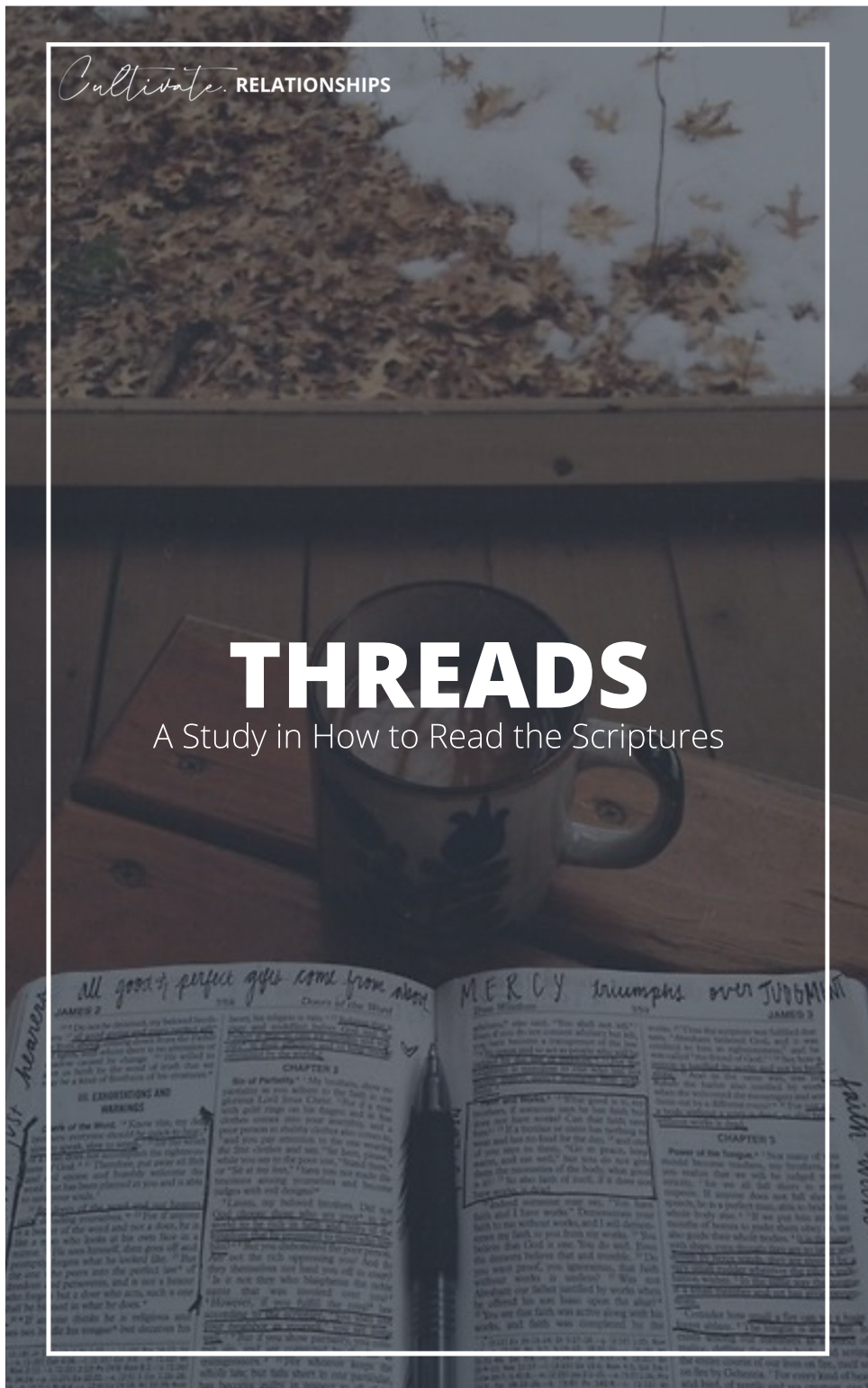


Cultivate. RELATIONSHIPS

THREADS

A Study in How to Read the Scriptures



// THREADS

Jesus is perfect theology.

