Modeling Timothy
How to Study the Bible In Order to Teach Others

“The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” 2 Timothy 2:2

By Kate Megill © 2011 Teaching What Is Good
Teaching is not my gift. My husband is the teacher. I use my gift of word of wisdom to encourage, instruct, disciple and mentor women in their walk with God, their lives as wives and mothers and their general life.

This particular summer I felt God strongly lead me to teach a youth class, open to all women with a goal of learning to study the scriptures so that you can be equipped to lead others in the study of the bible.

My youth pastor has a very strong passion for discipleship and training our youth in leadership. My vision for this class fit right in with his passion and direction for the youth ministry.

It was a great summer class for me! It was small, but the gals who came were passionate in their walks with God and the Word.

I also want to give a huge thank you to my husband, Kevin. His help and input were invaluable in how well the class went. As I said, he is the teacher and we worked well together (even though he wasn’t with me in the classroom).

I hope this study will be helpful and encouraging and instructive in your pursuit to teach the Word of God to others. This study works best if you are working through it in a group so you can practice what you’ve learned.

Thank you for downloading it and using it as the Lord leads you.
Modeling Timothy Study - week 1
Word Studies

Each week a different type of study is taught and an assignment is given. The following week, everyone will be leading their own 5 minute study of what we learned the previous week – so this is an interactive class, a hands-on class. My scripture passage for our class is:

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Tim 2:2

Today we talked about word studies and learned how to use a Strong’s concordance and a Vine’s Expository Dictionary of the NT. Since most folks no longer have these in book form, we used the online versions of these that can be found at: http://www.blueletterbible.org and http://www.tgm.org/bible.htm. If you have never gotten a chance to use these, please check them out.

Devotion vs. Study

There really is a difference between devotional reading and deep study of the scriptures. In our devotional time we are doing just that: building our intimate love relationship with God. We are speaking to Him in prayer and He is speaking to us in our hearts through His Word. This is a time for us to listen as well as pour out our hearts – to meditate on the things He’s spoken to us and allow His Spirit to touch our hearts in deep and intimate ways.

Study of the Word is more of a digging time: where we get to really push to find out what a word or phrase means. We are more focused on the INTERPRETATION of the message and allow the Spirit to later take that interpretation and bring it to apply to our lives in ways that will change us. But generally, that application will not be taking place during our study time. It may, but we usually need to really chew the cud of the scriptures long enough to digest it before we get to apply it. And that will often take place more in our devotional times with God. Studying is where we build that knowledge that the Spirit will draw on later.

Strong’s Concordance

Strong’s concordance has become the definitive resource in scripture study. Strong’s numbers are separated into Hebrew and Greek. Every single word in the bible is given a
Strong’s number that is tied to the original Greek or Hebrew word.

For example: the word “master” in the New American Standard shows up numerous times in the book of Genesis. But there are 3 different Hebrew words that are translated as “master”.

- H4910 (the H standing for a Hebrew word) – mashal which means: to rule, to have dominion
- H113 – ’adown which means: firm, strong, lord, master (as a possessor, owner)
- H1376 – gĕbiyr which means: lord, ruler (with an idea of power)

Each of these numbers can then be looked up in the Strong’s (via blueletterbible.com, for example) to see ALL the places this Hebrew word was used in the OT and how it is translated into English. We see that in Genesis, H113 (for example) is translated as either master or lord – and always used in reference to an owner or authority over another but never (for instance) in relation to God, always referring to a human in that position.

This can be VERY helpful as we study out a word. Sometimes we read a scripture passage and a word jumps out at us and we may read other passages with that same English word and draw conclusions. BUT if we are not looking at the same Hebrew or Greek word, our conclusions may be inaccurate because we are going only on the translators’ use of the word rather than God’s and the bible writer’s.

Language

It is important to remember that our VERY LIMITED understanding of Greek and Hebrew languages (unless we are fluent and read, write and think in those ancient languages) are not as black and white as we may think they are! Sometimes entire doctrines have been created based on a partial or inaccurate understanding of a word’s meaning. We need to be very careful when exploring the original languages and realize that sometimes we “know just enough to make us dangerous.” We should be sure and use
great humility when teaching using the ancient languages, realizing that we could actually be WAY off base due to our very limited knowledge.

