

Studying a Single Book

How to Study the Bible
Tom Mullenix

I. Read through several times to become familiar with the book.

II. Begin to note:

- Subjects repeated.
- Words repeated
- Underlying topics of concern
- Look for definite purpose statements.
 - John 20:31
 - Luke 1:1-4
 - 1 John "I write this to you"

III. Determine the theme (Practice: Galatians)

Galatians
1:6, 7
2:15, 16
3:1-5
4:8-11
5:1-6
6:12-16

IV. Listen; as if listening to one side of a telephone conversation. REAL PEOPLE, REAL PROBLEMS (Practice: 1 Corinthians)

1 Corinthians
1:10, 11
1:25
2:5
3:1-3
3:18-20
4:14
5:1
6:1-5
7:1
8:1
10:1
11:17
12:1
15:1
16:1

V. Outline the book (Practice: 1 Peter)

VI. Get Background information.

Now you can go to a commentary, Bible Dictionary, minister, etc.

VII. For a specific passage: Answer these questions:

- What does it say?
- What does it mean?
- What does it mean to me?

Extra for Website:

Read through:

There is no hard and fast rule about reading through a book first, but it is valuable so that you can see the Big Picture. Better in the beginning to tackle smaller subjects, like a New Testament letter, a minor prophet or a Psalm.

My preference is that you read through a book at least three times before you move on to the next steps.

Theme concepts

As you read through, begin to look for phrases or topics that seem to be repeated. Look for how the subjects interrelate and if there is something overarching that seems to pull them together.

We are looking for the basic reason that the author penned this text.

Listen

We do this rather naturally. We listen to a telephone conversation (one side) and begin to piece together the whole conversation. When my wife says, “We’re not interested,” and hangs up, I know it is a telemarketer. The people who received the original communication we now have in the Bible were real people with real life problems. The letters were real life, spiritual answers to their problems. By listening to the “other side” we begin to open our minds for better understanding, application. This makes the Bible very ‘real’ for me.

Outline

1 Peter

Addressee & Author 1:1, 2

Our Salvation 1:3-12

Our Response 1:13-2:3

Our Identity 2:4-12

Submit 2:13-3:12

Positive Suffering 3:13—book’s close

1 Corinthians points...

➤ **Don’t marry**

That’s what 1 Corinthians 7:1 says, doesn’t it? Read it in context. Compare it to other statements in the Bible. Consider its context within the entire book of 1 Corinthians.

➤ **Smoking?**

1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 says we are the temple of God, and if we destroy that temple, God will destroy us. Check the context, is it talking about the human body? Look at the greater context of the book [check 1:10, 11]. Compare to Ephesians 2:19-22. The passage is really talking about the church. Destroying the church by taking sides does not please God. *Addictions are covered in 1 Corinthians 6:12.*