COURSE ?

HERMENEUTICS 1

Compiled by Project North Africa

SOURCES

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Table of Contents

How to teach and learn from these lessons ---------------------------------------------- 3

DAY 1

Lesson 1: Introduction to Interpretation, Analyzing Narrative------------------------5-8

Lesson 2: Analyzing Law and Hebrew Poetry---------------------------------------------9-10

Lesson 3: Analyzing Prophecy---------------------------------------------------------------11-12

Lesson 4: Analyzing Wisdom and Parables-----------------------------------------------13-14

Lesson 5: Analyzing Teaching and Discourse--------------------------------------------15-16

Lesson 6: Review Questions and Discussion-------------------------------------------------17

DAY 2

Lesson 1: Event Words and Kernel Sentences-----------------------------------------------19

Lesson 2: Event Words and Kernel Sentences-------------------------------------------20-21

Lesson 3: Problems and Context------------------------------------------------------------22-23

Lesson 4: Context and Themes--------------------------------------------------------------24-27

Lesson 5: Obligations (Applications), Reflection----------------------------------------28-31

Lesson 6: Review Questions and Discussion---------------------------------------------32-33

DAY 3

Lesson 1: Reflection-----------------------------------------------------------------------------35-36

Lesson 2: Analyzing Law----------------------------------------------------------------------------37

Lesson 3: Analyzing Hebrew Poetry--------------------------------------------------------------38

Lesson 4: Analyzing Hebrew Wisdom and Teaching------------------------------------------39

Lesson 5: Interpreting Narrative, Law, Poetry, Wisdom, Teaching------------------------40

Lesson 6: Review Questions and Discussion----------------------------------------------------41

DAY 4

Lesson 1: Analyzing Your Passage -----------------------------------------------------------------43

Lesson 2: Interpreting Your Passage---------------------------------------------------------------44

Lesson 3: Applying Your Passage-------------------------------------------------------------------45

Lesson 4: Hermeneutics Wrap-Up-----------------------------------------------------------------46

Lesson 5: Hermeneutics Wrap-Up-----------------------------------------------------------------46

Lesson 6: Hermeneutics Wrap-Up -----------------------------------------------------------------46

HOW TO LEARN FROM THESE LESSONS

1- The first section of this course is a review of information the student already knows and is convinced of. We review it because of its importance as the basis for the need of the rest of the course. The character of the Word of God demands our very best work as we interpret it. The character of the Bible reveals that if we use something else—anything else—in its place, the eternal, life-changing fruit we seek will be impossible to achieve. Let these realities refresh your mind and spirit about the importance of the work of interpreting the Word of God.

2- We will consider three steps of interpretation in this course. However, only the first two are technically part of interpretation (hermeneutics). Analysis must be done first. This is the process of determining what the text says. The second step is interpretation. This is the process of finding out what the text means. The third step (not technically a part of interpretation) is the application of the message of the text. The reason we include all three steps is simple: we must apply God's message to our lives; God didn't give us His Word for our knowledge only, but for the purpose that we should live it out daily. Good analysis leads to good interpretation, and good interpretation leads to good application, and good application leads to believers growing more and more into Christ-likeness.

3- You will learn a number of rules to follow as you interpret Scripture. It is of **utmost importance** that you understand **why** you **must** follow these rules. They are not rules given in Scripture by God; rather, they are human (man-made) rules to follow. But they are more than just human inventions, because we derive them directly from what we believe about the Bible itself. If you interpret the Bible without following these rules, it will lead to a faulty message in your teaching and preaching, and subsequent harm to the lives and souls of those who listen to you. **We must follow these rules**!

4- Remember: you can never read your Bible too much. Obviously, reading the Bible takes time, and none of us can read it all the time. God expects us to live responsibly in our daily lives, fulfilling the many responsibi-lities before us. With this said, I will repeat: you can never read your Bible too much. The more familiar you are with your Bible, the easier, quicker, and more efficient you will be to interpret it. "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col 3.16). Read it! A lot!

5- If you get these notes before the sessions begin, read them and study them on your own. This applies especially to Day 1. Attempt to answer the questions asked. All the work you can accomplish on your own will help us move forward more efficiently once the sessions begin. How we use our time will be an important factor in how much you will learn and apply during our days together.

6- Plan on sharing with someone else the things you are learning. Find someone who will listen and explain to him how the process of interpretation works. It is important for all disciples of Jesus (not only pastors) to know these beginning principles and rules so they can better understand God's message to them. These are the most important truths in the world and are not meant to be held to yourself. You will learn more when you share what you learn with others.

DAY 1

Goals of the day

At the end of Day 1, the student will be able to:

1. List the key elements to deal with in each of these types of biblical literature:
   1. Narrative
   2. Law
   3. Hebrew Poetry
   4. Wisdom
   5. Prophecy
   6. Parables
   7. Teaching
   8. Discourse
2. Explain the validity and importance of the statement: *The Bible is both a divine and a human book.*

LESSON 1: Introduction to Interpretation, Analyzing Narrative

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERPRETING THE WORD OF GOD PROPERLY

