

Lesson 5:

Analyzing the Books of the Bible

Effective Bible Study

2 Timothy 2:15

Read It, Explain It, Apply It

The purpose of this lesson is to begin to **dig deeper** into the text. We want to answer six questions:

1. Who was the inspired penman of the book? (*Sometimes this information is not given.*)
2. When did he live?
3. With what historical timeframe was he dealing?
4. For whom, specifically, was the book designed? (*Sometimes this information is not given.*)
5. What are the main sections of the book?
6. How has the Holy Spirit developed the book's theme?

If possible, we should determine the author, the recipients, and the general circumstances that caused the writing of the various books of Scripture.

Authorship

- A. Of course, the ultimate Author of Scripture is God. In some situations, it is important to have a knowledge of the human penman who wrote the book (ex: 1 Corinthians)
- B. Sometimes, the human penman is not given (1-2 Samuel, Hebrews).
 - "When a human writer of Scripture was providentially led to hide his identity there is no need to try, and possibly little hope of success in trying, to discover it. It is wiser to be content not to know" (A. M. Stibbs, *The New Bible Commentary: Revised*, Eerdmans, 1970 ,p 1191).

The Recipients

- A. It is sometimes very important to know who were the original recipients of a particular book.
 - Examples: Matthew (Jewish) • Mark (Roman) • Luke (Greek)
- B. Sometimes no particular recipients are suggested (common in poetry & historical narratives).

ANALYZING THE CONTENT:

Analyze – to examine methodically and in detail (typically for the purposes of explanation and interpretation).

Broad Analysis (*look for the natural, major divisions*)

Example – Isaiah:

- I. Judgment from God [upon the nations, Israel and Judah] (1-39)
- II. Comfort from God [in deliverance from captivity and in the coming Messiah] (40-66)

Detailed Analysis (*discover how the material is arranged, "hang some meat" on the broad analysis*)

Example – Isaiah

- I. Judgment from God (1-39)
 - A. Prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem (1-12)
 - B. Prophecies concerning foreign nations (13-23)
 - C. Judgments upon the nations (24-27)
 - D. A book of woes (28-35)
 - E. A historical section (36-39)
- II. Comfort from God (40-66)
 - A. Deliverance from Babylonian captivity (40-48)
 - B. Jehovah's suffering servant (49-57)
 - C. The glory of the Messianic age (58-66)