This class will reveal how Jesus
is the culmination of all of Scripture.

From word studies to discovering themes
that point to Jesus, this class will give you
practical resources and confidence to understand
God's heart through the whole of Scripture.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

BibleProject.com/Podcasts/Series/Paradigm

Podcast Series: Paradigm

How (Not) to Read the Bible

By: Dan Kimball

Zondervan ©2020

Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes

By: E. Randolph Richards & Brandon J. O'Brien

IVP Books; 1st Edition ©2012

The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah

By: Alfred Edersheim

Hendrickson Academic; 1st Edition ©1992

WEBSITES

- Bible.com
- BlueLetterBible.com

RECOMMENDED TRANSLATIONS FOR STUDYING

- Amplified Bible (AMP)
- Complete Jewish Bible (CJB)
- English Standard Version (ESV)
- Lexham English Bible (LEB)
- Lexham English Septuagint (LES)
- New American Standard Bible (NASB)
- New English Translation (NET)
- New King James Version (NKJV)
- New Living Translation (NLT)

2 MINDSETS FOR READING THE BIBLE

MINDSET #1 – The Bible is a unified story that points to Jesus — the Holy Spirit must draw the threads and make proper application, not us. For example, Jesus asks the Bible teachers of his day, “have you read the Scriptures” 34 times in the Gospels. This implies that although they had memorized, studied, and were considered experts in the Scriptures, they still didn’t understand it.

MINDSET #2 – The Bible was written for us but not to us. It is a library of writings dealing with different morals, cultures contexts, languages, and political issues during specific times in specific places for specific people. For example, we can read Leviticus 15.19-21 yet we don’t check the seats we sit in for who was sitting there before us and more importantly, when they sat there. We don’t do this because we consider these passages of Scripture not important for us today.

You might be thinking, *so how do I understand or apply what I’m reading?*

There are a vast range of morals, cultural contexts, languages, and political issues we face across the globe. Therefore, we must turn to the first mindset (seek the Holy Spirit) to read, understand, and apply what we’re reading without making its truths relative or its morals subjective. The Holy Spirit is the only one who can guide us into personal application, surpassing the specifics of all cultures, circumstances, and issues.

7 PARADIGMS OF BIBLICAL LITURATURE

To begin to understand how the Scriptures can speak to you, there are seven paradigms that need to be considered and accepted. Once these paradigms are embraced, we can now begin to understand and apply the Scriptures to our own lives. These paradigms will help us better hear the Holy Spirit's voice in reading, meditating, and discussing the Scriptures.

The Old and New Testament Scriptures are:

- 1) **Both Divine and Human Literature** – *it was developed with the help of both the Holy Spirit's and peoples' direction and creativity.*
- 2) **Unified Literature** – *despite its multiple genres and authors, it is cohesively designed to be connected by themes, concepts, and patterns.*
- 3) **Messianic Literature** – *every theme, concept, or pattern points to our need of a savior and the man, Jesus, as the anointed one.*
- 4) **Communal Literature** – *it is meant to be read, understood, and applied primarily with the company of other believers.*
- 5) **Ancient Literature** – *the structure and concepts of it are not intended to be understood within our modern times but rather applied to them.*
- 6) **Meditation Literature** – *its content and understanding becomes deeper and more complex with re-reading over time and contemplation.*
- 7) **Wisdom Literature** – *its literary styles and genres all reveal God's wisdom and how we should make decisions amidst life's complexities.*

HERMENEUTICS

Hermeneutics (Gk. *hermeneuō*) = translate or interpret. It is the study of interpreting a writing. Therefore when it comes to the Bible, it is about how we approach, understand, and interpret the Scriptures. If exegesis is the act of studying a passage critically and interpreting the meaning, then hermeneutics is the study of the principles by which a passage is to be interpreted. Technically speaking, Biblical Hermeneutics began within Scripture. We see the Pharisees and Sadducees using “hermeneutics” to look at how to understand the Old Testament.

