

Teaching Your Kids About Bible Study (Pt.2)
Selected Scriptures
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INTRODUCTION

1. I want to begin tonight by reading an architect's view of the Bible:

The Bible is like a magnificent palace constructed of precious Oriental stone, comprising sixty-six stately chambers. Each one of these rooms is different from its fellows and is perfect in its individual beauty; yet, when viewed as a whole, they form an edifice-incomparable, majestic, glorious, and sublime. In the book of Genesis, we enter the vestibule, where we are immediately introduced to the records of the mighty works of God in creation. This vestibule gives access to the law courts, the passage way to the picture gallery of the historical books. Here we find hung on the walls scenes of battles, heroic deeds, and portraits of valiant men of God. Beyond the picture gallery we find the philosopher's chamber (the book of Job), passing through which we enter the music room (the book of Psalms). Here we linger, thrilled by the grandest harmonies that ever fell on human ears. And then we come to the business office (the book of Proverbs), in the very center of which stands the motto: "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (14:34). Leaving the business

office, we pass into the research department-Ecclesiastes. From there we proceed into the conservatory (the Song of Solomon), where the fragrant aroma of choicest fruits and flowers and the sweetest singing of birds greet us. Then, we reach the observatory where the prophets with their powerful telescopes are looking for the appearing of the Bright and Morning Star prior to the dawning of the Son of righteousness. Crossing the courtyard, we come to the audience chamber of the King (the gospels), where we find four lifelike portraits of the King Himself that reveal the perfections of His infinite beauty. Next, we enter the workroom of the Holy Spirit (the book of Acts) and, beyond, the correspondence room (the epistles), where we see Paul, Peter, James, John, and Jude busy at their tables under the personal direction of the Spirit of Truth. And finally, we enter the throne room (the book of Revelation), where we are enraptured by the mighty volume of adoration and praise addressed to the enthroned King, which fills the vast chamber; while, in the adjacent galleries and judgment hall, there are portrayed solemn scenes of doom and wondrous scenes of glory associated with the coming manifestation of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

2. Oh, the majesty of this Book, from creation to the culmination. How it behooves us to be diligent in our study!

3. But how do we go about it? How can we really understand the Bible?
4. In our last time together we talked about reading the Bible and how important it is to read it yourself and to teach it to your kids too.
5. There are many things we are to pass on to our kids. This is one of them.
6. ***You must teach your kids to read the Bible.***
7. I cannot stress this point enough.
8. You ask, “How should they read it?”
9. I gave 5 ways in which the Bible should be read:

I. You Must Teach Your Kids to Read the Bible

A. Prayerfully

Our reading should be done with the deepest reverence. No one can comprehend the teachings of the Bible in his own ability. He must have the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

That's why David prayed in Psalm 119:18 - "Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Thy law."

B. Undistractedly

David prayed in Psalm 119:10, "With all my heart I have sought Thee; Do not let me *wander* from Thy commandments."

C. Daily

1. Moses said in Deuteronomy 17:19 that the king whom God would one day set over Israel was to "*read it [the law] all the days of his life.*"

"All the days of his life" would imply a daily reading of it.

2. Paul set this same priority to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:13 when he said, "*Until I come, give attention* to the public reading of Scripture."

Giving attention "to the public reading of Scripture" implies that God's Word is to be read *daily*.

D. Repetitiously

In Nehemiah 8:3, Ezra “And he read from it [the law] before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law.”

We must read God’s Word regularly.

I suggested that you read the Old Testament at least once a year and the New Testament repetitiously.

What I mean by repetitiously is to take a book in the NT and read it over-and-over once a month. You can select one of your choice or read the one we’re studying. Break larger books into smaller sections and read each section for 30 days (eg. Revelation has 22 chapters - divide it up into 8, 7, 7).

You can find the plan for this kind of reading on our website. It covers the entire NT.

E. Carefully

“Don’t hurry as you read the passage. Take as much time as is necessary.”

Deuteronomy 17:19 says that a king was to “carefully [observe] all the words of this law and these statutes.”

II. You Must Teach Your Kids to Interpret the Bible

Once you have taught your child how to read the Bible, now you need to teach them how to interpret it.

“Observation is the first step. Read the Bible text over and over. As you observe what is being said in the Bible, take

notes.

Here are some questions to keep in mind: Who was the writer? To whom was he writing? To what location and from what location was he writing? What was the situation or occasion? When did it occur? What historical or cultural factors might have a bearing on understanding the passage?" (John MacArthur, *How to Get the Most from God's Word*, 164).

Hans Finzel says, "The process of observation can be divided into three steps of study, following in logical sequence. First, we look at the *whole*; divide that up into *parts*; and finally scrutinize the *details*."

"In interpretation you study the purpose of the passage, as well as the meaning of the details. Interpretation is the point at which you put yourself in the author's place and try to recapture his thoughts, emotions, and attitudes. Your ultimate task is to discover *why* the author wrote what he wrote. A good definition for interpretation is 'the science of discovering the original meaning intended by the author' (*Unlocking the Scriptures*, pp.35, 65).