1. The Bible is a **divine** book.
   1. What does 2 Tim 3.16 say about the relationship between God and the Word? It is inspired by God.
   2. According to 2 Pet 1.20-21, who directed the men who wrote the Bible? God the Spirit
   3. What does the Word of God bring (or produce) according to 1 Pet 1.22-25? Eternal life
      1. Life comes from what because of the prophesying (preaching) of God's Word in Ezek 37.1-10? From death
      2. What comes from the Word of God according to Rom 10.17? Faith (resulting in eternal life)
      3. According to James 1.21, what *is able to save your souls* (give eternal life)? The implanted Word of God
      4. What causes people to be born again according to 1 Pet 1.23? The living and abiding Word of God
   4. How does Heb 4.12-13 describe the Word of God? Alive, powerful, discerning
   5. What word would you use to describe the Word of God when you consider together these two verses: Jn 10.35 with 1 Th 2.13? Authoritative
   6. What is the Word shown to be in Heb 5.13-14? Spiritual food
2. The Bible is a **human** book.
   1. The Bible was written ***by people***.
      1. According to 2 Pet 1.19-20, who wrote the Bible? Men/people/human beings
      2. According to Gal 6.11, who wrote (at least part of) the epistle to the Galatians with his own hand? Paul
      3. The Bible was written in the languages ***of*** **people**: Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek
   2. 1 Pet 1.1; Php 1.1: Written ***to*** ***people***
      1. To whom did Peter write his first epistle? To whom did Paul write his letter about Onesimus? To believers (saints) in different regions of Asia (Turkey); to Philemon: in other words, ***to people***.
   3. 1 Jn 5.13; 1 Cor 10.6, 11: Written so ***people would understand*** God's message
      1. According to 1 Jn 5.13 and 1 Cor 10.6, 11, why were the Scriptures written? To explain God's truth so that ***people would understand it***
      2. What did the Spirit want believers to understand from 1 Jn 5.13? That the believers might have assurance of their salvation
      3. What did the Spirit want believers to understand from 1 Cor 10.6, 11? That the Corinthians believers might know how to live their lives for Christ
3. Because it is inspired and authoritative, the consequences of poor interpretation are not acceptable.
   1. What does 2 Cor 4.1-2 say Paul did NOT do when he preached the Word of God? Paul did not change (adulterate) the Word of God.
   2. How did the Jewish leaders teach the people according to Jesus in Mk 7.7? They taught their commandments as though they were the Word of God.
   3. According to Tit 1.14, what did some Cretans do when they heard God's Word? They followed the commandments of men and turned from God's truth.
   4. Since (at least some of) those whom we teach will follow our teaching, we cannot fail to give them God's truth lest their lives be weakened or ruined by our failure to interpret the Bible properly and accurately.
4. We are totally dependent on God the Spirit as we interpret the Bible.
   1. We must never forget that even if we do our work perfectly (from a human standpoint), we will accomplish nothing for eternity without the work of God the Spirit in us.
      1. Without the Spirit, we cannot find His truth in the Word He has inspired. (Jn 14.26; 1 Cor 2.9-14)
         1. According to Jn 14.26, who will lead us into (help us find) all truth? God the Spirit
         2. According to 1 Cor 2.9-14, who is the source of knowledge about God's truth in His Word? God the Spirit
      2. Without the Spirit working in the hearts of people, we will not see them respond to the Word we share. (Jn 16.8; Eph 6.17; Tit 3.4-5)
         1. According to Jn 16.8, who convicts people of sin? God the Spirit
         2. According to Eph 6.17, the Word of God is whose sword? God the Spirit's sword
         3. According to Tit 3.4-5, who regenerates sinners unto salvation? God the Spirit
5. Because we are co-laborers with God through His Word (1 Cor 3.9), and because we are serving the truth of God to people (2 Cor 5.18-20), we MUST NOT BE SLOTHFUL, BUT DILIGENT to interpret His Word properly.
   1. According to 1 Cor 3.9, who is working (laboring) with you when you communicate the Word of God to people? God Himself is working with me.
   2. According to 2 Cor 5.18-20, who is making *His appeal through us* when we share the gospel with people? God Himself is using us to make His gospel appeal to people.

**AN ACROSTIC TO GUIDE OUR INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE: *ACTOR***[[1]](#footnote-1)

* **A**nalysis
* **C**ontext
* **T**heme
* **O**bligations (Application)
* **R**eflection

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ANALYSIS | ANALYSIS |
|  |  |
| INTERPETATION | CONTEXT |
|  | THEME |
|  |  |
| APPLICATION | OBLIGATIONS |
|  | REFLECTIONS |

**ANALYSIS (ACTOR)**

1. Read a passage often enough to become **very familiar** with it.
   1. Suggestion: read the text and its context at least 15 times; you cannot read it too often!
   2. Observe what the biblical text actually says **without bringing your preconceptions to the text**.
      1. "Bow to the text" in the sense of giving your attention to exactly **what it says**.
      2. The question to ask during ANALYSIS is: **What does the text say?**
   3. After becoming familiar with the text, re-state what it says (not what it means!) in your own words.
      1. Example: 2 Cor 4.10-11
         1. Re-state these two verses in your own words.
         2. Answer: Jesus delivers living believers to death so people can see His life in us.
      2. Example: Lk 14.22-35
         1. Re-state this passage in your own words.
         2. Answer: Jesus said that no one could be His disciple if he did not hate every person dear to him, and even his own life; that each disciple had to take up his cross and follow Jesus.
2. Analyzing narratives (an account of what happened)
   1. Report
      1. Short sections that narrate a single/simple event
      2. Usually contain one to several chapters
      3. Examples: Gen 22 (Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac); 2 Sam 11-12 (David and Bathsheba)
         1. What is the report about in Gen 22? Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac
         2. What is the report about in 2 Sam 11-12? David and Bathsheba
   2. Speech story
      1. Narration of a speech
      2. Focus on what someone said, not the surrounding details.
      3. Examples: Joshua 23 and 2 Sam 12.1-2
      4. Who is making a speech in Josh 23? Joshua
      5. What is this speech by Joshua about? Israel's need to repent if they would walk with YHWH
      6. Who is making a speech in 2 Sam 12.1-12? Nathan the prophet
      7. What is Nathan's speech about? David's sin with Bathsheba and David's need to repent
   3. Drama
      1. Longer sections covering one subject/theme
      2. Several stages
         1. Setting
         2. Characters
         3. Problem (with beginning of conflict and its escalation)
         4. Crisis (theme of drama will be found near this part of the successive stages)
         5. Resolution
         6. Following action
      3. Ex: Gen 12-25 and 1 Sam 1-28
         1. Who is the drama of Gen 12-25 about? Abraham
         2. Who is the drama of 1 Sam 1-28 about? Samuel
   4. Elements to remember when analyzing narrative:
      1. No commands are given to the reader.
      2. The author tells the reader the details he wants to tell him/her so that he can achieve his purpose for the reader.
      3. God's truth is illustrated by what people say and do in narrative.

LESSON 2: ANALYZING LAW AND HEBREW POETRY

1. Analyzing law
   1. Commands given by Jehovah to Israel
      1. What command did God give Israel in Ex 20.2? To have no other gods besides Jehovah
      2. In what situation did God command a sacrifice of two pigeons in Lev 12.1-8? The birth of the first born child
   2. Legal expressions (as differing from poetry, narrative, wisdom, etc.)
   3. The rules for the **covenant** relationship between Jehovah and Israel
      1. In Dt 28.1, what did Jehovah require of Israel in this covenant relationship? Faithful obedience
      2. In Dt 28.1, 15, what did Jehovah promise to Israel in this covenant relationship? Blessings for faithful obedience and cursing for disobedience
      3. This covenant was between Jehovah and Israel, not between Jehovah and Christians today (the Church).
         1. This covenant is **not** between God (Christ) and the Church (believers since Pentecost).
         2. The commands of this covenant are **not binding** on believers today.
         3. If the commands of this covenant are **repeated** **in the NT**, then they are binding on believers today.
   4. There is **MUCH** for believers today to learn from the Mosaic covenant!
2. Analyzing Hebrew poetry (Psalms, Proverbs, much of OT Prophecy, etc.)
   1. Figurative language
      1. Pictures painted with words
         1. Designed to impact the reader's emotions as a means of impacting his understanding
         2. Enhances the truth communicated
      2. Not to be taken literally
   2. Parallelism: the primary characteristic of Hebrew poetry
      1. Two thoughts expressed in two lines/sentences
      2. Response of the second line to the first
         1. Restatement
            1. The thought of the first line is repeated in the second.
            2. Ex: The wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the way of the righteous. (Ps 1.5)
         2. Contrast
            1. The thought of the first line is opposed by the thought of the second.
            2. Ex: The Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish. (Ps 1.6)
      3. Synthesis
         1. The thought of the first line is developed in the second.
         2. Ex: You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potters vessel. (Ps 2.9)
   3. Examples of different kinds of parallelism
      1. Which kind of parallelism is Prov 3.33? Contrast
      2. Which kind of parallelism is Prov 4.10? Synthesis
      3. Which kind of parallelism is Ps 2.3? Restatement

