

How To Study Scripture

Introduction: This is not an exhaustive teaching series on how to study Scripture. It is meant to be a starting point in falling in love with God's Word. If you are already proficient in studying God's Word, I hope you will gain new insight and helps. I cannot stress enough that this is not a seminary lesson; this is simply setting you in the right direction, so you may go and study God's Word accurately and faithfully. I have divided this into two sessions. The first will focus on the methodology of studying Scripture and the second will focus on the practical application.

Session 1: Understanding How We Interpret God's Word

Hermeneutics: The principles and method in which we choose to study.

Why is a correct Hermeneutic Important?

- It should be the will and desire of every believer to know God!
- We know God primarily through His Word!
- Knowing the Word of God means having a sure foundation from which to launch!

What is the end purpose?

- To have a sure foundation so that we may, through diligent study, **find the meaning God intended** of a particular passage rather than what we intend it to.

accurate conclusion: a **Literal, Historical, and Grammatical Hermeneutic**.

Literal – In its most basic meaning, “We take Scripture at face value.”

- Phrases, commands, and words are to be taken literally according to the common usage of the day when written unless otherwise evident that we should not (i.e., specific genres).

Historical – In its most basic meaning, “The vast majority of Scripture is an accurate historical account of the history of the world.” (when future prophecy is fulfilled, all will be historically accurate)

- We believe that events described in Scripture are historically accurate and reliable accounts of church and human history.

Grammatical – In its most basic meaning, “Grammar often determines meaning.”

- Much like in our native English language, grammar determines how the reader should interpret words and phrases, how the structure of sentences works, and so forth.

The Three C’s – While some would add this as the fourth aspect of our hermeneutic, I believe that this is what connects everything.

CONTEXT, CONTEXT, CONTEXT

My introduction to Hermeneutics class used "*Grasping God's Word: A hands-on approach to reading, interpreting, and applying the Bible*" by Daniel Hayes and Scott Duvall. The following section comes from this book for plagiarism purposes, little of this is my own. The reason I use this is because of the imprint it left on me and the visual representation of it, and the simplicity of it. There is a copy unless checked out in the church library.

Refer to the picture on the next page for these steps listed

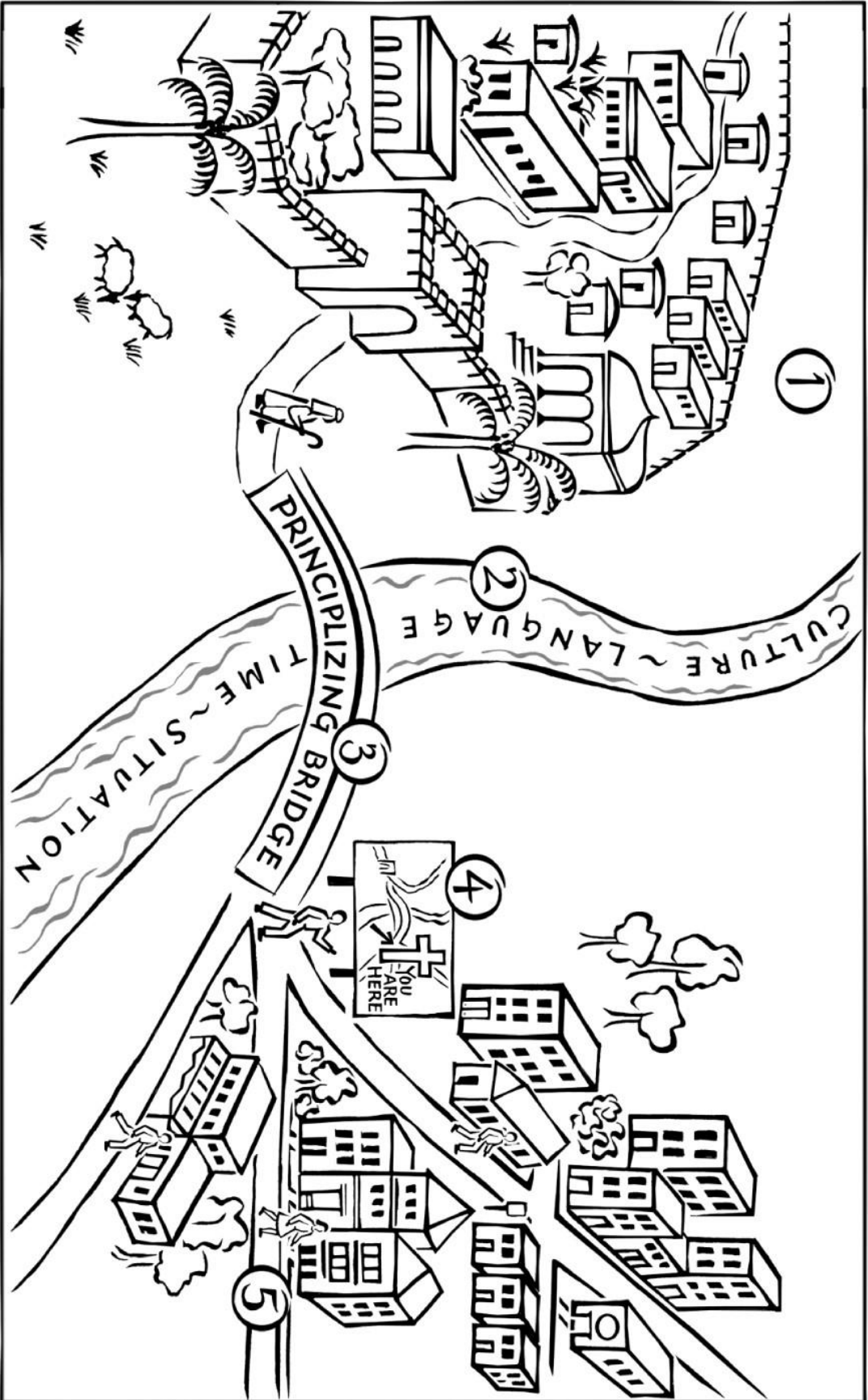
Step 1: Starting in their town. (We must start with the understanding that each book of the Bible was written for a specific purpose, to a specific people, during a specific time)

