

Reading Scripture

Sermon Text: Acts 8:26-40

Reading Scripture for understanding is a discipline that should lead to joyful faith and obedience to Jesus.

1) Read Scripture for understanding (8:30).

- a) "Do you understand what you are reading?"
- b) Beware of superstitious or prideful motivations.
- c) Reading Scripture is a call to love God with "all of your mind."
 - i) Deut. 6:6-9
 - ii) Deut. 17:18-20 Law of the King
 - iii) Psalm 1:2 "but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night"
 - iv) Dan. 9:2
- d) What did the original author intend the original readers/hearers to know and to do?
- e) What does the ultimate Author intend for me to know and to do? (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:6, 11)
- f) Some passages are more difficult than others.

2) Read Scripture with God-given guides (8:31).

- a) "How can I, unless **someone guides** me?"
- b) Beware of pride that refuses help and of false spiritualism in interpreting Scripture.
- c) God gave us teachers who give oral and written instruction.
 - i) Eph. 4:11—gifts from Christ
 - ii) 2 Pet. 1:12-15—some leave writings to survive them
 - iii) 2 Tim. 2:2—teachers are to train teachers who will train teachers and so on
- d) Pastors, Teachers, Commentators (Matthew Henry), Study Bibles (Reformation Study Bible, ESV Study Bible)

3) Read Scripture with investigative questions (8:34).

- a) "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?"
- b) Who?—By whom? To whom? About whom?
- c) What?—What happened? What was said?
- d) When?—When was this spoken? When did this happen? What happened before or after?
- e) Where?—Where was this spoken/done? Heaven? Earth? Israel? Judah? City? Village? Country? Gentile land? At sea?
- f) Why?—Why was this spoken/done? Why was it recorded by the author?
- g) How?—How did this happen? Human causation? Miracle? How does this fit into the larger context of this book and of the Bible?

4) Read Scripture in context (8:35).

- a) "Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus."
- b) Historical/Cultural Context
- c) Literary Context
 - i) Immediate
 - ii) Book
 - iii) Canonical
- d) Redemptive Historical Context
 - i) Where is this text on the timeline of Redemptive History?
 - (1) Covenant Administrations: Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, New Covenant

(2) Redemptive Events: Creation, Fall, Flood, Patriarchs, Exodus, Giving of the Law, Davidic Kingdom, Exile, Rebuilding of Temple/Jerusalem, Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Parousia of the Son of God, New Creation

(3) Promise/Fulfillment (partial or proleptic fulfillment)

e) Resources for Context:

i) Bible Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Handbooks

ii) Old and New Testament Introductions

iii) Basic Biblical Theologies:

(1) O. Palmer Robertson's *Christ of the Covenants*

(2) Graeme Goldsworthy's *According to Plan*

5) Read Scripture for the love of Christ (8:35-40).

a) “. . . he told him the good news about Jesus . . . and he baptized him. . . . And the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. . . . And Philip preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.”

b) Redemptive History is like a river, whose source is the promise of Christ, which empties into the ocean who is Christ Incarnate.

c) The various themes of Scripture are different currents all flowing to the ocean.

d) Wherever you are along the river you must trace the current all the way to the ocean.

e) Every text of Scripture is a part of this river. Figure out its key theme, and then follow that theme through Scripture until you arrive at Christ.

f) What do I learn of Christ? What does Christ require of me?

g) Worship the God Who has revealed Himself in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments!