



Bible Handling Skills

Week 5

Reading with the Heart and the Head

'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

Making sure we are doers of the Word

Knowledge is usefull only when it leads us to action.

God's Character

God's character is unchanging, so what we see of it in any passage of scripture is as true today as it was then.

What do these passages show us about God's character?

Exodus 6:1-8

Exodus 32:11-14

Romans 1:16-20

Revelation 4:8-11

Bible Timeline

How does what has happened in between the passage then and me now affect how it applies?

Having an overview of the Bible, knowing what happens when, is a great tool for applying our Bible's rightly, as I'm sure you've seen.

Leviticus 5:17-19

This is a direct command in the Bible. So do you do this? If not, why not?

Who Am I?

Which character (if any) are we supposed to identify with in a given passage?

When we read our bibles or other books and watch films we often empathise with the hero, putting ourselves in their shoes. Everybody likes to be a hero, no one wants to be the villain or loser. But we need to be careful in doing so, because the hero of the Bible is Jesus, not us, and things that apply to Him do not often apply to us.

Joshua 1:1-9, Judges 3:7-11, 2 Chronicles 33:21-25

1st question to ask might be – Who am I not?

Another question to ask is – Are any a shadow of Jesus (a rescuer / healer / teacher / leader / etc of God's people)

Apply by asking – How should I praise God for the kind of ruler that He has provided.

Then we can ask who am I (if anyone)?

Apply by asking – How do they act / think that is good, that I should be like, how to they act / think that is bad and I should avoid.

What to do? How to think?

God is more concerned about our motives than our actions, because it is easy to do the right thing for the wrong reasons.

The real heart and hope for every time we open up our Bible is that the Holy Spirit will change us to be more as God wants us to be. Learning for knowledge's sake is not enough; we need to apply what we learn so that we are changed.

1 Peter 2:9-12, 3:13-17, 5:6-11

What actions does Peter give that we should do?

In what way do your actions need to change?

What is the motivation given for acting in that way?

In what way does your thinking in this area need to change?

Pray!

Anyone can make sense of the bible, but we can only truly understand if the Spirit opens our eyes!

And some thoughts...

Basically I always just thought it (exposition) was a fancy word that evangelicals liked to throw around to sound clever but it is the idea that you are trying to 'expose' the original intention of the author as opposed to 'imposing' your opinions and hobby horses on to the text. *(Ed Kitchin)*

The most important thing about studying the Bible is to read it. Don't think you know what it says, read it closely and think about what it says. *(Pete Roberts)*

For me the most helpful thing I've learned about studying the Bible has been that everything I need to know is simply about learning to read carefully! To discover that there are no magic formulas and that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, the Bible renders its meaning when I simply think about plot, characters, context, images, words and sentences is really liberating. *(Andrew Evans)*

Pray! I pray before I start and also pray about it afterwards and try to make it not just an intellectual bible study but a spiritual one. *(Will Leonard)*

Discipline to read my Bible even when I don't want to that builds up a knowledge of scripture over time. In my experience there has been no better aid in studying the Bible than knowing my Bible - and that cannot be just picked up but is only gained through years of discipline. *(Jack Sykes)*