

# How to Study a Bible Passage

- 1. Remember the purpose of the Bible! It's the narrative of creation, our fall into sin, our redemption by Jesus and the future recreation of the world.**
  - a. *John 20:30-31*; God's Word is not primarily an FAQ book or textbook.
  
- 2. What's the context?**
  - a. Authorship: What's the author's relationship to the content and purpose?
  - b. Scriptural: What's going on in the scripture before and after this passage?
  - c. Historical: What's going on in the world at the time?
  
- 3. What's happening in the passage?**
  - a. Who is doing what where and when? Look up any unfamiliar words.
  - b. Does the passage employ any literary devices to be aware of?
    - i. Hyperbole – ex: John 21:25;
    - ii. Metaphor – ex: John 10:7-10;
    - iii. Anthropomorphism – ex: Psalm 98:8;
    - iv. Parable vs. Allegory – ex: Luke 18 vs. Matthew 13.
      1. Parables typically have one main point and aren't meant as multi-faceted allegories.
    - v. Prophecy – ex: Isaiah 43.
    - vi. Poetry – ex: Proverbs 15:32-33.
    - vii. Apocalyptic – ex: Revelation 17.
  - c. Don't "spiritualize" miracle texts by only treating them as analogies. Focus on what the miracle tells us about God.
  
- 4. Still confused about your passage?**
  - a. Read the passage in multiple reputable translations, such as ESV, NIV or GW.
  - b. Look up a passage's Strong numbers - <http://biblehub.com/interlinear/>
  - c. Let scripture interpret scripture! Look for other passages that might shed light on it.
  - d. Still confused? Consult a commentary. Ask your LIFEGroup friends.
  
- 5. How does this passage connect to the overall narrative of scripture?**
  
- 6. What can we learn from this passage?**
  - a. What is it describing? What is it prescribing?
  
- 7. What does this passage say about God's Law and our sin? What does this passage say about our Savior Jesus and the Gospel?**
  
- 8. Do you find it hard to apply scripture to your life?** Try inserting your name into the passage. Ex: "For God so loved yourname that He gave His only Son..." Put yourself in the situation. Does the passage make you feel condemned or rescued? Why? *Ephesians 2:8-10*.