

Understand and Study the Bible
Session 5: Understand & Study Bible Narratives

- Bible narratives/stories have sections and a typical life cycle:
 - Setting & Characters –
 - Scenes –
 - Rising tension –
 - Climax –
 - Resolution –
 - Following Action or Teaching –
- How does this change our process of Reading Carefully in Context?
 1. Pray for God to speak to you through the passage, for His help in understanding, for Him to guard you from careless reading.
 2. Read the whole passage through from beginning to end.
 3. ***Isolate the entire story – never work with only part of the story.***
 4. Read the entire chapter(s) containing the passage, plus one before and one after.
 5. Re-read the passage slowly, going verse by verse and sentence by sentence.
 6. Re-read it at least 1 or 2 more times (consider reading different translations).
 7. Think about how the passage fits into its immediate biblical context, then move outward.
 8. Think through the “5 W’s” (Who, What, When, Where, Why).
 9. Look for and understand the purpose of connecting words like therefore, if/then, in order that, in the same way, for, and, but, ...
 10. Think about any words that are repeated – is there special significance?
 11. ***Identify the narrative elements – setting & characters, scenes, rising tension, climax, resolution, following action/teaching***
 12. Determine the author’s main point – if it’s in the passage, highlight it or underline it. If it isn’t, write it in your own words.
 13. Create your own paraphrase of the entire passage.
- Tips for Finding the Point of a Story
 - If it’s a Jesus story, He’ll usually make the point and it will probably be the last thing He says or does
 - Otherwise, look for a decisive comment by the narrator or trusted figure in the Resolution or Following Action/Teaching sections
 - Otherwise, look at the repeated words/phrases – it’s probably related to them
 - Otherwise, who/what got the bulk of the space in the story – it’s usually there
 - Otherwise, what happened last – that’s probably the point

Notes from Analyzing Passages