

SOM Week 10 Overview

Readings

- 1 & 2 Peter
- Jesus style by Gayle Erwin (p125-181)

Topical Teaching

How to study the bible - Joel

Exodus 4:1-17, Psalm 119:9-11, 105. Joshua 1:7-9, 2 Tim 2:15, 2 Tim 3:16, Luke 24:27,

Prayer

So we have this topic of “how to study the bible”, and for our next class Pastor Billy Pena God willingly will be sharing on how to teach a bible study, so there might be some of the same material repeated.

A question I have heard over the years is, how do I study the bible? No doubt we can understand the importance of the word of God and the ability it has to speak into our lives, in another class we will revisit that and also look at the reliability of scripture.

But just quickly, I think of verses such as

- Psalm 119:9-11 “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed to Your word With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against you.”
- Psalm 119:105 “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”
- Joshua 1:7-9 “Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you: Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”
 - As the children of Israel were preparing to enter into the promised land, God comes to Joshua and tells him, Moses is dead. You’re the guys now. Be strong and very courageous, I’m with you. Here’s the key to success. Hold to my word, don’t stray from it, don’t let it depart from your mouth, meditate on it, observe to do all that is in it.
 - Joshua is the first person that is commanded to hold to the word of God. Pre-Joshua, God came and spoke in various ways, walked with Enoch, appeared to Abraham, spoke to Jacob in a dream, burning bush to Moses, but God tells Joshua, hold to the word of God, just as He tells us.
- So as disciples and followers of Jesus, if we want to hold to the word of God and do it and meditate on it, it’s so important to know what His word says, I was telling the guys

earlier this week, that I don't believe what anyone says about God or the bible or any doctrine or theology unless you can show me in the bible where it is in context.

- And being able to have that for ourselves, to have a systematic theology- to know what the bible says about the different questions of life(creation, salvation, death, heaven, marriage, sin, who God is, what God can do, etc) as Peter says 1 Peter 3:15 "Always be ready to give a defense(an answer) to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear", is so vital to the work and call of ministry.
- But you cannot give a defense if you don't know what it says, and you can't know what it says unless you read and study the bible. (Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God)
- Beyond the fact that Jesus speaks to us through His word, we should have a systematic theology, and that is part of the reason we have so much bible reading in this class. So a) you build a discipline of reading your bible daily b) you know what the bible says

How to study the bible

- So all that being said, let's look at how to study the bible. Chuck Swindoll, the founding pastor of Stonebriar community church, and the chancellor of dallas theological seminary, uses this analogy for studying the bible. He says in his thick southern drawl "Think about studying the bible as though you are preparing a meal, you have to choose what to eat, what ingredients to use, how to cook it.. Find a passage in the bible that you would like to study(For us at calvary we like the expository teaching so on to the next verse)- either a book, a chapter, a miracle, a life; then prepare the meal, 4 main keys- Observation, Interpretation, Correlation, and Application(the studying part), and finally serve the meal bon appetit"
- The four keys that he wrote out were observation, interpretation, correlation and application, and all great fundamentals, but I want to expand on that a little bit for our purposes this morning.

I wrote out a couple basic things that I look out for or the way I study a passage. And we will use the verses that we read from exodus 4 as our example of studying a passage.

1) Get alone, don't be distracted

- Jesus when He spent time with the Father He was alone, He woke up early, He went to a desolated place, He went up on a mountain.
 - Spurgeon when writing on prayer(but I think the same applies to our devotional time) said "The common fault with the most of us is our readiness to yield to distractions. Our thoughts go roving hither and thither, and we make little progress towards our desired end. Like quicksilver our mind will not hold together, but rolls off this way and that. How great an evil this is! It injures us, and what is worse, it insults our God. What should we think of a petitioner, if, while having an audience with a prince, he should be playing with a feather or catching a fly?"
 - That time when you are studying and reading your bible is your time with God. You have an appointment with Him. How would you like it if you had a meeting

set and during the meeting the person started day dreaming or scrolling through social media like you weren't there.

- I like to wake up early when the world is quiet, sit with my coffee for a few minutes, and then pick up reading the passages I left off on the day before.
- I am not one of those people who can sit in a coffee shop reading my bible, I get to distracted with people, before I realize it I'm staring at people wondering why they are the way that they are, or wondering why they would wear that, or who would order a matcha latte because it tastes like dirt, and before I know it I am completely off track

2) Something super simple, but Pray!