LESSON 3: ANALYZING PROPHECY

1. Analyzing prophecy
   1. OT prophecy was **first and foremost the preaching** of Jehovah's servants, not **foretelling the future**.
      1. "You are breaking the covenant! Repent and return to Jehovah!"
      2. How did Isaiah describe Israel Is 1.4b? Forsaking the LORD, despising the Holy One of Israel, utterly estranged
      3. "Repent and return to Jehovah!"
      4. What did Jehovah invite Israel to do in Is 1.18? Come and think with Me (about repentance)
      5. What did Jehovah say in Is 1.19 He would do if they repented? Give them the good of the land
      6. What did Jehovah say He would do (Is 1.20) if Israel continued to rebel? He would destroy them.
      7. The prophets' **foretelling** was the **by-product** of their preaching (**forth-telling**).
   2. Prophetic statements about the future often have multiple fulfillments.
      1. Some fulfillments occurred soon after the prophecy was given.
         1. How do we know Jeremiah's prophecy in Jer 20.4-6 was fulfilled sooner rather than later? The Babylonian captivity happened at the end of the book of Jeremiah (52.15).
         2. How do we know that the prophecy in 1 Kg 21.19 was fulfilled sooner rather than later?
            1. 1 Kg 22.1: War between Israel and Syria for 3 years
            2. 1 Kg 22.38: Ahab killed in battle and the dogs lick the blood from his chariot
            3. This means the prophecy was fulfilled not much more than 3 years after it was given.
      2. Some fulfillments occurred after a long period of time had passed—or haven't happened yet!
         1. What does Mt 3.1-3 tell us about the fulfillment of the prophecy of Is 40.3? John the Baptist fulfilled it hundreds of years later.
         2. When was this prophecy of Is 2.4 fulfilled? It hasn't happened yet.
      3. Some prophecies were fulfilled soon after they were given **as well as** much later.
         1. After reading all of Is 7, about how many years would you say passed before the prophecy in Is 7.14 was fulfilled? Perhaps as few a 5-10; definitely within 65
         2. According to Mt 1.22-23, who was the prophecy of Is 7.14 fulfilled by, and when? Jesus Christ at His birth, about 700 years later.
      4. Some prophecies were fulfilled partially at one time, then partially at a later time.
         1. Read Lk 4.18-19, then read Is 61.1-4
         2. According to Lk 4.21, when was Is 61.1-2a fulfilled? When Jesus read it.
         3. When do you think Is 6.2b-4 was fulfilled—or has it been fulfilled yet? It has not been fulfilled yet.
         4. Was one part of this prophecy of Isaiah fulfilled at one time, and the another part fulfilled at another time? Yes

**Hold your opinions about prophecy firmly, but also hold them charitably**.

LESSON 4: ANALYZING WISDOM AND PARABLES

1. Analyzing wisdom literature
   1. "Wisdom" in the sense that it deals with issues that lead to a life of blessing (good life) or cursing (bad life)
   2. Life's "big issues"
      1. What is the meaning of life? Why am I here? (Ecclesiastes)
      2. Why do good people suffer? (Job)
      3. How do I find wisdom and apply it to my daily life? (Song of Solomon, Proverbs)
   3. Approaches its subjects in an indirect way rather than by giving a direct statement of truth (as in law, preaching/teaching, and epistle forms of literature)
      1. Example: Proverbs
         1. Give a proverb from your culture to the class.
            1. Do the words rhyme?
            2. Is it a longer or shorter statement?
            3. Does its rhythm and "melody" sound interesting or appealing?
            4. Does the vocabulary used apply directly to the meaning of the proverb, or do they "paint a picture" of the message?
         2. Proverbs are not promises.
            1. Is your cultural proverb a promise?
         3. Proverbs are statements of general truths that will generally lead to the stated results.
            1. How does your cultural proverb communicate its message?
      2. Example: Ecclesiastes
         1. The author (probably Solomon) leads the reader to the truth of God…
         2. By making statements and claims such as Eccl 1.2.
            1. What does the writer say in Eccl 1.2? Vanity, vanity! All is vanity!
            2. Is this a true statement, or is it false? False
2. Analyzing parables
   1. Jesus used many parables.
   2. Parable: a short story or illustration with the intention of making a **single, main point**.
      1. Look for the main point of the parable.
         1. Let the many details of the parable lead you to the point of the parable.
         2. Do not build doctrines or establish practices on the details of parables.
      2. Jesus sometimes tells us His point.
         1. What is the point of Jesus' first parable in Mt 13? He who has ears to hear, let him hear.
         2. What is the point of Jesus' parable in Mt 13.44? Those who realize the value of entering the kingdom are willing to give all to do so.

LESSON 5: ANALYZING TEACHING AND DISCOURSE

1. Analyzing teaching (ex: Moses in Deuteronomy, Jesus in the gospels, Paul in the epistles)
   1. The intention of these passages is to teach God's truth in a more direct way.
      1. What is Paul teaching in Rom 1.16-32? The Gentiles do not have righteousness that God requires.
      2. What is Jesus teaching in Mt 5.13-16? Believers should let the truth of the gospel in their lives impact others.
   2. Doctrine should be based **primarily** on this literary form with support coming from other literary forms.
   3. This kind of passage will often state a truth/doctrine as well as give an application to real life.
2. Analyzing teaching that is by (accomplished via) discourse
   1. Definition:
      1. Authors' use of **discourse** to make **propositions**
         1. A proposition is an idea or truth that one person **proposes** (communicates) to another person.
         2. The biblical authors often used someone's discourse (speech, conversation) to propose an idea (or ideas) to others.
         3. Examples:
            1. What is the proposition made by Jesus in Lk 14.25-33? *So therefore, anyone of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be My disciple*.
            2. What proposition is made by Peter in Acts 2.14-36? *Let all the house of Israel…Lord and Christ*…
      2. Study of how authors put their ideas together to communicate their propositions (message/ideas)
   2. The importance of the author’s “**connecting tools**”
      1. Explicit: **words** that clearly connect thoughts or ideas
         1. Sequence relations: a simple sequence of events or ideas
            1. Addition: **and, also, furthermore, in addition**, etc.
            2. Subtraction: **but, however, on the other hand**, etc.
            3. Time: **then, before, after, next**, etc.
         2. **Cause and effect relations**
            1. Purpose: **so that, in order to/that, to**, etc.
            2. Reasoning: **since, therefore, thus, consequently, for this reason, because**, etc.
            3. If-then: **if (this is true), then (this will be true)**
            4. Concession: **although, even though, in spite of**, etc.
      2. **Implicit**: A clear connection of ideas is present though no typical connecting words are present.
         1. Ex: *The rain today prevented the game from being played.*
            1. This is a *reasoning* connection from above [ii) 2)].
            2. It could be expressed this way: *Since it rained today, we won’t play our game*.
         2. Ex: *I thought his love would be the single most important aspect of her recovery*.
            1. This is a subtraction connection from above [i) 2)].
            2. It could be expressed in this way: *He loved her, but the medications were the main reason she recovered.*

LESSON 6: REVIEW QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

1. List the key elements to deal with in each of these types of biblical literature:
   1. Narrative
   2. Law
   3. Hebrew Poetry
   4. Wisdom
   5. Prophecy
   6. Parables
   7. Teaching
   8. Discourse
2. Explain the validity and importance of the statement: *The Bible is both a divine and a human book.*

DAY 2

Goals of the day

At the end of Day 2, the students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate how to find event words in biblical verses.
2. Demonstrate how to build kernel sentences from these event words.
3. Explain the difference between literary context and historical context, and give three examples of each.
4. Explain the importance of personal application of what the Scripture teaches.
5. Explain the different ways the Bible teaches truth and how these different ways affect application of those truths.
6. Explain the difference between Fallen-Condition Focus and Redemption-History Focus.

