

HOW TO READ YOUR BIBLE FOR ALL IT'S WORTH

3 March 2021 | Week 7: Before You Open Your Bible

REVIEW OF STUDY QUESTIONS: Revelation 12

And though this world, with devils filled,
should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God has willed
his truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim,
we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure,
for lo! his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.

- Martin Luther "A Mighty Fortress is Our God"

I. Introduction

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. - 2 Timothy 3:16

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. - Romans 15:4

For this is the will of God, your sanctification... - 1 Thess. 4:3a

II. Common Errors in Application

- 1) Jumping straight to application

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. - Jeremiah 29:11

- 2) Misreading what is descriptive vs. prescriptive

*And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.
- Acts 16:9-10*

- 3) Applying the text beyond its intended meaning

- 4) Emptying the text of its application

- 5) Assuming all application is equally clear

Straight-line vs. Jagged-line issues

"All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only learned but the unlearned, in due use of ordinary means may attain unto sufficient understanding of them." - Westminster Confession of Faith 1.7

III. Categories of Application¹

1) Clear Direct Commands

Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.

¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

- Romans 12:10-13

2) General Truth

"Therefore, render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." - Matthew 22:21

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. - Proverbs 22:6

3) Direct Analogy

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit - Ephesians 5:18

4) Indirect Analogy

When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. - Daniel 6:10

5) Indirect Extension

¹ <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/5-ways-to-read-the-bible-for-personal-application/>

IV. General Questions for Application

- 1) How does this passage challenge or confirm my understanding about God and what he is like?
- 2) How does this passage challenge me to change the way I live?
- 3) What does this passage teach me about being a disciple of Jesus?
(Gospels & Acts)
- 4) How is my situation similar or different from those being addressed?
(Prophetic & Apocalyptic)
- 5) How does this passage lead me to trust God and his promises in Jesus?
(Prophetic & Apocalyptic)

LUKE 18:1-8

And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. ²He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. ³And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' ⁴For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man, ⁵yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.'"

⁶And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. ⁷And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? ⁸I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

V. Before You Open Your Bible²

1) Prayerful Heart (I.O.U.S.)³

- **I.** *Incline my heart to your testimonies,
and not to selfish gain!* – Psalm 119:36
- **O.** *Open my eyes, that I may behold
wondrous things out of your law.* – Psalm 119:18
- **U.** *Unite my heart to fear your name* – Psalm 86:11
- **S.** *Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love* – Psalm 90:14

2) Humble Heart

*He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.* – Ps. 25:9

God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble- Jam. 4:6

3) Joyfully Expectant Heart

*Your words were found, and I ate them,
and your words became to me a joy
and the delight of my heart* – Jer. 15:16

*For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that
through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we
might have hope.* – Romans 15:4

² Smethurst, Matt. (2019). *Before you open your bible: nine heart postures for approaching God's word.* Great Britain:10Publishing.

³ Piper, John. (2013). *When I Don't Desire God: How to fight for joy.* Crossway.
<https://document.desiringgod.org/when-i-don-t-desire-god-en.pdf?ts=1471455013>

4) Discerning Heart

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ - Phil. 1:9-10

for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. - Heb. 5:13-14

5) Obedient Heart

*"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever...
- John 14:15-16*

6) Longing Heart

Your testimonies are wonderful;
therefore my soul keeps them.
¹³⁰ The unfolding of your words gives light;
it imparts understanding to the simple.
¹³¹ I open my mouth and pant,
because I long for your commandments.
¹³² Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as is your way with those who love your name.
¹³³ Keep steady my steps according to your promise,
and let no iniquity get dominion over me.
¹³⁴ Redeem me from man's oppression,
that I may keep your precepts.
¹³⁵ Make your face shine upon your servant,
and teach me your statutes.
¹³⁶ My eyes shed streams of tears,
because people do not keep your law. - Psalm 119:129-136

7) Christ's Heart

CASTLETON CORE: WEEK 7

How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth | Study Questions | Psalm 119

1. Read the text out loud and note (highlight, underline, circle) how the Psalmist talks about the word (testimonies, statutes, etc.) of God.
2. What is the literary context of this passage?
3. What is the historical context of this passage?
4. How does this chapter connect to Christ and the metanarrative of Scripture?
5. How does this Psalm challenge or confirm your understanding of God and his word?
6. How might this passage change the way you approach the Scriptures?

Suggested Resources for Further Study

Book Resources

DeYoung, K. (2014). *Taking God at his word: why the bible is knowable, necessary, and enough, and what it means for you and me*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

ESV study Bible: English Standard Version. (2011). Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

Helm, D. R. (2011). *One to one Bible reading: A simple guide for every Christian*. Kingsford, N.S.W.: Matthias Media.

Plummer R. (2010). *40 questions about interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregal.

Smethurst, Matt. (2019). *Before you open your bible: nine heart postures for approaching God's word*. Great Britain: 10Publishing.

Online Resources

Sermons:

- Kevin DeYoung, (2012). [*Never Spoke a Man Like this Before: Inerrancy, Evangelism and Christ's Unbreakable Bible*](#)
- D.A. Carson, (2015). Revelation 12
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yyqhgO0LM2c>

Articles

- Russel Moore, (2018). Does Jeremiah 29:11 Apply to You?
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/jeremiah-2911-apply/>
- Joe Carter, (2016). *5 Ways to Read the Bible for Application*
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/5-ways-to-read-the-bible-for-personal-application/>