

Pastor Grady Covin
The Mission
January 29, 2025

Lesson 22

So in this last lesson I want to give you nine questions to ask when you come to the last step of application. And by the way I could probably teach from now until the end of the year on how to study your Bible and I know I'm leaving a lot of things unsaid, but I think I've given you at least a better general understanding of how to approach the Word of God. And hopefully you'll take away at least a few things you didn't know or have never considered before.

Now, earlier, when we studied the step of Observation, I said that one of the things to do with any passage of Scripture is to bombard it with questions. Well, the same thing's true when it comes to Application. And so I want to give you nine questions you can ask whenever you come to the Word. Obviously there are others, but this will get you to thinking hopefully.

1. Is there an example for me to follow?

If you've ever noticed, a lot of the Bible is biographical? And that's not by accident; it's by design. God has filled His Word with stories of people because really nothing else helps the truth of the Word of God come alive the way people do.

The challenge, of course, is to apply their situation with your situation.

For instance we're studying about the life of Daniel on Sunday mornings, and how Daniel and his three friends stood for God, even when

others would not stand, even when threatened with persecution and death they vowed and then followed through with their vow to serve the Lord.

Well, the truth is, we'll probably never face having to be put to death for our faith in God, but don't we face obstacles in this world that try and derail our faith and gain our allegiance? Sure we do. All the time we have to make a choice to either follow Christ or follow our own misguided thoughts.

And so though the situation may not be exact, the principal still stands. And the choices remain the same; to follow God and practice the things of God or follow our natural born tendencies and be deceived by the world and the things of this world.

So always, no matter the scripture, ask is there an example here for me to follow?

2. Is there a sin to avoid?

And once again, I'll refer you back to that all familiar passage of scripture in;

2 Timothy 3:16, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

There are many benefits to studying and meditating on the word of God, but none greater than its ability to speak to our conscious and guide our thoughts and our actions in regard to moral issues.

Before we were born again and supernaturally changed by the hand of God, we did things that we didn't even look on as being sin. Most of us did things and never even thought about how they affected our relationship to God. And the reason is because we had a different standard for right and wrong.

Only when we came to Christ and began reading and studying the Scriptures did we learn what sin really was and is.

Married couples sometimes get saved, each one of them, and when they start learning the word of God, they realize just how messed up their marriage really was before they came to Christ. They didn't even realize they had a bad marriage until they became a Christian. They just thought that's how everybody lives. But then they read a scripture like Ephesians chapter 5 and they began to realize all the things they need to work on.

And there are many other examples I could give you of how the Bible convicts us of our sin after we're saved and begin to get into God's word.

3. Is there a promise to claim?

God's Word is absolutely filled with promises—and they're all made by God, who by His very character cannot and does not lie and who we know is totally capable of fulfilling every one them.

Take Nehemiah chapter 1 for example. We looked at that scripture in a past lesson. God promised to restore their land if the people would confess and repent of their sin. And God honored His word. In fact, He even used Nehemiah as part of the answer to that prayer.

Now, one thing we do need to keep in mind when it comes to God's promises is that they're not all given to us. Some promises that God made are given to certain individuals, not to people in general. Other promises He made were to groups of people, such as the nation of Israel. And so we need to be careful to always determine and distinguish the recipient, because we can't claim promises that haven't been made to us.

But we can certainly claim promises that have been made to us. We can claim all the promises made to the church, as well as all promises made to

“the righteous”, such as in the book of Proverbs and in other portions of the wisdom literature.

4. Is there a prayer to repeat?

Abraham teaches us something about prayer in Genesis 18. So does Nehemiah and David and Daniel and Jonah and Jesus and Paul and many others. And in every one of these prayers there are lessons to be learned as to how we should pray. And so as you study those passages, ask yourself, What is there in these prayers that I need to be praying?

5. Is there a command to obey?

Again, the Bible is filled with many clear-cut commands. There are fifty-four in the book of James alone. Likewise, there are many in Paul’s writings, for example in Romans 12–15, Galatians 5–6, Ephesians 4–6, Colossians 3–4; all these passages of scripture contain commands and are primarily for our exhortation.

