordained** and an apostle. (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.” 1 Timothy 2:7
3. **MIDDLE VOICE:** indicates that the subject participates in the results or outcome of the action. (This voice is unique to Greek)
EXAMPLE: “For they that have used the office of a deacon well **purchase** to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. 1 Timothy 3:13



MOODS

In the Greek language, mood shows how the action is related to reality. It is the relationship of action to reality. (see chart 111)

1. **INDICATIVE MOOD:** describes mood or mood of certainty. It is a statement of fact which assumes reality. This mood simply states a thing as a fact.

EXAMPLE: “I **extort** therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;” 1 Timothy 2:1

2. **IMPERATIVE MOOD:** a command or entreaty. It is the mood of violation or will. The imperative mood in the Greek makes a demand on the will of the reader to obey the command; it is to indicate prohibition and authority.

EXAMPLE: “Let the woman **learn** in silence with all subjection. 1 Timothy 2:11

3. **SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD:** the mood of probability or contingency. It implies some doubt regarding the reality of the action. It expresses an uncertainty or an action which may or should happen.

Syntax

Tense	Kind of Action	Time of Action	Example
Present	Continuous	Present	“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Rom 5:1
Imperfect	Continuous Action, Repeated Action	Past	“And Jesus sat over against treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury and many that were rich cast in much.” Mark 12:41
Perfect	Completed Action	Action completed in past, with results continuing in the past.	“By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand , and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Rom 5:2
Pluperfect	Completed Action	Past completed action, with results continuing in the past.	“These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.” John 9:22
Aorist	Action as Occurring	At one point in time, past, present, or future	“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.” Rom.5:6
Future	Action to Occur	Future	“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” Rom. 5:6

Greek Verb Tenses:

Expresses the Relationship of the Subject to the Voice

Voice	How the Subject is related to the	Example
Active	Indicates the subject produces or performs the action.	“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Rom.5:8
Passive	Indicates the subject is acted upon or the recipient of the action.	“And hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given, unto us. Rom. 5:5
Middle	Indicates the subject participates in the results or outcome of the action.	For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and, great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. 1 Tim 3:13

Syntax

Mood	Relation to Reality	Usage of Meaning	Example
Indicative	Mood of Certainty-reality	Used to declare a statement of fact as something which is true. Expresses that which is actual, factual or reason.	“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Rom 5:1
Imperative	Mood of volition or will, expresses intention. – contingent reality	Used to express a command or entreaty. Denotes intention, authority, permission, or prohibition.	“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptation.” James 1:2
Subjunctive	Mood of probability or potentiality -probable reality	Used to express an action which may or should happen, but which is not necessarily true at present. Expresses conditional or uncertain action.	“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” John 20:31
Optative	Mood of possibility or wishing -Probable reality	Merely presents an action as conceivable, with no definite anticipation of realization.	“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.” 2 Peter 1:2

