

Sermon Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE - 1.8.2023

FEASTING ON GOD'S WORD - PART 2

I. INTRODUCTION

2 Timothy 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

RIGHTLY HANDLING THE WORD OF TRUTH

- The verb used for 'rightly handling' literally means to 'cut straight' or 'guide along a straight path'.
- He means to give believers straight, precise, and careful communication of the word of truth.
- The word of truth is the gospel, the apostolic teaching, Scripture.
- This is in contrast to what the false teachers were doing. They 'swerved from the truth' (2 Tim 2:18a).
- False teachers were speaking falsehood, confusing and upsetting the faith of some of the believers.
- They were not rightly handling the word of truth. They were crooked in their handling of the truth.
- But it's not only the pastor's responsibility to rightly handle the word of truth, every believer needs to rightly handle the word of truth.

II. SEE THE BIG PICTURE

THE UNITY OF SCRIPTURE

- Key to rightly handling God's Word is understanding the big picture; the grand storyline of the Bible.
 - Your Bible is a collection of 66 books, written by about 40 human authors, spanning a period of some 2,000 years.
 - Its two main sections, OT and NT, are written in two main languages, Hebrew and Greek respectively.
 - The Hebrew Bible arranged the books of the OT in a different order than we have them in ours and they divided them into three categories, the Law, Prophets, and the Writings.
 - The Bible as we have it is a mixture of different types of literary genres and styles (historical narrative, law, songs, poetry, wisdom, prophecy, prose and apocalyptic literature.)
 - God is the Bible's one, main Author as he divinely inspired everything in Scripture.
 - Therefore, you need to approach the collection of 66 books of the Bible as a unified whole.
 - It is better to treat your Bible as one book, with One author, and one main subject.
 - The supreme subject that is at the center of Biblical literature is Jesus Christ.
 - It is Jesus Christ and God's glorious rescue and salvation through Jesus Christ.
 - Not just in the NT but the OT also.
 - John 5:39, You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.
 - Luke 24:27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.
 - Luke 24:44 Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."
 - The whole of Scripture, from beginning to end, has Jesus at its center. All of Scripture points to Jesus.
 - Paul writes of "the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints." And that mystery is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1:24-27)
 - "The new is in the old concealed; the old is in the new revealed." Augustine
 - The OT unveils the promise of Messiah but ends without the fulfillment.
 - The NT brings us the fulfillment of the promised Messiah—Jesus Christ—with a view of the glory to come at the end of the age.
- For this very reason, we must pay careful attention to how we read and study the Bible.

- There is a unified thread that runs through Scripture tying it all together.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

- Biblical Theology concerns itself with tracing God's progressive self-revelation through time and his divine activity as it unfolds in human history—from creation all the way to the unveiling of the full glory of Christ.
- Biblical theology gives us an understanding of how texts in one part of the Bible relate to all other texts.

A very practical and easy way to remember the big picture is by dividing the grand storyline of Scripture into four divisions: **Creation - Fall - Redemption - Restoration**

- You can consider this the plot line of Scripture, the meta-narrative, the big picture.
- Begins at creation and culminates in the return of Christ and the Renewed Creation.
- Paul gives us a hint of the grand storyline in Ephesians.
- **Ephesians 1:7-10** In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.
- These are some of the highlights and major points in the plot line of redemptive history.
 - 1 - The Creation and the Fall
 - 2 - The Flood and God's Promises
 - 3 - The Exodus and the Law
 - 4 - The Conquest / Life in the Promised Land
 - 5 - The Kingdom and The Temple
 - 6 - The Exile
 - 7 - The Return from Exile
 - 8 - The Messiah
 - 9 - The Church
 - 10 - The End
- It is important to have a general grasp of the Bible's Grand Storyline so you know what period of redemptive history the book of the Bible you are reading falls in.
- [The Bible Timeline Chart](#) gives you a good overview of the history of God's people to the present.
- If you want to understand the Bible, you have to grasp that it is one story, with one Author, and one main Subject. It is a cohesive, unified story where God is the protagonist, not us.

III. OBSERVATION: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

THREE PRINCIPLES FOR UNDERSTANDING GOD'S WORD

1. OBSERVATION - WHAT DOES IT SAY?
2. INTERPRETATION - WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
3. APPLICATION - WHAT DO I DO?

