

onetoone

BIBLE READING

DAVID HELM

Sheets for copying

To make it a little easier for you to use some of the ideas and suggestions in *One-to-One Bible Reading*, here are some easy-to-photocopy sheets that you can use either in preparation or in your one-to-one meetings.

COMA questions for the Gospels and Acts

Context

- What has happened so far in the narrative? Have there been any major events, characters or themes?

- What has happened just prior to the section you are reading?

Observation

- What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does the author describe them? How do they describe themselves?

- Is time or place significant in the events that happen in the passage?

- Is there a conflict or high point in the passage?

- Do you think there is a main point or theme in this section of the story?

- What surprises are there?

Meaning

- Are there any 'editorial' comments from the author about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?
- Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What does this person learn?
- What does the passage reveal about who Jesus is, and what he came into the world to do?
- How could you sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words?

Application

- How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
- Is there some attitude you need to change?
- What does this passage teach you about being a disciple of Jesus?

COMA questions for Old Testament narrative

Context

- What has happened so far in the narrative? Have there been any major events, characters or themes?

- What has happened just prior to the section you are reading?

Observation

- What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does the author describe them? How do they describe themselves?

- Is time or place significant in the events that happen in the passage?

- Is there a conflict or high point in the passage?

- Do you think there is a main point or theme in this section of the story?

- What surprises are there?

Meaning

- Are there any 'editorial' comments from the author about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?
- Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What does this person learn?
- How does the passage point forward to what God is going to do in the future? Does it prophesy or anticipate Jesus Christ in some way?
- How could you sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words?

Application

- How does this passage challenge your understanding about who God is and what he is like?
- Is there some attitude or behaviour you need to change?

COMA questions for the epistles

Context

- What can you learn about the person or situation to which the letter is written?

- What clues are there about the author and his circumstances?

- What was the main point of the passage immediately before this one? Are there logical or thematic connections to the passage you are reading?

Observation

- Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the text? Are there key connecting words (for, therefore, but, because) that indicate the logical flow of the passage?

- What is the main point or points? What supporting points does the author make?

- What surprises are there in the flow of the argument?

Meaning

- How does this text relate to other parts of the book?

- How does the passage relate to Jesus?

- What does this teach you about God?

- How could you sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words?

Application

- How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?

- Is there some attitude you need to change?

- How does this passage call on you to change the way you live?

QUESTIONS FOR THE EPISTLES

COMA questions for Hebrew wisdom literature and poetry

Context

- Are there any clues about the circumstances in which the passage was written?

- What has happened so far?

Observation

- Are there repetitions or multiple instances of similar ideas? Do these repetitions make a particular point, or point to the structure of the passage?

- What images or metaphors does the author use? What do they indicate about God or the other people in the text? What might they indicate about modern readers?

- What is the tone of the passage? What emotions is the author arousing?

- What is the main point or points?

- What surprises are there?

Meaning

- Are there specific instructions/commands given to the reader? Does this passage mention any consequences for not following God's commands?
- How does the author motivate the reader/audience, or make his appeal?
- What does the passage teach us about God, and his people, and life in his world?
- Does the passage point forward to Jesus? Is the gospel anticipated or foreshadowed in some way?

Application

- How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
- Is there some attitude you need to change?
- How does this passage call on you to change the way you live?

COMA questions for prophetic literature

Context

- Are there any clues about the circumstances in which the prophecy was given or written?
- Are any people or places mentioned that you aren't familiar with? (Chase them up in earlier parts of the book, or refer to a Bible dictionary or commentary.)
- Are other bits of the Old Testament mentioned or alluded to in the passage? What part do these 'memories' play in the text?

Observation

- Are there repetitions or multiple instances of similar ideas? Do these repetitions make a particular point, or point to the structure of the passage?
- Paying attention to when the prophet is speaking and when God is speaking, what does the passage tell us about God's plans? What does it tell us about God's character?
- What kind of human behaviour, if any, is condemned or rewarded? What response is called for (if any)?
- What is the main point or points?

Meaning

- Are there specific instructions/commands given to the reader? Does this passage mention any consequences for not following God's commands?
- Does the text have a sense of expectation about something happening in the future? What is to be expected and when? How should this motivate action in the present?
- Does the passage point forward to Jesus? Is the gospel anticipated or foreshadowed in some way?

Application

- How is your own situation similar to or different from those being addressed?
- How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
- How does this passage lead you to trust God and his promises in Jesus?
- How does this passage call on you to change the way you live?

QUESTIONS FOR PROPHETIC LITERATURE

COMA questions for apocalyptic literature

Context

- Are there any clues about the historical circumstances the literature is addressing?

- Are other bits of the Bible mentioned or hinted at in the passage? What part do these ‘memories’ play in the text?

Observation

- What images are used in the passage? What effect do they have?

- What emotions does the passage arouse (e.g. fear, expectation, awe)?

- How does the passage seek to reveal what God is like? Where in this passage might we find hope for men and women?

- Is there a crisis in the passage? What is the tension/conflict about, and how does it relate to readers?

Meaning

- Are there specific instructions/commands given to the reader? Does this passage mention any consequences for not following God's commands?
- Does the text have a sense of expectation about something happening in the future? What is to be expected and when? How should this motivate action in the present?
- Does the passage point to Jesus? Is the gospel foreshadowed or looked back upon in some way?

Application

- How is your situation similar to or different from those being addressed?
- How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
- How does this passage lead you to trust God and his promises in Jesus?
- How does this passage call on you to change the way you live?

QUESTIONS FOR APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

Eight weeks through Mark's Gospel

Week 1 (Mark 1:1-15)

- How does Mark show us that Jesus is worthy of attention?
- What 'witnesses' does Mark call upon to introduce Jesus, and why?
- What is the message of Jesus, and how does it draw your attention to him?
- According to the passage, what has Jesus come to do?
- What is your own reaction to Jesus after reading this passage?

Week 2 (Mark 2:1-12)

- What do you think is the most surprising thing Jesus does in this encounter?

- If someone in a crowd of people said to you, “Your sins are forgiven”, what would you and everyone else think of that person?

- How does Jesus demonstrate his claim to be able to forgive sins?

- What difference do you think his authority should have in your own life?

Week 3 (Mark 3:7-35)

- How do people react to Jesus today?

- What responses to Jesus do you see in this passage?

- Why was Jesus' authoritative teaching a threat to the teachers of the law?

- Jesus says, "He first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house" (v. 27). What is the point of this statement?

- What house is Jesus claiming to be overthrowing, and what could this mean for you?

- According to this passage, how do you become a part of Jesus' family?

Week 6 (Mark 14:53-15:15)

- When we read of great tragedies in history, we tend to think that we would have acted differently if we had been there. Can you see yourself in this passage? What would you be doing?

- How are some of the characters in this passage similar to each other? How are they different?

- What evidence is Mark presenting in his attempt to prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?

- How does Jesus' silence actually communicate his identity? (See Isaiah 53:7-9.)

- How has this passage affected your view of Jesus?

Week 7 (Mark 15:16-39)

- How many times does the phrase “King of the Jews” appear in chapter 15 (including verses 1-15)? What is ironic about this? What is Mark trying to say about the events at the cross?
- Read Psalm 22. How does this help you understand the words of Jesus from the cross in verse 34?
- How does Psalm 22 end? What is Jesus ultimately claiming for himself?
- Why do you think the events at the cross were necessary?
- What final description of Jesus’ identity does Mark provide? Where have you seen this title before?
- What do the events at the cross teach us about what it means to follow Jesus?

