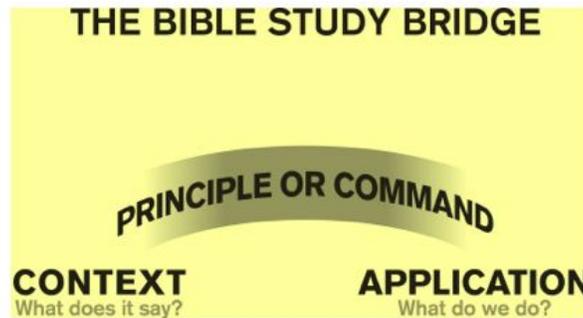


How to Study the Bible¹

1. The original Bible *context* is the first side of the bridge (hearers, situation, etc.).
2. The bridge is the *principle or truth* that is universal in the passage.
3. The other side of the bridge is *application*. (Here is where real, open-ended questions can be asked.)



FOLLOW THE R-E-A-P method: *Read, Examine, Apply, Pray*

1) READ what the biblical text says

- a) What is obvious? Ask the who/what/where/when questions? What is going on?
- b) Look for what is stressed and emphasized. Is there a purpose statement? What gets repeated? What gets a lot of space (attention)?
- c) What is compared and contrasted? Are there metaphors? Images?
- d) Note the transitions (i.e. *Therefore, but, and, etc.*)

2) EXAMINE what the biblical text means (*understanding the gift's intended purpose*)

→ Context is the key (Note: a good study Bible is helpful with this step)

- Why did the author write this? What circumstances were occurring? What issues & situations are being addressed?
- What literary devices & tools did the author use to convey his message?
 - *Genre & Literary devices*: Letter; history; poetry; apocalyptic; law; wisdom
- What did the author want the original audience to ... *know? Do? Desire?*
- What vision of God or His Kingdom is being shared (or consequence for living apart from God and His vision is being shown)?

**The goal is to discover what the inspired author said to the text's original audience

⇒ What is the main idea the author was communicating?

Think of how you could say what the text means in your own words.

**Remember: the text only has one meaning = what the original, inspired author meant when he wrote it; however the text may have several applications).*

¹ Bridge illustration from *Transformational Small Groups* by Ed Stetzer and Eric Geiger

3) APPLY what the biblical means to my life

a) How does the text relate to all people? What is the condition that we share with the original audience?

- A common temptation? An incorrect view of God? A need for grace?
- A shared fear? A shared hope?

b) How does the passage show our need for grace? Jesus? God's power?

c) 5 Questions to help determine the application:

1) *Who am I to be or become?*

→ This relates to us becoming more like Jesus and our character.

2) *How should I think?* (Something to know, learn or study?)

→ This relates to thinking Christianly and having a biblical worldview.

3) *What should I do?*

--Is there a sin to confess?

--Is there a promise to claim?

--Is there a sin to avoid?

--Is there a prayer to pray?

--Is there a command to obey?

--Is there a truth to internalize?

--Is there a joy to delight in? Something to cherish or value?

--Is there a new way of relating to others to adopt?

--Is there an area in which I need to be bold?

4) *How and where should I go as God's witness and ambassador?*

→ The Bible is a missionary text revealing God's mission to the world.

--Who do I need to teach this to?

--Who do I need to show this to?

--How will this change my witness?

--Where do I need to live sent with this message?

5) *What obstacle exist in me that could prevent me from living this Kingdom vision (i.e. idols, thoughts, feelings, habits, relationships, etc)?*