Does that mean we shouldn’t look at the meanings of the original words at all? **ABSOLUTELY NOT!** There is great value in study and digging in to the words in the original languages. We learn greater context clues, greater breadth of how these words are used in various verses as well as broadening our use of grammar and syntax. BUT we just need to be careful when making dogmatic statements based on a brief study using Strong’s, Vine’s and an online bible.

**Assignment**

Everyone was given an assignment. They were to choose a word they were interested in and look it up in a Strong’s. Then they were to choose one of the numbers (for one of the Greek or Hebrew words) and follow that to an ending point. They were to:

- Let us know what the original Greek or Hebrew word is
- Give a definition to the best of their ability of that word
- List at least 10 verses that use that word and the various ways it is translated
- Share how (if at all) that word and the various translations adds to our understanding of the English word we think of
- Prepare to share this in 5 minutes of class time next week

I’m sharing this here for anyone who was unable to make it to class this week, and just for common benefit. Each one of us will be discipling someone in our lifetime; whether it is another woman (or man, if you are a man) or if it is our own children. Knowing how to study the bible so that we can teach others is such a necessary skill. Studying the bible at all is something we should all learn to do.

I hope this has been helpful. If any of you want to do this study along with us, I would LOVE to hear your comments about what you are learning! Even if you are not sharing with our class your 5 minute studies, you can share in a comment what you’ve seen and how your study of God’s Word went as you learn along with us.
Modeling Timothy - Week 2
Character Studies

Today is our second week of our study of how to study the bible. Along with our particular type of study of the week, we are looking at various tools (today we look at using a Lexicon) each week and important things to understand in studying.

We will do a short character study at the end and then everyone is assigned to go home and do a character study on their own (choosing anyone they want to look at, realizing the more major of a person they choose, the more scripture there is, whereas a minor person in scripture will have less to look at and may be more doable for our purposes). Then next week, they will share (in 5 minutes) who they looked at, the passages they chose and what they learned from this person.

Using a Lexicon:
A Lexicon is a Greek or Hebrew dictionary that gives the word in the original language and the meaning of the word as well as where it came from (etymology). It also gives ways the word is used and the Strong’s number associated with it (either G for Greek or H for Hebrew) and all the verses where that particular word is used.

In the Blue Letter Bible online (www.blueletterbible.org) the Lexicon is found in 2 places. One is a tab above the passages themselves and another is when you are looking at a book of the bible. When you are opened to a book, on the left hand side there are a series of letter links. The letter C stands for the Lexicons. If you click on that by a particular verse, it will give you all the words in the original language and the meanings, parts of speech and use.
Genres of Scripture:
If you have spent any time reading the scriptures you will have noticed that there are very different types of writings. Not just that the bible has many human authors, but there are many different genres of writings. Understanding what type of genre really helps to understand how to look at and understand what you are reading/studying.

- History or Narrative (Gen-Esther, Gospels, Acts)
  - This genre tells a series of events
- Wisdom (Job-Song of Solomon) – some of which is poetry
  - The parables of Jesus (and much of Jesus’ teachings) are wisdom-like
- Prophetic (Isaiah-Malachi, Revelation)
  - (some people separate out the apocalyptic literature which would include Daniel, some of Ezekiel, some of Zachariah, Revelation and some of the Olivet discourse—Matt 24)
- Epistles
  - Pastoral letters (1 & 2 Timothy, Titus)

It is important to understand these different styles/types of writings because it is important to know that God speaks to us in many ways. To some, He speaks to the artistic/poetic heart and spirit – the Psalms are filled with passion and emotion and if you read them in a black-and-white manner looking only for the Doctrinal Truth, you’ll miss the heart of what God is saying to us. But for those with a black-and-white/scientific mind, we have Paul’s writings that have an exactness to it that teaches us the doctrinal truths for Christian worldviews and living.

All of these differences are needed for us to have a whole view of God’s heart and mind. We are not just minds and not just emotions. We were created with a combination, as we were created in God’s image, and God blesses us through His Word with the variety of ways He speaks to us and touches us to know Him more fully.

