



DISCUSSION GUIDE

“By the Book” – How to read the Bible, part 1

GETTING STARTED

What is one thing you are thankful for this week and what is one thing we can pray for you this week?

Remind each other of our simple expectations for meeting together

How would you like to grow in reading and understanding the Bible better?

QUICK REACTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

Why is it important for you and me to have a better understanding of how to read and interpret the Bible?

DIG IN TO THE MESSAGE

Dave gave two rules that will help guide us in reading and interpreting the Bible...

#1 Define the meaning of the text (Scripture) by what the author purposely willed it to mean.

? Who “gets” to define what a passage of the Bible means... the author, or the reader? Why is this important?

? In what ways can we confuse what the Bible “means” with how does the Bible apply to me?

(Dave gave an example of a hypothetical bible study in which everyone had a different “meaning” of what they read.)

Why is this an insufficient way to read the Bible? Why is it important to allow the author (inspired by God) to speak for themselves before we jump to application?

TRY IT AS A GROUP

Pick a text of Scripture (an example you may choose is 1 John 2:1-6). Pull out your phones, or study Bible notes to find out more about John who wrote this book. Then read the passage together, then ask what did John intend to communicate. What did John mean when he wrote these words?

The second rule Dave gave us to help guide us in reading and interpreting the Bible was...

#2 You must read the Bible in view of the culture and the audience that it was written too.

Dave indicated that we can “read back into the Bible” our own experiences, culture, ideas that those in the 1st century were unaware of. So, it is vital that we have resources and tools to help us understand, how the audience, historical culture understood what Luke or Mark meant. Dave gave the specific example of Jesus’ response to the Pharisees over taxes.

TRY IT AS A GROUP

Read Matthew 22:15-22

Again, get out a couple resources from your phone, or study Bible.

As you read this passage, as a group, look up some of the background on why Jesus was addressing this topic, who was He addressing, how would they have understood this issue, then, ask how would you apply this passage to your lives today?

If you really want an adventure, read the next section--- The Discussion about Resurrection in Matthew 22:23-33 (This is more difficult, but give it a try)

Why is this such a difficult passage for us to understand?

What issues was the audience who was hearing this teaching aware of that we aren't? Why does it matter?

How can you see that understanding the culture, audience, place and time in this instance will help you better read and interpret the Bible?

APPLY WHAT WE LEARNED?

What can you stop or begin doing to better read, interpret and understand the Bible?

How can we pray for each other?