

How to Read and Study Your Bible

Lesson 11 – November 20, 2011

Step 1: What did the text mean to the biblical audience?

- a. Read seriously and observe the text. What does the text say?
- b. Break the passage into manageable parts.
- c. Determine the context of the passage.

1) Historical-Cultural Context

- a) Biblical author
- b) Biblical audience
- c) Other elements: geography, social customs, religion, economy, politics, etc.

2) Literary Context

- a) Genre, Form
- b) Surrounding context

Step 2: What does the text mean? What is the biblical principle in this text?

- a. Determine the differences between the biblical audience and us.
- b. Identify the similarities between the situation of the biblical audience and our situation.
- c. Based on the meaning from Step 1, identify the broader biblical principle. It should:
 - 1) Be reflected in the text.
 - 2) Be timeless and not tied to a specific situation.
 - 3) Not be bound to one particular culture.
 - 4) Correspond to the teaching of the rest of Scripture.
 - 5) Be relevant to both the biblical audience and the contemporary audience.
- d. Write out the biblical principle (or principles) in one or two sentences, using present-tense verbs.

Step 3: Apply the meaning of the text. How should individual Christians today apply the biblical principle in their lives?

- a. Observe how the principles in the text address the original situation. What are the key elements?
- b. Discover a parallel situation in a contemporary context.
- c. Make your application specific. What should we *think*, *value*, or *do*?