



Bible Handling Skills

Week 3

Learning To Read The Details

'All scripture is breathed out by God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.'

– 2 Timothy 3:16

Why The Details Matter

Isn't it enough to understand the big picture?

We should be convinced that all of the Bible is true and relevant, that it is simple enough for a child to understand and turn to Christ, and yet also complex enough that none on earth will ever fully plunge the depths of its Truths.

- We can expect to be challenged and changed anew even by Scripture we have studied many times before.
- We can look at the very details of a passage, knowing that they are part of the inspired, perfect Word of God, and so are of great value for us to consider.

n.b.

it is 'as originally given' that the Word of God is perfect, so we should want our translations to be as literal as possible, so that we can be sure that even the details down to individual words are the same as the original.

Structural Breaks

Digesting the Bible in manageable chunks.

- Change of Topic
 - e.g. Acts 2:1-13 (The Holy Spirit Comes upon the Apostles)
Acts 2:14-40 (Peter preaches in the power of the Holy Spirit)
Acts 2:41-47 (New believers join the fellowship)
- Change of central character
 - e.g. Acts 6:8 (Stephen), 8:1 (Saul), 8:4 (Philip)
- Change of location
 - E.g. Acts 13:4 (Cyprus), 13:14 (Antioch), 14:1 (Iconium)

Structure Within A Passage

Helping us understand what it is saying.

“This afternoon I want you to go shopping. On the way, please would you drop a letter off at Mr Brown’s. When you go shopping buy four crunchy red apples and one pint of semi-skimmed milk. Because this should take you about an hour, I suggest you have lunch first”

- **Repetition**
 - e.g. 1 Thess 2:1-5, John 6:47-59, Proverbs 7:1-2

- **Chiasm**

- E.g. 1 Thess 2:6-9

“As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you

But we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children

We loved you so much we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well

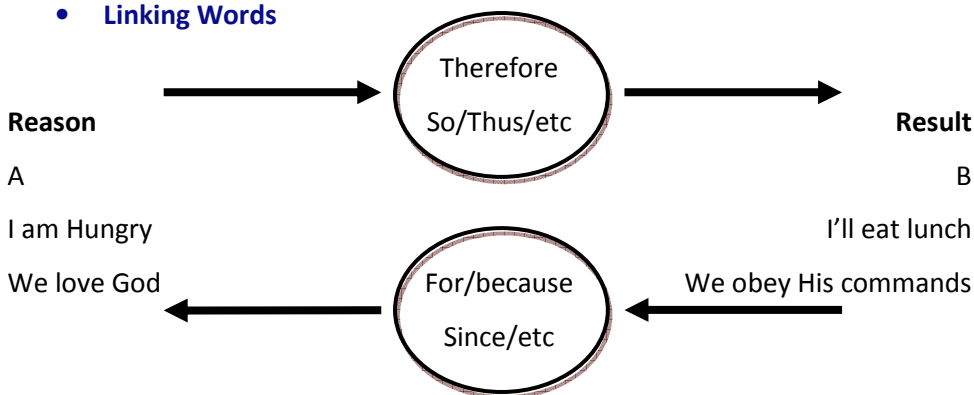
Because you had become so dear to us.

Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone”

- **Parallels**

- Complementing (e.g. Psalm 24:1-2)
- Contrasting (e.g. Proverbs 29:11)

- **Linking Words**



- Other linking words include:

So, in order that, but

Romans 1:14-25

¹⁴I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. ¹⁵So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

¹⁶For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹For although they knew God, they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

²⁴Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonouring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

- Highlight the linking words
- Note down any repetition and/or contrasting parallels in vs 21-23
- Put an arrow above each linking word pointing from the reason to the result e.g.

Reason → result

← Result because reason

- Try to sub-divide the passage into each section of Paul’s argument.
- See if you can follow the chain of reason to result from its very beginning to its very end (**n.b.** there may be more than one beginning and end)
- Summary
 - Can you see what the primary bases of Paul’s argument are?
 - Can you see what the ultimate outcomes of what Paul is saying are?
- How does this help clarify our understanding of the passage?

Recommended reading

Dig Deeper – Nigel Beynon & Andrew Sach