

GRASPING GOD'S WORD

How to Read the
Book: Sentences

- Hebrews 5:11-14 - About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

SERIOUS BIBLE STUDY

- God wants to have deeper and more mature conversations with you, but if you are tied to superficial and surface readings of the Bible or if you always assume that you have already seen and understood all there is, then your relationship with God will tend to stay at the same level.
- One of the most critical skills needed in reading the Bible is the ability to see the details. Most of us read the Bible too quickly, and we skip over the details of the text. However, the meaning of the Bible is intertwined with the details of every sentence.

SERIOUS BIBLE STUDY

- Before we can ask, “what does this text mean?” we have to ask, “what does this text say?”
- Reading and interpreting is a combination of analyzing small pieces of text and big pieces of text. We have to understand the small parts of the text (words, phrases, sentences) to understand the larger chunks (paragraphs, chapters, stories).

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

1) Repetition of Words

- Look for words that repeat. First, be sure to note any words that repeat within the sentence you are studying. Then survey the sentences around the text you are reading and look for repetition in the larger passage.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

1) Repetition of Words

- 1 John 2:15–17: Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

1) Repetition of Words

- 1 Corinthians 15:50-54: Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

2) Contrast

- Look for items, ideas, or individuals that are contrasted with each other.

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2) Contrast

- Proverbs 14:31: Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.
- 1 John 1:5–7: This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

3) Comparisons

- Contrast focuses on differences. Comparison focuses on similarities. Look for items, ideas, or individuals that are compared with each other.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

3) Comparisons

- Proverbs 25:26: Like a muddied spring or a polluted well are the righteous who give way to the wicked.

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3) Comparisons

- James 3:3-6 - When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

4) Lists

- Anytime you encounter more than two itemized things, you can identify them as a list. Write the list down and explore its significance. Is there any order? Are the items grouped in any way?

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

4) Lists

- Galatians 5:22–23: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control...

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

5) Cause and Effect

- Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

5) Cause and Effect

- John 3:16: For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

6) Figures of Speech

- Figures of speech are images in which words are used in a sense other than the normal, literal sense.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

6) Figures of Speech

- Psalm 119:105: Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.
- Matthew 23:27: Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

7) Conjunctions

- Hebrews 12:1: Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

7) Conjunctions

- 2 Timothy 1:7-8: For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

8) Verbs

- Ephesians 4:2-3: Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

8) Verbs

- Colossians 3:1: Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN SENTENCES

9) Pronouns

- Ephesians 1:3: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.