

HOW TO STUDY A BIBLE PASSAGE

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15

Tools Needed: *A good study Bible; A thorough concordance; A Bible dictionary*

Optional: *Atlases, Encyclopedias, Commentaries, etc.*

I. OBSERVATION (Its purpose is to help you see details you might otherwise overlook)

- Read through and pray over the passage as many times as possible before anything else.
 - Read the passage in several different Bible translations.
- A. List the following: (You will not find all of these in every passage)
1. Repeated Words
 2. Connecting Words (for example: and, but, for, since, therefore, because)
 3. Time Words (for example: after, then, before, immediately)
 4. Location Words
 5. Contrasts and Comparisons
 6. Unknown Words
 7. Figurative Expressions
 8. Logical Sequences (one part of the passage explaining another part)
 9. Anything strange, unusual, or unexpected
- B. List the key words in each verse
- C. General response
1. What is the passage about?
 2. What is the purpose of the passage?

II. BACKGROUND OF THE BOOK

- A. Who wrote this book?
- B. When was it written?
- C. To whom was it written?
- D. Why was it written? (What was going on?)
- E. What is the main theme of the book?

III. CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE

- A. What is the passage immediately before it about & how is the material in both passages related?
- B. What is the passage immediately after it about & how is the material in both passages related?
- C. How does the passage relate to the rest of the book?
- D. What other passages in the Bible deal with this topic?

IV. BACKGROUND OF THE PASSAGE

- A. What is the time? (day, night, etc.)
- B. Who are the principle persons involved?
- C. What are the chief events?
- D. What geographical factors are involved?
- E. What cultural customs have a bearing on the passage? (Information about customs can be found in the Study Bible and Bible Encyclopedia)

V. WORD STUDY AND RESEARCH

- A. Look up all the key words you listed in the observation portion of the study. (Use your concordance and Bible dictionary)
- B. Use your other resources to find out more about the historical context of the passage.

VI. WHAT OTHER SOURCES SAY

Use commentaries to find out how others understand the passage. Why do you agree or disagree?

VII. APPLICATION – This is a most crucial step!

- A. What principles in this passage are unchanging truth?
- B. Where does this passage touch your life?
- C. What are some specific applications to contemporary needs today?
- D. Is there a truth to believe? An example to follow? A warning to heed? A promise to claim? A command to follow