- When studying a character in the bible, it is usually more informative to look at larger passages of scripture rather than isolated verses (if possible), it tends to give a broader perspective of the person.
- Read very carefully for details about what it would be like for them
  - It is very easy to gloss over what we read looking for the doctrine – in doing a character study we want to see them as others around them see them, and in the realness of their lives. If we do this we will miss a great deal of what God wants us to see.
  - The goal is to get inside the heart of the person – not getting thrown by the bad as well as the good – God gives the good, the bad and the ugly. Scripture does not have a fictional Villain or Hero where the Good Guy wears white and is always good and the Bad Guy wears black and is always bad. Real people in scripture (like we are still today) are mixtures and we need to see and recognize that for what it is so we can see God’s truth to us in a person’s life
Doing a Character Study:

Priscilla & Aquila – Character Study
(Priscilla is her nickname, Prisca is her real name)

Acts 18:2-4 (he met them in Corinth)
After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth.

And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them,

and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers.

And he was reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

Acts 18:18-21 (they went to Ephesus with Paul)
Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow.

They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

When they asked him to stay for a longer time, he did not consent,

but taking leave of them and saying, “I will return to you again if God wills,” he set sail from Ephesus.

1 Cor 16:19 (in Ephesus before Paul left, since he is there with them)
The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

Acts 18:24-26 (Paul leaves and they meet Apollos)
Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures.

This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John;

and he began to speak out boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.
Rom 16:1-5 (they are back at Rome, this is after the Acts 18 passage in timeline)
I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea;
that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,
who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;
also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.

2 Tim 4:19 (the are back in Ephesus during persecution of Christians in Rome)
Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

Timeline
They started in Rome, (49-50 AD) kicked out under Claudius, went to Corinth (Acts 18:2-3), met Paul (were there for a year or 2) then moved to Ephesus with him (Acts 18:18) and one of the churches met in their house there. (before Paul leaves is 1 Cor 16:19) Paul left (after 2-3 years). They stayed and helped Apollos out (Acts 18:26). Left Ephesus and returned to Rome (where another church met in their house) (Rom 16:3-5). By 2 Timothy 4:19 they were back in Ephesus (Nero was the church at this time in Rome 64-68 so they returned Ephesus).

- What did we see about Priscilla and Aquila?
- How did they help Paul in his ministry?
- How did they help to build the body of Christ?
- How did God use them?
Modeling Timothy - Week 3
The Interpretation Model

This week we look are looking at the **Interpretation Model** for studying scripture.

Our class started out with everyone sharing their 5 minute presentation of their character study. Everyone did a great job and those 5 minutes just FLEW by!! It was exciting to see the ways each of the gals were a little different in their presentation. This shows how the Holy Spirit works through our uniqueness: our gifts, talents and personalities. Yet God’s truth is always the same. Very cool!

When looking at a passage of scripture it is important that we **REALLY** look at it. I shared the story of a fellow who had fallen for this gal but she didn’t want anything to do with him. He had read the story of Jericho and how the Israelites marched around the city for 7 days and the walls just fell down. So he thought that sounded like a great idea to do with this gal. He marched around her house for 7 days and expected the walls of her heart to come tumbling down. Needless to say, the only thing that happened was that she called the police on him!!

*But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation...* [1 Pet 1:20](#)

We have to be sure that we don’t try to make the scriptures mean whatever we think they should mean or to line up with whatever doctrinal umbrella we sit under. The Holy Spirit gives interpretation for the scriptures and we need to learn to come honestly and openly to the Word and allow the Spirit to lead and guide us as we try to interpret it. Today I’m going to share a tool that might help.

**OBSERVATION**

When I was in college we all took a class on observation. We had to sit and for 1-3 hours a day we wrote out our observations of the children interacting. Here was a typical first entry:

- Billy was mean to Sally and took her toy car. Sally got mad and bit Billy on the leg. Mrs. Kendall tried to comfort both children but was upset with them both and got stressed out as the rest of the class started to cry and scream.

**This IS NOT OBSERVATION**! It was a conclusion that Billy was mean, that Sally got mad, that Mrs. Kendall was trying to comfort, got upset and stressed out. The observation is **SIMPLY THE FACTS** of what happened.
The same is true with scripture. We need to learn to first come to the Word and observe JUST THE FACTS of what it is saying. When we are observing in scripture, it is helpful to have a notepad to write out all the things we see. Think about:

- what does it actually say, who is it speaking to (remember, it isn’t speaking directly to us, for us – but not to us)
- do these verses easily fall into groups, i.e. are verses 3-5 on the same topic while verses 6-9 share another thought
- think about the details – read slowly and do not add your own thoughts
- what do you notice
- what were you surprised at
- what questions does this raise for you
- even if what you see might seem significant, it can be an important clue to understanding the passage

INTERPRETATION

This is part is often glossed over when we study. We skip the observation altogether and jump right to application. BUT if we don’t find out what the interpretation is, we will not have a good grasp of the spiritual truths of the passage and it will be too easy to go on the wrong track.

