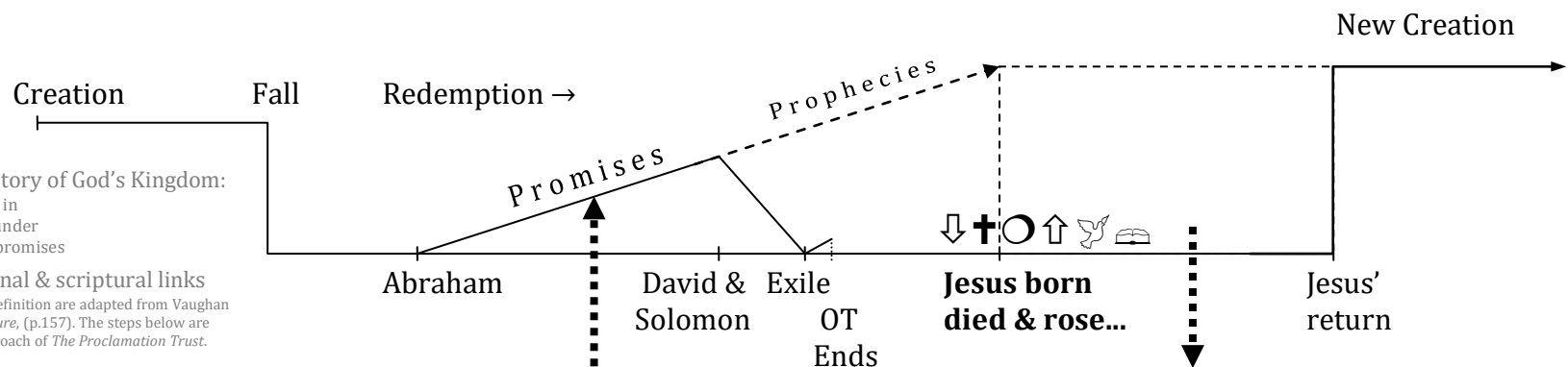
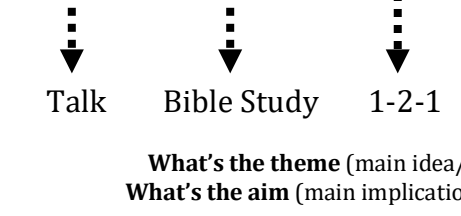
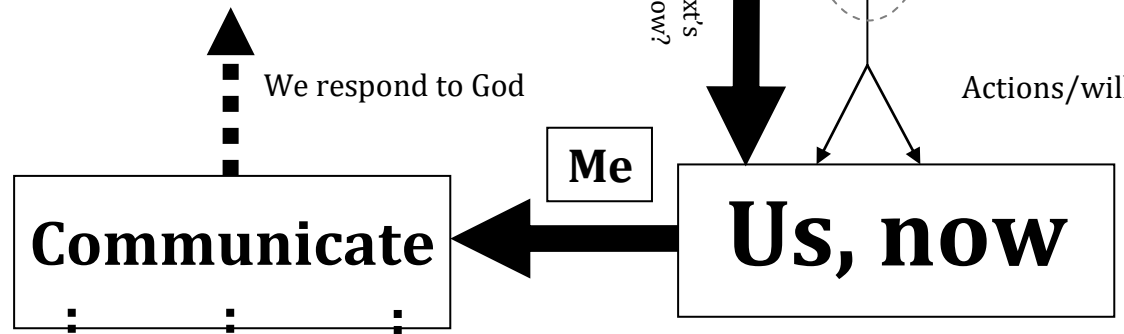
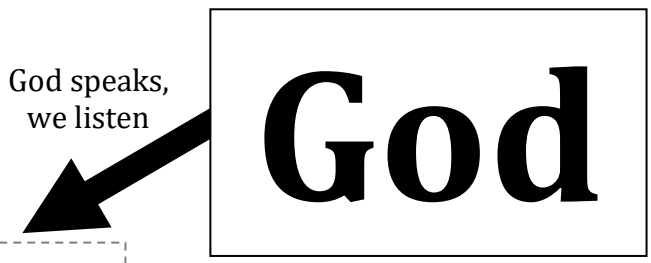
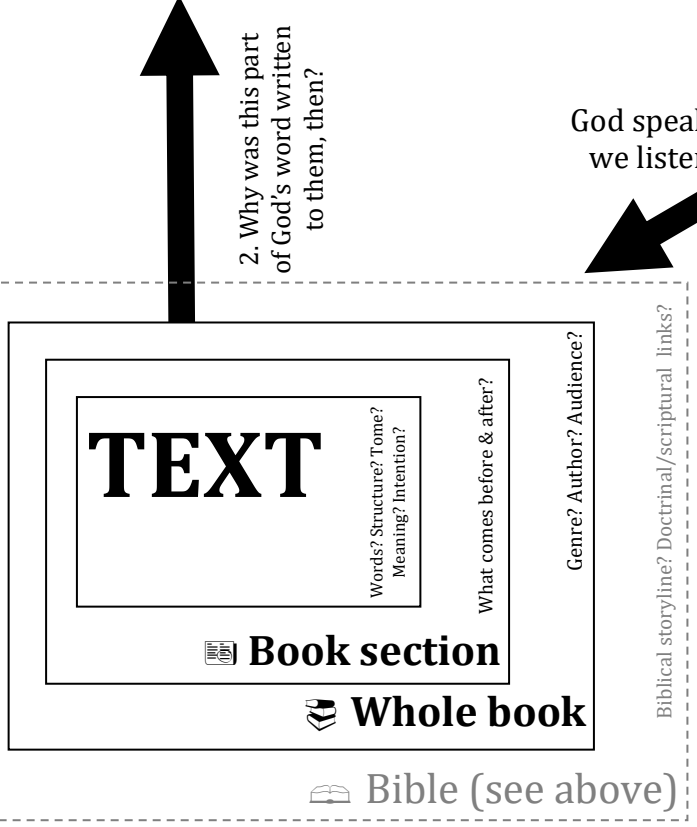
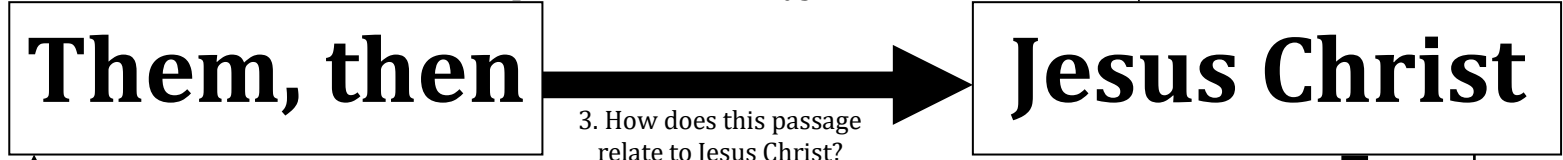