LESSON 1: EVENT WORDS AND KERNEL SENTENCES

EVENT WORDS AND KERNEL SENTENCES

This simple study tool is helpful.

It enables the student to find all the **event words** in the passage.

The **event words** help communicate all the truths in the passage.

If I can determine all the **event words** in a passage, I can know I have found the main points in that passage.

We will say that all verbs are event words; if you see a verb in a verse, it is an event word.

However, all event words are not verbs.

Some event words are other parts of speech.

STEP 1: FIND THE EVENT WORDS

What are the events words in Mk 1.4?

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

* Appeared
* Baptizing
* Proclaiming
* Baptism
* Repentance
* Forgiveness
* Sins

Do you understand why baptism, repentance, forgiveness and sins are event words?

* When we talk about a *baptism*, we are talking about an event.
  + We go to see a baptism.
  + We go to see someone baptize someone else.
* When we use the word *repentance*, we are talking about an event that takes place inside a person.
  + A person decides to turn away from sin.
  + A person decides to turn to Jesus in faith.
* When we talk about *forgiveness*, we are talking about an action someone does; an event.
  + A person has been offended.
  + He forgives the offender of his offense.
* When we talk about a person’s sins, we are talking about an evil action he has done; an event.
  + A person breaks God’s law.
  + He has sinned.

Verbs in our passage are always event words.\*

Besides verbs, some event words are *hiding inside* nouns or other parts of speech.

The *first step* in using this study tool is to *find the* *event words*.

* The verb *to be* ( I *am*, they *are*, he *is*) does not express any action, but we will use it as an event word because it is a common verb.

LESSON 2: KERNEL SENTENCES

STEP 2: FORM KERNEL STATEMENTS

A *kernel sentence* is a **short sentence** built around the event word.

It must have a subject and a verb.

It might have a direct object.

It might also have an indirect object.

It might also have an additional adverb or adjective.

We build a kernel sentence by choosing an event word from the passage.

We then determine the subject of that event word from the passage.

Another way of stating this is: We then determine what actor is dong this action.

* Example: Mk 1.4- *baptism*
  + John came… proclaiming a ***baptism*** for the forgivenes*s* of sins.
  + The event word is *baptism*.
  + The action is *to baptize*.
  + Now we ask: Who *baptizes* according to Mk 1.4?
  + Mk 1.4 indicates that John was baptizing.
  + So then, we build a kernel sentence: John baptized.

Our kernel sentence may have other elements.

The kernel sentence can look like any of these:

* Subject + verb
* Subject + verb + direct object
* Subject + verb + direct object + indirect object
* Subject + verb + direct object + indirect object + adverb or adjective

An example in English:

* John spoke.
* John spoke words.
* John spoke words to Sam.
* John spoke words to Sam quickly (adverb).
* John spoke words to old (adjective) Sam.

For Mk 1.4, how many kernel sentences would we build?

* How many event words are there?
  + There are seven event words: appeared, baptizing, proclaiming, baptism, repentance, forgiveness, sins.
  + We will build seven kernel sentences.
  + Each event word should result in the formation of a kernel sentence.
* What or who appeared?
  + The verse tells us plainly that *John appeared*.
  + The first kernel sentence is simply, *John appeared*.
* Who baptized?
  + The verse indicates that *John baptized*.
  + This is the second kernel sentence.
* What or who proclaimed?
  + *John proclaimed*.
  + This is the third kernel sentence.

We will explain later how to build larger kernel sentences. However, the concept of a kernel sentence is that it is short and simple.

* What or who baptized?
  + *John baptized*.
  + This is the fourth kernel sentence.
* What or who repented?
  + *The people repented*.
  + This is the fifth kernel sentence.
* What or who forgave?
  + *God forgave*.
  + This is the sixth kernel sentence.
* What or who sinned?
  + The people *sinned*.
  + This is the seventh kernel sentence.

What is the benefit of building kernel sentences?

How does building kernel sentences help the student to understand the passage?

The **verbs** (event words) in a passage **carry its meaning**.

If I see and understand all the events in the verse, I will have the beginning of an understanding of what God is communicating in that verse.

If I mention all the thoughts in the verse by using kernel sentences, I will point out to the people I teach all the truths in the verse.

If I teach all the concepts in the verse by using kernel sentences, I will teach all the concepts God put into the verse.

Do you want to be sure that you are getting all the truths out of a verse?

* Find all the event words.
* Build a kernel sentence around each event word.

The kernel sentences you build will contain all the primary points of truth that God put into that verse for you.

LESSON 3: ANALYZING PROBLEMS AND CONSIDERING CONTEXT

This lesson ends the first step (analysis) and begins to deal with the second step (interpretation).

1. Problems
   1. Definition: anything the interpreter doesn’t know/understand about the text
   2. Types of problems
      1. Obvious problems: something in the text of which the interpreter is ignorant
         1. Ex: Dt 6.16: “Do not test YHWH as you did at Massah”
         2. Where is Massah? What are the details of what happened there? If you don't know, find out!
      2. Hidden problems: information I think I know, but actually don’t know in the context
         1. Event words and kernel sentences will be one help to you with this kind of problem.
         2. Ex: Eph 5.8: “Walk as children of light” (KJV)
            1. *Walk* refers to ones’ *manner of life*
         3. Ex: 1 Tim 4.12: “Be an example of the believers…in conversation…”
            1. *Conversation* means one’s *manner of life*.
   3. Resolving problems
      1. **Read your Bible a LOT** so that you become familiar with the full content of the Word of God.
         1. Make Bible reading a part of your "work day," not only for devotional and study purposes.
         2. Try to read large portions at one sitting.
            1. Divide longer books (like Genesis) into several parts and read one part at a sitting.
            2. Read Paul's epistles entirely (each one) at a sitting.
      2. Ask older brothers in Christ.
         1. Their own insights
         2. Their years of Bible study
         3. Their extra-biblical resources, like iv) (1) – (4) below
      3. Look for Internet sites with Bible helps.
      4. Learn to read English so that you can make use of:
         1. Bible encyclopedias
         2. Bible dictionaries
         3. Lexicons (vocabularies and definitions of biblical words)
         4. Expositional commentaries