- 2 Timothy 2:7 "Consider what I say; and the Lord give you understanding in all things"
- James 1:5 "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that gives to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord"
- James 4:8 "Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you"
- Proverbs 8:17 "I love them that love me; those that seek me early shall find me"
 - Something incredibly simple, but powerful to do, is simply to ask God to open our hearts and touch us as we study and read His word
 - That He would give us understanding, that He would open our eyes and speak to our hearts
- One passage I love is Paul praying for the saints in Ephesus that Ephesians 1:17-19 "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe"

3) Simple reading and observation (what is the passage saying)

- As we read, make observations as to what is happening and going on in the passage. Does not have to be deep or super spiritual, just make simple observations, who are the characters, what are they saying, what are they doing?
- There was a saying when I was in premed, when you hear hoofbeats, think horses not zebras. The simple plain explanation is usually more correct over the deep and exotic one.
- Chuck Smith had an acronym KISS- Keep it simple stupid
- So lets look at exodus 4 what do we observe
 - We see that Moses is having a back and forth conversation with God.
 - Moses is apprehensive, saying they will not believe me nor listen me
 - God asks Moses what is in his hand, and uses the rod to demonstrate God's power by doing a miracle.
 - Moses ran away from the snake.

- God does another miracle with turning Moses hand leprous and then healing it. First mention of leprosy in the bible
- God giving examples of miracles as proofs that God was with Moses
- Moses still feeling inadequate and apprehensive says he cannot talk, he has slow speech and a slow tongue
- Moses, still after God saying that He will be with his mouth and teach him what to say, says God send someone else.
- God says that He would be with Moses, He would be with Moses' mouth, He would teach him what to say.
- Finally God gets angry with Moses, and says isn't Aaron your brother? I'll speak to you and you speak to him, and he will speak to the people,

4) Background, Context, Setting.

- This is where the “studying” takes place. Where is this scene taking place, what happens before, what happens after. And this is critical to understanding a passage because this is where so many people get it wrong and that is how you get bad and wrong doctrine. Cherry picking verses.
- Its so important as Paul described to give the “whole counsel of God” and “rightly divide the word of truth”
 - A good question is how do I get or learn the background context and setting: Reading the chapters that are before it, looking at commentaries on the passage, most will tell of the setting, listening to a good bible teacher.
 - But the more time you spend in the bible just simply reading it, your mind grows and makes the connection as the Spirit enlightens us. I once heard David Guzik describe his mind as a concordance when someone asks him a bible question: he goes through all the passages and verses that relate to that question looking for the answer.
 - For example: Is Jesus God? There are a plethora of passages you can look to, but some verses that jump of the page: John 1:1 “in the beginning was the word, the word was with God the word was God. The word put on flesh and dwelt among us.”. “The son of man is Lord of the sabbath”, “Before Abraham was, I am”, “I and the Father are one” and those are just a few.
- So to continue the example, exodus 4. The background, context, and setting is the children of Israel have been in bondage for over 400 years. To simplify a little more, who are the children of Israel and how did they end up in Egypt?
- They are the descendants of Abraham, whose son was Isaac, whose son was Jacob, who had twelve sons(the twelve tribes of Israel), who sold their brother Joseph into bondage and after struggling for years, God rose him to the second most powerful man in Egypt, and through the wisdom God gave Joseph, he preserved life through the seven years of plenty into the seven years of famine,

and during that time Jacob and his other sons came to live with Joseph in Egypt and Pharaoh let them stay in land of Goshen.

- But years after this, after this pharaoh was dead, and Joseph was dead, a new pharaoh arose and was concerned about the numbers of Hebrews in the land, so he made them slaves. And their bondage was about 400 years.
 - And the people cried out to God and God raised up a deliverer Moses. The problem was Moses tried doing it in own ability at first, and then had to run for his life for killing an Egyptian. So at 40 years old he's running for his life, goes to midian which is the backside of the desert, marries a girl named Zipporah the daughter of Jethro/Ruel the priest of midian, and is in the desert tending sheep for another 40 years
 - Then one day Moses sees a bush on fire but it was not burned, something interesting after seeing the same thing for 40 years. And God speaks to Moses saying "Moses I am sending you to be my deliverer"
 - But after 40 years Moses says "who am i that I should go to pharaoh?"
 - Then he asks "Who are you? What is your name?"
 - God essentially encouraging Moses, I will be with you, I am sending you. I will stretch my hand and do many wonders. And that's where we pick up in chapter 4.
- That is a lot of background and context, does that help you get a better and clearer picture of where we are picking up in the passage?

V1 "Then Moses answered and said, "But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, the Lord has not appeared to you."

- Understanding the context that he was initially rejected, and now has left his position and the splendors of Egypt for the last 40 years to be a shepherd in the middle of nowhere helps us understand his apprehension"
- In chapter 4, there is a constant reference to "they", they will not believe me, that they may believe, if they will not believe. In context we understand who the they is, the children of Israel.