Somebody asked a wise, old scholar one time; how they could determine the will of God? And his response was simple: He said, “95 percent of the will of God is revealed in the commands of Scripture. And so if you spend your time studying and meditating on that 95%, you shouldn’t have much trouble working out the other 5 percent.”

So ask yourself; is there a command to obey; or what am I being exhorted to do or not to do?

6. Is there a condition to meet?

As you already know, many of the promises of God are based on conditions set forth in the text. For instance, Jesus said, **“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you” (John 15:7).**

So what are the conditions? **“If you abide in Me, and [if] My words abide in you.”**

And so here we have a great promise: **“Ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you.”** But first we have to meet the conditions! We have to be in Christ; that means to be a genuine born again Christian and then God’s word must abide in us. In other words, we not only have to know God’s word, we have to know what it means and know how to apply it, before we can ever even know what to ask. And then what we ask will always line up with God’s word and God’s will and we will receive what we ask; and many times even greater than what we ask.

And so our study and meditation and knowing how to interpret and apply God’s word is very important and also has great benefits!

7. Is there a verse to memorize?

Now, obviously, we could memorize any verse of Scripture if we set our mind to it, but there are some verses that will carry much more significance for us for than others.

For me personally one of those verses is **2 Corinthians 5:17, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**

I quote that verse all the time, because it has great significance to me. That’s what I know happened in my heart and that’s what I know can happen in anyone’s heart who is willing to humble themselves and come to an end of themselves and admit their sinful sinfulness and then ask God to forgive them, and then be willing to repent or turn from that old life of sin.

That’s why personally I love and cherish that verse. And I’m sure many of you have your own favorites.

But there are many others that could and will have significance if we'll just take the time to learn them, but we have to put forth the effort to do so. And for most people a Bible memorization program can help.

One off the top of my head is one called the "Topical Memory System. I may or may not have mentioned it before. I can't remember, no pun intended. At any rate I think it or one like it would be a great way to at least get started.

And don't sell yourself short, it is possible also to memorize large portions of scripture if you'll put forth the time to do it. Entire chapters of the Bible and even entire books are memorized by people and so nothing is impossible with God when you make it your commitment.

8. Is there an error to mark?

One of the more positive developments that we've observed among Christians especially lately has been a renewed emphasis on serving others, especially people who are less fortunate than us. And a lot of churches advertise their serving on social media and the like, and I'm not saying that's good or bad. It has its advantages and disadvantages, but the fact that they serve others is definitely what God would have us to do as Christians.

That's the outworking of biblical truth; it ought to produce—love and concern for people and their needs.

But also during this same period I think there's also been a loss of basic theological and doctrinal knowledge. I think many church goers and professing Christians attend church because they like the warm fuzzy feeling they get from shallow, half truths that are being preached from many of our pulpits today.

And a lot of so called Christians today are on the fence when it comes to Biblical truths like the virgin birth, and the resurrection, and creation,

and the inerrancy of Scripture, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And as a result, they're open to theological error.

Well, the only thing that can truly combat that is personal Bible study. That's the only thing that can get people like this off the fence and on the right side of Biblical truth.

And so if you're one of those people, or even if you're not, as you investigate God's Word, you need to ask yourself: What doctrines or truths is this passage teaching? And what theological errors may this passage of scripture be exposing to me? And then ask: What changes do **I** need to make in **my** thinking in order to bring it in line with what the Scriptures teach?

9. Is there a challenge to face?

Have you ever read a portion of the Bible and felt convicted that you needed to act on the basis of what you've read? Well, I hope so, because that's what the word of God through the Spirit of God is designed to do. It's purpose is to challenge you to respond in some area of your life, or in some situation that you might be facing.

Now, that could be a personal relationship that needs to be healed. Or maybe an apology that needs to be made. Or maybe a restitution that needs to be settled. Or maybe even to get out of you something that's drawing you away from God or preventing you from drawing closer to God. Or maybe there's a good habit you need to start cultivating, or a bad habit you need to stop. Whatever it is, the Holy Spirit uses Scripture to promote changes in your life.