**CONTEXT (ACTOR)**

1. Literary
   1. The words, sentences, paragraphs, and chapters that surround our text and relate to it
   2. How our text fits into a larger section (paragraph, chapter, book) around it
   3. Gained by carefully reading the larger section (preferably the entire chapter)
   4. Guidelines
      1. Interpret single verses in view of surrounding verses.
         1. Example: Who pierced, crushed, chastised, and wounded Jehovah's Servant in Is 53.4? Jehovah, as shown in Is 53.5.
         2. Example: Are these four things (Acts 15.28-29) the only commands from God that the Gentile believers needed to obey? No; they were the rules from the Law of Moses that their Jewish brethren needed them to keep.
      2. Interpret paragraphs with a view of how they fit into the surrounding paragraphs.
         1. Example: How does Is 1.18-20 fit into the other paragraphs in Is 1??
            1. Is 1.2-4: Israel as more foolish than beasts; as corrupt children
            2. Is 1.5-6: Israel as sick from head to toe
            3. Is 1.7-8: Israel as a desolate land
            4. Is 1.9-17: Israel as Sodom and Gomorrah, offering unacceptable sacrifices to YHWH
            5. Now, Is 1.18-20:

In spite of all this, *come now and let us think about this situation together*.

YHWH offers grace to these unfaithful, covenant-breaking people.

Almost exactly in the middle of this chapter telling of Israel's unworthiness and sinfulness, YHWH offers mercy and abundance.

At the same time, He warns of the results if Israel fails to repent.

* + - * 1. Is 1.21-23: Faithfulness turned to unfaithfulness with no justice for the widow and orphan
        2. Is 1.24-31: The coming judgment of YHWH
      1. Example: Why does Paul insert Gal 1.11-2.14 after Gal 1.6-9?
         1. Paul has given a very harsh condemnation to any who bring *another gospel* in 1.6-9.
         2. He justifies his harsh opinion by showing that his opinion isn't his own, but God's via the reality of the gospel.

LESSON 4: CONTEXT (CONT'D) AND THEME

* + 1. Ask the questions:
       1. How (or why) does my text fit in its context here and not somewhere else?
          1. Example: Why does the content of Rom 8 fit in between Rom 7 and Rom 9-11?

Rom 8 is the triumphant terminus of Paul's doctrinal exposition of the gospel.

Rom 1-7 moves from pagans' lack of righteousness to Jews' lack of righteousness to righteousness given by faith in Christ to how that works out in a believer's life.

Rom 8 exults in the gospel's reality and the believer's sure hope of righteousness.

Rom 9 begins the 3-chapter discussion of how the gospel impacts God's relationship to Israel.

Thus, Rom 8 ends the Rom 1-8 explanation of the gospel before another topic begins in Rom 9.

* + - * 1. Example: Why does Paul deal with the problem of the use of speaking in tongues in 1 Cor 14 and not in 1 Cor 12 or 13?

In 1 Cor 12, Paul explains how all the spiritual gifts are designed by the Spirit to work in the local church.

In 1 Cor 13, Paul explains that the use of all the spiritual gifts should be motivated by love (agapé).

With the background of 1 Cor 12-13, Paul then deals in 1 Cor 14 with the misuse of speaking in tongues.

* + - 1. How does my text contribute to the message of the larger context (chapter, book, etc.)?
         1. Example: Philemon 21

In verses 8-16, Paul presents his request to Philemon as an appeal, though he could have presented it as a command.

In 17-20, Paul offers to repay whatever the financial cost of his request might be.

Then, in 21, Paul communicates his confidence that Philemon *will do even more than I say* (request).

Philemon 21 thus ties together Paul's logic for why Philemon should grant Paul's request.

* + - * 1. Example: Hebrews 1

Jesus is presented by Hebrew's author as superior to all the other elements of the Judaism.

Heb 1 begins the process by showing how Jesus is superior to angels, (at present) God's most knowledgeable and powerful creatures in all of His creation.

* + 1. Look for thematic statements that introduce or interpret an entire section.
       1. Example: 1 Cor 1.31
          1. This verse quotes from Jer 9.24.
          2. It summarizes and interprets Paul's argument in 1 Cor 1 that there should be no division based on who might be wiser than another.
          3. The gospel among the Corinthian believers demonstrated this proper basis for boasting: only in one's relationship to God though Christ.
       2. Example: 1 Cor 2.14
          1. The wisdom believers have is from God the Spirit.
          2. 1 Cor 2.14 summarizes Paul's teaching in this chapter.
    2. Look for repeated words or phrases.
       1. What phrase is repeated often in Heb 11? By faith
       2. What word (or concept) occurs often (59 times) in Romans? Righteousness; declared righteous
          1. 41 (righteous, -ness)
          2. 3 (just)
          3. 15 (justify)
    3. Determine how **your text** fits into the **purpose** of the **whole document** (the book, the whole Bible).

1. Historical
   1. The world in which our text first appeared
   2. Includes language, culture, customs, author, and audience of our text
   3. Necessity of finding extra-biblical information from extra-biblical sources
   4. Audiences and authors
      1. Audiences
         1. Read the whole section/document while asking questions about the audience.
         2. Who? What? When? Where? How? Why?
         3. What was their attitude toward the author/his message?
            1. Accepting

How was acceptance shown to Paul in Php 4.13-16? By whom? The Philippians sent gifts to Paul.

* + - * 1. Ambivalent

Did Paul expect Philemon to be ambivalent toward him in Philemon 20-21? How do we know? No; *confident of your obedience*…

* + - * 1. Rejecting

What was the attitude of some in Corinth according to 2 Cor 10.10? They rejected Paul.

* + 1. Authors
       1. Determine their relationship with the audience.
       2. Determine their attitude toward the audience.
          1. Accusing

What attitude does Paul display in Gal 1.6-9?

Answer: Paul accuses some of following *another gospel*.

* + - * 1. Rebuking

What attitude does Paul display in 1 Cor 6.1-6?

Answer: Paul rebukes some for going to court before pagan judges to settle grievances with brothers in Christ.

* + - * 1. Encouraging

What attitude is Paul communicating in 2 Cor 7.9-11?

Answer: Paul encourages those who were obedient in disciplining a sinning brother.

* + - * 1. Pleading

In Gal 4.18-21, what attitude does Paul express?

Answer: Paul pleads with the Galatians to follow the truth of the gospel.

* + - * 1. …and other attitudes, too.

