

Bible Study Cheat Sheet

1. Where Am I in the Organizational Structure of the Bible?

- Am I in the Old Testament or New Testament?
- What Section of the Bible am I in?
 - **History** (Genesis through Esther)
 - **Wisdom and Poetry** (Job through Song of Solomon)
 - **Prophets** (Isaiah through Malachi)
 - **Jesus** (Matthew through Acts)
 - **The Letters of Paul** (Romans through Philemon)
 - **Letters to Believers** (Hebrews through Jude)
 - **Revelation**
- When, in correlation to the life, ministry, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, does this take place?
 - If before, then it will foreshadow, picture, or promise Jesus and the gospel.
 - If during, it will outline and chronicle the life of Jesus and the work of the gospel.
 - If after, it will explain the gospel, clarify the gospel, or apply the gospel to how we live.

2. What Era of Biblical History Am I In?

- **Creation and Fall** (Genesis 1-11)
- **The Patriarchs** (Genesis 12-50)
- **Moses** (Exodus through Deuteronomy)
- **Israel conquering the land and living without a king** (Joshua through Ruth)
- **Israel as a Kingdom/Nation** (1 Samuel through 2 Chronicles | Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Jeremiah)
- **Israel's Exile** (Ezekiel, Daniel, Obadiah, Esther-kind of)
- **After-Exile History** (Ezra, Esther, Nehemiah | Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)
 - Intertestamental Period (Not specifically in Scripture, but things that happened in this time of history are alluded to at times)
- **Jesus** (Matthew-Acts 1)
- **Church Age** (Acts through Today)
- **Future Events** (TBD - Spoken about all throughout the Scriptures)

3. What Literary Genre Am I Reading? (And the things to remember concerning genres!)

- **Narrative** (Make sure to take note of narrative elements—characters, places, time stamps, plot, etc.)
- **Legal** (What it says is what it means. But applying it will take a lot of discernment!)
- **Poetry** (Take note of imagery/metaphor, structure, and repetition/refrains)
- **Wisdom** (Principles, not promises; general truths; observed consistencies often told through poetic allegory)
- **Prophetic** (SPECIFIC—what is the context?; Rhetorical declarations; some have not been fulfilled yet!)
- **Discourse** (Words, grammar, and argument flow are important to take note of!)
- **Apocalyptic** (Features like images, symbols, end of the world language; discerning meaning may take a full Bible study of a theme/image.)

4. Observational Questions

- What are some key words in this text? (Repeated words, transition words, etc.)
- Who are the people involved? (Author, audience, characters in the story, etc.)
- What terms need to be defined? (Obscure words, theological words, ambiguous words, etc)
- What geography is involved? (Cities, regions, people groups in that area, etc.)
- What is the context? (The paragraph, the chapter/section, the book/letter/story, etc.)

5. Rules of Interpretation

- Interpret a passage based on the ordinary rules of grammar.
- Interpret a passage in the context of the book, chapter, and paragraph it exists in.
 - What is the topic of this entire chapter?
 - Is the book I'm reading historical, wisdom, etc.?
 - What would these words mean to the original recipients?
- If the phrase or verse is a part of a poem or some other literary device/genre, take that into account.
- Be careful to discern the true meaning of words.
 - Look up the English words that you don't know, and words that you thought you knew, but seem to mean something different.
 - Don't be afraid to look up the meaning of the Hebrew/Greek words.
- If there is an apparent contradiction in Scripture, we resolve it by carefully looking at three things:
 - How was the subject first introduced in Scripture?
 - Is there a clear Scripture to help me understand this unclear Scripture?
 - Is this resolved in progressive revelation?
- Resources to Help
 - BibleHub (comprehensive website for study!)
 - Blue Letter Bible (Website/App for concordance work)
 - Commentaries (J. Vernon McGee, John Phillips, Warren Wiersbe "BE" series, etc.)

6. Applicational Questions

- Does this Scripture state a clear command to follow?
- Does this Scripture state a principle of cause and effect?
- Does this Scripture narrate a truth?

*****Remember that your application MUST be consistent with your observation and interpretation*****

Practical Things To Do In Bible Reading/Study:

- Commit to Consistency
- Choose a Reading Plan
- Decide on A Format
- Try to familiarize yourself with the context
- Look for Jesus/the gospel in the text
- Expect and anticipate that God will speak to you directly and specifically
- Journal and determine to share what God shows you
- Always diversify or engage with the Bible in various ways
 - Read it out loud, listen to it, hear it taught through podcasts, memorize it, read ABOUT it
- Set aside times to read larger portions of Scripture

Galatians 6:9 (Pastor Micah Translation)

"Let us all make sure we don't get tired while doing what is good, for, at the right time, we will be rewarded for our labor, if we don't give up."