

INDUCTIVE
BIBLE STUDY

Psalm 119:130

¹³⁰ The unfolding of Your words gives light;
It gives understanding to the simple.

2 APPROACHES TO BIBLE STUDY

DEDUCTIVE

- One is dictating to the Scriptures, rather than letting the Scriptures speak.
- One comes to the text with a thesis and then seeks out passages to support that thesis.
- One has already, to a certain extent, drawn conclusions before reading the whole text of Scripture in context.



Eisegesis “to lead into”

INDUCTIVE

- One lets the Scriptures speak for themselves.
- One draws conclusions based on thorough examination of the content.
- One lays aside preconceived ideas and first lays down a groundwork of observations.



Exegesis “to lead out of”

The **inductive approach** goes from general observations to specific conclusions. It is better for digging deeper into the heart and mind of God with accuracy. Conclusions come from what you have *observed*.

Before anything...

PRAY.

The Holy Spirit is your Teacher. Without Him you will not understand or be able to live out what you study.

1 Corinthians 2:12-14

¹²Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, ¹³which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*. ¹⁴But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

You can pray something like this...

Psalms 119

¹⁷Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live and keep Your word. ¹⁸Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law.

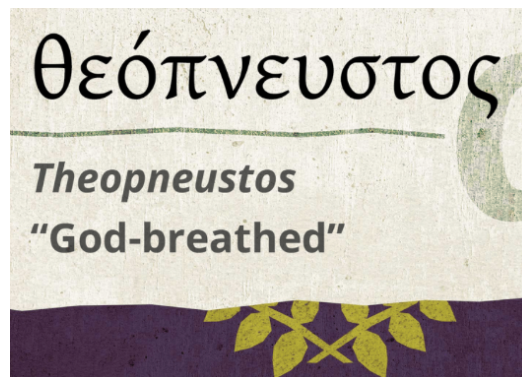
³³Teach me, O Lord, the way of Your statutes, and I shall observe it to the end. ³⁴Give me understanding, that I may observe Your law and keep it with all *my* heart. ³⁵Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it.

God wants to speak to *you*. Don't rely on other people. Think for yourself, and let the text and Spirit speak for themselves.



Qualifications for interpreting the Bible

- **Regeneration**
- **Reverence**
- **Humility**
- **Willingness**
- **Dependence**
- **Objectivity**



The Bible is...

- **divinely inspired**
- **indestructible**
- **infallible**
- **finally authoritative**
- **historical**
- **factually inerrant**
- **spiritually clear**

3 STEPS OF INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

Observation:

What does this text say?

Interpretation:

What does this text mean?

Application:

What does this text mean for me?

Look, Learn, Live

OBSERVATION

What does the text say?

“Look, look, look, until looking becomes seeing.”

What is **observation**?

- the first and foundational step of Inductive Bible Study
- not determining what the text means, but simply looking to see what it says
- becoming familiar with the text before moving on to interpretation

MISCONCEPTIONS

1. The Bible will magically make an impression on me without any effort on my part.
2. I can't *really* actually understand the Bible.
3. I need a pastor or teacher to explain the Bible to me so I know what to believe.

BARRIERS TO BIBLE STUDY

1. **Busyness** – Bible study requires time and patience, as well as regularity and consistency. Go slow. Make it a priority. Make it count.
2. **Sloppiness/Laziness** – Bible study requires precision, thoroughness, and effort.
3. **Distractions** – Bible study requires paying attention and using your mind for God's glory. Put aside your phone, texts, emails, social media, news, skate videos, etc.

Hebrews 2:1

For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away *from it*.

CONTEXT

Before you start taking a detailed look at the text, it is important to first get the big picture.

- Look at the surrounding passages.
- Read through many chapters or the whole book in one sitting if possible.

OBSERVING THE TEXT



You are a detective. Gather clues.

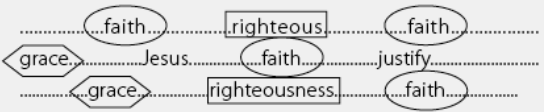
- Look at multiple translations.
- Look up words/phrases/expressions you don't know.
- Mark your Bible up! (Yes, it's really OK.) Color code.
- Ask good questions. Observation questions are like keys that open up the text and help us really see what is going on.






OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

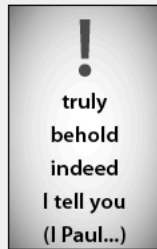


1. Repeated Words / Phrases / Ideas / Themes
2. Key Words
3. Who
 - people: main characters, people groups, etc.
 - pronouns
4. When
 - time elements
 - verb tenses
5. Where
 - geographical locations
 - general "locations"
6. Contrasts
7. Comparisons
8. Commands (Includes Advice, Promises, Warnings, Predictions)
9. Conditional Statements
10. Connectives
11. Atmosphere, Mood, Emotion
12. Figures of Speech
13. Lists
14. Illustrations
15. Emphatic Statements
16. Progression
 - progression of events
 - progression of thought, author's logic

Observation	Example
<p>1. Repeated Words / Phrases / Ideas / Themes</p> <p>Look for words, phrases, ideas, and themes that are repeated throughout the book. These will show you the big picture and main emphasis of the book and also things that the author is concerned about.</p>	 <p>The diagram shows a sentence structure with dotted lines representing missing words. The words 'faith', 'righteous', 'grace', and 'justify' are highlighted with boxes or ovals. The words 'grace' and 'righteousness' are also highlighted with boxes. The words 'faith' and 'righteousness' are also highlighted with ovals. The words 'grace' and 'righteousness' are also highlighted with boxes. The words 'faith' and 'righteousness' are also highlighted with ovals.</p>
<p>2. Key Words</p> <p>Key words are those words with meaning that are essential to understanding a passage. Key words are often repeated.</p>	<p>Galatians, Romans: <i>Justification</i></p> <p>Hebrews: <i>Perfect</i></p>
<p>3. Who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People: main characters, people groups, etc. • Pronouns: I, he, they, you ... 	<p>1 Peter 1:1 <i>Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the exiles of the dispersion...</i></p> <p>1 Thessalonians 4:13 <i>"But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep..."</i></p> <p>Mark 13 <i>Interchange between you & they.</i></p>
<p>4. When</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time elements: Look for time elements or specific dates given in the book. <div data-bbox="620 911 771 1142" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>then after when until before in that day</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb tenses: Observe past, present, and future tenses. 	<p>Galatians 1:18 <i>"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days."</i></p> <p>Ephesians 2:1-2 <i>"And you he made alive, when you were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once walked..."</i></p> <p>Acts 20:29-31 <i>"I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears."</i></p>
<p>5. Where</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographical locations Look for cities, regions, & countries. Find them on a map. • General "locations" Observe locations such as heaven, earth, etc. Observe direction: north, east, south, & west. 	<p>Acts 16:6 <i>"And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia."</i></p> <p>Ephesians 2:6 <i>"...and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus..."</i></p>

Observation	Example
<p>6. Contrasts</p> <p>Contrasts are things that are opposites. Contrasts are often identified by the conjunction "but". Also look for broader contrasts such as contrasting ideas, character, actions, people, etc.</p> <div data-bbox="620 283 774 459" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">  <p>but rather instead</p> </div>	<p>Titus 1:16 <i>"They profess to know God, BUT they deny him by their deeds..."</i></p>
<p>7. Comparisons</p> <p>Comparisons lay things or people alongside of each other and show how they are alike or not alike. These things can be shown to be similar to each other, or one can be shown to be better than the other. Another type of comparison is when something is compared to how it should be.</p> <div data-bbox="620 539 774 865" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">  <p>as like likewise so also more less better</p> </div>	<p>Psalm 42:1 <i>"As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after thee O Lord."</i></p> <p>Hosea 13:3 <i>"Therefore they shall be (like) the morning mist or (like) the dew that goes early away, (like) chaff that swirls from the threshing floor or (like) smoke from a window."</i></p>
<p>8. Commands</p> <p>Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice • Promises • Warnings • Predictions 	<p>2 John: 10-11 <i>"If any one comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house or give him any greeting; for he who greets him shares his wicked work."</i></p>
<p>9. Conditional Statements</p> <p>Statements where the promise is dependant on an action.</p> <div data-bbox="620 1152 774 1297" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>if then unless</p> </div>	<p>Deuteronomy 28:1 <i>"And if you obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments which I command you this day, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth."</i></p>
<p>10. Connectives</p> <p>A connective is a word that connects two statements or ideas together.</p> <p>Connectives show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reason • Result • Conclusion <div data-bbox="620 1358 774 1663" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">  <p>for therefore because so, so that in order that nevertheless thus</p> </div>	<p>2 Timothy 3:1-2 <i>"So put away all malice and all guile and insincerity and envy and all slander."</i></p> <p>Philippians 3:2-3 <i>"Look out for the dogs, look out for the evil-workers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the true circumcision..."</i></p> <p>Nehemiah 9:26-27 <i>"Nevertheless they were disobedient and rebelled against thee and cast thy law behind their back and killed thy prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to thee, and they committed great blasphemies. Therefore thou didst give them into the hand of their enemies..."</i></p>