To do this you must:

A. Understand the problems

"The Bible has been around for many years, parts of it for as long as four thousand years. Now how are we going to understand what there were saying and the various circumstances in which they lived?" (John MacArthur, *How to Study the Bible*, p.70).

We have to bridge the gaps!

1. The language (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek)

2. The history (mostly Jewish)
3. The culture (Jewish / Gentile)
4. The geography (The Middle East)

B. Be Familiar with the Principles

1. Always remember that context rules

“Context” means “that which goes with the text”

“When you interpret anything – a word, a verse, a teaching – it must always be considered in the light of the surrounding verses and chapters, the book in which it is found, and the entire Word of God” (Kay Arthur, How to Study Your Bible, p.60).

Richard Belcher in his book, Biblical Exegesis, says, “Familiarize [yourself] with the total passage itself, seeking to determine in a rough manner the main theme of the passage and the main divisions and subdivisions within the passage” (p.2).

- a) Remember “isolation breeds misinterpretation”
- b) Scripture is to be understood in its immediate context (eg. 2 Pet.2:20-22)

2. Always seek the full counsel of God

- a) Be like the Berean Christians (Acts 17:11)
- b) Check out what you’re studying or hearing being taught
- c) The daily reading and studying of Scripture will aid you in this

“Saturate yourself in the Word of God; it is your safeguard against wrong doctrine” (Kay Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, p.62).

- d) Don't forget to meditate on Scripture (Ps.1:2; 119:97-100, 148)

Thomas Manton said, “The end of study is information, and the end of meditation is practice, or a work upon the affections. Study is like a winter sun, that shines, but warms not: but meditation is like a blowing upon the fire, where we do not mind the blaze, but the heat. The end of study is to hoard up truth; but of meditation to lay it forth in conference or holy conversation.”

3. Remember that Scripture will never contradict Scripture

- a) Contradiction comes from poor study or interpretation

If you don't take the necessary time to discover the author's original intended meaning, the conclusion will be contradictions.”

- b) Scripture must be understood in the light of the whole of Scripture

This is what the Reformers called *Analogia Scriptura* – which means, the analogy of Scripture.

“One part of the Bible doesn't teach something that another part contradicts” (John MacArthur,

How to Study the Bible, p.74).

J. I. Packer said, “The Bible appears like a symphony orchestra, with the Holy Ghost as its Toscanini, each instrument has been brought willingly, spontaneously, creatively, to play his notes just as the great conductor desired, though none of them could ever hear the music as a whole...The point of each part only becomes fully clear when seen in relation to all the rest” (God Has Spoken).

- c) The best interpreter of Scripture is Scripture

The Old Testament explains the New. The New Testament explains the Old.

Richard Baxter said, “It is not the work of the Spirit to tell you the meaning of Scripture, and give you the knowledge of divinity, without your own study and labor, but to bless that study, and give you knowledge thereby...To reject study on the presence of the sufficiency of the Spirit, is to reject the Scripture itself.”

*****4. Do not base your doctrine on an obscure passage of Scripture

“An obscure passage is one in which the meaning is not easily understood” (Kay Arthur, How to Study Your Bible, p.62).

- a) Doctrine is based on clear repeated teachings of Scripture

For example: (Jesus is God, Salvation is by

Sovereign grace through supernatural faith in Jesus, Elders are godly men who lead the church, deacons are men and women to assist the elders in a support role by serving the needs of the congregation) – None of this is obscure in Scripture but taught repeatedly!

- b) Do not build your theology on obscure passages of Scripture
 - (1) The baptism for the dead (1 Cor.15:29)
 - (2) Tongues being a personal private prayer language (1 Cor.14:2)

5. Interpret Scripture Literally

- a) The Bible is not a book of mysticism

“God has spoken to us through His Word that we might know the truth. Therefore, take the Word of God at face value” (Kay Arthur, How to Study Your Bible, p.63).

- b) Scripture is to be understood in its natural normal sense

The rabbi’s used to say, “If you take the consonants of Abraham’s name, brhm, and add them up, you get 318. Therefore, when you see the word Abraham, it means he had 318 servants.”

6. Check your conclusions by using reliable commentaries (wait to do this last, after you have gone through the text yourself)

“As you consult these various commentaries, remember that no one person has a corner on all the truth. You may disagree with the writer on one thing and agree on another, but don’t discount all an author says just because you don’t see everything the same way. And don’t believe it just because a godly person who is a scholar has said, ‘This is what it means.’ Check out the interpretation according to the inductive principles you have been given” (Kay Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, p.64).

