



Practical Applications

How to study the Bible for yourself

Applying What You've Learned

- A topical study involves two things:
 - First, you pick a subject and examine all that the Bible has to say about that subject.
 - Then you put together a comprehensive outline of what the Bible actually teaches on that subject.
- A character study is much the same:
 - First, you pick a person and look at all the Bible has to say about him/her.
 - Then you put together a summary of lessons you've learned from your study of that person.
- Chapter studies are a bit different:
 - You look at the passage or chapter in detail.
 - You then put together an outline of what it says and means by what it says.
- But, what do you do with all this gold that you have mined?

The Importance of Application

- One writer put it this way, “No matter how much you know about God’s Word, if you don’t apply what you learn, Scripture will never benefit your life” (Arthur, 111).
- Another said it like this, “It is essential to know how to locate all the truth from the Bible that is needed to deal with an issue or problem. Similarly, it is important to be able to interpret each passage properly... But all of this—even when it is done well—can fall flat and effect little or nothing unless what has been learned is coupled with proper implementation [i.e., application]” (Adams, 103).

Application is the Point of Bible Study

- 1 Peter 2:1-3, the point of feeding on the Word is to grow spiritually
- 1 John 2:12-14, the path of spiritual growth is through the application of the Word to our lives
- James 1:22-25, a hearer of the Word who doesn't do what it says is deceiving himself
- Luke 6:46-49, hearing the truth and not acting on it is useless and foolish!

Remember Last Week

- I told you to do either a Character or Topical Study, and bring in all your notes and outline.
- Today, I will show you how to derive personal application points from your work.

A Simple Approach

- Ask yourself 3 basic questions:
 1. What truths or principles have I just learned that should change the way I think, act, or set priorities in my life?
 2. What practices in my life do I need to change, maintain, establish or abandon altogether in my life based upon what I've just learned?
 3. What sin(s) in my life have just been revealed through my studies that I need to confess and repent of as a result of what I've learned?
- Do whatever is necessary to follow through on the answers you gave and you will see great profit in your own Bible study
- Most people need a little more specific direction than that to really apply what they've learned! That's what today's lesson is all about!!

What Does the Bible Say about Application?

- In 2 Tim 3:16-17, Paul gives us 4 primary ways the Bible can be applied to our lives:
 1. Teaching – what God says
 2. Reproof – what we're doing wrong
 3. Correction – what we should do instead
 4. Training in righteousness – how to make it a pattern of life
- In Eph 4:20-24ff., Paul tells us how to work through this process.

How To Do It

- Conclude your study with lessons learned
 - Principles, lessons, truths, etc...
 - Attitudes, actions, examples, etc...
 - Arguments, proofs, or doctrines I've learned
- Now meditate on what you've learned—and start to think about your own life in comparison
 - Patterns to follow or avoid
 - Truths to embrace

A Helpful Method of Meditation

- Ask yourself the SPACE PETS questions!
- *Dynamic Bible Study Methods*, 35:
 - [S]in to confess?
 - [P]romise to claim?
 - [A]ttitude to change?
 - [C]ommand to obey?
 - [E]xample to follow?
 - [P]rayer to pray?
 - [E]rror to avoid?
 - [T]ruth to believe?
 - [S]omething to praise God for?

From Meditation to Application

- These questions are not inspired, nor are they an exhaustive list of application oriented instigators.
- But, this list helped me early on in my own Bible study times to get the juices of my mind flowing.
- But even this is not the end of the application process. You haven't done application until you've got a plan and follow through with implementation!

5 Step Implementation Process:

1. Be specific on what needs to change
2. Be clear on what you need to do
3. Be deliberate on how and when you are going to do it
4. Be committed to living more for God
5. Be ready to share what you've learned

1. Be Specific on What Needs to Change

- Write out the full put off/put on process
- Include why what you've done or what you've thought is wrong
- Describe in your own words what it should look like in your life from now on (e.g., when is a thief not a thief?)
- Pick a memory verse or phrase

2. Be Clear on What You Need To Do

- Write out the specific steps you are going to follow—esp. if we're talking about an immediate application
- Add objectives or tasks to your 'To Do' list in your planner
- Don't be afraid to generate some actions plans if you are so inclined

3. Be Deliberate on How and When You Do It

- Make special plans for repeat or regular events/occurrences
 - E.g., pray before you walk in the door
 - E.g., don't go to bed until you've done your act of worship as a husband
- Make prayer part of your application process
 - Pray for strength, courage or even the words or wisdom to act
 - Pray for God to accept your act of worship to Him

4. Be Committed To Living More for God

- You have to follow through!
- Don't expect to nail it your first time out.
- The Christian life is like any other occupation, hobby or practice you try to master—it takes work, study, effort, sacrifice, patience and diligence.
- Don't be afraid to revisit a study or application in the future—or to pick a similar topic or character to further enhance your growth.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help when you hit a road block! Pastoral counseling isn't just for new believers!

5. Be Ready To Share What You've Learned

- Remember that we aren't here on this earth just for ourselves.
- Keep in mind that we are all called to be part of the process of 'making disciples' (Matt 28:18-20)
- Think of all the 'one another' passages in the Bible if you need a reminder!

A Sample of One Another Texts

- Rom 12:10, devoted to one another
- Rom 12:16, be of the same mind toward one another
- Rom 13:8, love one another
- Rom 14:13, not to put stumbling blocks before one another
- Rom 14:19, build up one another
- Rom 15:7, accept one another
- Rom 15:14, admonish one another
- Rom 16:16, greet one another
- 1 Cor 12:25, care for one another
- Gal 5:13, serve one another
- Eph 4:2, showing tolerance for one another
- Eph 4:32, Being kind to one another, and forgiving each other as God in Christ has forgiven you
- Eph 5:19, speaking to one another in a way that builds us up
- Eph 5:21, submitting to one another
- Phil 2:3, regarding one another as more important than yourself
- Col 3:9-16, not lying to one another... but bearing w/ one another and forgiving each other... teaching and admonishing one another
- 1 Thess 3:12, loving one another
- 1 Thess 4:18, comforting one another
- 1 Thess 5:11-15, building up one another... living in peace w/ one another... always seeking after that which is good for one another
- Heb 3:13, encouraging one another
- Heb 10:24-25, considering how to stimulate one another on to love and good deeds—encouraging one another all the more as the day of redemption draws near!!!

What To Do Now

- Commit yourself today to doing one of the study methods we've covered over the last few lessons.
- Find a person share it with!
 - E.g., Roger in my case early on.
 - E.g., the church and my family as well as TMS now (even writing).
- Be deliberate in your pursuit of holiness and maturity—and recognize the Bible is the key!

A Few Closing Tips

- The most important practical lesson I can share with you in the area of application is this:
 - You must give yourself to prayer if you really want to change and grow spiritually!
- There are 3 reasons I say this:
 1. B/c you can't live your Christian life on your own.
 2. B/c you can't truly change biblically unless you're doing it for Him.
 3. B/c you can't discern your own heart or how to change biblically w/o both exposure to and an understanding of His Word!

For Future Study

- Jay Adams, *What To Do on Thursday*, section 4 on Implementation is an excellent read as well!
- Never be afraid to supplement your studies with good books or preaching!
 - GTY has a host of excellent resources
 - RCC has much of my own work
 - Many good books are in the office, library and part of the Pastors' Challenge each year.