

# Understanding Scripture Class

## Session 2: Careful Reading

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**Recap:** *Biblical hermeneutics is the craft of interpreting Scripture.*

1. *Grasping the Text in Their Town*
2. *Measuring the Width of the River to Cross*
3. *Crossing the Principlizing Bridge*
4. *Grasping the Text in Their Town*

### Where to begin?

#### I. Careful Reading

- A. Not looking to apply or interpret yet, just observe
- B. Slow Down
- C. Look for Details

1. Repetition of Words

#### **2 Corinthians 7:6-13**

*But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more. For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.*

*For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter. So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but in order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God. Therefore we are comforted.*

*And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.*

## 2. Comparison

- **Negative**

**Proverbs 26:1-11**

*Like snow in summer or rain in harvest,  
so honor is not fitting for a fool.*

*Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying,  
a curse that is causeless does not alight.*

*A whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey,  
and a rod for the back of fools.*

*Answer not a fool according to his folly,  
lest you be like him yourself.*

*Answer a fool according to his folly,  
lest he be wise in his own eyes.*

*Whoever sends a message by the hand of a fool  
cuts off his own feet and drinks violence.*

*Like a lame man's legs, which hang useless,  
is a proverb in the mouth of fools.*

*Like one who binds the stone in the sling  
is one who gives honor to a fool.*

*Like a thorn that goes up into the hand of a drunkard  
is a proverb in the mouth of fools.*

*Like an archer who wounds everyone  
is one who hires a passing fool or drunkard.*

*Like a dog that returns to his vomit  
is a fool who repeats his folly.*

- **Positive**

**Isaiah 40:30-31**

*Even youths shall faint and be weary,  
and young men shall fall exhausted;  
but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;  
they shall run and not be weary;  
they shall walk and not faint.*

## 3. Contrasts

- **Subtle**

**Proverbs 26:12**

*Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes?  
There is more hope for a fool than for him.*

- **Look for key words like but:**

**Romans 6:23** *For the wages of sin is death, **but** the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

4. Lists

- **Containing 2 or more items: it's a list**

**Galatians 5:22-23**

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

5. Cause and Effect

**Proverbs 15:1**

*A soft answer / turns away wrath,  
but a harsh word / stirs up anger.*

6. Figures of Speech

- What Image is the Author Trying to Convey?

**Psalms 119:105**

*Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.*

7. Conjunctions

- And, therefore, but, because, for, since, in order that, so that etc...

**Galatians 2:15-16**

*We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.*

- Importance of Therefore...looking back.

**Hebrews 12:1-2**

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*

8. Verbs

- Action Words
- Past, present or future? (I went, I go, I will go)
- Imperative Command (Go!)
- Active Verbs v. Passive Verbs
  - Active - the person does the action  
I *hit* the ball.
  - Passive - the person has the action done to him  
I *was hit* by the ball

### **Colossians 3:1-2**

*If then you have been raised (passive) with Christ, seek (active) the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set (active) your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died (passive), and your life is hidden (passive) with Christ in God.*

## 9. Pronouns

- He, she, you, me, my, we, our, it.
- Note who it is referring to:

### **Ephesians 1:3-14**

*Blessed be the God and Father of **our** Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed **us** in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as **he** chose us in **him** before the foundation of the world, that **we** should be holy and blameless before **him**. In love **he** predestined **us** for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of **his** will, to the praise of **his** glorious grace, with which **he** has blessed **us** in the Beloved. In **him** **we** have redemption through **his** blood, the forgiveness of **our** trespasses, according to the riches of **his** grace, which **he** lavished upon **us**, in all wisdom and insight making known to **us** the mystery of **his** will, according to **his** purpose, which **he** set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in **him**, things in heaven and things on earth.*

*In **him** we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of **him** who works all things according to the counsel of **his** will, so that **we** who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In **him** **you** also, when **you** heard the word of truth, the gospel of **your** salvation, and believed in **him**, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of **our** inheritance until **we** acquire possession of it, to the praise of **his** glory.*

## **II. Practice**

Make as many observations about Colossians 1:15-20 as you can using all the specific observation tools mentioned above:

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

## **III. Warning: Don't lose the Forest for the Trees**