Here’s a list of some good commentaries:

- a) Commentaries on the Whole Bible:
 - (1) The Believer’s Bible Commentary by William MacDonald
 - (2) Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible
 - (3) The MacArthur Bible Commentary by John MacArthur
 - (4) KJB Commentary by Edward Hinson and Woodroll Kroll
 - (5) Commentary, Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible (1871) by Jamieson, Faussett, Brown
 - (6) The Bible Knowledge Commentary (2 Volume: Old and New Testament) by John Walvoord
- b) Commentaries on individual books of the Bible

- (1) The MacArthur New Testament Commentaries
- (2) Word Biblical Commentaries
- (3) The Expositor's Bible Commentary by Frank Gaebelin
- (4) Calvin's Commentaries by John Calvin
- (5) Everyman's Bible Commentary Series
- (6) The Pillar New Testament Commentary
- (7) Expositional Commentaries by James Montgomery Boice

C. Follow a Particular Procedure

1. Ask specific questions (who, what, where, when, why)

“The answers to who, what, where, when and why can be found by looking in these four places, in the order stated: content of the passage/book; context of the passage; comparison with other Scriptures; consultation with resource books” (Finzel, 69).

As you read you will have questions. Bible study is simply looking for the answers to those questions in light of their true meaning.

But Bible study is more than that. It's about knowing God and obeying His commandments.

2. Follow specific steps

When you interpret Scripture it is important to do your own work. There are certain study tools you can use, but don't resort to commentaries at this point. Dig in and determine what the passage means, as you go through the following steps:

- (1) Underline key words and phrases and define them in terms of the context-what the passage is saying. Underline only the most basic and important words at first, then use your Bible dictionary, concordance, and word study book to study meanings.
- (2) Paraphrase (put into your own words) each verse or section of the passage. If this grows laborious, try putting the basic thought conveyed in a passage or paragraph into one sentence. This may seem like a lot of work (and for some people it is), but it forces you to think over the meaning of the passage and put it into your own words, a process that is extremely beneficial.
- (3) List the divine truths and principles in the verse, paragraph, or passage. Ask the following questions: (i) Is there a command God has given? (ii) Is there an example to follow? (iii) Is there some sin I should avoid? (iv) Is there a warning against false teaching of any kind? (v) Is there a basic doctrinal truth about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, Satan, or man? (vi) Is there a promise from God to Christian believers, Israel, the church, or unbelievers? (Note the conditions of the promise, as for example in Matthew 6:33.)

- (4) Cross reference as many truths, or principles, as possible. Do you find these same truths taught in other parts of Scripture? Use your concordance, or other Bible study tools, to discover these truths. List at least one or two truths, but don't get bogged down with trying to list six or eight.
- (5) After you have observed and interpreted the passage on your own, now you must evaluate what you have discovered.

Here is where you stop to check what commentators and other scholars have said about the passage.

You have already covered this to some extent in doing your observation and interpretation, but go back again to see what divine truths or principles are emphasized by the Bible commentaries and the study Bibles in your library. You may modify your own understandings or conclusions, but don't always think you have to agree with every commentator. Make them prove themselves. As somebody once said, "The Bible is a good commentary on the commentaries."

(Taken from John MacArthur's *How to Get the Most from God's Word*, 165-66).

III. You Must Teach Your Kids to Apply the Bible

(This answers the question, "How does it apply to my life?")

A. Application Always Follows Interpretation

J. Robertson McQuilkin said, “The goal of all Bible study is to apply the truth of Scripture to life. If that application is not made, all the work put into making sure of the author’s intended meaning will have gone for naught. In fact, to know and not do, doubles the offense of disobedience” (Understanding and Applying the Bible, p.255).

1. Ps.119:34 - “Give me understanding and I shall keep your law; indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart.”
2. James 1:22

B. Application Must be Kept Simple, Practical, and Personal

1. Ask the right questions

“How does this relate to my life?”

- a) Is there a principle to apply?
- b) Is there a command to obey?
- c) Is there an attitude to adjust?
- d) Is there a sin to repent of?

2. Principlize what you learn

Take the Scripture you are studying and write a brief sentence of what it is teaching.

3. Model before others what you learn

Phil.4:9 - “The things which you have learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.” (NKJV)

4. Teach what you learn to others

2 Tim.2:1-2 - “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” (NKJV)

CONCLUSION

1. Before you can teach this to your children, you need to teach this to yourself. Take it one at a time—don’t let the details distract or discourage you.
2. Keep it as simple as possible—speak to your kids on their level. Ask you kids, “What did you read?” “Did you understand it?” “What did you not understand?”
3. Since this is something you will be teaching your kids until they leave the home and venture out on their own, expose them to teachers and books that will help them understand the Bible.
4. Listen to good preaching with them. We’re currently listening to a series by RC Sproul.
5. I hope these things we’re sharing with you in this series is helpful. I can’t think of anything more important to teach our kids.
6. They need to understand the gospel to be saved.
7. They need to understand that God is One and a Triunity and that He is to be loved with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.
8. They need to meditate on His Word daily and they need to ready,

study, and live it daily.

9. Again, parents, this all starts with you because you are the authority in their lives as well as the example.
10. If you're here tonight and have never surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, I want to encourage you to do so right now as we pray.
11. The greatest gift you can give your children is a born again mom and dad!
12. Let's pray.