

Bible Study Methods

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Psalm 119:34 Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart. ESV

READ: The journey begins with careful reading. What did it mean to the first audience?

R ead	Read: Conscious concentration with repetition
O bserve	Record: Write down what you see in what you read: Observe key thoughts, insights, summarize, paraphrase
A nalyze	Reflect: Meditate —what is going on in the passages; consider the truths and the implications for yourself, what can you learn about God and yourself
D o	Respond: Act on the truth you have learned and worship the Lord

OBSERVE: What do I see? What does it say? Probe, Discover, Detect, Explore

How to Get the Big Picture

1. Look for what is listed first and last—that is usually the emphasis
2. The Law of Proportions—where the author spends most of his time—that is the emphasis
3. Look for repetition: themes, names, terms, items, etc.

PRECISE Reading and Observation

Prayerfully	Conscious dependence (before, during and after, with humility)	
Reflectively	Repeatedly, whole book or pericope in one sitting, use different translations	
Extensively	Background issues Big Idea Basic structure and flow Broad strokes <i>Use mechanical or structural rewrite</i>	Background A —Author Who? Background/Experience P —Participants Who? Background/Culture/Situation P —Purpose Circumstance and Context L —Location Geography (from — to) Y —Year (Time) Dates (time of year), Period—Cultural/Historical/Political
Creatively	Imagination View points	Try to see, feel, experience the event/interaction

Intensively	Read for: Questions, Questions, Questions Who? What is said about them, what do they say What? What is taking place, what is the point, what is going on Where? Do not assume you understand the location When? What time, what day Why? Purpose, why does the author include that How? In what manner, way, by what means Wherefore? So what do I need to do	Use your Repeated Alike / Unlike Different Accentuated Related To look for things that are emphasized
Look at:		
Terms		
Structure		
Literature		
Context		
Atmosphere		

Specifically **Purposefully**—with the view of the author in mind | Look at details, ask questions

Effectively By unit of thought—**THINK Context!** | A Text without a Context is a Pretext.

Grammatical Construction	7 Steps to Study a Word
Verbs: action, who is doing what (Active, Passive, Middle, Reflexive)	1. What does the immediate context reveal?
Subject: the one doing the action	2. How is it used throughout the book?
Object: the one being acted upon	3. How is the word used in other books by the same author?
Modifiers: descriptive words, adjectives and adverbs	4. How is the word used by other writers?
Prepositions: tell where the action is	5. How is the word used: literally or figuratively?
Connectives: linking or flow	6. How does its meaning differ from other synonyms & antonyms?
	7. What can you learn from the original language?

Connectives

Place: where	Contrast: but, yet, much more, nevertheless, otherwise, then
Time: after, as, before, now, then, until, when, while, finally	Concession: although
Reason: because, for, since, for this reason	Comparison (correlation): also, and, as, just as—so, likewise, so also
Result: so, then, therefore, thus, consequently, that	Series of facts (addition): and, first of all, in addition, last of all, or, also,
Conclusion: then, so	Conditional: if
Purpose: in order that, so that, that	Emphatic: indeed, only

Things to Look For:	Prepositions—go with noun to form a phrase	
Verbs	Pronouns	Conjunctions
Figures of Speech	Conditional	Clauses
Laws of Structure		
Cause & Effect	Interchange	
Climax	Introduction & Summary	
Comparison	Pivot or Hinge	
Contrast	Proportion	
Explanation or Reason	Question & Answer	
Repetition	Dialogue	
Purpose/Result	Lists	
Specific to General/General to Specific		
<i>Sphere</i>		<i>Logical</i>
Location: in, on, at		Means: by
Motion: to, from		Accompaniment: with
Direction: toward		Benefit: for
Position: over, at		Origin: of
Permeation: through		Characteristic: of
Entrance: into		Identity: of
		Opposition: against
		Conformity: according
<i>Chronological</i> Time: before		

ANALYZE: What does it mean? Mull, Digest, Judge, Explain

Overlap between Observation & Interpretation	Content	Observe—ask questions
Content: Immediate and Extended (Analogy of Faith)	Context	Context Rules!
Background: Historical (Author/Audience) and Cultural (Socioeconomic/Religious)	Comparison	Scripture clarifies Scripture
Structure: Grammar and Words	Culture	Time—When?
Literary Genre: Exposition, Narrative, Proverb, Prophecy, Poetry, Parable	<i>Bridge the gap</i>	Space—Where?
	Consultation	Customs—Why/How?
		Last step

Subject/Purpose Statement: A statement which summarizes the content (*what*) of a given passage (or book) and the author's purpose (*why*) for recording the content.

Correlation: Where does it fit?

Analogy of Faith: No interpretation is acceptable if it is contrary to the general tenor of the rest of Scripture: therefore, interpret more difficult/obscure passages by the use of more simple/clear passages and remember the more natural interpretation is to be preferred.

Getting the Big Picture	Biblical Theology — Structure for thinking
Particular to General (Synthesis)	Biblical World-life view — Structure for living

Do: Application—How does it work?

Four Steps	Personal Application with SPECS?	Nine Questions to Ask
Know the text & yourself	Sin to be forsaken?	1. Is there an example to follow?
Relate it to experience	Promises to be Claimed?	2. Is there a sin to avoid?
Meditate	Examples to be followed?	3. Is there a promise to claim?
Practice	Commands to be obeyed?	4. Is there a prayer to repeat?
	Stumbling block or hindrance to be avoided?	5. Is there a command to obey?
		6. Is there a condition to meet?
		7. Is there a verse to be memorized?
		8. Is there an error to mark?
		9. Is there a challenge to face?

SHARE: How to pass it on (Be a tree not a pipe)

CAP Your Lesson	Goal	Communication and Application	
Content (Information)	Transformational	Be Textual	Be Concrete
Application (Relevance)	Biblical	Be Specific	Be Relevant
Practice (Concrete)	Teaching	Be Practical	Be Direct

Summary: ROADS lead to transformation

The goal is to determine what the text meant to the original (biblical) audience, then to understand what the author intended us to understand—so that we can know God better and honor Him by responding to His revealed character rather than doing the WFRA—*What Feels Right Approach*.

Bibliography and Helpful Resources

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