

# Discover 101

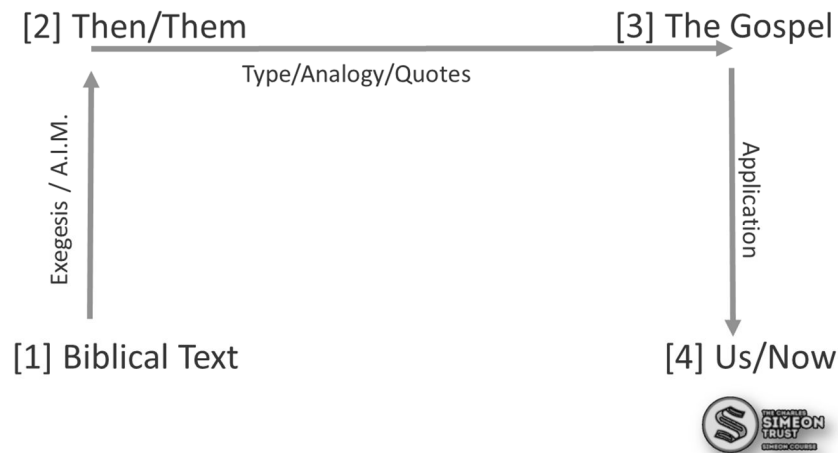
## Seeking to Handle the Word from God Correctly

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### Why Study the Bible?

1. Because it is a revelation of God (John 5:39).
2. Because it is a revelation from God (2 Tim. 3:15).
3. Because it is an absolute explainer of this life and the life to come.

### The Overview:



### Step One – The Biblical Text

1. We always begin with a mindset of complete dependency on the Holy Spirit to open blind eyes and to teach us His truth (Ps. 119:5, 12, 18; 1 Cor. 2:7-16; Eph. 1:15-20; 1 John 2:20, 27).
2. Now, use an ESV Bible. This puts everyone on the same page. Any translation could do, but this is easier.
3. Pick a smaller book or letter.

### Step Two – Them/Then

#### • Structure

1. Take a piece of Paper and make columns for each of the chapters for the Letter.
2. Based on the paragraph divisions within the chapter list the verse divisions.
3. Read the paragraph and write the emphasis of the paragraph in as few words as possible. Your starting point are the divisions within the ESV Bible. This, however, could change based on your findings. Sometimes you might summarize each verse when the larger thought is not immediately apparent. As you connect the verses, the larger thought becomes apparent.

4. As you read through the various paragraphs make sure you tie each one to what precedes and what follows. There should be consistency between paragraphs. Always be summarizing the point of each paragraph and chapter. This will help you summarize the intent of the book or Letter. Sometimes you might get stuck. If necessary, look at a Study Bible, but initially use sparingly and carefully.

- **Understanding the Melodic Line**

1. Every paragraph and chapter will be controlled by the overall intent of the book or letter.
2. As you look at a paragraph begin noting the grammar of the paragraph such as “therefore”, “so that”, “for”, “but”, etc. Also note the repeating of words and some “bigger” words that can carry a lot of historical or theological “weight.” For example, usage of words like gospel, righteousness, redemption, etc.
3. Based on your initial observation, what is the structure or flow of the paragraph or chapter?
4. As you see the movement within the chapter and then the chapters, you will be able to summarize the intent of the book or letter. There should be a flow or continuity within the book. No book is a random and unintended compilation of disconnected thought [except Proverbs, ha!]
5. At this point, you should be able to visually chart out your book or letter.

- **Context, Context, Context**

1. What is the historical context of your book or letter (circumstances and culture of the audience)?
2. What is the literary context and style of your book or letter (the passages on either side)?
3. What is the biblical context of your book or letter (connections to other places in the Bible)?

- **Emphasis**

1. In light of the structure, melodic line, and context, write a short statement stating the author’s main idea (AIM) for his original audience.

## Step Three – The Gospel

1. When you begin noting how the passage is used elsewhere in the New Testament, you will filter what it meant to them/ then through the lens of Jesus.
2. If this is an Old Testament passage, is it used in the New Testament? If so, how?
3. If this is a New Testament passage, what part of the gospel is highlighted?
4. What parts of this passage **connect to the gospel** of Jesus Christ? What particular facet of the gospel is in view? Remember, the Gospel is more than the Death/Burial/Resurrection.

## Step Four – Us/Now (Application)

1. From Jesus, you will begin making application to us | now. Application is always the child of the parental text. Application is controlled by the meaning of the passage. Application is always limited.
2. In light of your gospel connection, what **argument** [one short sentence] will you make to **your audience**?
  - a) What argument/application will you make to the believing?
  - b) What argument/application will you make to the unbelieving?

## Using Outside Resources

The above pattern is helpful on a personal level, but all Bible study should be done in the context of a local church community. As much as we prize individualism, the Biblical pattern is always community based as it relates to Word and Prayer. Thus, always seek to do study in community even after you have done it personally. Now, . . .

**AFTER** you have done your own work, you can begin looking at what others have said. The best place to start is with the footnotes in a solid study bible. I would shy away from commentaries, dictionaries, online studies, etc. Always begin small and then go bigger. I would highly recommend the following Study Bibles. They are theologically neutral in their reading of certain passages.

- The ESV Study Bible
- The NIV Study Bible
- The Gospel Transformation Bible
- The NET Bible – Very good, but technical

The Following Study Bibles have a theological framework imposed on their interpretation of the Bible and I would use with caution on select passages. As a rule, any study Bible with one primary author will carry their presuppositions into their interpretation of certain passages.

- The Ryrie Study Bible
- The John MacArthur Study Bible
- The David Jeremiah Study Bible
- The Reformation Study Bible [Has a reformed theological framework]
- Etc.

I would work to shy away from Bibles that impose a theological framework on it. I am more than happy to talk with you through this.