How to approach studying the Bible

1. *Read the entire book: Establish author, audience and context (completed)*
2. Read the chapter: Identify the message being communicated
3. Identify questions that you want to have answered: Use resources to find answers.
4. Read the chapter: Identify the message being communicated
5. Map the audience & message: Apply the message to your life
6. Compare your conclusions with others: Trace back any differences to the text

Session 2: Understanding Chapter 1

Objective: Identify the message of Chapter 1 and apply it as God's word spoken into our lives.

Step Two: Read the chapter and identify the message Paul is communicating to Titus

1. Salutation - Greetings
   - *a.* From Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ
     - *i.* Teaching godliness to God's elect
     - *ii.* Preaching hope to God's elect
       1. Based on God who does not lie
       2. Revealed by God
       3. Commanded by God
   - *b.* To Titus my true child
     - *i.* (do not stray from the authority you have from me)
2. Put what remained into order as I directed you
3. Appoint elders in every town as I directed you
   - *a.* Qualifications of an overseer
     - *i.* Musts
     - *ii.* Must Not's
   - *b.* The need for solid leadership (defend and protect the church)
     - *i.* Overseers are God's stewards (agents)
     - *ii.* Silence the deceivers
     - *iii.* Rebuke the liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons to bring on sound faith
4. Theology point: Purity does not come from impurity
   - *a.* Those who introduce corrupt teaching are defiled
   - *b.* It does not matter what positives they bring to the table, everything that comes from them is defiled
     - *i.* What they look like: talking about God, but living for themselves and their lies
     - *ii.* By contrast, pure faith only comes from pure lives and pure doctrine
   - *c.* They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work

Step Three: Identify and write down any questions that arise out of the chapter. - Use resources to research and answer the questions you've written down.

Why does Paul open with such a formal, involved salutation when he is writing to Titus his protégé? The introduction is 70 words in Titus but only 51 combined in 1 & 2 Timothy + Philemon (the other 3 personal epistles).

> [ESV Study Bible] Only Romans and Galatians have longer introductions. Paul's salutation in Titus emphasizes /sets up the theological sections in 2:11-14 and 3:3-7.
>
> [Study] Offers a strong foundation grounding for Titus as Paul emphasizes what to do. Paul is emphasizing his divine commission and applying that authority to his commands to Titus.

What does Paul mean by "what remained" in v5? Had something happened to disrupt the church on Crete?

> The KJV translated "what remained" it as "the things that are wanting"
>
> I concluded that "remained" means "remained undone"
>
> This suggests the gospel had been preached and people had believed, but the work of building churches had not been completed

To whom is the rebuke in v13 directed?

> [Study] Seems to be directed toward the people who are introducing false teaching. This is the encroachment of compromise and error into the gospel that had been preached on Crete. This entire paragraph seems to be about the people on the island and the common leading astray

What does it mean to rebuke?

> [Interlinear] To refute leading to conviction on the part of the offender; has the overtone of bringing shame. Suggests that there is a response to the charges being brought. Carries the idea that the purpose is a change in the rebuked party, not just getting into an argument.
>
> In this chapter, I used several new resources. Let me explain a little about them.
>
> In the case of understanding the phrase "what remained", I chose to look at the verse in a different translation of the Bible in the hope that would offer a clearer translation. In the King James Bible, the phrase "the things that are wanting" helped me understand that this was talking about things that needed to be done but hadn't yet been completed. Other translations can be useful tools to help clarify words that aren't clear.

Step Four: Read the chapter and refine the message Paul is communicating to Titus (now that your questions are answered)

Be Grounded: Teach godliness in the church; preach hope based on God's reliability, as revealed by God, as commanded by God.

The Charge: Complete the task of establishing the churches on the island of Crete.

The Solution: Install elders in every church. Overseers must be above reproach, able to teach sound doctrine and refute bad doctrine

The Problem: In Crete, there are many who would lead astray and upset the faithful. They must be rebuked and brought back to the truth, so the church is sound in faith and doctrine.

Spiritual Point: Good doctrine and faith will never come from defiled unbelieving lives. Truth only comes from truth. Life only comes from life. Those who have not believed are defiled in minds and conscience; unfit, disobedient, detestable in their influence on the church.

Step Five part 1: Map the Audience (how much and in what ways is Titus like us today?)

Titus is a believer, living under the power of the gospel, pursuing the mission of the church:

- Theologically he is very close to me.

Titus is acting on Paul's instruction and apostolic authority and oversees setting up churches

- Vocationally he is distant from me, but the things he is charged to do (setting up a healthy church) have direct application to me and represent principles I must honor in my church.

Step Five part 2: Map the message to apply to me today

- What commands must I obey?
- What truth must I hold dear?
- What error must I flee?
- How is God revealed?
- How is the gospel made clear?

- What actions can I take in the next 7 days that will demonstrate what I said above is real?

What commands must I obey?

- While I do not speak for the church, as a believer I should still rebuke and oppose the insubordinate, empty talkers, and deceivers (they must be silenced, rebuke them sharply)

What truth must I hold dear?

- God's truth can only come from a gospel redeemed life. All other sources of truth are defiled.

How is God revealed?

- The promise and guarantor of eternal life

How is the gospel made clear?

- Without the gospel, defiled is the only option. It is not possible, apart from having a gospel-changed life, to understand and teach true doctrine.

Big Idea: A healthy gospel flourishes in a healthy church

- Church leaders are God's stewards and must teach sound doctrine
- Deceptive teachers abound and must be silenced
- Only the gospel produces proper faith.

What actions can I take in the next 7 days that will demonstrate that what I said above is real?

- Evaluate my life – Am I living the gospel? How am I dealing with defiling influences?
- Pray for my church leaders who bear this burden
- Where am I tempted to compromise instead of rebuke or resist?