Interpretation is finding out what this passage ACTUALLY MEANS.

- what did the writer intend for the average reader to understand from what he wrote
- what is going on in the context of the rest of the chapter/book
- what is going on in the context of the history at the time of the writing
- what can we understand from the passage itself to help us understand what this passage means

This is a good time to look at the observations you wrote down and do some exploring. Did you find a word you want to understand better? Look it up in different translations or go to Strong’s to find out what the original word was and what it means. Use this information to help you understand what this passage means.

After you’ve done that, again spend time in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to show you any biblical principles (truths) this passage teaches. Sometimes there is one, sometimes more than one, sometimes there might be nothing as this might be part of a larger whole and no specific biblical principle in this shorter passage or verse.

CORRELATION

This is something that most people just ignore or don’t know. We are not yet ready to jump into application. First we want to take the notes we’ve written and the thoughts we’ve come up with and draw connections.
• what other scriptures does this bring to mind that agree with our ideas or balance them
• what stories (like the Jericho Guy) or people (biblical or not) does this bring to mind that remind us of the things we’ve been seeing
• what things in my own life should I look at to help me see what God might be showing me (like when you take your own name and insert it in 1 Cor 13 in place of love to see if you FIT the character we see in the scriptures

APPLICATION

NOW we can begin to look at what this passage means TO ME. First we need to know what it says, what it means and what biblical principles or truths are found there before we jump into applying it to our lives. The applications are as many and varied as there are people. While there is one interpretation, there are many ways God will use these truths to reveal things in our hearts, minds and lives that need to change.

• what is one thing the Holy Spirit is working on in our lives that this sheds light on
• is there something ELSE that is new that the Holy Spirit wants to open my eyes to
• how does God want me to change how I believe, think and act

The assignment was to choose a short passage of scripture and write out your: observations, interpretation, correlation, and application and be ready to share next week in a 5 minute presentation of your study.
Modeling Timothy - Week 4
Topic Studies

The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge is an often overlooked resource, but one that is very invaluable for topic studies. It is a book of cross references. But it is different from Strong’s. Strong’s takes the original word in the Greek or Hebrew and gives the references everywhere in the bible that original word is used, regardless of how it is translated into English. This helps us understand how the original word is used in the totality of scriptural contexts.

The TSK gives cross references about how ideas in verses are connected. It’s kind of like when you are talking with someone and they say something and it reminds you of something else, then you talk about that and it reminds the other person about something. It is not a linear (all in a straight line) study like a word study using a concordance would be. It is more of a web of interwoven ideas.

The TSK can be found on the Blue Letter Bible site (in the list of letters to the left of a scripture passage, it is the K) or at numerous sites online, here is one of them: Bible Study Tools.com (although Blue Letter Bible is easier to use). Here is what it says of TSK:

For generations, the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge has been an enduring cross-reference resource for Bible students worldwide. This highly respected and nearly exhaustive compilation of cross-references was developed by R.A. Torrey from references in the Rev. Thomas Scott’s Commentary and the Comprehensive Bible. With nearly 500,000 cross-references it is the most thorough source available. Treasury of Scripture Knowledge is in the public domain and may be freely used and distributed.

The best way to use it is to start with a verse. Suppose you read a verse (here is one I saw in my quiet time this week that I thought was really cool) – Ps 4:1:

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!
You have relieved me in my distress;
Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.

I thought the bolded part was very interesting! I looked this up in TSK. Here are cross references it gives:

(Ps)11:7 24:5 41:12 Isaiah 45:24 ; Jeremiah 23:6 ; 1 Corinthians 1:30 ; 2 Corinthians 5:20
2 Corinthians 5:21
Now, if you look in the TSK you’ll see that it divides the verse into different parts and follows each one. The one we followed here is the one that starts with “O”. So, let’s read these verses and see where it takes us.

*For the LORD is righteous, He loves righteousness ; The upright will behold His face.*  
*Ps 11:7*

*He shall receive a blessing from the LORD And righteousness from the God of his salvation.*  
*Ps 24:5*

*As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, And You set me in Your presence forever.*  
*Ps 41:12*

“They will say of Me, ‘Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.’ Men will come to Him, And all who were angry at Him will be put to shame.*  
*Is 45:24*

“In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The LORD our righteousness.’*  
*Jer 23:6*

*But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,*  
*1 Cor 1:30*

*Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*  
*2 Cor 5:20*

*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*  
*2 Cor 5:21*

From looking at these verses, we get a sense that “righteous” as used in *Ps 4:1* is very much related to justice before God more than personal holiness.

Again, TSK isn’t a word study. It is following cross references of ideas in the scriptures to other verses with the same ideas. It’s not a straight study of the word in the original language. Rather it shows the flow of an idea throughout the scriptures.

**Topic Study**

A topic study *seems* similar to a word study but it really is quite different. It is studying a concept, an idea rather than a word. It is much easier to do a topic study when you know the scriptures really well because then you have a better grasp of the IDEAS or CONCEPTS in passages that will help you know where to look.

If there is a topic you want to study more in-depth, start by thinking about all the passages that talk about it. Go as wide and broad as you can. This is NOT a time to limit the scriptures to look at. Let the scriptures teach you rather than you limiting the
scriptures. Sometimes the passages you will choose to look, at first glance, may make others think, “What does THAT verse have to do with that topic?”

My husband and I do topic studies very differently.

If he were studying, say, “the authority of the apostles”, he’d start in Romans and, in 30 minutes scan through the rest of the NT noting anything remotely having to do with apostolic authority. (If your bible has headings, you can use those headings to help you scan.)

If I were studying the authority of the apostles, I’d look at scriptures on apostles using a concordance as a springboard on where to look in the scriptures and let those verses spur my mind on where to go from there.

For example, in the gospels, apostles would remind me of the 12 which would remind me of the 70 Jesus sent out and I’d use my concordance to find those passages to read. I might also look up scriptures having to do with submit or leadership or teaching or things like that. Anything that would have to do with the topic of authority of the apostles would be included in my search.

Remember, this isn’t about studying any one word. It is about looking at the entire topic (and all that that implies) and what the bible teaches about it. Allowing the scriptures to help you remember other scriptures that might talk about this idea. This is a GREAT place to use the TSK in your study!!

We are going to look at (mini-study) 3 different passages on the topic of forgiveness. You will notice that one does not have the word forgiveness in that passage.

At the end of reading the scriptures, go back and read them again, very slowly. Ask questions about the passage as you go. Let the first reading of the passage guide your questions for your second very slow read through. Sometimes this may lead you to a specific word study within the passage for greater clarity.

At the end write out some of the things you’ve seen from all of the passages. Write out the questions you come away with. (Sometimes you come away with more questions than answers. This is NOT a bad thing!) Write out the similarities you see in the different passages and write out the things that might seem to not match.

Remember, each of these passages will be saying something very specific and will be different from each one another. They will all have truth to teach on the topic, but they will have some truths that are unique to themselves as well as some truths that add to what the other passages say.

Very often you will find that studying out these seeming inconsistencies (and asking the Spirit for wisdom and insight and more scriptures to teach you from) will lead you to very rich understanding of the whole context of the scriptures and mind of God.
Modeling Timothy - Week 5
Paul's Teachings - **Acts 17:22-31**

Today we are going to look at how to study and understand Paul’s teachings. Sometimes Paul is very hard to understand (at least for me). His lack of punctuation and run-on sentences make things hard for me to get what he’s saying – particularly in bite sized pieces. But today I’m going to try and help you see what his patterns of speak are and how to “get” what he’s saying.

The first thing to remember is that Paul was trained as a scholar, a theologian. If you’ve ever spoken to a theologian (I am married to one!), you’ll know that they are (generally) very analytical and sequential in their thoughts. Paul is no different. In most of his writings (except the parts when he is “touchy-feely”, you’ll know what I mean 😊) his teachings are arguments (not as in debates, but as in making a doctrinal point one piece at a time) and they flow from one point to another in a line, like unfolding a thought. Because of that, they are meant to be seen in one piece. His teachings are not like Proverbs where you can take one section of a verse as a little nugget. If you try that with Paul’s teachings you will most likely miss the entire idea he is presenting and even misinterpret the small piece you are looking at.

