

Guide to Effective Bible Reading

Directions: tape this card in the front of your Bible; refer to it frequently during your reading.

What is the Bible about (i.e., its main theme)? The Bible records the true story of God’s plan to redeem His people.

How is this presented? This theme is presented in three key elements, each explicitly or implicitly seen throughout the Bible.

- **Authored:** by the Father (Eph 1:11); before time (Eph 1:4).
- **Accomplished:** by the Son (Heb 12:2); all of and each part of Scripture points to Him (Lk 24:25-27, 44-45; 1Pe 1:10-12)
- **Applied:** by the Spirit (Gn 1:1-2; Ac 1:1-8).

How is this structured (outline): three major sections;

- **Gn 1-2:** what God did to give His people true or perfect life (i.e., family, home, purpose and future).
- **Gn 3:1-14:** what Man did to lose this and the consequences.
- **Gn 3:15-Rv 22:21:** what God has promised, done, and is doing, to give true life back to His people.

How is this story developed? The key elements are progressively developed and expanded, from implicit presentation in Genesis, to growing explicitness in the OT, to comprehensively complete expression in the NT.

	<i>Authored</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Applied</i>
OT:	covenant words and actions (Gn 9:8-16; Heb 8:9-10)	interdependent-expanding covenants (Gn 17:4; Gal 3:28- 29; Ps 89:3-4; Lk 1:32-33)	types & shadows of old covenant (Rom 5:14; Col 2:17; Heb 10:1)
NT:	plan initiated before time now fulfilled (Eph 1:4,11)	consummate accomplishment in Christ (Jh 19:30)	already-not yet” application via new covenant (1Jo 3:2)

Guide to Effective Bible Interpretation

Directions: tape this card in the back of your Bible; refer to it frequently during your study.

Ordinary Methods: common to all mankind. These are the natural ordinary reading skills used by anyone when reading anything.

- **Reading skills:** ordinary skills used to read anything. Pay attention to the theme, format, structure, style, etc..
- **Language skills:** learned skills used to analyze writing. Pay attention to word meaning, grammar, original language, etc..
- **Background skills:** study skills used to analyze the setting outside the Bible. Pay attention to cultural and/or historical referents.

Note: these ordinary methods are always to be subservient to the following spiritual methods.

Spiritual Methods: only available to the Christian and only apply to the Bible. This is because they are skills that require the Spirit’s use through the faith of the Christian when reading the Bible.

- **SI - Spiritual illumination:** the Spirit provides insight necessary for understanding that results in belief (2Co 2:6-16, Ps 19:8). Pray for this ministry every time you read the Bible.
- **SIS - Scripture Interprets Scripture:** the Bible is its own authoritative interpreter (2Pe 1:20-21; Jh 5:46). Look for explicit/implicit referents, theme structures, context sets, etc..
- **CC - Christ-centered:** Christ as the one who fulfills the covenant of grace is the central theme of the Bible, both the whole book, and in all its parts (Lk 24:25-27, 44-45; Ac 10:43; Col 2:17). Look for covenant interactions and development.
- **II - Indicative-Imperative:** God’s saving work is the basis of Christian life (Ex 20:2-3; Php 3:20-4:1). Look for covenant interactions between being and doing.
- **LG - Law & Gospel:** God’s law serves to point to the gospel (Rom 3:20; Gal 3:24). Look for covenant interaction between law and grace.