5) Jesus and the gospel

- How does a passage relate and connect to Jesus and the gospel message? Jesus said in John 5:39 "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of me"
- Hebrews 10:7 "Behold, I have come- in the volume of the book it is written of Me- to do your will, O God."
- All of scripture, the old and new testament all point to and speak of Jesus. I heard a quote that said "There is a red cord that goes from the beginning to the end bible, it weaves its way through every page. That red cord is Christ. It all testifies of Him."
- Some passages are obvious, like in Numbers with Moses lifting up the bronze serpent, and Jesus even explains that to Nicodemus in John 4:14-15 "and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of Man be lifted up, that whoever

believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” and for some others you have to dig a little more.

- What does this passage here teach us about Jesus? Just as God ordained Moses to deliver to children of Israel from bondage, Jesus is our deliverer from the bondage of sin and death.
- Just as God was going to teach Moses what to say, Jesus said in John 12:49 “For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak”
- John 8:28-20 “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father who taught Me, I speak these things. And He who sent Me, is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.”
- There are more that you can find and look it, but just for times sake lets move on.
 - I like to think of it as micro and macro connections. We see a bunch of micro connections, but on the macro scale, Moses delivering the children of Israel then giving them the law sets things in motion for the nation and culture of Israel, where Jesus would be born and raised.

6) Application

- What was God telling the people then, and what is He telling me now? What is the message of the passage?
 - In spite of Moses’ reluctance and apprehension and perceived inadequacy, God desired to use him to deliver the children of Israel from bondage- in the same way, He desires to use us for “good works He has foreordained for us to walk in”
 - What is in your hand? Many sermons have been preached on this one phrase and rightly so. God took the shepherd's rod that was in the and turned into the rod of God. That rod was used to demonstrate God’s power in egypt, splitting the red sea, bringing forth water out of the rock, and later the rod budded and brought forth flowers and almonds.
 - Similarly, God would ask us what is in our hand? A computer? A pen? A child? A grandchild? Fill in the blank, what can God do with that thing you think is ordinary if you surrender it to His power and purposes.
 - For those of us who are nervous when sharing or talking in front of people, v12 is a comfort. “I will be with your mouth and teach you what to say”. I cannot tell you how often before a teaching or message I have prayed that.
- And you can continue to pull application from this text as the Spirit guides and teaches us.

7) Cross references

- Are there any other passages in scripture that are similar, similar message, lesson, or relate specifically to this text? Again this comes from reading, learning, and studying the bible as a whole, but as you continue you start seeing how the bible is the best commentary on the bible.

- One teacher said, it might have been Chuck- the Old Testament is the new Testament concealed, the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. The bible is the best commentary on the bible.
 - And its really cool when you find little passages that give more light on others.
- I don't have time to read it, but in acts 7:20-36, Stephen, when he is before the sanhedrin, quotes so much of this account.
- But for example, Moses was not the only person apprehensive about the call of God. Jeremiah 1:6-7 "Then said I: "ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth." But the Lord said to me: "Do not say, 'I am a youth,' For you shall go to all whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak"
- Gideon, when the Lord appears to him when he is hiding from the midianites "The Lord is with thee, o mighty man of valor" he's looking around to whom the Lord is talking to. And Gideon replies to the Lord Judges 6:15 "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?" So he said to Him, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my fathers house."
- The example of God using whatever is in your hand isn't just for Moses, Think about Samson with the jawbone of a donkey, David with his sling, Ehud with his left hand dagger

8) Commentaries

- The last one, commentaries. I love looking at what other biblical scholars and pastors and theologians have gleaned from passages. I have a bad habit of buying more commentaries than I need when I am studying a book. But simply just reading the couple pages on what a commentator has written can shed a lot of light.
 - More than half the battle when it comes to commentators is finding the right ones and being able to chew the meat and spit out the bone. You may not or probably will not agree with every piece of theology a commentator has, but being able to take the good and leave the bad is a great skill to learn.
- Just some commentators that I personally love: Charles Swindoll(his character series is excellent), Warren Wiersbe(he is usually the first one I go to), David Guzik(When I want a quick overview with simple application), John Macarthur(Have to chew the meat and spit the bones out with this one, because I don't agree with everything he says), and one of my new personal favorites has been F W Boreham.
 - Also the puritans are great, any of the old stuff: Spuregon, Ironside, Watchman Nee
- And if you don't have commentaries, listening to sermons or studies on the passages is a great great way to study the bible as well. I would love to see my stats in heaven of how many hours I have spent listening to sermons, but there are great bible teachers to listen to

Conclusion

- Out of all that mishmosh, here are the 8 points of a bible study: Get alone, Prayer, Observation, Context, Jesus and the gospel, application, cross references, commentaries.
- I'll leave you with one verse, 2 Timothy 2:15 "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth"