

September 13, 2015

Observation – *What does it say?* **Interpretation** – *What does it mean?* **Application** – *What does it mean for me?*

This email accompanied the handout for the group this week:

The handout for this week's group will look a bit different - actually a lot different. You will need to use your own Bible since the text is not included.

Read through John 8, with special attention to verses 42-59 where we will concentrate this Sunday. Then use the handout as a simple framework to organize your own Observation, Interpretation, and Application notes.

I hope this change will have several beneficial effects:

1. Using your own Bible means we will have an interesting variety of translations. That variety can help us see how different scholars tried to communicate the truth of Scripture from Greek into English. The differences often provide insight into the shades of meaning of various words or phrases.
2. Having your Bible open to the passage will be a great help in seeing the broader context. The handouts we have been using are convenient, but quite limited. It is difficult to glance back to something that happened in an earlier passage that we may have discussed a week or two before. Using your Bible makes that quick review more convenient. Your own Bible also has the advantage of finding a passage later ("I know Jesus said something about this on the bottom of the left-hand page.")
3. As helpful as the handout format is (for me at least), your normal Bible study (in your quiet time or in your Life Group) most likely doesn't have that particular structure. This transition to a more general format is intended to make your own inductive study even more independent of the layout or arrangement of the passage - independent of everything except the text and the Holy Spirit.
4. Your Bible will have verse and chapter divisions, and probably will include descriptive headings for larger sections. Do your best (at first) to ignore them. See if the paragraph breaks inserted by the translators make sense to you, or if you might divide things differently based on your understanding of the text. Do you see places where even the verse divisions (added a thousand years or so after John wrote) may break the flow of a thought? And I won't say any more about footnotes....except to read them after you have studied the text. Do you agree with the editors notes based on your own study? (Unlike the text, the notes are not inspired!).
5. Using your own Bible will make it much more natural for you to use good inductive study methods in your Life Group discussions or your personal study in Scripture. One of the benefits of this inductive method is that it is very reproducible and transferable. Sharing over a cup of coffee with a friend as you open the Bible to a passage is a way that you can help others improve their own study as well.

See you on Sunday for another great discussion, d.v.

Mike

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The Gospel According to John 8:42 - 59

Using your own Bible in your preferred translation, read the passage several times. Use this page to note your observations, questions about interpretation, and possible application from this text. Be sure to note verse numbers to help others in the group during our discussion.

<i>Observation (What does it <u>say</u>?)</i>	<i>Interpretation (What does it <u>mean</u>?)</i>	<i>Application (What does it mean <u>for me</u>?)</i>
<p><i>What <u>facts</u> do you observe about the passage (repetition, comparisons, contrasts, cause and effect, unusual words, etc.)? Mark the passage (underline, circles, etc.) to help bring out the writer's thought process.</i></p>	<p><i>What <u>questions</u> come to mind about the facts of the passage that would help you interpret the writer's meaning?</i></p>	<p><i>How does the writer's meaning relate to your life? What <u>specific application</u> might the Holy Spirit want to show you?</i></p>