

The Preacher's Bible

The Bible is God's instrument of change, transformation, and, above all, a revelation of His heart. We should expect that whenever the Bible is opened and faithfully taught, lives will be changed and transformed. This session will consider the importance of the Bible in the life of every disciple and the local church. How should the pastor/preacher approach the Bible in order to see transformation in their own life as well as in the lives of those who hear?

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I. Introduction

A. The Goal of Effective Bible Study

The goal of effective Bible study is getting the mind of God into the actions and attitudes of men and women (Is. 55:8-11; Rom. 11:33-34; Deut. 29:29).

1. Question #1: How has the mind of God been revealed to us?
2. Question #2: How do we get the mind of God into the attitude and actions of men?

B. The Method of Effective Bible Study

Regarding historical, grammatical exegesis...

C. The Process of Effective Bible Study

Regarding hermeneutics...

“Hermeneutics teaches us how to know what the Bible means by what it says.”
(cf. Neh. 8:8; Lk. 24:27. 45)

II. DOCTRINAL PRESUPPOSITIONS TO EFFECTIVE BIBLE STUDY

A. Concerning God and His Word

1. God spoke . . . (Is. 55:11; Jn 17:17)
2. God spoke through men...(2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 Thess. 2:13; Acts 4:24-25)
3. God spoke through men that which is both reliable and profitable (Ps. 119:11; 50,140; Prov. 30:5-6, 18; Matt. 5:18; Acts 20:20; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Jude 1:20)

B. Concerning Us and God's Word

Rule #1 - The Bible is to be interpreted literally.

Plain Literal Interpretation

Figurative Literal Interpretation (e.g. Matt. 23:14)

Rule #2 - The Bible is to be studied diligently (2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Pet. 3:16; Ps. 1:2-3; cf. Job 28)

Rule #3 - The Bible is to be applied generously (2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 10:1-14; Heb. 4:12; Titus 1:7-9)

III. DIVINE PREREQUISITES TO EFFECTIVE BIBLE STUDY

Prerequisite #1 - A Regenerate Heart (1 Cor. 2:11-12, 14; Mk. 12:24)

Prerequisite #2 - A Receptive Life (James 1:19-27)

Prerequisite #3 - A Clear-Thinking Mind

Regarding memorization and meditation: Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:1-3; 19:7-9; 119:9-11; Ecc.12:11-12; Jn 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 4:12).

IV. DESIGNATED PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE BIBLE STUDY

Step One: Preparation – Anticipating God's Direction

1. Begin with P.R.A.Y.E.R. (Praising, Repenting, Asking, Yielding, Entreating, Rejoicing)
2. Make a commitment to strive to find the single meaning of the text.
3. Proceed with caution—drawing conclusions from the facts of Scripture (inductive exegesis).

Step Two: Observation - Asking the Right Questions

1. Study the background of the book.
2. Read the entire book and chapter a number of times in many translations.
3. Examine carefully the specific passage in many translations.
4. Ask appropriate questions (Who? What? Where? When? How? Why?).

5. Look up cross-references.
6. Write down any further observations.

Step Three: Interpretation - Answering the Right Questions

1. Do particular word studies (synonyms, antonyms, figures of speech, idioms, repeated words and phrases, etc.).
2. Watch for specific details in the grammar (tenses, voices, moods, person, number, prepositions, conjunctions, etc.).
3. Write down what others say about the text.
4. Begin problem solving—deciding on what seems to be the best view.

Step Four: Application - Applying the Right Answers

1. Answer the question: So what?
2. List: commands to obey • promises to keep • truths to know • actions to take • sins to forsake • examples to follow • things to avoid • new thoughts about God
3. The Bible is “a HIM book”—focuses on the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus (Matt. 5:39)

Step Five: Presentation - Announcing the Good News

1. Share what we have learned.
2. Organize the presentation.
3. Select appropriate illustrations.
4. Scan or file all research and message notes.

V. DOCTRINAL PUBLICATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE BIBLE STUDY

“But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion to books is wearying to the body” (Ecc. 12:12).

A. Suggested Bible Study Tools

1. Two Whole Bible Translations
2. One Bible Paraphrase
3. One Complete Bible Concordance
4. One Bible Encyclopedia or Dictionary
5. One Dictionary of New Testament and Old Testament Words
6. One Bible Handbook
7. One Systematic Theology (Bible Doctrine)
8. One Commentary of the Whole Bible
9. Commentaries on Specific Books of the Bible
10. Other Helpful Biblical Resources
 - a) A topical Bible
 - b) An inter-linear Bible (presenting side-by-side versions)
 - c) A Bible atlas containing maps and charts (Note: Some are found in the back of many Bibles)
 - d) A guide to parallel passages (e.g. A harmony of the Gospels)
 - e) A single volume dictionary or textbook on church history
11. Secular Helps
 - a) An exhaustive dictionary in the same language as your Bible version
 - b) A grammar textbook in the same language as your Bible version
 - c) A general knowledge encyclopedia
 - d) A thesaurus that lists words in groups of synonyms and antonyms