

## **Questions To Ask When Studying The Bible**

### **Questions Before Studying:**

1. Is my heart ready to hear what God has to say on the matter?
2. Is there something I want scripture to say right now? What is it? And why?
3. Have I prayed to the Holy Spirit to open my eyes to understand God's word? Am I trusting in the Spirit?

### **Initial Questions about the Text:**

1. What kind of passage am I reading?  
(Narrative,Poetry,Proverb,Prophecy,Letter,History,etc?)
2. Who is writing this?
3. Who is the audience?
4. What comes before this passage?
5. Is this part of a larger section of the book? And what is that section about?

### **Questions While Reading Any Passage:**

1. What is the main point of this passage?
2. Are there words or ideas that are being repeated?
3. Who are the people involved in this passage (either characters in a narrative, or people being spoken to or spoken about)? List them out, with a brief descriptor.
4. What words or phrases are confusing to me?
5. Does the author use a particular communication style?  
(hyperbole,rhetoric,logic,parable,allegory,analogy,metaphor,simile,etc)
6. Are there other places in scripture that shed light on this passage? What are they,and how do they help us interpret this passage?
7. Can this passage be broken up into smaller sections ? How would I do it? Why that way?
8. What does this passage say about God?
9. How does this passage describe mankind?
10. Where does it fit in God's redemptive plan?
11. How would the original Audience have responded to this passage?

### **Questions for Meditation:**

1. How does this passage lead me to prayer?
2. How does this passage draw me closer to God?
3. What about this passage makes me delight in my relationship with God?
4. Is there anything in this passage I'm convicted by?
5. How does this passage strengthen and encourage me in my faith in Jesus?
6. What are some practical ways that God uses this passage to change me?

### **Questions for Narrative:**

1. Who are each of the characters in the narrative, and what kind of character are they in the story?
2. How does this story fit into the bigger story(of the book its in,and of the whole Bible)?
3. How would you summarize the story in a paragraph? In a sentence?

4. Does the passage simply record a historical event, or does the author have a reason for telling this story?
5. Is there a moral command connected to the story?
6. How does this story fit in the big story of the Bible?

**Questions for poetry:**

1. What poetic devices are used? (repetition, allegory, parallelism, etc)
2. What do those poetic devices reveal about the purpose of the passage?
3. What does this poetry illustrate about God's character?
4. How does this poetic verse lift your soul to worship God?
5. How does this poetry describe human experiences, or emotions?

**Questions for the Psalms:**

1. What type of psalm is this? (Thanksgiving, praise, confession, lament, wisdom, curses, etc).
2. Are there words or phrases repeated throughout the psalm?
3. Is there a logical flow to the psalm from beginning to end? What is it?
4. How does this psalm function in the Christian's life? What is it for?
5. What range of experiences or emotions does this psalm display?
6. In what way does Jesus Christ complete/fulfill this psalm?

**Questions for Wisdom Literature:**

1. What form is it? Poetry? Proverb? Narrative?
2. What advice is given, and what is its purpose?
3. Does the author intend this passage to be an absolute truth or promise, or is he relating a general truth about life?

**Questions for Prophecy:**

1. What is the background of the prophecy?
  - 1a. Who is the prophet speaking to, and why?
  - 1b. What is the nation being commanded to do, or rebuked because of?
2. What does this passage tell us about the way God relates to his people?
3. Does the author make use of an allegory? Does he interpret that allegory for us?
4. What imagery is used, and is the imagery explained?
5. How is the prophecy fulfilled in the context?
6. How is it fulfilled in the larger story of God's plan? How does it point to Christ?

**Questions for the Gospels:**

1. What special emphasis does the writer have in his Gospel? (Takes some "boating")
2. Is there a parallel passage in the other Gospels? Does it emphasize something different?
3. How does this passage depict Jesus?
4. What forms of communication does Jesus use in the passage (hyperbole, rhetorical, questions, parable, etc)

**Questions for Acts:**

1. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in this story?
2. To whom is the Gospel being proclaimed (Jews or Gentiles)? Why would that matter?
3. Why do you think this story was included in the foundational church history of the early church?

**Questions for the Epistles:**

1. Who wrote the letter?
2. Who was the letter written to?
3. What is the relationship between the author and the recipient?
4. Does Scripture share any prior background to the letter (in Acts or in a previous letter)?
5. What is the attitude of the letter writer toward the recipient(s)?
6. What does the letter say about the recipient(s), and their situation?
7. If you had to outline the flow of the letter, what would it look like? Where would you break up sections of the letter?
8. Is there a logical argument presented in my passage?
9. How does the writer point his readers to the finished work of Christ?
10. Does this passage reference the Old Testament? Does it quote a passage, or just reference a part of the Old Testament? How does that effect your interpretation of the passage?