

Bible Study for Every Christian

Part 6: Evaluation and Application

BIBLE STUDY FOR EVERY CHRISTIAN (PT. 6)
Evaluation & Application



THE PROCESS OF INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY



- 1) Preparation
- 2) Observation
- 3) Meditation
- 4) Interpretation
- 5) Evaluation
- 6) Application

THE MEANING OF INTERPRETATION

- **Definition:** Interpretation is the proper use of generally accepted principles to determine the one, divinely-intended meaning of the passage.

THREE MAIN PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

- 1) Interpret based on authorial intent.
- 2) Interpret Scripture with Scripture.
- 3) Interpret literally.



EVALUATION VS. THE OTHER STEPS

- 1) Preparation – preparing your tools and your heart for study.
- 2) Observation – observing the details of the text to determine what it really says.
- 3) Meditation – thinking deeply about the text to understand it and to plan how to do it.
- 4) Interpretation – using generally accepted principles to decide what the text actually means.
- 5) Evaluation – comparing your interpretation against the interpretation of others.

STEP FIVE: EVALUATION

- **The Process:**
 - 1) Compare your interpretation against several good study Bibles.
 - MSB, ESV, & NIV
 - 2) Compare your interpretation against conservative (non-liberal) commentaries.

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COMMENTARIES

- 1) How to choose helpful commentaries
- One-volume: *The New Bible Commentary* by Intersarsity & Eerdmans.
- Multi-volume series
 - Keil & Delitzsch on the OT
 - Tyndale series on the OT & NT
 - William Hendricksen on the NT

COMMENTARIES

- 1) How to choose helpful commentaries
 - Individual commentary on a particular book
 - Lists of recommendations...
 - 1) Appendix in Gordon Fee's *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth*
 - 2) *Commentaries for Biblical Expositors* by Jim Rosscup
 - 3) www.bestcommentaries.com

COMMENTARIES

- 2) How to use helpful commentaries
 - They provide good models of interpretation.
 - They help with difficult passages.
 - They provide a check against novel or erroneous interpretations.

COMMENTARIES

- 3) How Not to use helpful commentaries
 - a) Never use them in place of your own study.
 - b) Never use them before your own study.
 - c) Don't accept their authority as the final authority.
 - d) Avoid the merely devotional ones.
 - e) Watch out for guesses and conjectures without evidence.

STEP SIX: APPLICATION

- The consistent message of Scripture is that God intends the teaching of His Word be applied.**
 - John 13:17 - "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.
 - Rom. 15:4
 - 1 Cor. 10:11
 - Jam. 1:22 - Prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

A. THE FRAMEWORK OF APPLICATION

- 2 Tim. 3:16-17 - All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
- 1) Teaching
 - What does the passage teach?
 - To whom did it/does it apply?
 - Has it been changed by subsequent revelation?

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A. THE FRAMEWORK OF APPLICATION

- 2) Reproof
 - Does this passage confront errors in my beliefs?
 - Does this passage confront errors in my thinking or behavior?
- 3) Correction
 - Does this passage identify changes I should make in my beliefs?
 - Does this passage identify changes I should make in my thinking or behavior?

A. THE FRAMEWORK OF APPLICATION

- 4) Training in Righteousness
 - Are there instructions in this passage to me as God's child that I am to put into practice?

B. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF APPLICATION

- 1) Should flow from authorial intent
 - Thinking to change?
 - Commands to obey?
 - Examples to follow?
 - Sins to confess and forsake?
 - Errors to avoid?
 - Emotions to be felt?
 - Promises to believe?
 - Ideas about God to praise?

B. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF APPLICATION

- 1) Should flow from authorial intent
- 2) Should distinguish between commands to specific individuals or groups and those universally given.
- 3) Should carefully distinguish between what the Bible records and what it approves.

B. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF APPLICATION

- 4) Should be carefully made from narrative...
 - 1) The comments of the narrator;
 - E.g., 2 Ch. 16:12 - In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet. His disease was severe, yet even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but the physicians.
 - 2) The words of the main characters.
 - 3) The purpose of the entire book.
 - 4) God's direct assessment or application in context.

B. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF APPLICATION

- 5) Should only embrace the promises made to us.
 - a) Is the promise universal in scope?
 - E.g., Rev. 22:17 - The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.
 - b) Is the promise personal?
 - E.g., Acts 18:9-10 - And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid any longer, but go on speaking and do not be silent; ¹⁰for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city."
 - E.g., John 14:26 - "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."
 - Cf. John 16:12-15

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Part 6: Evaluation and Application

B. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF APPLICATION

- c) Is the promise conditional?
 - E.g., Jam. 4:8 - Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.
- d) Is the promise for our time?
 - E.g., the promise of land to Abraham.

C. THE THREE VARIETIES OF APPLICATION

- 1) Focusing the claims of truth on our own lives
 - So what?
- 2) Considering ways and means to implement the truth
 - How?
- 3) Looking for the right motivation
 - Why?

THE KEY QUESTIONS OF APPLICATION

- 1) What did the author want the original readers to do in response to this passage?
- 2) What am I supposed to do in response to this passage?
- 3) Why am I supposed to do what this passage teaches?
- 4) What are some practical ways or means that I can think of to do what this passage teaches?

AN EXAMPLE

- E.g., Ex. 20:14 - "You shall not commit adultery."
 - 1) Original readers: God expressly forbid His people to have a sexual relationship with someone who was not their spouse.
 - 2) Authorial Intent: I may not enter into a sexual relationship with anyone who is not my spouse.
 - 2) Authorial Intent: I may not allow myself to desire a sexual relationship with someone who is not my spouse.
 - 3) Motivation: N/A
 - 4) Ways & Means: Not allowing close relationships with members of the opposite sex who are not my spouse.
 - 4) Ways & Means: Not being alone in potentially intimate situations with members of the opposite sex.

D. THE DANGERS OF APPLICATION

- 1) Making the timeless principles you derive from the text or your application have the same authority as God's explicit commands.
- 2) Failing to distinguish between cultural commands and timeless commands.
- 3) Artificially identifying timeless commands as culturally conditioned.
- 4) Applying personal convictions rather than the authorial intent.
- 5) Failing to apply the truth to your life at all.