

# How to Study the Bible: The Process

## 2 Timothy 2:8-15

### Distinction between Bible reading & Bible study

- Bible Reading—BIG PICTURE (30,000-foot perspective)
  - God’s grand redemptive story
  - “The O.T. is the N.T. *CONCEALED*; and the N.T. is the O.T. *REVEALED*”
- Bible Study—time to land the plane
  - This is where we SLOW DOWN long enough to identify the many different details of God’s redemptive plan

### Two primary Bible study methods

- Deductive (very similar to topical)
  - GENERAL→SPECIFICS
- Inductive
  - Specific→General
  - Three main steps/practices:
    - Observation--*What does it say? What do I see?*
    - Interpretation—*What does it mean?*
    - Application—*What does it mean to me?*
  - **2 Timothy 2:15**

### Selection—*What do I study?*

- Become familiar with the Bible
- Select a book/passage
- Select a version of the Bible you can understand
  - **The best version is the one you read & understand!!**

### OBSERVATION—*What do I see? What does it say?*

- Observe the text→**ASK**: who, what, where, how, when, why type questions
- Observe historical setting

## Interpretation—What does it mean?

- Interpretation flows from observation → accurate interpretation depends on careful observation
  - Two Warnings:
    - Danger of presuppositions
    - Don't jump to application just yet
- Understand words change meaning over time
  - GOAL: to identify what the AUTHOR is seeking to say
- HISTORICAL CONTEXT in which this passage is being written
  - *What is the historical context in which this passage was written?*
  - *What is the sociological situation in which this passage was written?*
  - *What is the geographic situation in which this context is written?*
- Theological Implications
  - *What is being revealed about God (more specifically, what is God revealing about Himself)?*
  - *What does it reveal about human nature...ME?*
  - *What does it say about SIN?*
  - *What does it say about REDEMPTION and SALVATION?*
  - *What does it say about CHURCH and/or the CHRISTIAN LIFE*
- Identify how each verse/paragraph/passage fits into the larger framework of the book
  - Specifically, how this passage fits into God's redemptive plan

## Application—What does this mean to me? How does the meaning of this passage apply to my life?

- Social Implications
  - *What does this passage say in regards to social issues: justice, poverty, money, racism, etc?*
  - *How is God's redemption revealed in this passage?*
  - *How does the meaning of the passage influence the values & goals of our lives and society?*
- Personal Implications
  - **2 Timothy 3:16-17**
  - The point of careful observation & accurate interpretation is so we might follow through with effective application
    - **Howard Hendricks: "It's not how much you get into Scripture; it's how much Scripture gets into you!"**
    - **Howard Hendricks** also states, *"The mark of true spiritual maturity is not how much you understand, but how much you use. In the Spiritual realm, the opposite of ignorance is not knowledge, but obedience."*
  - *What does the meaning of this passage say about my moral decisions?*
  - *How does this text influence my personal goals?*
- Practical next step(s):
  - *What am I going to do with what I've learned?*
  - *What goal am I going to make in my life to pursue the truth I've just learned?*
  - *What am I going to do this next week?*