

Understanding and Applying the Bible

The Bible is the living word of God – infallible as originally given, and the supreme authority in all Christian doctrine and lifestyle. It is through the Bible that God speaks most clearly to us. So whether we are preparing to give a talk, Bible study or doing our own personal quiet time, it is vital that we understand the text properly and apply it to our lives. To understand the text means to get into the head of the writer and identify with them, so that we comprehend what they are trying to say or what they mean by the text.

It is important that we understand Scripture correctly. If we misunderstand a passage of Scripture it could lead to an incorrect understanding of who God is, or who we are, which could result in poor lifestyle choices.

Below are some steps to help you understand the text and then apply the text to your life:

Understanding Scripture

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal to you the truth of Scripture.
2. Read the passage about 3 times.
3. What style of writing is it? (Letter, parable, NT/OT, poetry, wisdom literature etc..)
4. Who wrote it?
5. When was it written?
6. Who was it written to?
7. Why was it written?
8. Put the passage in context. What is around the text? In the chapter, in the book, in the Bible?
9. What are the words/phrases/verses that need explanation? (Words like "Therefore," "so," "Messiah," "Son of man.") Remember to: *Interpret Scripture with Scripture*.
10. Are there references to other parts of the Bible?
11. Who are the main characters?
12. What are the key themes in the passage?
13. What is the main point/"big idea" of the text?



Applying Scripture

14. How does this passage speak to us?
15. What issues does the passage raise which challenge the way I live?

Finally, Get Outside Help

Go to some Bible commentaries and see if your understanding agrees with Bible scholars.