

Tips for dynamic Bible reading & devotional life

- Set a time and space for your Bible reading
- Use a physical Bible and journal
- Write/journal about your observations and applications
- Set goals (memorization, frequency, amount to read)
- Talk to others about what you read and observe
- Ask questions
- Change up your approach

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HERMENEUTICS

Hermeneutics is the practice of interpretation

Interpretation Case Study

Mary Had a Little Lamb

“Mary Had a Little Lamb”

Interpretation 1:

Mary owned a small lamb

“Mary Had a Little Lamb”

Interpretation 2:

Mary owned a young lamb

“Mary Had a Little Lamb”

Interpretation 3:

Mary once had a lamb, but not anymore

“Mary Had a Little Lamb”

Interpretation 4:

Mary, mother of Jesus,
gave birth to the “lamb” of God

“Mary Had a Little Lamb”

Interpretation 5:

Mary ate a small portion of lamb meat

“Mary Had a Little Lamb”

Interpretation 6:

Mary is a lamb and gave birth to a newborn lamb

“Mary Had a Little Lamb”

Interpretation 7:

Mary scammed a small lamb

5 Step Procedure to Interpreting Scripture

1. **Identify the genre**

- Law, History, Poetry/Wisdom, Prophets, Narratives, Epistles, Apocalypse

2. **State your initial understanding of the passage**

- Based on what you observe, know, think, and receive from the Holy Spirit

3. **Make observations about the following contexts**

- Literary (requires research)
- Cultural (requires research)
- Historical (requires research)

4. **Interpret the meaning of the passage**

- What's the big idea / main point?

5. **Apply the passage to your life and to those around you**

- What does God want me to do with this?

Try it out

**(1) Genre, (2) Initial understanding, (3) Observations [literary, historical, cultural],
(4) Interpret the meaning, (5) Apply it to life**

Matthew 28:18-20

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Try it out

**(1) Genre, (2) Initial understanding, (3) Observations [literary, historical, cultural],
(4) Interpret the meaning, (5) Apply it to life**

Proverbs 25:21-22

*²¹ If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat,
and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink,
²² for you will heap burning coals on his head,
and the LORD will reward you.*

Try it out

(1) Genre, (2) Initial understanding, (3) Observations [literary, historical, cultural],
(4) Interpret the meaning, (5) Apply it to life

James 2:14-17

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Try it out

(1) Genre, (2) Initial understanding, (3) Observations [literary, historical, cultural],
(4) Interpret the meaning, (5) Apply it to life

Romans 5:18-19

¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Try it out

(1) Genre, (2) Initial understanding, (3) Observations [literary, historical, cultural],
(4) Interpret the meaning, (5) Apply it to life

Romans 6:1-2

¹ What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

