

MODULE 7: SESSION 8

APPLIED THEOLOGY

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

Principles of Application

ADDENDUM: The following notes were accidentally left off the previous lesson:

1. Final Thoughts on Synthesizing Your Study
 - a. Read back through the study you have done and (if you have a hard copy) mark or highlight the parts that really grab your attention. Highlight the parts that are really the keys to understanding the text. Highlight the newest things you learned or the freshest angles you discovered.
 - b. At this point, you are now beginning to think in terms of how you would organize this information for presentation.
 - c. SNEAK PEEK:
 - i. Already done one technical term: *exegetical proposition* – a synthesis statement about your text – IE: Eph 4:31-32 -- *What is inside matters to God and determines our actions.*
 1. This is the boiled-down summary of the interpretation of the text.
 - ii. *Homiletical Proposition* --relating to "homiletics" (presentation) – this is your ANGLE – examples:
 1. A Nine-Part Summary of a Sanctified Life
 2. Taking Inventory of Your Walk with Christ
 3. Inner Attitudes and Outer Behaviors
 4. How to Be a Better Betty not a Bitter Betty

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1. Introduction:
 - a. Our town their town slide review
 - b. The pendulum tendency in Bible teaching: giving too little attention to application in favor of pure knowledge or giving too much attention to application without explaining the text
 - i. The first leads to a heady, cold faith
 - ii. The second leads to poor and faulty interpretation and misuse of Scripture

- c. Theme verse for the Bible student and teacher: James 1:22 (ESV) – 22
But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.
- d. Challenges of Bible Application
 - i. Bridging the historical gap between the time of the Bible and present day – how do the words of Scripture impact my life today?
 - ii. Not taking a Scripture out of context to make the application you want
 - iii. Jumping too quickly to application
 - iv. Being able to recognize times when implication is more appropriate than application – IE: Teaching on the deity of Christ – the IMPLICATION is clear: BELIEVE THIS!!
(implications are wide and varied and don't have to be spelled out by the speaker)
- 2. Principles of Application:
 - a. An application cannot violate the proper grammatical-historical interpretation of the given text
 - i. Examples of BAD applications:
 - 1. Rom 13:8 – “Owe no one anything” – APPLICATION: Debt is a sin.
 - a. CONTEXT is making sure we pay proper respect to governing authorities
 - 2. The widow's two small copper coins – (Mark 12:42) – give generously even if it hurts
 - a. CONTEXT – the widow has been fooled by religious leaders into giving all she had to live on – Jesus doesn't commend this as a pattern of giving – he is condemning those who take advantage of the poor by getting them to contribute money in a works-based salvation system.
 - b. Find the elements present-day readers share with the original audience
 - c. Understand the Covenants and differences
 - i. Don't use an OT Law to make a rule for a New Covenant Christian
 - ii. HOWEVER, the OT laws carry principles which are reaffirmed in the NT
 - d. Determine what is Normative for Today
 - i. IE: Book of Acts is filled with wonderful principles – ALSO filled with things that have never happened since (tongues of

- fire, believers dropping dead when an apostle condemns them, etc)
- ii. IE: A Nazarite in the OT was not to cut his hair as a sign of dedication to the Lord. This is not valid today because the entire Law of Moses has expired.
- e. Look for the Principle Naturally Occurring in the Text
 - i. IE: Ruth is an example of patience in suffering, a servant's heart, and genuine salvation experience
 - f. The Naturally Occurring Principle is a Bridge to Application Today
 - i. How can I be patient in suffering? How can I have a servant's heart? What does genuine salvation look like? ("Your people my people and your God my God" – complete turning away from old life – repentance)
 - g. Honestly Allow the Text to Impact You Personally
 - i. Your best application may come from what the Lord did in your own heart in the study of your passage
 - h. Pray about application – let the Holy Spirit be your guide through the medium of good study and meditation on the passage
 - i. Test your application
 - i. Do your principles line up with established Scriptural principles?
 - ii. Is your application given elsewhere in Scripture?
 - iii. Does someone in Scripture live out your application as an example?
 - j. Howard Hendricks' Nine Questions to Ask:
 - i. Is there an example for me to follow?
 - ii. Is there a sin to avoid?
 - iii. Is there a promise to claim?
 - iv. Is there a prayer to repeat?
 - v. Is there a command to obey?
 - vi. Is there a condition to meet?
 - vii. Is there a verse to memorize?
 - viii. Is there an error to mark?
 - ix. Is there a challenge to face?¹
 - k. Applications should be based in reality not an esoteric theory
 - i. EXAMPLE:
 - 1. Ineffective application – consider the life of Christ

¹ Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 342.

2. Effective application – Next time you have the opportunity, be as compassionate with a difficult person as Jesus was with the 5,000 that he fed miraculously
 - l. Applications should answer the question: What do I do with this?
 - m. BUT: Note that application may be directly to the heart and the HS will do different things with different people (that is the norm for accurate Bible teaching)
 - n. Expect to change lives with your teaching and teach toward this end – don't just give information
 - o. Expect that your study should change YOUR life – you should be applying it to YOURSELF
3. Examples of Application
 - a. Ephesians 4:31-32 (ESV) – 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.
 - b. Application 1: Bitterness has been common to mankind since Cain was bitter with Abel. It is a sign of believing someone is less worthy of God's grace that you are. A return to the gospel and an honest evaluation of why you believe you have the right to maintain bitterness will let the air out of this sin.
 - c. Application 2: There is no wiggle room in these verses. We are commanded to forgive one another and no conditions are given here. This is not optional.
 - d. Application 3: The key to forgiving another is to examine how Christ forgave you. You were forgiven completely, permanently and with no future condemnation or mention of your sin (Rom 8:1).
4. SNEAK Preview:
 - a. Imperative Structure (outline which is pure application)
 - b. EXEGETICAL STRUCTURE: (Eph 4:31-32)
 - i. Six Signs of Disobedience
 - ii. Three Signs of Obedience
 - c. IMPERATIVE STRUCTURE:
 - i. Stop Sinning in Your Heart and with Your Mouth
 - ii. Start Honoring Christ in your Heart and with Your Mouth