

Delighting IN THE **Word**

**CONDENSED
STUDY GUIDE**

A SELF-DIRECTED GUIDE TO PROPERLY STUDY
AND MEDITATE ON ONE PASSAGE OF THE BIBLE

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Delighting in the Word

Additional Condensed Workbook Pages

**Throughout this study, if you need more room to write, feel free to write more on a separate sheet of paper.*

My Pericope: _____

Write out your pericope:

Before you move on to the next pages, ***read your passage multiple times***. Pray Psalm 119:18, “Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law.” Ask the Lord to help you have humility as you study His Word and be open to having your mind changed about what you thought you knew about this passage.

CONTEXTUALIZATION

Who is the author of my passage? _____

What is the author’s situation?

Who is the audience of my passage? _____

What is the audience’s situation?

What are some useful geographical and cultural considerations?

Literary Context: What is the Genre?

- Literary genre “acts as a kind of *covenant of communication*, a fixed agreement between author and reader about how to communicate”¹
- **BASIC APPROACH to each:**
 - **Narrative—**
 - Theological truths in story form
 - MAIN QUESTION: How does the story fit into the overall redemptive plan of God?
 - MAIN CAUTION: Don’t moralize the text into being a simple lesson about you.
 - **Law—**
 - Theological truths in covenant law form
 - MAIN QUESTION: What was the purpose of this section in God’s covenant with Israel?
 - MAIN CAUTION: Do not inappropriately apply Mosaic Law to the Christian. We are under New Covenant law of Christ.
 - **Poetry—**
 - Theological truths in poetic, artistic form
 - MAIN QUESTION: What is the encouragement or exhortation the poet is conveying?
 - MAIN CAUTION: While poetry is emotional, it is not solely for the purpose of creating immediate emotion.
 - **Prophecy—**
 - Theological truths in future-oriented predictive form.
 - MAIN QUESTION: How does this prophetic section fit into the overall redemptive plan of God?
 - SECOND QUESTION: Is the prophecy in my pericope fulfilled later in Scripture or a yet-to-be fulfillment to come?
 - MAIN CAUTION: Don’t wildly apply Bible prophecy to current events.
 - **Wisdom—**
 - Theological truths in proverbial or direct teaching form (but note that Psalms falls into poetry AND wisdom literature by many)
 - NOTE that there is a lot of overlap with POETRY and WISDOM literature.
 - MAIN QUESTION: What is the message of living a righteous life being conveyed by the text?
 - MAIN CAUTION: Don’t forget that wisdom literature is at times ambiguous because it is meant to make you think and meditate on the truth,

- **Gospel**—
 - Theological truths in narrative form centered on the advent of Jesus Christ to the earth.
 - MAIN QUESTION: How does this fit into God’s purposes for Messiah?
 - MAIN CAUTION: Don’t moralize the text immediately without understanding the bigger mission of Messiah.
- **Epistle (letter)**—
 - Theological truths presented in direct teaching, exhortation, rebuke, and application.
 - MAIN QUESTION: How does my pericope fit into the overall purpose and message of the epistle?
 - MAIN CAUTION: Lack of understanding of the original context will often lead to misapplication in your context.
- **Prophetic-Apocalyptic** (Revelation)
 - Theological truths presented at the end of the Bible which tie up all loose ends of prophecy, encourage the saved to persevere, and encourage the lost to repent.
 - MAIN QUESTION: How does my passage contribute to the completion of God’s redemptive program?
 - MAIN CAUTION: Don’t dismiss Revelation as being hopelessly mysterious and symbolic or as having already happened for the most part.
- **NOTE:** One Bible book is NOT always easily categorized—so pay attention to your particular pericope

What is the genre(s) of the book that my passage is in?

Go back and look at the main question(s) for your genre(s). Write the answer to that/those question(s) below:

Far Context

What covenant is the book in? (Keep this in mind and don't misapply)

Circle one:

Israelite Covenant

New Covenant

What is the main message or theme of the Bible book?

What major section of the Bible book does my passage fall into? (Use a few sample outlines from resources to give you an idea of the overall flow of the book)

Near Context

What is the main message or theme of the major section my passage falls into?

What is happening right before and right after and how might this have a bearing on my passage?

MEDITATION

REVIEW: Steps in a Useful Meditation Time:

1. Prayer as the starting point
2. Choose a small, specific biblical truth
3. Reasonable and logical implications
4. Self-Examination questions
5. Personal application and prayer

Begin with prayer asking God to sharpen your mind to the truths found in the Scripture you are studying.

What is one specific truth you have gained from the study of your passage so far?

What are some reasonable and logical implications from this truth?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Write some self-examination questions based on what you have learned about this specific truth.
Once you've written them down, choose to meditate on one or more of the answers.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

APPLICATION AND PRAYER

How can you personally apply what you have learned from this passage to your life? Using the previous Psalm 23 examples of Personal Application and Prayer, write down some of your personal application assignments and prayers based on your pericope:

Assignment	Date Assignment Finished

For further study, write down on a separate page more spiritual truths you have learned from this portion of the study. Add reasonable and logical implications, self-examination questions, and personal application & prayer for each spiritual truth.