**THEME (ACTOR)**

1. Definition: the central idea/proposition of a text
2. The value of teaching/preaching themes
   1. Normally, we teach through books of the Bible.
   2. However, topics (themes) often arise that we need (or that are advantageous) to deal with.
      1. "Hot topics" in our culture: what people in our community are talking about
      2. Personal topics: birth and death; parents and children; personal fulfillment; etc.
      3. "Hot topics" in church: leadership, service by members, worship style, etc.
      4. Seasonal topics: Christmas, Easter, Ramadan, Advent, etc.
      5. Questions prompted by Scripture:
         1. Did David and Bathsheba's son (that died) go to heaven? (2 Sam 12)
         2. Should we speak in tongues in our worship services? (Acts 2)
3. How to develop a theme
   1. Even if the whole Bible presents a theme, begin your study of it in one text.
   2. Ask yourself all the questions you can about the theme you are working on.
   3. Write down all the things you already know about the theme (brainstorm).
   4. Check cross-references in the text you are studying.
   5. Check extra-biblical sources for information on the word that expresses the theme.
      1. Concordance
      2. Bible dictionaries
      3. Bible encyclopedias

LESSON 5: OBLIGATIONS (APPLICATIONS)

**OBLIGATIONS (ACTOR) (APPLICATIONS)**

1. Difficulties in applying what the Bible teaches
   1. People who hear the Bible don’t want to or don’t know how to apply its truths to their lives.
   2. Teachers don’t know how to apply propositions from long ago in a different culture to life in their culture in the present.
2. Steps to follow to overcome 1) b)
   1. Meaning of the text in that place at that time
      1. Example: 1 Cor 11.1-16
         1. What is the meaning (the underlying principle communicated)?
         2. Answer: the woman should be under the authority of her husband even as the husband is under the authority of Christ who is under the authority of His Father.
      2. Example: Mt 5.41
         1. What is the reason Jesus gave this command?
         2. Answer: Roman law required citizens of lands Rome ruled to carry a soldier's pack for a mile; this command is to respond in love to demands or requests made by others.
   2. Principle at the core of that meaning
      1. Example: 1 Cor 11.1-16: Submission to God-ordained authority
      2. Example: Mt 5.41: Show God's grace by serving others—even those who oppress us.
   3. Similar situation for here and now
      1. Example: 1 Cor 11.1-16: Wife's respect/submission to her husband's decisions
      2. Example: Mt 5.41: Serving the needs (and often requests) of others, including unbelievers
   4. Other biblical texts that support our application
      1. Example: 1 Cor 11.1-16:
         1. How does Eph 5.22-23, 33 support our application of the principle of 1 Cor 11.1-16?
         2. Answer: Wives are commanded to respect and obey their husbands.
         3. How does 1 Pet 3.1-6 support our application of the principle of 1 Cor 11.1-16?
         4. Answer: Believing wives are commanded to love and serve their unbelieving husbands so that those unbelieving husbands will decide to obey the Word and be born again.
      2. Example: Mt 5.41:
         1. How does Lk 6.32-36 support our application of the principle of Mt 5.41?
         2. Answer: Jesus teaches that if we show no more love than unbelievers do, we are not showing God our Father to the world.
         3. How does Gal 5.13 support our application of the principle of Mt 5.41?
         4. Answer: Believers are commanded to serve each other.
3. Results of not applying/obeying God’s Word
   1. According to Jn 5.39, what terrible mistake did the Pharisees make about the Word of God? They thought their knowledge of the Scriptures gave them eternal life.
   2. According to James 4.17, what does knowledge of the Word without application of its truth bring? Sin
   3. You CANNOT EFFECTIVELY teach/preach to others what you have not effectively applied (or are at least ready to apply) to your own heart/life.
4. Application must:
   1. Not be driven by emotion alone, but by a love-motivated decision
      1. From 1 Cor 13.1-3, what is the only motivation for our actions that pleases God?
      2. Answer: Love; not just an emotion, but sacrificial giving of one's self for another
   2. Take place over an appropriate period of time
      1. According to Jesus in Mt 10.22, how long should we apply God's Word our lives?
      2. Answer: As long as we are alive
   3. Be complete, not partial
      1. What is Paul's command to Archippus in Col 4.17?
      2. Answer: *See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord*.
   4. Rely on the power of the Holy Spirit
      1. What is Paul's question in Gal 3.3?
      2. Answer: *Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh*?
   5. Include a plan that is:
      1. Significant enough to commit to
         1. Not good: *I'll pray 5 minutes every day*.
         2. Good: I'll remind myself many times as I go through each day to talk to God about whatever is happening.
      2. Simple enough to be understood
         1. Not good: *I will memorize scripture verses from the OT on the odd days of the month, from the NT on even days of the month, if the pastor used them in his messages sometime in the last month*.
         2. Good: I'll memorize scripture verses that the Spirit impresses on my heart each week.
      3. Short enough (period of time to accomplish it) to be followed
         1. Not good: *I'll share the gospel with at least one person each week for the rest of my life*.
         2. Good: I'll share the gospel at least once a week for the next month.
      4. Specific enough to be measured
         1. Not good: *I'll read the Bible more*.
         2. Good: I'll read 4 chapters of the epistles each day for a month.
      5. Spiritual enough to make a difference in your heart and life
         1. Not good: *I'll only have one dessert each week*.
         2. Good: I'll seek to really connect my heart and mind to Christ by His Spirit each time I have my devotions.
   6. Rules for knowing if a practice found in a passage can be applied directly today, or if it is “culturally bound” in its context
      1. What was the purpose of the practice in its setting?
         1. Would that practice have the same significance in my culture today?
         2. If not, is there a timeless principle that could be practiced in my culture today, but in a different way?
         3. These three—i), (1), (2)—are a repetition in different terms of 2) above.
      2. Assume every teaching or practice in scripture is applicable today unless:
         1. The context restricts it.
            1. Should church leaders make drastic statements in order to provide strong leadership (1 Kg 3.25)?
            2. Answer: No; Solomon's command fit that particular situation, not all situations.
         2. Later revelation overrules it.
            1. Must believers circumcise their male children (Lev 12.3)?
            2. Answer: No; circumcision is not necessary for NT believers (Acts 15.5, 20; 1 Cor 7.9; Gal 2.3).
         3. It conflicts with other scripture.
            1. Should believers in Muslim communities eat pork since Jesus, in Acts 10.15 (see also Mk 7.19), declared all foods to be clean?
            2. Answer: No, because 1 Cor 8.19-23, 10.31, and Rom 14.13-18 tell us not to offend others in this way.
         4. It is unique to the biblical culture of the passage.
            1. Do I need to carry objects 2 miles for another person (Mt 5.41)?
            2. Answer: No; that was a command for Jews in Palestine under Roman rule.
   7. Ask these questions:
      1. Will this application make the gospel more real and clearer to others?
      2. Will this application present Jesus’ truth to others clearly?
      3. Will this application present Jesus’ love to others clearly?
   8. All applications of biblical truth should:
      1. Present BOTH the LOVE and the TRUTH about God and His relationship to us through Jesus.
      2. If it doesn’t do **both of these things at once**, then it is not a proper, biblically correct application of what the Word says**.**
      3. **Give examples of this kind of application of God's truth in your context.**
   9. How do we apply truths revealed by implication in narrative passages?[[2]](#footnote-2)
      1. General principles/rules
         1. We find no commandments in narrative passages.
         2. God's truths are illustrated by what happens in the narrative passages.
         3. The Bible teaches us by:
            1. Explicit propositions (theology; true statements that the Bible teaches us)

God is one: Dt 6.4; 1 Cor 8.4

* + - * 1. Principles communicated implicitly (attitudes, ethics)

Love one another: Mt 22.39; Phil 2.2

* + - * 1. Actions to do/perform

Don't lie: Ex 20.16; Col 3.9

* + - 1. The Bible also teaches us these kinds of truth at two levels:
         1. That which the Bible (the Spirit) intends to communicate

Don’t lie: Ex 20.16; Col 3.9

* + - * 1. That which the Bible teaches only by implication or precedent

Don't lie: Tit 1.2; 1 Jn 1.6

LESSON 6: OBLIGATIONS (CONT'D)

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

* + 1. Therefore, we should follow these rules:
       1. If our practice is **only** based on information found in a narrative passage, we have no authority to say that God commands our practice for all people.
       2. If our practice is based **only** on information found by implication\*, we do not have authority to say that God commands our practice for all people.

