

Basic Training in the Bible

Andrew Stepp | Session 1: Introduction

“Bible Reading Destroys the Church” by Paul Penley (*Google this article! It’s a 2 part series*)
Would Jesus promote personal Bible reading?

Why can Scripture be so difficult to understand?

- The Nature of the Reader

- The Nature of Scripture

Why does this class exist?

- We need training, and we need the community. Those are powerful tools in the hands of the HOLY SPIRIT!
- This is a training ground.
- This is an invitation to dig into God’s Word.
- This is an opportunity to build a framework that can help us to mine familiar texts for the deeper treasures and equip us to wade through the deeper, more challenging texts.

What should you expect?

- An overview of each book, tips on what to look for, & a reading plan for the week.
- Opportunities for you to give me feedback
- Opportunities for you to shape the curriculum.
- Community – “This is NOT a discussion class... but it doesn’t mean we can’t be friends.”

What do I expect from you?

- Do your best to be present! → Either physically or electronically
- Read your Bible!
- Interact with the text → Mark it up!
- Share with me what you’re learning – what’s surprising, frustrating, comforting, exhilarating, confusing or all of the above!
- Consider joining a small group

What is my hope for this class?

- For you to grow! ...And for me to grow!
- To KNOW Scripture – Jesus knew Scripture, obviously... but his audience and Paul’s audience and Peter’s audience KNEW Scripture. The more you know Scripture the more alive it becomes!
- For the Holy Spirit to shape our hearts as we spend time in his Word.
- Ultimately To grow in our Christ-likeness

Four Key Resources:

- *How to Read the Bible Book by Book* by Fee and Stuart
- *Eerdmans' Handbook to the Bible*
- *How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth* by Fee and Stuart
- *The Bible Speaks Today* commentary series

Principles for Interpreting Narratives

- 1) An Old Testament narrative usually does not directly teach a doctrine.
- 2) An Old Testament narrative usually illustrates a doctrine or doctrines taught elsewhere.
- 3) Narratives record what happened – not necessarily what should have happened or what ought to happen every time. Therefore, not every narrative has an individual identifiable moral application.
- 4) What people do in narratives is not necessarily a good example for us. Frequently, it is just the opposite.
- 5) Most of the characters in the OT narratives are far from perfect – as are their actions as well.
- 6) We are not always told at the end of a narrative whether what happened was good or bad. We are expected to be able to judge this on the basis of what God has taught us directly and categorically elsewhere in Scripture.
- 7) All narratives are selective and incomplete. Not all the relevant details are always given. (e.g., John 21:25) what does appear in the narrative is everything the inspired author thought important for us to know.
- 8) Narratives are not written to answer all our theological questions. They have particular, specific, limited purposes and deal with certain issues, leaving others to be dealt with elsewhere in other ways.
- 9) Narratives may teach either explicitly (by clearly stating something) or implicitly (by clearly implying something without actually stating it).
- 10) In the final analysis, God is the hero of all biblical narratives.

This Week's Readings:

Option 1: Read Genesis 1-26 → 5 Days x 5 chapter (+1)

Option 2: Five Shorter Readings:

Genesis 1-4:16 – Creation and Fall

Chapters 6-9, 11 – The Flood and the Tower of Babel

Ch. 12:1-9; Ch. 15 & 17 – God's Covenant with Abraham

21:1-7; 22:1-19 – Isaac is born (...and almost sacrificed!)

Ch. 24 – Isaac and Rebekah