

My Bible Study Tool Bag #2 More Observation

Review: Strategies to help us become first-rate OBSERVERS.

We need to read:

Thoughtfully...with a focus

Repeatedly...use different translations, listen to it, read it aloud

Patiently...consider staying in the same book for a month, or a few verses every day for a week

Prayerfully...look at Psalm 23 and turn it into a prayer (use personal pronouns)

Purposefully...look at the sentence structure (nouns, verbs, modifiers). Is there a geography point to be made? Where does this passage fit in history? What are the ideas and concepts being shared?

Meditatively...interact with the passage. Do you identify with any of the characters? Is there a command to obey? Anything to confess? Anything to start/stop? Do you need to express gratitude?

More Observation Tools

1. Learn to look for anything (or things) that are emphasized
 - A. Consider the order of how things are presented
Examples: The names of the apostles or the names of Jesus' friends
 - B. Sometimes the author just outright tells us what to think
Example: John 20:30
 - C. Notice how the passage(s) build towards a climax
Example: II Sam. 11 and 12
 - D. Consider the length of the material. Longer material may suggest something of importance
Example: Contrast the book of Genesis with the book of Haggai

2. Learn to look for things that are related
 - A. When general information leads to more specific details
Example: Matt. 6:1-18
 - B. When questions are answered in the text
Example: Romans 6:1
 - C. When a cause produces an effect
Example: Nehemiah 1

3. Learn to look for things that are alike or unlike.
 - A. Comparisons
 - Similes: using words “as” “like”
 - Example: Ps. 42
 - Metaphors: A story that has a parallel spiritual emphasis
 - Example: John 15
 - B. Contrasts
 - Note the use of contractions: “but,” “therefore”

4. Learn to look for things that are true to life
 - Consider Solomon in II Kings 11. What could you use and apply to your life?

How to Organize your Observations and Discoveries:

Sometimes, you need to “pick” a passage apart in order to get its full meaning. Sometimes, you need to look for the BIG Picture.

Charts can help you find the main teaching to a passage/chapter or book.

Example Matthew 13:1-23

SOULS.	DESCRIPTION.	GROWTH.	HINDERANCES.	RESULTS

How to Study a Section:

1. Read and reread that section of scripture.
2. Observe all the who, what, where, when and how details. Write them down.
3. Identify the various paragraphs or verses. Put a label or title on each section.
4. Evaluate how the section, relates to the rest of the book. Watch for things emphasized, repeated and so on.
5. Write down the Big Idea behind this section. Makes sure your Big Idea summarizes the section of scripture.
6. Study your questions. Keep a list of the ones you cannot answer. (They will be a good list for further investigation.)

Passage: _____

WHO: _____

WHAT: _____

WHERE: _____

WHEN: _____

HOW: _____

QUESTIONS:

ANSWERS:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Context:

Comparisons:

Culture:

BIG IDEA (Interpretation: What this passage meant to the original audience)

APPLICATION (WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ME?)

Some suggestions for your own bible Study Tools

1. Purchase Howard Hendrick's book *Living by the Book*.
2. Purchase a one volume Bible commentary.
3. Purchase a good map/atlas.
4. Purchase a good bible dictionary: *Holman's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*.
5. Consult The Bible Project Website.
6. Consult Bible Hub Website.

Groups Discussion/ Personal Practice

1. Make a chart to help you understand the events surrounding the birth of Christ. Use Matt. 1-2 and Luke 1-2. The top categories might be: where, people, how (how did they heard the news), their reactions.
2. Make a chart to help you understand Mark 4:35-5:42. The top categories might be: Miracle, Realm, People, Means, Results, Faith. You should have four rows for each occasion/category. Did the chart help you understand the passage?
3. Make a chart for the book of Jonah.
The top characteristics might be: Where, obedience/disobedience, God's reactions, and Results. You should have four rows down indicating the four chapters of Jonah.
4. Visit the Bible Project site. Watch the video on Jonah.
5. Visit the Bible Hub site. Type in Ephesians 6:12 and do a study on the three terms: rulers, authorities and powers of the dark world. Who are they?