\*In other words, if our practice is not based on what the biblical author intended to communicate, but on information that is incidental to the author's intended message, we do not have authority to say that God commands our practice for all people. "It is one thing for **the historian** (biblical author) to include an event because it serves the greater purpose of his work, and yet another thing for **the interpreter** (human reader) to take that incident as having teaching value apart from the **historian’s larger intent**."[[3]](#footnote-3)

* + - 1. "In matters of Christian experience (*attitudes, ethics*), and even more so of Christian practice (*actions*), biblical precedents may sometimes be regarded as repeatable patterns—even if they are not understood to be normative[[4]](#footnote-4)."[[5]](#footnote-5)
         1. Strong indication (or strong pattern value):

There is only one practice.

This unique practice is repeated in the Bible.

This gives strong "value" to the pattern; we may do the same.

Example:

We should baptize people only after they have confessed Jesus Christ as Savior.

Are there any instances in the NT narrative in which someone was baptized before he confessed Jesus Christ as Savior? No

Example:

Church leaders should immerse new believers when they baptize them.

Are there any instances in the NT narrative in which a believer is baptized by another mode of baptism? No

* + - * 1. Weaker indication (or weaker pattern value):

The repeated practice varies.

The pattern is not repeated.

We have little reason to do the same since the "pattern value" is weak.

Example:

We should observe the Lord's Table each time we gather to worship.

Do we see the Lord's Table observed each time believers gather in the NT? No

* + - * 1. No indication (or no pattern value):

The practice is culturally conditioned.

This practice has no biblically supported authority to be practiced.

We probably should not practice this.

Example:

We should baptize infants.

Does the NT narrative give any examples of infants being baptized? No

**Students should discuss biblical commands and truths they apply in their lives (and teach others to apply in their lives, too) to see if they demonstrate these rules and principles for application of the Word.**

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

1. What is the primary benefit of finding event words in biblical texts and using them to build kernel sentences?
2. Once I find an event word (and the action it communicates), what do I look for next in the passage?
3. Is the verb in a kernel sentence always active or passive?
4. Explain the difference between literary context and historical context, and give three examples of each.
5. Explain the importance of personal application of what the Scripture teaches.
6. Explain the different ways the Bible teaches truth and how these different ways affect application of those truths.
7. Explain the difference between Fallen-Condition Focus and Redemption-History Focus.

DAY 3

Goals of the day

At the end of Day 3, the students will be able to:

1. Answer the question: when analyzing a passage, what is the basic question I must answer?
2. Answer the question: when interpreting a passage, what is the basic question I must answer?
3. Demonstrate how to analyze a passage finding event words and using them to form kernel sentences.
4. Demonstrate how to interpret a passage using the relationships between kernel sentences.
5. Explain the difference between a Fallen Condition Focus and a Redemption History Focus when dealing with a passage.

LESSON 1: REFLECTION

**REFLECTION (ACTOR)**

1. Definition: discerning how each text relates the work of Christ (the gospel) to the fallen condition of man
2. Two foci:[[6]](#footnote-6)
   1. Fallen-condition (of man) focus, or FCF
      1. How does the text show the fallen condition of people?
      2. How does the text show the remedy through Christ for the fallen condition shown in the text?
      3. This is a more **experiential** focus.
      4. The teacher/preacher should apply this focus to the hearers' lives (what they do).
      5. Example: Lk 15.11-32
         1. What is the FCF of this passage?
         2. Man is sinful, willful, rebellious and selfish, even to the extent of harming himself by his choices
         3. This focus is on sinful man and how he responds to God.
   2. Redemptive-history focus, or RHF
      1. What does this text reveal about the divine plan (gospel) to meet the need of people's fallen condition?
      2. How does this text reveal that Christ is the one, true Redeemer?
      3. This is a more **theological** focus.
      4. The teacher/preacher should apply this focus to the theological understanding of the hearers.
      5. Example: Lk 15.11-32
         1. What is the RHF of this passage?
         2. God forgives even the worst sinner and rejoices over his repentance.
         3. This focus is on God and how He acts towards man through the gospel.

We will now analyze five different passages from five different kinds of biblical literature.

ANALYSIS OF A PASSAGE:

1. Jn 8.31-33
   1. What kind of literature is this passage? Narrative
   2. What do I need to remember when analyzing a narrative passage?
      1. The author (narrator) tells me what he wants me to know, not everything that may have happened in the event he narrates.
      2. I learn God's truth by what people say and do in a narrative passage.
   3. What are the event words for:
      1. Jn 8.31: ???????
      2. Jn 8.32: ???????
      3. Jn 8.33: ???????
   4. What are the kernel sentences for:
      1. Jn 8.31: ???????
      2. Jn 8.32: ???????
      3. Jn 8.33: ???????

LESSON 2: ANALYZING LAW

1. Ex 20.12-16
   1. What kind of literature is this passage? Law
   2. What do I need to remember when analyzing a law passage?
      1. These are rules given by God to Israel for the covenant He made with them.
      2. They are legal statements (not poetry, not narrative, not teaching, etc.)
   3. What are the event words in:
      1. Ex 20.12: ??????
      2. Ex 20.13: ??????
      3. Ex 20.14: ??????
      4. Ex 20.15: ??????
      5. Ex 20.16: ??????
   4. What are the kernel sentences for:
      1. Ex 20.12: ??????
      2. Ex 20.13: ??????
      3. Ex 20.14: ??????
      4. Ex 20.15: ??????
      5. Ex 20.16: ??????

LESSON 3: ANALYZING HEBREW POETRY

1. Ps 100.1-3
   1. What kind of literature is this passage? Hebrew poetry
   2. What do I need to remember when analyzing Hebrew poetry?
      1. Parallelism is the form used in Hebrew poetry.
      2. Figurative language is often used.
   3. What are the events words in:
      1. Ps 100.1: ??????
      2. Ps 100.2: ??????
      3. Ps 100.3: ??????
   4. What are the kernel sentences for:
      1. Ps 100.1: ??????
      2. Ps 100.2: ??????
      3. Ps 100.3: ??????