Once you have completed all of your application assignments, you may move on to the next chapter. **Don't rush this step!** Applications become a personalized program of sanctification based on what the Spirit of God is doing in YOU with this text.

OBSERVATION

Basic Approaches to Observation

- Ask the “W” questions:

- Who is speaking? _____
- Who is spoken of? _____
- Who is spoken to? _____
- What is happening? _____

- What is the flow of passage? _____

- What is the argument being made? _____

- Where, geographically, is this taking place? _____

- Where, metaphorically, is the author and/or listener spiritually?

- When does this take place in relation to other events in the Bible?

- Do the verbs indicate past, present, or future?

- Is urgency or patience more emphasized? _____

- Why is this passage in this part of the book?

- Why might the Lord include this in Scripture?

- Patterns and Relationships:

- How much space devoted to various topics? _____

- What is first and last? _____

- Are there important word or phrase orders? _____

- Noticeable repetition of words or ideas? _____

- What connecting words are there? _____

- Do phrases or words modify others? (adjectives and adverbs)

- Are there questions and answers, statement of fact, or both?

- Any cause-and-effect relationships? _____

- Any comparisons or contrasts? _____

- **Actions**

- What are the verbs in the text? _____

- Are they commands? Passive? Wishes/hopes? _____

- **Noting Random Questions as You Study (sometimes the most fruitful part of study!)**

Write down any random questions you have as you study:

- Important Definitions (use resources for help)

Word	Definition

CORRELATION

THE USE OF HELPFUL CROSS REFERENCES

Using a concordance choose some key words from your passage and note their reference.

Key Word	References			

After looking up these references in context, cross out any that muddy the waters or don't expand on understanding your passage. Highlight any that clarify or add to your main idea.

Using cross-references in your Bible or another source, list some other passages that might relate to your passage.

References			

After looking up these references in context, cross out any that muddy the waters or don't expand on understanding your passage. Highlight any that clarify or add to your main idea.

Can you think of any previous sermons you have heard that address your passage or related topics? Look back at your sermon notes or search online to see if you can find any sermons that correlate to your passage and write down some notes that add to your study.

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INTERPRETATION

Combine and condense your observations into useful statements:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Write your synthesized statement(s):

Gospel Implications

1. Is there a comparison/contrast between the faithful and the lost?

2. Is there a gospel command or principle to follow?

3. Is there a gospel warning given or implied?

4. Is there a direct gospel truth I could glean from my knowledge of other passages?

Theological Truths:

1. What truths about God does my text demonstrate?

2. What truths about mankind does my text demonstrate?

INFORMATION

Now that you have completed a large part of your study on your own, find a few helpful resources to supplement your study. Review the following considerations before refining or correcting your interpretation.

Gathering Extra Information

1. It serves as a checking principle to make certain you didn't come up with a completely original interpretation.
2. It serves as a corrective if you came to a mistaken conclusion (but only believe this if an author gives a compelling argument).
3. It enriches your study with the study of others and fills in some blanks with specialized study not readily available in the Bible text itself.
4. Provides the author's unique meditations and application which stimulates your own thinking.

Evaluating and Using Commentaries

1. Resources are written by fallible human beings
2. Know the difference between an opinion stated as a fact and a position supported with reasons/arguments.
3. Beware of commentaries that imply a low view of Scripture.
4. Evaluate a resource's sense of profound respect for the literal interpretation of Scripture and for the clear acceptance of the historical nature of Bible events.

1. List any commentaries or resources you are using to gather extra information:

2. Did you learn anything new that helped you refine or correct your interpretation?

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EVALUATION AND PRESENTATION

1. Review all your meditations
2. Prayerfully evaluate what the Lord is doing in your life, heart, and mind through this study
 - a. What has the Lord taught you during this study? How has this impacted your life? What have you learned about God through this study?

3. Consider options for presentation. Share what you are learning with family and friends!
 - a. How might you present what you have learned? What friends or family might you share it with? When?

4. Plan your next study! Repeat this process and make it a lifestyle!!
 - a. What study might you want to complete next? List some ideas for another pericope:

MEDITATION – ON THIS WHOLE STUDY

Will you change your own life by making the decision to do what you've now been trained to do?

Nathanael Ranew: "Little meditating makes lean Christians, of little life, little strength, little growth, and of little usefulness to others."²

John Ball: "Meditation is a serious, earnest and purposed musing upon some point of Christian instruction, tending to lead us forward toward the Kingdom of Heaven, and serving our daily strengthening against the flesh, the world, and the devil."³

Thomas Watson, "Let [your] meditation be reduced to practice. Live out your meditation . . . Meditation and practice, like two sisters, must go hand in hand . . . The end of meditation is practice."⁴

Write your own meditations or choose one or more of the Puritan prompts listed below for further meditation on this entire study.

1. Your major sin to fight
2. The glory of God
3. The attributes of God
4. God's sovereignty and providence
5. Eternity and future things
6. The stewardship of your life
7. Your coming death
8. The spiritual value of your life

NOTES

¹ Duvall and Hayes, *Journey into God's Word*, 64.

² Ranew, *Solitude Improved*, 157.

³ John Ball, *Divine Meditation*, 3.

⁴ Thomas Watson, *Christian on the Mount*, 100-102.