

A Teachers Guide to Bible Reading for Beginners

1. **Prayer.** The first step is always to pray. This of course includes teaching the importance of continual dependence on God by the Holy Spirit. Psalm 119:18
2. **Context, context, context.** Rather than reading a passage and jumping right into application and applying the Scripture in unsound ways, we should always start with examining the context.
 - a. Explain the different types of Biblical contexts.
 - i. **Broad context.** The Bible as a whole and the Gospel as center.
 1. This may require that some initial time spent teaching through the Bible's redemptive meta-narrative.
 - a. Creation and the Nature of God.
 - b. The fall, the origin and nature of sin, and mankind's condition.
 - c. The history of Israel. Teach the important aspects of:
 - i. Idolatry and Rebellion.
 - ii. Prophecies and Promises.
 1. Preservation of the Scriptures.
 - iii. God's plan for all nations in the OT.
 - iv. Purposes of the OT sacrifices and the Law.
 - v. Symbols and foreshadows of Christ in the OT.
 - ii. **Narrow context.** The context of the books of the Bible, the chapters, the passage and the paragraph.
 - iii. **Historical and Cultural contexts.**
 1. What was the author's intended meaning to whom he was writing?
 - iv. **Literary contexts.**
 1. Genres used in various books of the Bible.
 2. Grammatical context.
 3. **Relevance.** Next we must ask which contextual understanding is most important for understanding the current passage being read. In every biblical passage the broad and narrow contexts will be foundational.
 4. **Principles.** Do not apply the Word just yet. Next look for principles. There are principles to be found in every chapter of the Bible. To find many interesting principles in the text we can ask ourselves questions like:
 - a. What does this passage teach me about God? Don't overlook the "obvious".
 - b. What does this passage teach me about man? About myself?
 - c. What does this passage teach me about sin? About the world?
 5. **Application.** Now we can look at the principles we've discovered in the text and apply them to our own life. How do the timeless principles apply to you today?
 6. **Dig.** A few more questions help us to delve into the passage further:
 - a. How is this passage related to the Gospel? The cross? This step is very important, as every passage is somehow connected to the Gospel.
 - b. Does anything in this passage stand out to me?
 - c. What questions do I have? Is there anything I don't understand?
 - i. Write these questions down.
 7. **Prayer.** How will we pray after our time in the Word as we seek the Holy Spirit's enabling in personal application?