1. Personal & prayerful...

...relationships with Jesus



- 1. Follow the story of God's Kingdom:
 - a. God's people in
 - b. God's place under
 - c. God and his promises
 - 2. Draw doctrinal & scriptural links
- The graphic (right) and definition are adapted from Vaughan Roberts, *God's Big Picture*, (p.157). The steps below are adapted from the approach of *The Proclamation Trust*.




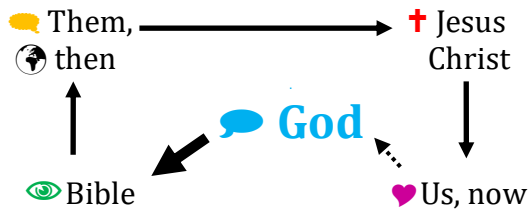
Ps 119:18,
Ps 19:14

John 8:31, 15:7
Eph 4:15

Bible Reading Questions

Jesus Christ said: “the Scriptures ... bear witness about **me**” (John 5:39, ESV)

 **Pray** for God’s help (Psalm 119:18; Psalm 19:14) then **ponder** God’s word (Psalm 1:2; 2 Timothy 2:7)



These questions will help lead you through these steps:

OBSERVATION: what does God’s Word say?

- Think about the passage’s words; structure; genre; big ideas; ask what it says about God & people

SITUATION: why was this passage written?

- Think about how the passage fits into its book; (and if we know) who first read and wrote it & why

INTERPRETATION: so, what did this passage mean to its first hearers or readers (them, then)?

- It helps to try to keep summarising (1) the main idea/s and (2) the main implication/s of the text

How does this passage relate to JESUS CHRIST?

- Ask how its themes, truths, & book relate to the Bible and its storyline about King Jesus and His kingdom

So what are this text’s IMPLICATIONS for us, now?

- Think about how this brings me/us to (Mark 1:15)
 - ...repent (turn from sin and its lies)
 - ...believe (trust Jesus and His truth)
- And how does that change my/our (2 Tim 3:14-17)
 - ...attitudes (mind)
 - ...affections (heart)
 - ...actions (will)

COMMUNICATION: how can I pray in response?