LESSON 4: ANALYZING WISDOM LITERATURE AND TEACHING

1. Prov 22.6
   1. What kind of literature is this passage? Hebrew wisdom
   2. What do I need to remember when analyzing Hebrew wisdom?
      1. It is in the form of Hebrew poetry.
         1. Parallelism
         2. Figurative language
   3. What are the event words for Prov 22.6: ??????
   4. What are the kernel sentences for Prov 22.6: ??????
2. 1 Thess 5.3-4
   1. What kind of literature is this passage? Teaching
   2. What do I need to remember about when analyzing teaching passages?
      1. The intention of these passages is to teach God's truth in a more direct way.
         1. What is Paul teaching in Rom 1.16-32? The Gentiles do not have righteousness that God requires.
         2. What is Jesus teaching in Mt 5.13-16? Believers should let the truth of the gospel in their lives impact others.
      2. Doctrine should be based **primarily** on this literary form with support coming from other literary forms.
      3. This kind of passage will often state a truth/doctrine as well as give an application to real life.
   3. What are the event words for 1 Thess 5.3-4: ??????
   4. What are the kernel sentences for 1 Thess 5.3-4: ??????

LESSON 5: INTERPRETING NARRATIVE, LAW, POETRY, WISDOM, AND TEACHING

1. Jn 8.31-33
   1. Remember: the question here is: what is the message of this passage; what does it mean?
   2. How do the relationships between the kernel sentences help you determine your interpretation of this passage? How do the kernel sentences fit together to reveal the message of this passage?
   3. Refer to your analysis of Jn 8.31-33 in Lesson 1.
2. Ex 20.12-16
   1. Remember: the question here is: what is the message of this passage; what does it mean?
   2. How do the relationships between the kernel sentences help you determine your interpretation of this passage? How do the kernel sentences fit together to reveal the message of this passage?
   3. Refer to your analysis of Ex 20.12-16 in Lesson 2.
3. Ps 100.1-3
   1. Remember: the question here is: what is the message of this passage; what does it mean?
   2. How do the relationships between the kernel sentences help you determine your interpretation of this passage? How do the kernel sentences fit together to reveal the message of this passage?
   3. Refer to your analysis of Ps 100.1-3 in Lesson 3.
4. Prov 22.6
   1. Remember: the question here is: what is the message of this passage; what does it mean?
   2. How do the relationships between the kernel sentences help you determine your interpretation of this passage? How do the kernel sentences fit together to reveal the message of this passage?
   3. Refer to your analysis of Prov 22.6 in Lesson 4.
5. 1 Thess 5.3-4
   1. Remember: the question here is: what is the message of this passage; what does it mean?
   2. How do the relationships between the kernel sentences help you determine your interpretation of this passage? How do the kernel sentences fit together to reveal the message of this passage?
   3. Refer to your analysis of 1 Thess in Lesson 4.
      1. How do the relationships between the kernel sentences help you determine the meaning of this passage?
      2. How do the sections before and after this passage help you determine its interpretation?

LESSON 6: QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

1. What are your questions about or difficulties with event words?
2. What are your questions about or difficulties with kernel sentences?
3. What are your questions about or difficulties with using the relationships between kernel sentences to determine the interpretation of a passage?

DAY 4

Goals for the Day

1. Demonstrate how to apply the message of a passage to daily life.
2. Choose a passage from the Bible and demonstrate how to go through all three steps of studying that passage: analysis, interpretation, application.

LESSON 1: ANALYZING YOUR PASSAGE

1. How to choose a passage to study.
   1. When you want to find a passage that speaks to a certain topic or theme, remember:
      1. The Bible teaches us by:
         1. Explicit propositions (theology; true statements that the Bible teaches us)
            1. God is one: Dt 6.4; 1 Cor 8.4
         2. Principles communicated implicitly (attitudes, ethics)
            1. Love one another: Mt 22.39; Phil 2.2
         3. Actions to do/perform
            1. Don't lie: Ex 20.16; Col 3.9
      2. Always seek a passage that explicitly expresses the truth or theme you want to deal with (as in 1)a)i)(1) above.
         1. For the theme of adultery, which of these passages is most explicit? Defend your answer.
            1. Mk 10.19; Jn 8.3-4; Rom 2.22
            2. Mk 1.19: God directly and explicitly commands His people not to commit adultery.
      3. If no explicit statement/proposition is made in the Bible, seek a passage with a very strong implication of the theme you are developing
         1. For the theme of diligence, which of these passages most directly implies it? Defend your answer.
            1. Prov 22.29; Prov 10.4; Lk 15.8
            2. Prov 10.4:

Diligence is contrasted with a slack hand.

Diligence makes rich while a slack hand causes poverty.

1. Analyze the passage you have chosen.
   1. Remember: the question here is: what does the passage say?
   2. What are the event words in the passage?
   3. What are the kernel sentences for the passage?

LESSON 2: INTERPRETING YOUR PASSAGE

1. Now interpret the passage.
   1. What interpretation do the relationships between the kernel sentences lead you to?
   2. The most important tool for completing the interpretation step (finding the message of the passage; what does it mean?) is its context.
      1. Literary context
      2. Historical context
   3. What is the literary context of your passage? ????????????
      1. Why did the author put your passage at this particular point in his writing?
      2. How does your passage fit with the portions just before it and just after it?
      3. How does your passage contribute to the message of its chapter? Its book?
   4. What is the historical context of your passage? ??????????
      1. Who are the recipients of the passage/communication/book? ??????
      2. Who is the author of the passage? ??????
      3. What is the relationship between the author and the recipients? ??????
      4. What is the situation in which the author and the recipients find themselves? ??????

LESSON 3: APPLYING YOUR PASSAGE

1. Now apply the passage.
   1. Remember that at this point the primary question is: what must I do now?
      1. For whom must I do this? ??????
      2. How, when, why must I do this? ??????
   2. What principles will I use to make my passage's application? (Day 2, Lesson 5) ??????

LESSON 4, 5 AND 6: FINAL QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION ABOUT ANALYZING, INTERPRETING, AND APPLYING GOD'S MESSAGES IN THE BIBLE

- These will be a wrap-up sessions for the purpose of answering questions and dealing with major difficulties that remain for the students.

- The plan is "open."

1. GETTING THE MESSAGE by DANIEL M. DORIANI, P&R Publishing, 1996. Doriani used the acrostic CAPTOR (CONTENT, ANALYSIS,

   PROBLEMS, THEMES, OBLIGATIONS, REFLECTIONS). I adapted this, changing it to ACTOR, putting PROBLEMS in the ANALYSIS section while moving CONTEXT into second position instead of first, which fits my approach better. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Adapted from **Fee, Gordon D.; Stuart, Douglas (2009-10-14). How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth (Kindle Location 1880). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.** [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid. (Kindle Locations 2131-2132). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Normative: required by God for all people in all places in all succeeding times [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Fee, Gordon D.; Stuart, Douglas (2009-10-14). How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth (Kindle Locations 2207-2209). Zondervan. Kindle Edition. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Doriani, p. 170 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)