Observation	Example
<p>11. Atmosphere, Mood, Emotion</p> <p>Observe the author's emotion or general feeling of a book or passage. Atmosphere/mood/emotion can be: joyful, sorrowful, angry, loving, rebuking, beseeching etc.</p>	<p>Philippians 4:1 <i>"Therefore, my brethren, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved."</i></p> <p>Lamentations 1:2 <i>"She weeps bitterly in the night, tears on her cheeks; among all her lovers she has none to comfort her; all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they have become her enemies."</i></p>
<p>12. Figures of Speech</p>	<p>See page 26.</p>
<p>13. Lists</p> <p>A list is 3 or more items that fall under a certain category.</p>	<p>Galatians 5:22 <i>"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law."</i></p>
<p>14. Illustrations</p> <p>Observe illustrations the author uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quotes • Metaphors, analogies • Personal experience • Everyday life situations • Past history 	<p>Titus 1:12 <i>"One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.'"</i></p> <p>2 Timothy 4:7 <i>"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."</i></p>
<p>15. Emphatic Statements</p> <p>Observe words that add extra emphasis to what the author is saying.</p>	<p>Amos 9:13 <i>"Behold the days are coming, says the Lord..."</i></p> <p>Matthew 19:23, 28 <i>"Truly I say to you..."</i></p>
<p>16. Progression</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression of events • Progression of thought, author's logic <p>Observe the following progressions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the author move to a climax? • General → Specific • Question → Answer • Statement → Illustration • Teaching → Application • Need → Remedy 	<p>Ephesians: <i>Ch. 1-3 = Theology / Teaching</i> <i>Ch. 1-4 = Application</i></p>

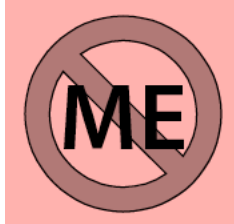


INTERPRETATION

What does the text mean?

What is **interpretation**?

- understanding the author's viewpoint, as well as the viewpoint of his audience
- not asking what it means to us today, but what it meant to the original hearers or readers



Understanding the historical context is **ESSENTIAL** to good interpretation. Imagine yourself thousands of years back in time. Put yourself in the sandals of the original audience. Try and see the book or passage through their eyes.

LITERAL, HISTORICAL, GRAMMATICAL APPROACH

Historical Context:

- Who is the Original Audience?
- What is the cultural, political, social, and geographical situation of the Original Audience?
- What did the Original Audience think or believe? What is their religious background?
- What is happening in history or in their church at this time?
- Is the audience facing any problems? Are they struggling with something? What are their strong points?
- Why was the book written?

The bridge between Observation and Interpretation is:

WHY?

(For example: Why are these words repeated? Why are these people mentioned? Why was this command given?)

INTERPRETATION

OBSERVATION

Interpretation **BUILDS** on the foundation of Observation.
Thorough Observation results in better Interpretation.

REMEMBER: *A text cannot mean what it has never meant!*

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS



1. What are the author's concerns?
2. What are the original audience's concerns, questions, struggles, strengths and/or weaknesses?
3. What does this mean?
4. What does this imply?
5. What is the significance of this?
6. What is the larger argument being made?
7. What is the theme?
8. What does this passage reveal about man?
- 9. What does this passage reveal about God? His purpose? His nature? His work?**

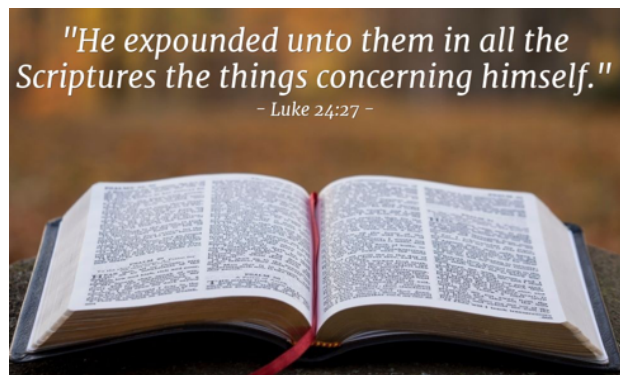
Cross-Reference – Let Scripture interpret Scripture.

(For example: Is there an OT quote in the NT? What is it referring to? What other Bible passages deal with this same theme?)

