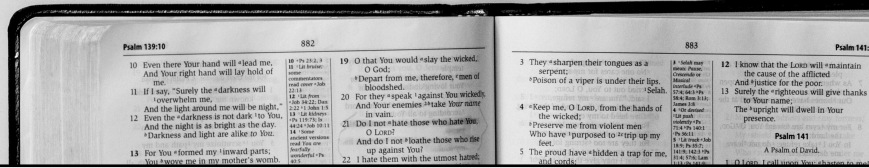


DISCIPLESHIP CLASS

HOW TO READ THE Bible

WEEK 3



VIDEO NOTES

PLOT IN BIBLICAL NARRATIVE

- When reading narratives, it's important to understand every scene in the context of its larger plotline.
- You can make the same story have a totally different message if you ignore where it occurs in the plot (this happens all the time when people read the Bible)
- The plot must be read from beginning to end.
- Tracing the conflict and resolution through the plot helps you see the message the author is trying to get across.
- Smaller stories fit within the context of their own movements, and then these movements together make up the building blocks of the grand plotline of the whole story of the Bible.
- no matter where I'm reading in the Bible, I need to pay attention to these different layers of the plot, so I can read each story in context.

Level 1

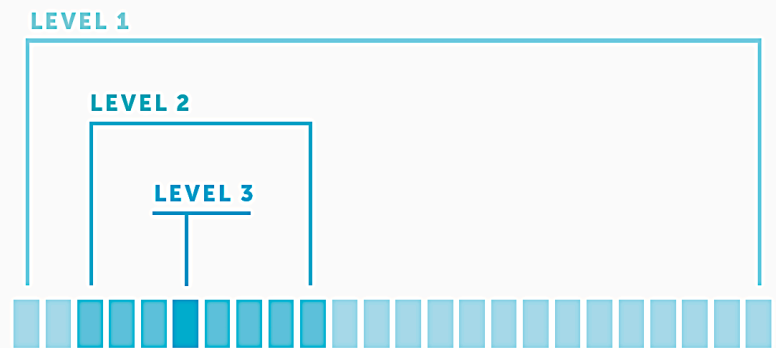
- One overall storyline in the Bible
- e.g. the reunion of Heaven & Earth

Level 2

- The multiple movements of that overall storyline
- e.g. The period of the judges

Level 3

- The hundreds of individual narratives that make up each of these movements



CHARACTERS IN BIBLICAL NARRATIVE

- We identify with characters because, just like them, we're in our own story having our own conflicts that we need to overcome.
- Biblical stories use characters as a mirror, so we can see ourselves and discover our own human nature in the reflection.
- Most biblical stories highlight the moments when characters fail or come to the end of themselves, and then they choose radical trust in God's grace and wisdom. It's in these stories that the authors show us how to be a human who truly pleases God through humility and surrender.
- By studying biblical characters, we can observe our own worst tendencies on display. And we see time and again God's gracious response that will see this story through to the end.

God is the only character who continues through every movement of the biblical narrative from beginning to end. This shows us that a fundamental purpose within these stories is to reveal God's character, identity, and purposes in history. In the first few chapters of Genesis, we see God's character in his desire to share with humans goodness and love and for us to share in this with each other. We read of God bringing justice on human evil as well as forgiveness and restoration. We can observe God's identity as the author of the universe revealed through the family of Abraham and Israel, and then ultimately through Jesus of Nazareth. We can see that God's purpose is to rescue his creation from evil, so that it can be shared together in love for eternity.

SETTINGS IN BIBLICAL NARRATIVE

- Settings evoke memories and emotions because of other stories you know that happened in similar places.
- New Testament authors reuse all of these settings (From the Old Testament) to show how Jesus is the one carrying our world from the garden, out of Egypt and the wilderness, and into the new creation.

TEACHING NOTES

HOW TO CHOOSE TRANSLATION

- Your beliefs on translation technique will probably determine which translation of the Bible you favor.

2 rules of translation

1. Accuracy of Manuscripts
2. Translation Technique

Accuracy of Manuscripts

This refers to the accuracy of the transcription and date of the manuscripts from which translations (your Bible) have been taken. The older and more complete the manuscript the better the translation.

History of the Dead Sea Scrolls

In 1947, near the ancient settlement of Qumran, on the west bank of the Dead Sea, one of the biggest archeological discoveries was found, the Dead Sea Scrolls. In caves surrounding the area, archeologist discovered ancient manuscripts of the Old Testament. These were the most complete collection that has ever been produced. Up until this finding, the oldest Manuscripts of the Old Testament were from the middle ages (9-10th century A.D.) But this discovery predated those manuscripts by over 1,000 years! The Dead Sea Scrolls greatly increased the accuracy and date of all previous Old Testament manuscripts and are a main source for reference when translating the Old Testament today.

All current Bibles use the oldest known manuscripts (Dead Sea Scrolls) except for the King James Version and the New King James Version

KJV History

The KJV was issued by king James in 1611 but was not the first completed english version of the Bible. The first completed and widely circulated english Bible was the Geneva Bible, which was actually brought with the pilgrims when they sailed to America on the Mayflower (This was partly in protest of the rule of king James and England as a whole). The KJV and the NKJV did not take into account the earlier manuscripts i.e. the Dead Sea Scrolls. The NKJV does use the earliest manuscripts in footnotes, but not in the actual text. However the King James Version of the Bible was for many years the most popular translation. It has greatly impacted the phrases and language we use today especially within the english speaking church.

