

Dimensions of Study

What does the scripture say? (discovering what the text *says*)

- Read the Scripture all in one sitting if possible, ignoring verse and chapter divisions
- Read the passage in one or more recent translations
- Get the content clearly in mind by writing answers to questions provided with each lesson.
- Let the Scripture speak for itself, even if the meaning is not yet clear. Ask *who? what? where? when? what?* questions as you read.
- Take notes as you read and make observations on what you are reading.
- Who are the “cast of characters”?
- Make a quick outline of the book/passage
- Write a two or three sentence summary of the book/passage
- Mark passages that are familiar, you want to memorize, have questions about, want to study further in a commentary, etc.

What information do we need to understand the scripture more fully? (discovering what the text *means*)

- When was the book written; where, why and to whom?
- What is the possible source or sources for the passage?
- What was the writer saying for the time in which the passage was written?
- What are the original meanings of some of the words used?
- What is the original background (geography, political, cultural, religious)?
- What do the surrounding verses and chapters contribute to the setting or situation?
- What is the literary type of the passage?
- How is the passage structured?
- What are the relationships between the persons mentioned in the passage?
- What is the book’s place in the canon?

How can we apply this to our lives? (no easy answers here!)

- What is the Holy Spirit trying to teach me/us in this Scripture?
- How do you see yourself in this passage?
- What if you were actually present in the situation(s) portrayed in the passage?
- What is the meaning of the passage for my life either now or in the future?
- How can you use this passage to help someone else?
- What response does the passage require of me as a Christian? (confession, change, obedience, praise, thanksgiving, prayer, etc.)
- What does this passage require of us as a group? (class, family, church, etc.)
- How does this scripture help you be more like Christ?