As an analytic thinker, his **connecting** words are very crucial. We can’t simply ignore a preposition because it is a small word. All the words Paul uses are significant: every “but”, “and”, “for”, “therefore”, etc.. With that in mind, it is also important to remember that you can’t take a word out of context and base a whole interpretation on it. Remember we talked about the flow above. If Paul uses a word with a specific meaning in the context of a teaching, and he continues to use that same word in a pattern of speech, he will use the same meaning throughout. This is important to remember in correctly interpreting Paul’s writings.

He takes us step by step to reveal, unfurl, his thought process to help us understand God’s mind in a matter. Therefore it is important to understand where Paul thinks the readers (that he is specifically writing/speaking to) are in their thinking and worldview. This helps us follow as he walks them to the doctrine he is teaching. Sometimes you may not think he is making sense. Remember you are starting from YOUR viewpoint and perspective. We need to understand what the readers thought he meant (also what they believed, their worldview) in order for us to understand more exactly what he is saying.

Next we’ll need to look at historical context to understand what Paul is saying. To do this we may need to backtrack in the text to understand who is speaking to and what they believe. You don’t always have to use commentaries or bible dictionaries. Very often the information in right in the scriptures in front of us. For this passage, we’ll go back to verses 16-21 to give us insight and at the verses afterward to see the response of the people in verses 32-34.
We need to make sure we look at the STYLE and MODE of his writing. Is he writing to antagonize or to persuade? If he’s writing to antagonize then we interpret his words in that framework. If he’s writing to persuade, then we interpret in that framework. This is important (as part of the literary context) — in this passage we might think he is being snarky with his comment about their ‘ignorance’ until we realize his heart message is to persuade to Truth. Then it does not make sense that he would be sarcastic – which would mean we need to look at that comment in a different light.

Another clue to look for in his writings is his often mentioning what argument he is addressing. He might interject “some will say” into a letter. This means that “Watch for it, here comes my rebuttal!”

Lastly, it is very helpful to break his long teachings down to individual points. Not that we should separate them from the whole teaching, but to see the starting and ending places of a unique point in his teaching. This helps to see POINT BY POINT the progress in his thought process. And don’t forget to notice what he leaves out. Sometimes Paul is just as eloquent with what he chooses NOT to say as in what he does say.

Let’s look together at the points of Paul’s exposition in Acts 17:22-31.

First, in looking at the context (backing up in the text to verse 16) we see he is in Athens, a Greek city. We see that:

- his spirit is PROVOKED by the idols everywhere
- he was speaking in the synagogues to the Jews and faithful gentiles
- he was speaking daily in the marketplace (where everyone gathered to hang out
- the Athenians were always looking for whatever was *new* and so were quick to sit and listen to anyone new

**POINT 1-** starts with Paul’s recognition of their being very spiritual and ends with his calling attention to their even giving homage to an Unknown God (verses 22-23a)

**POINT 2-** starts and ends with his statement saying, “I’m here to tell you about this God you do not know!” (verse 23b)

**POINT 3-** starts with saying that THIS God created all things and ends with that He is not Himself made with human hands (verses 24-25)

**PARENTHESIS** - Paul does this often. He gives a little “by the way” teaching that might be off topic but adds to the depth of his teaching. Verses 26-28 are a parenthesis. In this he declares that God is the creator of all men and nations, even being the one who established the nations (which gives authority as to why Paul, a Jew, has anything to say to these Greeks listening about the One True God). It also goes on to say that God is above all but is close and actually reachable to those seeking Him and it is He who sustains all.
POINT 4- comes back to what we saw in verse 25 – God is not made with human hands or from the mind of man (verse 29)

POINT 5- “Therefore” (that connecting word – recognizing these Greeks had some inkling of another mystery God, he declares this God is actually the True God over all others) starts with the truth of God revealing Himself to men with a call to repent and ends with Jesus and His proof of who He is in the resurrection. He tells that God is calling NOW as the time to deal with what they were previously ignorant of and declaring that there is a time set for judgment.

Closing setting: some sneered when he spoke of the resurrection; others wanted to hear more about this new teaching and finally, there were some who joined Paul and believed.

Assignment:

- Choose 1 small passage (no more than a paragraph) of Paul’s writing to study.
- Read the surrounding context to understand what is happening historically and to whom he is writing
- As you discover the points of his message, write out and explore 1 point to share in class next week.
Modeling Timothy - Week 6
The Poetry

Our last instructional day will be looking at the poetry of the scriptures.