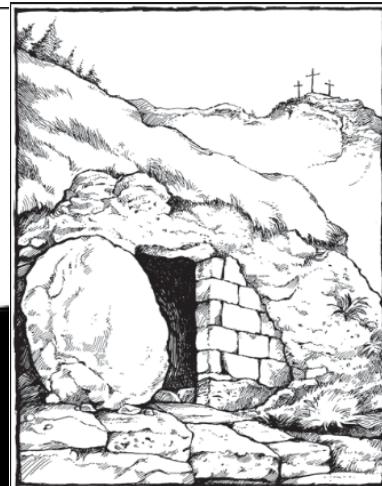
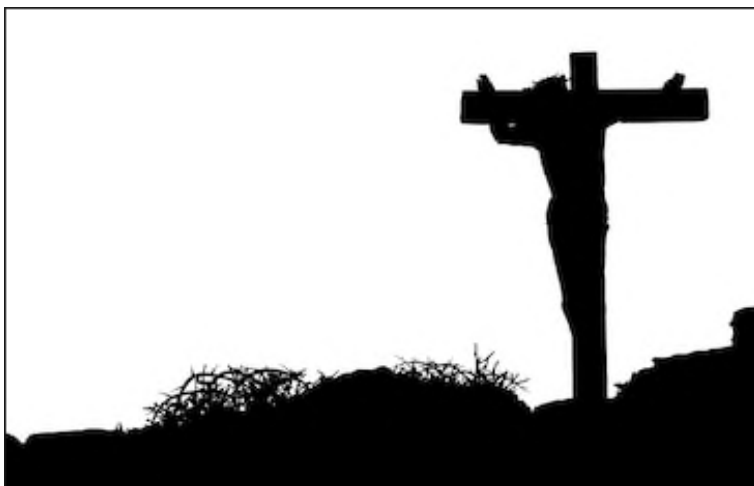
Start with reading the Bible itself first. There is no substitute for the text itself. Then you can tap into solid resources...

Bible dictionaries

Commentaries



KEEP IT GOSPEL-CENTERED: Always come back to the larger story of the Bible: God's glorious provision of salvation for sinners through His Son Jesus Christ who lived, died, and rose for us. (For example: How does this *prepare* for Jesus? How does this *present* Jesus? How does this call me to *live as a follower* of Jesus?)



CLEARING THE GAPS

God's word is spoken in time, yet is *timeless!*

God spoke to specific situations, problems, and questions in the past, because He was personally involved in people's lives, speaking directly to their needs in concrete ways that were appropriate to their situations. *And God still speaks!* Passages that seem outdated and irrelevant to us contain timeless and universal truths for us to discover. But we have to clear the gaps...

TIME GAP - 2000 years + away from 2019AD

CULTURE GAP – Cultures, customs and ways of living differ from period to period in history; politics, religion, economy, law, agriculture, architecture, diet, clothing, military

GEOGRAPHY GAP – Ancient Near East
(Egypt to Iran, Turkey to Ethiopia),

LANGUAGE GAP – Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic; 40 different authors with different styles writing in different genres (poetry, history, etc.)

SPIRITUAL GAP – God thinks and acts in ways that differ from the mere human perspective

APPLICATION

What does this text mean for me?



What is **application**?

- The GOAL of Bible study
- As God teaches us His Word, we want Him to work in our hearts. The study of Scripture should result in changed, transformed lives and a deep, abiding relationship with Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

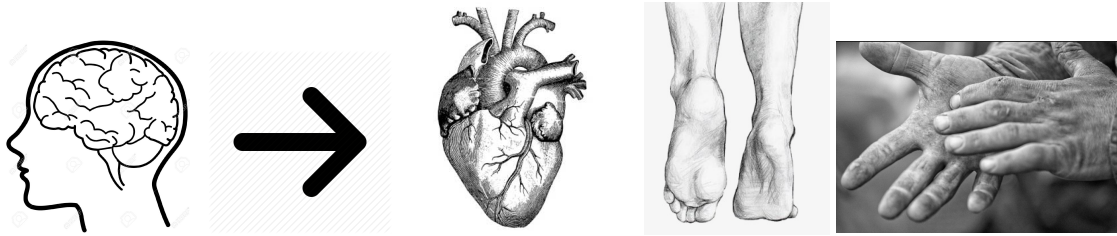
James 1:22-25

²²But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. ²⁵But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

So What?

Where do I go from here?

What am I going to do as a result of what I have learned?



KNOWLEDGE >>> WISDOM

KNOWING >>> DOING

Obey the Word!

APPLICATION QUESTIONS



1. What are the basic timeless truths in this passage?

2. How do these truths apply to my life? Be specific.

- What am I to believe? Do I need to change anything I have previously believed?
- Are there attitudes/actions I need to change/repent of?
- How does this truth comfort me? challenge me?
- What have I learned about myself or others? Is there any way I need to change in how I relate to others?
- What do I see about the character of God? How does this aspect of God's character speak or minister to me?
- Is there a command to obey? a warning to heed? a promise to believe? an encouragement to receive?

3. What specific steps or actions can I take to carry this application out?

Commit your application to the Lord in prayer.

