

Studying & Discovering the Text

Getting the most out of a passage of Scripture

We must put the break on both the urge to *interpret* and to *apply* until we have *observed* fully what the Bible is actually saying.

"What it means?" (INTERPRETATION) and "How it affects my life?" (APPLICATION)
must come after "What is it actually saying?" (OBSERVATION)

Step 1 - Pray

Establish a continuing dialogue with God in prayer and sincere dependence on His Spirit for illumination. Pray through the passage you are studying. This could be out loud so as to recognise His physical presence with you and to slow down your contemplation of the text.

Step 2 - Context

Understand the passage you are studying in the context of the chapter, and the thrust of the entire book (leave the extra-Biblical context and cultural things until later - unless mentioned in the Bible).

Step 3 - Different Bibles

Decide on a variety of translations and read your passage in them a number of times. Use a literal one (ESV, NKJV, NASB, NRSV); a dynamic equivalent (GNB, NIV, CEV); and a paraphrase (Phillips, Living, Message).

Step 4 - Who?

Who is in the passage? Identify everyone in the passage and jot down everything about them.

Step 5 - Where?, When?, What?

List references to places or locations

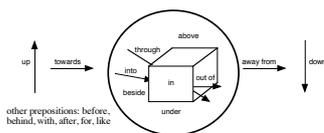
List any references to time

List non-person nouns, subjects, and things in the text

Picture yourself in the scene or audience - What can you smell, hear, taste, see, feel (both literally and emotionally)

Step 6 - Grammar

Note the verbs, connectives and prepositions in the text - the little things that mean so much.



Step 7 - Repeats

List every word that repeats (In the original languages is most ideal).

Step 8 - Select and Study

Select a handful of key words to study further with a concordance.

Step 9 - Summarise

Summarise the thrust of the passage in one simple sentence. Give the passage a possible title. This could become your conclusion.

Step 10 - Draw it

Picture a prevailing image and give it time to incubate in the imagination

Notes

Bible text

1. The Text The Joy of Discovery - Structure - Purpose - Proposition		2. The Listener - Introduction - Conclusion - Illustrations
The Preaching Room		
3. The World - Application		4. The Preacher - Personal application - Delivery