WHAT READING PLAN SHOULD I USE?

- Should you read through the Bible in a Year? Maybe.
- Pros: Familiarity with where things are in the Bible: people, places, events.
- Cons:
 - Challenging to understand the point of the book or the author's intent due to artificial breaks in the book.
 - Elevates verses or chapters over the whole book. Easy to take things out of context.
 - It's hard to do in-depth study.
 - Misplaced goal: BRP goal can subtly become *"I've got to get through this to check the box off!"*
 - Can be discouraging if you fall behind.
 - If you want to read through the Bible in a year, a suggestion would be the [Chronological Reading Plan](#).
- Suggested Bible Reading Plan: Seek to master one book of the Bible per month.
 - Shorter book: read it every day / Longer book: break it down into more manageable readings.
 - Alternate between an OT and NT book
 - Pros:
 - Dig deeper by studying where the book fits in the big picture.
 - Easier it is to remember what is happening in a single book.
 - Every time you read you pick up new details and themes.
 - By slowing down to dig deeper you have time to study, take notes, read commentaries and interpret and apply what you have read.

- If you read and studied one book of the Bible for a month, in five and half years you would have a solid grasp of God's Word.

PRINCIPLES FOR HOW TO READ GOD'S WORD

Read God's Word:

- **PRAYERFULLY:** Prayer is an important and essential component of Bible reading and study.
- The Bible is a spiritual book that can only be spiritually comprehended and that requires spiritual insight that can only come from the Spirit's illumination.
- 1 Cor 2:12 Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.
- All of your Scripture reading should be dependent on Holy Spirit illumination.
- Pray before, during, and after reading.
- Pray for clarity and insight as you read.
- Pray for desire to hear and do what He is saying through His Word.
- Pray that you will delight in His Word.
- EM Bounds wrote, "*We find, furthermore, the power of prayer to create a real love for the Scriptures, and to put within men a nature which will take pleasure in the Word.*"
- Ask God to change you through His Word.
- **THOUGHTFULLY:** Focus, concentrate, and eliminate distractions.
- God is speaking to you through His Word. Don't treat it casually.
- **IMAGINATIVELY:** Get in the text, picture what is taking place.
- Think about all of the sensory things involved, sights, smells, sounds, etc.
- Read out loud, this will help with retention.
- Use different Bible translations (ESV, CSB, NASB, NIV, NLT).
- Listen to audio reading of the book (Dwell / YouVersion).
- **MEDITATIVELY:** Think about what you read throughout the day.
- **PURPOSEFULLY:** As you read you are looking for clues that will aid you in interpreting Scripture.
- Use a notebook or an ESV Scripture Journal to take notes on what you observe.
- Develop a color coding system to highlight what you read in the Bible. It's ok to mark up your Bible.
- Here are things that you should be looking for and paying attention to.
- Key terms, phrases, people, places.
- What is the literary genre of the book (narrative, poetry, prophecy, etc.)
- Words and phrases that are repeated.
- The frequency of the appearance of certain characters in the book.
- Author's stated purpose/aim. Sometimes they just come out and state why they are writing (John 20:31)
- Themes or events that are emphasized.
- Grammar: verbs (action words), subject and object: subject is doing the verbal action and the object is the one receiving the verbal action.
- Look at the descriptive words, the modifiers, adjectives and adverbs, that enlarge the meaning of the words they are modifying.
- Connective words (conjunctions): 'but,' 'and,' 'or,' 'therefore,' 'so that,' 'because,' 'for.' These help us understand the flow of thought of the writer and how a passage is organized.
- Prepositional phrases: little words that tell you where the action is taking place, 'in,' 'on,' 'by,' 'through'.
- Things that are compared or contrasted (use of similes or metaphors).
- The goal of careful reading and observation is to know what the Bible says.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

- [ESV Study Bible](#)
- Online Resources: [BibleGateway.com](#) / [BiblyStudyTools.com](#)
- [Logos Bible Software](#)

Introduction to Biblical Theology Books

- [What is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism and Patterns](#) - James A. Hamilton Jr.
- [God's Big Picture: Tracing the Storyline of the Bible](#) - Vaughan Roberts

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?