PRAY THE SCRIPTURE BACK TO GOD!

Remember that *God alone* has the power to provoke change in our hearts and give us the endurance to obey.

Ezekiel 36:26-27

²⁶Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

OTHER WAYS TO HELP APPLICATION

Memorization

Meditation

- *A filling of your mind, not an emptying!*

Journaling

Studying in a group

- Keeps you on course
- Gives different perspectives
- Provides accountability
- Guards from heresy

God gave us His word to *communicate* with us and *change* our lives!

DETERMINING THE TIMELESS TRUTHS



A “**cultural statement**” is an expression that can be understood only within a certain cultural context and/or period of time.

A “**timeless truth**” is one of God’s principles that stands true regardless of differing times and cultures.

Following is a list of commands and practices that appear in the Bible. Your task is to determine which ones apply at all times and in all places, and which are temporary, needed at one particular time in one particular place but not necessarily applicable at all other times and in other places. Think about each one, then mark a “P” beside those that are permanent, and a “T” beside those that are temporary. (WARNING: Some may not be so easy.)

Old Testament

1. Remember the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8) _____
2. No person shall eat blood (Leviticus 17:12) _____
3. You shall not wear a garment made of two kinds of fabric (Leviticus 19:19) _____
4. Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot (Deuteronomy 19:21) _____
5. You shall love your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:18) _____

New Testament

1. Greet one another with a holy kiss (Romans 16:16) _____
2. Eat what is set before you asking no questions (1 Corinthians 10:27) _____
3. Observe the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:24) _____
4. Be circumcised (Acts 15:50) _____
5. Anoint the sick with oil (James 5:14-15) _____
6. Remember the poor (Galatians 2:10) _____
7. Sell lands and houses when one becomes a Christian (Acts 4:32-37) _____
8. Permit no woman to teach men (1 Timothy 2:12) _____
9. Wash each other's feet (John 13:14) _____
10. Beware of dogs (Philippians 3:2) _____

What principles did you use to determine whether these are temporary or permanent?



Old Testament Commands

Right or wrong, many often assume that some OT commandments no longer apply to us, while on the other hand, we feel certain that others are valid for today.

To properly determine which are valid we need to understand some basic facts about the OT.

1. The OT contains over 600 different commands (mostly in Exodus-Deuteronomy).
2. The OT is the record of God's covenant with Israel.

Guidelines for Applying OT commands:

1. Is the command restated in the NT?
2. Is the command revoked in the NT?
3. What is the *principle behind* the OT command?

Question: "Do Christians have to obey the Old Testament law?"

Answer: The key to understanding the relationship between the Christian and the Law is knowing that the Old Testament law was given to the nation of Israel, not to Christians. Some of the laws were to reveal to the Israelites how to obey and please God (the Ten Commandments, for example). Some of the laws were to show the Israelites how to worship God and atone for sin (the sacrificial system). Some of the laws were intended to make the Israelites distinct from other nations (the food and clothing rules). None of the Old Testament law is binding on Christians today. When Jesus died on the cross, He put an end to the Old Testament law (Romans 10:4; Galatians 3:23–25; Ephesians 2:15).

In place of the Old Testament law, Christians are under the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2), which is to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...and to love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37-39). If we obey those two commands, we will be fulfilling all that Christ requires of us: “All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:40). Now, this does not mean the Old Testament law is irrelevant today. Many of the commands in the Old Testament law fall into the categories of “loving God” and “loving your neighbor.” The Old Testament law can be a good guidepost for knowing how to love God and knowing what goes into loving your neighbor. At the same time, to say that the Old Testament law applies to Christians today is incorrect. The Old Testament law is a unit (James 2:10). Either all of it applies, or none of it applies. If Christ fulfilled some of it, such as the sacrificial system, He fulfilled all of it.

“This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3). The Ten Commandments were essentially a summary of the entire Old Testament law. Nine of the Ten Commandments are clearly repeated in the New Testament (all except the command to observe the Sabbath day). Obviously, if we are loving God, we will not be worshipping false gods or bowing down before idols. If we are loving our neighbors, we will not be murdering them, lying to them, committing adultery against them, or coveting what belongs to them. The purpose of the Old Testament law is to convict people of our inability to keep the law and point us to our need for Jesus Christ as Savior (Romans 7:7-9; Galatians 3:24). The Old Testament law was never intended by God to be the universal law for all people for all of time. We are to love God and love our neighbors. If we obey those two commands faithfully, we will be upholding all that God requires of us.