Step 2: Measuring the gulf between. (What separates us from them)

Step 3: Crossing the Principizing Bridge. (Beginning to interpret the passage)

Step 4: Consulting the Biblical Roadmap. (Does your interpretation line up with the rest of Scripture)

Step 5: Grasping the text in Our Town (How does this apply to us today)



Session 2: Practical Lessons and Practices

Read, Read, Read. The first thing you have to do in order to study God's Word is to read it!

- When studying a passage, read the passage at least five times to start
- Read the surrounding passages multiple times. (the chapter(s) before and after)
- Reread your passage in light of surrounding passages which adds **CONTEXT**
- **Pray.** I think this is one of the most underrated and missed things regarding studying Scripture. Pray before, after, and during your reading and preparation
- Studying God's Word is like paddling uphill; reading and studying is one paddle, and prayer is the other. If you only use one, you will go in a circle, never getting anywhere
- It is only natural for a believer to ask the One whom you are studying to reveal Himself to you.
- **Make Observations.** Ask questions about the passage you are studying
 - Ask the five majors: Who, What, When, Where, and Why
 - Write out things that seem important to you, or questions you may have
 - Remember, grammar is essential. Make notice of transition words (therefore, because, however) these are important to the context
- **Seek expert Advice.** One of the most effective study tools we have is each other.
 - Seek answers to your questions.
 - Ask someone more learned than you in that particular area.
 - Seek help through Study Bibles, commentaries, and sermons.
 - Gain a love for discussing God's Word with other believers, with your family

Practical Ways for a Consistent Growth in God's Word

- **Pick a book of the Bible and read a chapter in it every day for a month.**
 - When you get to the end, start over, most New Testament books are less than ten chapters. In a month, you will have read that book at least 1.5-5 times.
 - Want to know how some believers seem to just know where everything is? This is how they spend time in the Bible. It does not happen overnight.
 - At the end of each month, begin a new book, but you should also be very familiar with the one you just finished.
 - Do this for a year, and you should be reasonably familiar with nearly half of the NT
 - **Read through the Bible every year.**
 - Be a part of a Bible reading plan to hold you accountable to others.
 - My personal preference is to read it chronologically.
 - This is not your devotion but on top of that.
- **Never decouple Prayer from God's Word**

Resources

Below is a list of recommended resources that you can go to in order to find answers to your questions. I state this while we may point you to these resources, we do not necessarily recommend everything contained within these resources. Since you are studying Scripture and being a Berean, make sure everything you study lines up with Scripture.

Sermons Audio: many are available on the podcast as well.

- <https://www.gty.org/> - MacArthur
- <https://onepassion.org/> - Lawson
- <https://www.truthforlife.org/> - Begg
- <https://g3min.org/resources/> - G3 ministries
- <https://www.sermonaudio.com/main.asp>

Websites to start with: These websites are designed to give you a brief introduction to various thoughts regarding various theological questions.

- <https://www.gotquestions.org/>
- <https://www.gty.org/>
- <https://shepherds.edu/poimenas/>

Bible helps and apps: These are study tools to help. My personal recommendation is Logos.

- Logos <https://www.logos.com/>
- <https://www.blueletterbible.org/>
- <https://www.biblegateway.com/>
- <https://www.e-sword.net/>

Commentaries: for in depth study of a passage or book.

- https://www.preceptaustin.org/tool_commentary - online
- MacArthur Commentary series -
- New International Commentary series – seminary resource that assumes you know original languages and is also very expensive but well worth it.
- The New American Commentary
- The NIV Application Commentary
- The Expositor's Bible Commentary

Church Library: Did you know GHBC has a library?! While it is at this time small, it is full of great books and resources to help you in all parts of your life. It is located in Pastor Cal's office. We ask that you check out anything using our little check-out sheet; this is so that we know who has what; it helps us keep track of them.

Buying Books: There are numerous books written I would recommend to many to list, so I will not attempt them here. However, I have found the cheapest place to buy books is <https://www.bookfinder.com/>, where it searches numerous sources for the lowest price.