

# Living by His Book – *How to Understand, Interpret, and Apply the Bible*

Equipping Class Spring 2009  
Stonebriar Community Church

## Session 3: Observation – What Do I See?

### DEBRIEFING COLOSSIANS 1:3-8

Reading the passage in different translations

What did you see? What are some of the key terms? Are there commands? What did the gospel produce? What is a good summary title?

### HOW DOES ONE READ THE BIBLE?

- **Thoughtfully** – In what area of your life do you really engage your thoughts?
- **Repeatedly** – one sitting, different translations, out loud, schedule
- **Patiently** – be patient with your self and with the text
- **Prayerfully** – Before, during, after, and through a passage
- **Imaginatively** – differently translations and paraphrases; what if your were there?
- **Meditatively** – reflect, think, process, noodle, pause, chew on, simmer
- **Acquisitively** – read not just to receive, but to retain; possess, not just process
- **Telescopically** – putting the parts back together into a meaningful and powerful whole

### LITERARY FORM AND GENRE

#### Narrative – a story

- elements of a story: narrator; setting; chronology (time), characters, plot
- structure is conveyed through plot
- characters undergo psychological and spiritual development
- meaning is found as a whole rather than in isolated segments
- contains both history and theology
- selected events used to convey meaning
- events juxtaposed for contrast and comparison

*examples: OT historical books, Gospels, Acts*

*What are the elements of a story that you can see in the gospel of Mark?*

## Poetry

- intended to be spoken or sung, rather than read
- the key mark is Hebrew parallelism, not English meter and/rhyming

Synonymous parallelism	When a similar second line repeats the first line with little or no added meaning (e.g. Psalm 2:1-3)
Antithetic parallelism	When the second line restates the idea of the first by asserting the opposite. Instead of building upon an idea, it is contrasted to the first (e.g. Proverbs 1:7)
Synthetic parallelism	When the second line adds to or develops the thought of the first line (e.g. Psalm 1:3)

- vivid images, symbols and figurative language
  - appeals to the emotions (e.g. Psalm 13)
- examples: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon*

## Epistle/Exposition

- carefully reasoned argument or explanation
- a typical 1<sup>st</sup> century letter (edicts, proclamations, military correspondence, scholarly & business letters, and personal letter)
- form: opening & introduction, the body, and conclusion
- well-organized and logical flow
- builds to a logical, compelling climax intended for agreement and action

*examples: Paul's letters, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude*

*How do you see some of the elements in Colossians 1:3-8*

## Parable

- brief oral story illustrating moral
- the truth and message frequently relies on stock characters and stereotypes
- presents scenes and activities common to everyday life
- encourages reflection and self-evaluation
- we approach a parable with Luke 8:10 in mind
- there is a comparison with a real life situation through the form of a story
- there is typically one main goal, truth, or message from the parable

*examples: 2 Sam. 12:1-6, Eccl. 9:14-16, Matt. 13:1-53*

*What's the point in Nathan's parable?*

## **Prophecy**

- strident, authoritative presentation of God's will and words
- frequently intended as corrective
- intended to motivate change through warnings
- the prophet is a forth-teller first, then a fore-teller
- receiving and communicating God's special revelation
- the prophet was more of a reformer rather than an innovator, calling people back to God
- foretells God's plans in response to human choices
- often uses symbolism, imagery, and figurative language

*examples: Isaiah – Malachi*

*What elements of prophecy do you see in Isaiah 1?*

## **NEXT WEEK...**

Special lecture on the reliability of the Bible by Pastor Les Fleetwood

Now it is your turn...make observations on Colossians 1