New Testament Commands

Much of the teaching of the NT can be applied directly to us today, but sometimes a biblical teaching is directed so specifically to the culture of the ancient world, that another culture cannot understand it. As previously stated, we need to evaluate whether specific statements are cultural and temporary, or timeless; spanning across all ages. We should understand that *every cultural expression in the Bible is the result of some timeless principle*. And even though a cultural expression cannot be carried over directly to another culture, the timeless truth behind it can. Just because it is cultural does not mean it can be ignored.

THE OLD
TESTAMENT
INFORMS
THE NEW
TESTAMENT

THE NEW
TESTAMENT
INTERPRETS
THE OLD
TESTAMENT

EXAMPLES

Applying Biblical Examples

There are many excellent examples in the Bible. The difficulty however, is knowing which examples we are to follow and which we should avoid. Information the author gives us about the example will determine our application.

- **Explicit Examples:** The author tells explicitly whether a person or group is good or bad.
- **Implicit Examples:** There are no explicit statements about whether the actions of the example are right or wrong, but the author gives implicit approval or disapproval of what is done.



Applying Biblical Promises

Because we are no longer under the Old Covenant, we cannot assume that promises of that covenant directly apply to us. In fact, most of them do not. Such promises are usually associated with the blessings God promised the people of Israel if they obeyed His Law. Before applying a Biblical promise, we must *identify the person or group to whom the promise was originally given*. We cannot ignore the Original Audience and historical context of these books without serious danger of misapplying what we read.

Categories of Promises Directly Intended for Us:

1. Promises that are universal in scope
2. Promises given to the church
3. Promises given to other groups to which we belong

Conditional vs. Unconditional

Once we conclude that a promise applies to us, we must also ask whether its fulfillment is dependent in any way on our actions or attitudes.

Promises vs. Principles

A *principle* is not the same as a *promise*. A principle is usually based on who God is - and God never changes. But a promise is based on what God has said He would or would not do. Both the conditions and the recipients of His promise have sometimes changed greatly from the Old to the New Covenant.

Promises vs. Proverbs

In spite of appearance, most proverbs are not promises. They are wise sayings or principles that are generally true of life. Those who follow the advice given in Proverbs will have wisdom for dealing with the practical areas of life.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Author & Audience

Who wrote the book?

To whom was the book written? (Original Readers)

When was the book written?

Where was the book written from?

Historical Context

Old Testament

What is God doing in Israel's history at this time?

What is the religious, social, and political situation at this time?

New Testament:

What is the historical setting of the original audience?

Culture?

Religious situation/background?

Political/geographical situation?

What is happening in the church at this time?

- Strengths & Weaknesses?
- Problems, struggles, questions they may have been asking?

Type of Literature

What type(s) of literature is the book composed of?

Survey of Book

What is the main idea of the book?

What is the major reason that the book was written?

(Author's goal/purpose in writing)

STRUCTURE & COMPOSITION



Levels of Structure

Words in phrases → Sentences → Paragraphs → Segments
→ Sections → Divisions → Books → OT & NT

Kinds of Structure

1. **Geographical:** places (Acts, Joshua)
2. **Chronological:** time and events (Genesis, Luke)
3. **Biographical:** persons (Judges, Ruth)
4. **Topical:** ideas (Jeremiah, Matthew)
5. **Logical:** progression of thoughts or ideas (Romans, Galatians)
6. **Epistolary:** letter (Ephesians, Philemon)
7. **Anthology:** collections (Proverbs)

Laws of Composition

The composition of a book reflects the author's style – how the author expresses himself or arranges his material. These following compositional considerations are to be discovered from the text, not imposed upon it.

1. **Comparison:** alike (Romans 7:1-6)
2. **Contrast:** unlike (Acts 4:36-5:1)
3. **Repetition:** recurrence (“holy” in Leviticus)
4. **Principality:** emphasis and de-emphasis [attention to what's and isn't stated] (Gospels = note the amount of space devoted to the last week of Jesus' life)
5. **Continuity:** progression (the 3 “lost” parables in Luke 15)
6. **Climax:** everything builds to a high point (Job, Revelation, Ecclesiastes)
7. **Radiation:** central point or theme and everything ties into it (Philemon 10 / Philippians 2:1-11)

8. **Interchange:** subject A > subject B > subject A (Luke 1-3 = [A] John's birth announced [B] Jesus' birth announced [A] John born [B] Jesus born)
9. **Cruciality:** pivotal or turning point (Mark 8:27-30 / 2 Samuel 11-12)
10. **Harmony:** unity, everything fits together (Hebrews = centers around the superiority of Christ)
11. **Interrogation:** asking of questions (Romans 6-7 / Habakkuk / Malachi)
12. **General to Specific:** (1 Corinthians = book begins by talking about wisdom in general terms and then moves into the specific lack of wisdom in the Corinthian church)
13. **Problems to Solution:** (1 Corinthians)
14. **Theological to Application:** (Galatians)

FIGURES OF SPEECH



A figure of speech is “a literary mode of expression in which words are used out of their literal sense to suggest a picture or image. A form of expression in which words are intentionally used in other than a plain or literal way so as to produce fresh, vivid, or poetic effects.” (*Websters*)

Simile: A direct comparison of two things that are essentially different. Characterized by use of: *like, as, so*.