The question is; Are you open to such change? Are you prepared to take on the challenges of God? Do have a desire to grow and to mature and to become more usable by God.

Most Christians are quick to pray, I want to be used by God! God I want You to use me!

But only a few are willing to pray, God I want You to make me more usable and then use me up! That's the prayer we ought to be praying. And I'll guarantee you, if you'll approach God's Word with that attitude and that request, He'll honor that prayer, and the Holy Spirit won't let you go away disappointed.

So there you are nine questions to ask when you come to the step of application.

Now, in closing let me give you three suggestions on how to get started if you haven't already.

A. W. Tozer, one of the great preachers of old wrote, "I'm afraid too many churchgoers today are listening, but not learning. They're spectators, not students. They're passive, not participating. And that's because we who teach, often give them cut flowers that easily fade and wilt, rather than showing them how to grow plants for themselves—to discover firsthand the truth that God has revealed in His Word.

And so that's the purpose of what I've been doing over the last several months. To introduce to you the joy of getting into the Bible for yourself.

Now, that said, I can assure you I've just barely scratched the surface. There's so much more to learn in this regard. And I hope you won't stop. I pray that you'll not only go back over what we've learned but that you'll also research other ways to study and learn the scripture. But at the very least that you'll set your mind to put into action what you've been taught.

So how can you make permanent what you've learned or at least started to learn from this process?

Well, let me offer up a few suggestions as how to build on this foundation.

The first one is to begin a personal Bible Study program.

I once saw a poster once that said: **“In twenty years, what will you wish you had done today?”** And then under that question, in large, bold letters, it said, **“Do it now.”**

I remember before Billy Graham died, a reporter asked him if he could go back and do anything different, What would it be?

He said, “I would have studied more and I would have prayed more.

And you and I, twenty years from now, if we’re still here, will wish that we had done those things more as well, unless we start now to change that.

Now, is the time to start a personal Bible study program if you don’t already have one.

Set aside a time everyday to spend with the Lord. And then put to practice the things we’ve learned over the last several months. The lessons are still on our website if you need to review.

Number two, determine your objectives.

In other words, what do you want? Not just now, but at the end of life? You know a lot of people end up at the top of the pile in their field when it comes to their work, but they end up at the bottom of the pile when it comes to fulfillment. So ask yourself, what do I really want? Do I really want to have a personal Bible study program? Have I really seen the need for it in my life? Do I really think it would be beneficial?

If so get started! And then do the third thing.

Establish your priorities

This step determines how bad you really want to do this? What price are you willing to pay? There are plenty of things I’d like to do, but not

badly enough to pay the price required to do them. So ask yourself, Do I really want to develop a Bible study program and if so, what price am I willing to pay?

And then the fourth thing you need to do is set a schedule, which is just a tool to help you accomplish what you've already decided you want to do and are willing to pay the price to do it.

The fifth thing you need is discipline.

And ultimately, this is the fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit, once you determine in your heart to submit to God and allow Him to work in your life, the Holy Spirit will enable you to not only set a schedule, but also maintain it, keeping your priorities, and helping you to accomplish your goals and objectives.

A lot of people will say, "I sure would like to study the Word more, but I just don't know where I'd find the time."

Well, what they're really saying is that they've got all the time in the world to do what they think is essential. They just haven't determined in their heart that **Bible study** is essential?

Somebody asked Harry Ironside who was always on the go and preaching in venues across the country, How he managed to get up early every morning and read and study his Bible. They said, "Do you pray about it?"

He said, "No, I just get up."

And that's where most of us probably need to start. We just need to get up. It may mean we get up 30 minutes or an hour earlier, which means we have to go to bed a little earlier. But at the end of the day, or the beginning of the day, we just get up.

A lot of folks are expecting God to do what God is expecting them to do. God's not going to make you get up, but I have found that once I determine to get up with the intention of spending time with Him, He'll wake me up.

But now the opposite thing happens as well. Satan doesn't want us up and so you can be assured, he's going to do anything he can to disrupt your schedule. And he'll use every trick in the book to do it.

And in the end, it's going to come down to this; where is my heart? Where is my heart? What is my objective? What is my priority?