

Reading the Bible

Studying the Bible:

- Is not primarily an academic exercise
- Biblical literacy is not only about knowledge, it's about wisdom and understanding.
- Is a relational process of coming to know the God revealed in the Word.

Getting Started:

- Find the right environment
- Begin from a believing perspective
- Use a translation that is understandable for you
- Pray, asking God to illuminate His word and bring understanding.
- Focus on the content not consumption (it's not about how much you read!)
- Start where you feel comfortable and engaged
- Be aware of your presuppositions

Reading and Interpreting

The Bible is written in a different time, culture and geographical location.
Yet it still applies today!

Becoming Good Readers -

- Reading a Love note
- Be inquisitive
- Be imaginative

Write things Down-

- Write down observations
- Write down questions that you ponder
- Write down actions that you will take and live out
- Write down prayers for your life that emerge

Reading and interpreting

- Understand the text in their town and in their time.
- Observe similarities and differences between their culture and ours.
- What application can we make?
- Grasp the text in our town and our time. How should Christians apply the truths from God's word, today?

Beginning the Process

Who? wrote the book, and to whom was it written?

When? was it written?

Where? is it written from and to?

Why ? Is there a specific purpose for the book?

What ? is the author trying to convey? Intention? Context

LUKE 1:1-4

Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled[a] among us, 2 just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. 3 With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, 4 so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

Who: Luke

When: After the time of Jesus

Where:

Why: To give an orderly account of the life and ministry of Jesus

What: So that Theophilus would be certain of what he has been taught

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Who is Theophilus?

What has he been taught?

What sources did Luke use to investigate?

Who handed the teachings down?

The Big Picture of a Text

- Genre gives us key insights on how to read and interpret a book of the Bible.
- How are paragraphs connected?
- Are there major breaks, shifts or pivots in a story?
- What is the tone of the passage?
- What are the actions/roles of God and the actions/roles of people?

Textual Observations

- Repetition of Words

1 John 2:15-17 “15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father[d] is not in them. 16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.”

- Contrasts

Proverbs 15:1- A gentle answer turns away wrath, *but* a harsh word stirs up anger.

Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, *but* the gift of God is eternal life in[a] Christ Jesus our Lord.

- Comparisons

Proverbs 25:26 - Like a muddied spring or a polluted well are the righteous who give way to the wicked.

- Lists

Galatians 5:19-22 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

- **Cause and Effect**

Proverbs 15:1- A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger

- **Figures of Speech**

Psalm 119:105 - Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.

- **Conjunctions**

Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in[a]
Christ Jesus our Lord.

- **Pronouns**

Ephesians 1:3 - Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has
blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ

Exercise

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Putting it all Together

- Scripture
- Observation
- Application
- Prayer

Resources

- Blue letter Bible - blueletterbible.org
- biblegateway.com
- <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/wesleys-explanatory-notes/>
- http://www.searchingthescriptures.net/main_pages/free_bible_land_maps.htm