In English, poetry has rhythm, meter and structure. And because it is in our language, it is easily recognized by readers. Hebrew poetry also has rhythm, this is often what guides how lines are divided, but we don’t see it because of the translation. So often we need to read what others say about the rhythm and trust the translators to understand why it is written the way it is.

There are several aspects of poetry we’ll be looking at that are found in the Psalms as well as other poetic sections of the bible. They are:

- parallelism
- imagery
- emotions
- context

First: This is what Wikipedia says about parallelism.

In grammar, parallelism is a balance of two or more similar words, phrases, or clauses. The application of parallelism in sentence construction can sometimes improve writing style clearness and readability. It can also strengthen sequences described. Parallelism may also be known as parallel structure or parallel construction.

In the scriptures we see this very often, particularly in the Psalms. The focus is that there is one main idea written about in 2 (sometimes more) phrases or clauses or verses. This idea is spoken of from various viewpoints and with various aspects stressed. Like taking a picture of a chair from different angles, you see different parts or aspects of the chair. Each view gives greater understanding and clarity of the original chair. It is used in the scriptures to strengthen the main idea of the verse(s).

Sometimes parallelism is used to contrast an idea as in Proverbs 13:4. Sometimes it is used in an inverted structure as in Ps 51:10 where it first talks about me then heart, then spirit and back to me.

Next: The epistles are about instruction, facts and doctrine. The poetry of scripture is about feelings, emotions and word pictures. One thing that is used in the poetry of the bible is imagery. Think about it:

- God is described as a loving father and nursing mother
- we are described as sheep
- the righteous man is compared to a tree firmly planted by streams of water
It goes on and on. All of these conjure up images in our minds. We sense, rather than mentally calculate what is being talked about. This is what imagery does. It touches our feelings and helps us see things with our mind’s eye in a deep emotional way.

Sometimes that imagery is kind of weird for us! To say that our love’s teeth are like: “…a flock of newly shorn ewes Which have come up from their washing, All of which bear twins, And not one among them has lost her young.” (Song of Solomon 4:2) makes us say, WHAT???? However, when you think about sheep, before the shearing, as dirty and messy with clumped and knotted wool but AFTER, they are white and clean and tidy and even – and the comment about not having lost any young means no missing teeth; it gives a whole new image in our minds to this piece of poetry.

It is important that we understand the imagery of the time so we can fully experience the word pictures being painted for us.

**Next: Emotions** are an important part of the poetry of the Word. Sometimes we think that emotions are bad, even sinful. Emotions are simply feelings; neither good nor bad. David wrote with such passion and emotion! He was real. He wrote from the core of his being. He didn’t pull punches. BUT in almost all the Psalms, the Psalmist brings us back to a focus on God, helping us see what we are supposed to DO with those emotions we are feeling!

*James 5:13* “Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.”

**Last:** The context is important in the poetry. We see that David might be fighting for his life or struggling to treat the king with respect or whatever, but those are not things going on in our lives, so what do these passages have to do with me?

David (as all the writers of the Psalms) knew that their verses were going to be sung, and to be sung in worship. When they wrote THEIR experiences and THEIR feelings, they also knew that somehow they were writing to speak for all of our emotions. So even if our situation is different from David’s, that doesn’t mean I don’t experience the same emotions and need the same encouragement to take it back to God that David did.

**The Study:** A quick walk through *Ps 19* shows a number of things.

- there is both parallelism and imagery in this passage (*can you find it?*)
- it is divided into sections
- the first 6 verses are speaking of how nature (exhibited to all the nations of the world) declares the glory of God (with Paul years later making reference back here when he wrote the letter to the Romans)
- verses 7-10 speak about the Word of God (written directly to the Jewish people) declares the glory of God
- ending with verses 11-14 taking the truths we’ve seen and renewing our focus back on God and on OUR part in responding to His insight and wisdom proclaimed to His children
**Assignment:** This is the end of the instruction for our Modeling Timothy Class on:

**Studying The Bible To Teach Others**

I hope you have enjoyed it and learned from it and that your time in the Word will be richer for it.

For those in my class, you each have 2 studies to prepare. You will do a 15 minute study to share with the class and you will prepare a 30 minute study to share with the class. Choose 2 different “styles” of study to do using whatever passages of scripture you prefer. I am looking forward to hearing your studies and seeing what God shows you through the Word!