There is a plethora of books that break down Biblical hermeneutics. Each one has their own list of “important” principles. Since the subject of Biblical hermeneutics is incredibly vast and complex, for simplicity, I have decided to compile many of them into three categories:

1) Scripture Interprets Scripture Principles

Often Scripture interprets itself. In most instances, another Biblical writer interprets another Biblical passage.

Context: *The surrounding verses, chapter, and book(s) of the Bible provide immediate context to any Bible verse, as does the historical, cultural, literary genre, and linguistic context of a verse. (Psalm 51)*

Clear vs Obscure: *No verse of Scripture should be interpreted to contradict the overall message of Scripture. When we are faced with an obscure passage, we find a clearer passage to help interpret it. (Revelation 11.3-6 and Zechariah 3-6 [4.14])*

Precedence: *Word usage and context always builds on itself. Therefore, rather than making up a meaning to fit an immediate context, look at how it was used prior – going back to the first mention if possible. (Galatians 6.16-17 and John 1.14)*

Unity: *The meaning of a passage should agree with and be consistent with the rest of Scripture. No single passage should be the “proof text” of an idea, doctrine, or belief system. (Jeremiah 17.9 vs Matthew 12.35)*

2) Intent Interprets Scripture Principles

All Scripture has an intended meaning. It is therefore true that a Scripture has one correct interpretation while it may have many correct applications.

Definitions: *Studying Scripture requires knowing what the original word meant to its original audience (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek). We must find the plain meaning of a word then continue using that plain meaning. (Romans 5.18-19, “all” and “many”)*

Word Usage: *The original authors and audiences used words in unique ways including idioms and metaphors. Therefore, we must look to their cultural understandings, notions, and biases (not our own) when interpreting Scripture. (Revelation 20.3 and Joshua 23.10; 1 Chronicles 16.15; Psalm 50.10; 84.10; Ecclesiastes 6.6; 2 Peter 3.8)*

History: *Understanding religious, social, and socioeconomic life of the original authors and audiences will help us interpret passages of the Bible. We must remain aware as to not add our own backgrounds and culture to our reading of Scripture. (Romans 16.15; 1 Corinthians 16.20)*

Logic: *This is simply allowing our ability to reason logically and interpret evidence to play a role in understanding Scripture. Scripture should not contradict itself and it should make sense. (Matthew 27.37; Mark 15.26; Luke 23.38; *John 19.19-20*)*

Inference: *An inference is a fact reasonably implied from another fact. Inferential facts or propositions are sufficiently binding when their truth is established by competent and satisfactory evidence. (Matthew 27.48; Mark 15.36; John 19.29 = bathbroom sponge)*

3) Christo-Centric Principle

This one is the most important principle. It is the principle by which:

- *God reveals His heart and mind*
- *angels reveal their inspiration*
- *the enemy reveals their motivation for hatred and deception*
- *humans’ identity, design, purpose, and empowerment is revealed*

THREAD EXAMPLE ONE

GOD'S ANGER

(Discover that Jesus is perfect theology)

READING PRINCIPLE

Jesus is perfect theology. We can look to him to see God's character. This is important especially as we read difficult passages in the Old Testament.

KEY SCRIPTURES

John 14.8-11; Hebrews 1.1-3

READING HELP

Personally link or cross-reference passages in your Bible as you read and study.

HELP ASSUMPTION

You are continually reading and writing in your bible.

THREAD ONE EXAMPLE: GOD'S ANGER

Key Scriptures:

Mark 10.13-16; 11.15-19

Jesus is angry at those who:

- 1) Misrepresent or mistrust /distrust the Heavenly Father's character.
- 2) Inhibit others from having personal relationship with his Heavenly Father.