- Modern translations allow the original text to be translated better into our everyday language. As well, Modern translations are actually more accurate based upon the manuscripts we now have today.

Translation Techniques

- Different versions arise from differing opinions on which old manuscripts should be used and how you will translate them to English.
- There are three basic translation techniques:
 1. Formal (Literal word-for-word)
 2. Functional (thought-for-thought)
 3. Free (paraphrase)
- **Formal** (Literal word-for-word) : Seeks to stay as close as possible to the exact words and phrases in the original language and yet retain readable English.
 - **Pros:** A very reliable translation (typically uses italics for words not in original)
 - **Cons:** It can take more study to understand and can have awkward wording
 - examples: INTERLINEAR, KVJ, NKJV, AMP, RSV, NRSV, NASB, ESV, HCSB
- **Functional** (aka thought-for-thought): Seeks to translate words, idioms, and grammatical constructions from the original language to precise equivalents in the receptor language.
 - **Pros:** Tries to be literal but emphasizes readability vs literal wording
 - **Cons:** You won't know whether you are reading a literal or paraphrased translation
 - Examples: NRSV, NIV, NAB, NEB, GNB, JB

Formal (Literal) vs. Functional Example

“Como Se Llama” translated to English

Literal: How yourself call.....”how do you call yourself”

Functional: What’s your name

- **Free (paraphrase):** Seeks to translate general ideas into common, everyday language.
 - **Pros:** The most readable translation and it can be insightful.
 - **Cons:** Because the translator is interpreting the passage for you, it becomes a commentary. Word studies are meaningless.
 - Examples: Phillips, NLT, GNT, TLB, LB, MSG, TPT

1 Timothy 1:5

Formal Equivalence Translations

KJV: Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

ESV: The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Functional Equivalence Translations

HCSB: Now the goal of our instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.³

NIV: The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.

Free Translations

NLT: The purpose of my instruction is that all believers would be filled with love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and a genuine faith.

MSG: The whole point of what we’re urging is simply love – love uncontaminated by self-interest and counterfeit faith, a life open to God.

Bible Translation Comparison



There is not a perfect translation of Scripture because language is a fluid thing and translation requires interpretation. Yet, the Word of God is perfect, alive, and powerful. It is able to convict us to the core and convert the soul by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Consider Jesus. The Word in flesh came in human form and experienced the weakness of humanity, even suffering death on the cross. Yet, His life and death were more than typical because of the Divine nature inside of Him. He even had power to bring His earthly body back to life after He was crucified. His power shined through the cloak of humanity and touched all who had eyes to see and ears to hear. The same remains true with the written Word. Every translation that makes a serious attempt to adhere to the original texts can be used by God to reach the lost and edify the saint. God's truth shines through.

OUR SUGGESTION:

Try and Have 1 translation from each type: Form, Function, Free. This will allow you access to all 3 “versions.”

Resource: if you don't have a Bible from types Form, Function, and Free, don't worry, there's an app for that. “YouVersion Bible App” is a free app that allows you access to all major translations today.

UNDERSTANDING HISTORICAL & LITERARY CONTEXT

1. Understand the Historical Context (Background)

- A. Use a Bible Dictionary, Commentary, or other resource to learn the background. www.familychristian.com/bible-translation-guide
www.studylight.org, www.biblestudytools.com

B. Read through the book or section in one sitting using an accurate version of the Bible you can understand. It often helps to read through out loud.

As you do this, jot down the answers to the following questions:

1. What do you notice about the people (or person) the letter is discussing?
(What nationality are they? Are they rich or poor? What are their problems & attitudes?)
2. What is the writer's attitude?
3. Are there any specific things mentioned about why the book is being written (the occasion)?
4. Write down the letter's natural, logical sections .

2. Understand the Literary Context (what's being said)

A. Study each paragraph or section and briefly summarize the main point.

B. How does each paragraph or section fit into a flow of ideas? Write a brief sentence explaining how each paragraph or section fits into the overall flow of the purpose. Look for words like therefore, henceforth, because, for.

Remember that this is just a tool. Ultimately, the Spirit of God is our greatest teacher and the living author of these letters. Above all, remember to pray for insight as you seek to study the Word.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What translation do you use? Are you attached to it? Why? Do you think you should expand your reading to other translations as well?
2. What does your typical Bible time, quiet time, study time look like? Why does it matter if we read one verse or one section or book?

SMALL GROUP APPLICATION

Read: Titus Chapters 1 - 3

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS:

EXEGESIS

- What is the background?
- Who is the author
- Are there any specifics of why the book is being written and the message the author is trying to get across?
- What are the people like he is writing to?
- Does it point back to the Old Testament?

HERMENEUTICS

- How can I translate it to today's audience?
- What does this say about God?
- What are the principles I can apply to my life?

SMALL GROUP NOTES