- Revelation 1:14 “His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like burning fire.”

Metaphor: An implied comparison between two objects without the use of like, as or so. Asserts that one thing is another.

- John 10:9 “I am the door.”

Allegory: An extended metaphor that has the form of a story.

- Galatians 4:21-31 Hagar & Sarah :: Law & Faith

Analogy: A rather full comparison showing several points of similarity between unlike things.

- Ephesians 5:21-33 The body & the church

Irony & Sarcasm: Irony is stating one thing, but implying something different or meaning the exact opposite. When used to taunt and ridicule, irony is called sarcasm.

- Judges 10:14 “Go and cry to the gods whom you have chosen. Let them deliver you in the time of your distress.”

Personification: The attribution of life or human qualities to inanimate objects. The representation of an object as if it were a person.

- Leviticus 18:25 “The land vomited out its inhabitants...”

Apostrophe: Addressing or speaking to things, abstract ideas or imaginary objects.

- 1Co 15:55 “O death, where is your sting?”

Hyperbole: Exaggeration, not with the intent to deceive, but to emphasize and intensify an impression, make or reinforce a point.

- Matthew 5:29 “If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away...”

Rhetorical Questions: Questions posed for which the author doesn't expect or wait for an answer.

- Matthew 7:16 “Are grapes gathered from thorns?”

Litotes: The use of understatement. A phrase that understates or lessens one thing in order to magnify another. The opposite of hyperbole, often used as irony.

- Acts 14:28 “they remained no little time with the disciples”

Metonymy: The substitution of one term for another - usually a closely associated term.

- Romans 3:30 “Circumcision” for “Jews”

Synecdoche: Part of something is mentioned, but the whole is meant.

- James 4:8b “Cleanse your hands”

Eponymy: A sub-division of synecdoche in which an individual stands for the whole nation.

- Hebrews 11:2 “Ephraim has encompassed me with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit...”

Merismus: a combination of parts of the whole to express totality.

- Psalms 72:8 “May he have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth!”

Euphemism: The substitution of a mild, indirect or vague expression for a harsh, blunt one. A cultured or less offensive way to state something. Euphemisms are used to indirectly discuss such topics as bodily functions, anatomy, reproduction, death, etc.

- John 11:11 “Lazarus has fallen asleep”

Anthropomorphism: The practice of describing God in human terms as if he has hands, feet, a face, etc.

- John 10:29 “No one is able to snatch them out of my Father’s hand.”

Idiom: An expression belonging to a particular language that cannot be understood by the individual meaning of the terms.

- Acts 26:14 “It hurts you to kick against the goads.”

Type: A prefiguring symbol such as an OT event (or person) prefiguring an event (or person) in the NT. It is best to have the type explicitly mentioned in the NT.

- 1 Corinthians 5:7 OT Passover lamb typified Christ, the ultimate sacrificial lamb.


Symbol: Something that stands for another meaning in addition to its ordinary meaning. It is usually a visual image that represents an invisible concept. In interpreting symbols one is not free to impose his own interpretation but he must discover the author’s intention by taking into consideration: the culture, principles of interpretation, the overall message of the book, and in many cases the author’s own specific definition.

- Revelation 1:12-20 7 lampstands > 7 churches; 7 stars > angels of 7 churches

The Song of Solomon Illustrated (For our literalist friends.)



How Solomon saw Abishag



Your eyes are like doves
 Your hair is like a flock of goats
 Your teeth are like a flock of ewes
 Your lips are like a scarlet thread
 Your temples are a slice of a pomegranate
 Your neck is like the tower of David
 Your breasts are like two fawn gazelle
 (Song of Solomon 4:1-5)

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GENRES

Question: "How should the different genres of the Bible impact how we interpret the Bible?"

Answer: The Bible is a work of literature. Literature comes in different genres, or categories based on style, and each is read and appreciated differently from another. For example, to confuse a work of science fiction with a medical textbook would cause many problems—they must be understood differently. And both science fiction and a medical text must be understood differently from poetry. Therefore, accurate exegesis and interpretation takes into consideration the purpose and style of a given book or passage of Scripture. In addition, some verses are meant figuratively, and proper discernment of these is enhanced by an understanding of genre. An inability to identify genre can lead to serious misunderstanding of Scripture.

The main genres found in the Bible are these: law, history, wisdom, poetry, narrative, epistles, prophecy and apocalyptic literature. The summary below shows the differences between each genre and how each should be interpreted:

LAW: This includes the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy. The purpose of law is to express God's sovereign will concerning government, priestly duties, social responsibilities, etc. Knowledge of Hebrew manners and customs of the time, as well as a knowledge of the covenants, will complement a reading of this material.

HISTORY: Stories and epics from the Bible are included in this genre. Almost every book in the Bible contains some history, but Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Acts are predominately history. Knowledge of secular history is crucial, as it dovetails perfectly with biblical history and makes interpretation much more robust.

WISDOM: This is the genre of aphorisms that teach the meaning of life and how to live. Some of the language used in wisdom literature is metaphorical and poetic, and this should be taken into account during analysis. Included are the books of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes.

POETRY: These include books of rhythmic prose, parallelism, and metaphor, such as Song of Solomon, Lamentations and Psalms. We know that many of the psalms were written by David, himself a musician, or David's worship leader, Asaph. Because poetry does not translate easily, we lose some of the musical "flow" in English. Nevertheless, we find a similar use of idiom, comparison and refrain in this genre as we find in modern music.

NARRATIVE: This genre includes the Gospels, which are biographical narratives

about Jesus, and the books of Ruth, Esther, and Jonah. A reader may find bits of other genres within the Gospels, such as parable (Luke 8:1-15) and discourse (Matthew 24). The book of Ruth is a perfect example of a well-crafted short story, amazing in its succinctness and structure.

EPISTLES: An epistle is a letter, usually in a formal style. There are 21 letters in the New Testament from the apostles to various churches or individuals. These letters have a style very similar to modern letters, with an opening, a greeting, a body, and a closing. The content of the Epistles involves clarification of prior teaching, rebuke, explanation, correction of false teaching and a deeper dive into the teachings of Jesus. The reader would do well to understand the cultural, historical and social situation of the original recipients in order to get the most out of an analysis of these books.

PROPHECY: The Prophetic writings are the Old Testament books of Isaiah through Malachi, and the New Testament book of Revelation. They include predictions of future events, warnings of coming judgment, and an overview of God's plan for Israel. Apocalyptic literature is a specific form of prophecy, largely involving symbols and imagery and predicting disaster and destruction. We find this type of language in Daniel (the beasts of chapter 7), Ezekiel (the scroll of chapter 3), Zechariah (the golden lampstand of chapter 4), and Revelation (the four horsemen of chapter 6). The Prophetic and Apocalyptic books are the ones most often subjected to faulty eisegesis and personal interpretation based on emotion or preconceived bias. However, Amos 3:7 tells us, "Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets." Therefore, we know that the truth has been told, and it can be known via careful exegesis, a familiarity with the rest of the Bible, and prayerful consideration. Some things will not be made clear to us except in the fullness of time, so it is best not to assume to know everything when it comes to prophetic literature.

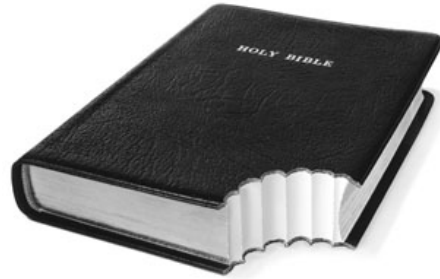
An understanding of the genres of Scripture is vital to the Bible student. If the wrong genre is assumed for a passage, it can easily be misunderstood or misconstrued, leading to an incomplete and fallacious understanding of what God desires to communicate. God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33), and He wants us to "correctly [handle] the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). Also, God wants us to know His plan for the world and for us as individuals. How fulfilling it is to come to "grasp how wide and long and high and deep" (Ephesians 3:18) is the love of God for us!

GENRES OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE

LAW	HISTORY	WISDOM & POETRY	PROPHECY	GOSPEL	LETTERS
OLD TESTAMENT Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	OLD TESTAMENT Joshua Judges Ruth 1 Samuel 2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther NEW TESTAMENT Acts	OLD TESTAMENT Job Psalm Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs	OLD TESTAMENT Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel Hosea Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi NEW TESTAMENT Revelation	NEW TESTAMENT Matthew Mark Luke John	PAULINE Romans 1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1 Thessalonians 2 Thessalonians 1 Timothy 2 Timothy Titus Philemon GENERAL Hebrews James 1 Peter 2 Peter 1 John 2 John 3 John Jude



Don't forget to eat!



Matthew 4:4

‘But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”

These materials were compiled and presented by Pastor Jon Bones in Spring 2019 for YWAM Barcelona’s Discipleship Training School.