Old Testament Cross-References:

- Zechariah 7.8-14 → Zephaniah 3.11-13 → Nahum 1.2-7
- Micah 6.6-8 (see also Jonah 4.2; 1 John 4.7-21 → Joel 2.12-13 (NOTE: In the Old Testament, God's love is referenced 263 times while God's anger is only referenced 119 times.)
- Hosea 5.15; 6.6-7 (see also 7.11, 13-15); Genesis 3.6 – God's anger is directed toward Adam because he mistrusted God's character.

APPLICATION QUESTION

Do you see the Heavenly Father as primarily loving toward you or disappointed with you?

NOTES

THREAD EXAMPLE TWO

GOD'S DESIGN

(Discover that Jesus is perfect humanity)

READING PRINCIPLE

Jesus is perfect humanity. He is our model to follow for how we should think and live; that is, flesh empowered by the Holy Spirit.

KEY SCRIPTURES

John 1.14; Ephesians 6.12; Philippians 2.6-7; Hebrews 2.14-18; 5.7-10; 1 John 4.2-3; 2 John 7

READING HELP

Use multiple translations of the Bible in your study.

HELP ASSUMPTION

You have access to multiple translations.

THREAD TWO EXAMPLE: GOD'S DESIGN

Key Scriptures:

- Galatians 5.16 – The Greek word for “flesh” is *sarx*. (NOTE: Other translations: “sinful nature”, “selfish desires”, “old nature”, “flesh’s lust”. The Gk. word for “desire” and “lust” is *epethymesa* [see Luke 22.15; Galatians 5.17; and James 1.14]. Also, the fruit of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit reveal we can either trust God and His design for us or we can trust ourselves apart from the Holy Spirit.)
- John 5.30; 6.38-40; Matthew 26.40-42 – The desire of Jesus’ flesh (his will) is in opposition to God’s. (NOTE: *sarx* is a neutral term — for Paul it’s bad, for John it’s good. Therefore, it is the thing our flesh is tempted by that determines if it is good or bad.)

Old Testament Cross-References:

- Jeremiah 17.1-8; Ezekiel 18; Deuteronomy 8; Genesis 3 (see also 1 Kings 3.1-15 – we can gain wisdom through God [life-giving] or through our own means [life-taking])

APPLICATION QUESTION

When is it difficult for you to believe that Jesus can fully identify with you and understand you?

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THREAD EXAMPLE THREE

GOD'S COMMUNITY

(Discover that Jesus' Kingdom is Here)

READING PRINCIPLE

Jesus' Kingdom began during the time of John the Baptist. Jesus' death and resurrection coronated it. And the destruction of Jerusalem (along with the Temple) established the Kingdom. And Jesus will return to a world filled with his Kingdom.

KEY SCRIPTURES

Acts 1.6-8 → Matthew 10.7 = The Kingdom *IS* here.

READING HELP

Talk about what God is saying to you through Bible reading and personal conversations with Him.

HELP ASSUMPTION

You have a community of believers that you talk to and with whom you share your life.

THREAD TWO EXAMPLE: GOD'S DESIGN

Old Testament Cross-References:

- Genesis 3.15 → 12.3 (Galatians 3.8 – God's people include Gentiles by faith) → 2 Samuel 7.12-17 (Hebrews 5.8-9 – Suffering) → Daniel 2.31-35 (v.44) → Matthew 10.7

Key Scriptures:

- Jesus describes his Kingdom in Matthew 13:
 - ↳ 13.24-30 – Wheat & Weeds (see Isaiah 60:1-3, darkness and light)
 - ↳ 13.31-32 – Mustard Seed (small → big)
 - ↳ 13.33 – Leaven (little → permeates)

Community (his Kingdom) currently exists to encourage and strengthen each other to trust God amidst darkness and weeds until he comes back and receives his kingdom.

APPLICATION QUESTION

When or with who is it difficult for you to see Jesus' Kingdom existing right now?

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