- You might like to note down what struck you
- Based on what God’s word says we could pray:
 - **A**doring God for who He is
 - **C**onfessing sin & asking God’s forgiveness
 - **T**hanking God for what He’s done & does
 - **S**upplicating or making requests to God
- Talk to others with questions or encouragements.

Practical Tips: Writing a Bible Study





Writing a Bible study rightly begins with our **prayerful, personal relationship with Jesus**. That’s the end goal of our Bible studies too! We write them so that, by hearing God’s word, others grow in their relationships with Christ.

The steps on the graphic overleaf (simplified to the left) are tools we can use to help us, as we depend on God’s Spirit, to understand God’s word. The questions (listed to the left) will help us **walk through the steps**.

Hopefully having moved through these, we will be able to **write a couple of summary sentences**. The first should summarise the *main idea/s* and the second the *main implication/s* of the passage. They will remind us, as we write the study, what we’re praying members will understand by the end of it.

Once we’ve walked through the kind of steps to the left it’s time to to **write the questions**. It’s good to have a variety of question types to help those answering follow the kind of steps we have – but at a higher speed!

Major types of questions include:

-  **Icebreaker**: get people thinking about the passage theme
-  **Observation**: look at what the passage says
-  **Interpretation**: think about what the passage means
-  **Implication**: think about how it applies to my/our lives

Imagine we were aiming for a study of 6-9 questions. I might split the passage in half (wherever is natural) then ask one of each of the three above types of question on each half. That’s only a suggestion, but I hope it’s a starting point.

Additional Resources

It can help to have done our own work before heading to commentaries. There are many fine resources available to use. Of course, there are many that aren’t, so as always, be biblically discerning (see Acts 17:11).

- **On Bible reading**: Andrew Sach and Nigel Beynon, *Dig Deeper: Tools to unearth the Bible’s treasure*, (IVP, 2005)
- **On the Bible’s storyline**: Vaughan Roberts, *God’s Big Picture: Tracing the story-line of the Bible*, (IVP, 2003)
- **On the Bible’s doctrines**: Bruce Milne, *Know the Truth: A Handbook of Christian Belief*, (IVP, 1998)

- **On running small groups**: Orlando Saer, *Iron Sharpens Iron: leading Bible-Oriented Small Groups that Thrive*, (Christian Focus, 2010)
- **One volume wonders**:
 - *ESV Study Bible* (Crossway, 2008)
 - *NIV Proclamation Bible* (Hodder & Stoughton, 2013)
- **Going deeper**
 - Various, *New Bible Commentary*, (IVP, 1994)
 - Various, *New Bible Dictionary*, (IVP, 1996)

Small Group Potted Proverbs

This list is largely indebted to Richard Coekin’s, *Understanding and Teaching the Bible* seminar delivered at New Word Alive 2008 and Tim Thornborough writing on *The Good Book Company* blog in 2008. There are more in Orlando Saer’s book *Iron Sharpens Iron...*

- **Sit to be Seen**: visibility aids involvement
 - **Aversion to Versions**: the same translation can help
 - **Ready to Read**: ask for volunteers rather than assuming
 - **Beware Prayer Pressure**: as above but for prayer!
 - **Follow my Leader**: don’t be shy about give a steer
 - **Cross the ball**: lead *others* to discover the answers
 - **If it Ain’t Broke...**: encourage others by using their words
 - **Walk Straight**: work through passage as God wrote it
 - **Simplify with Supplementaries**: build an answer gradually
 - **D.I.Y. background**: summarise complicated history
 - **Cross-references make us Cross**: only use if vital clarification
 - **Confess your Sins**: if they can’t get questions, apologise
 - **Entice the Mice**: give the shy a chance with “easy” questions
 - **Zip the lips**: everyone wants you to ask noisy to chat later
 - **Trample on trivia**: don’t be distracted but stick to the text
 - **Keep up the speed**: keep studies fresh by keeping going
 - **Rub their noses in the text**: ensure answers come from text
 - **Who do think you’re talking to**: treat people with respect
 - **We need time to apply**: don’t rush the application, it’s vital
 - **Get Real**: don’t diminish application with clumsy humour
 - **Watch the Watch**: don’t start/finish consistently late
 - **Learn your lessons**: invite group to summarise
 - **Pray with both Bible & diary**: lessons learned & issues faced
-
- **Beware the big bang**: pray in the passage with open Bibles
 - **The best non-question you’ll ever ask**: “Go on...”
 - **Apply as you go**: so application isn’t squeezed in at the end
 - **Open the door**: ask “open” questions to generate discussion

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