

2 Corinthians

Cracked Pots and Crazy Love

Week Five

Last week we moved into the **“Interpret”** stage of Inductive Bible Study, where we answer the question, “What does it mean?” We began collecting tools that help us answer that question. The first item in our tool belt was “Context.” In other words, questions about a passage are often answered by what comes before or after it.

One question we often should ask in Bible Study is “What does this WORD mean?” That is, we “should” but if we’re honest we often skate right past important or unfamiliar words without questioning their meaning. Some words become so familiar to us we don’t think about their meaning anymore. A favorite family movie, “The Princess Bride” features a villain whose pet expression is, “Inconceivable!” Eventually, another character challenges him, “I do not think that word means what you think it means.” So true!

The second Interpretation Tool for our Bible Study Tool Belt is as obvious and underused as “Context.” It’s a **Dictionary**. The translators of your Bible chose the words they did for a reason. If you come across an unfamiliar word, or if you notice a word that seems important to the passage (maybe it’s repeated a lot) look it up in the Dictionary. Even familiar words have shades of meaning that get lost with overuse (like, “awesome!”). You may be surprised at what you can learn from a dictionary, for example, where a word came from, or meanings it carried in the past that we’ve forgotten. It’s important to remember that we use both of these Tools together. For a very simple illustration, your dictionary may give you several very different definitions for the word “trunk”. The context in which the word is used lets you know which is the correct meaning.

Week Five Homework

Observe (What Do I SEE?)

Pray...Read...Mark up the passage...List one observation per verse.

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:16 (NIV)

Observations

¹⁴ Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? ¹⁵ What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."

¹⁷ "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you."

¹⁸ "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

2 Corinthians 7

¹ Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates

body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

² Make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have exploited no one. ³ I do not say this to condemn you; I have said before that you have such a place in our hearts that we would live or die with you. ⁴ I have great confidence in you; I take great pride in you. I am greatly encouraged; in all our troubles my joy knows no bounds.

⁵ For when we came into Macedonia, this body of ours had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn— conflicts on the outside, fears within. ⁶ But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, ⁷ and not only by his coming but also by the comfort you had given him. He told us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, your ardent concern for me, so that my joy was greater than ever.

⁸ Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while— ⁹ yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. ¹⁰ Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. ¹¹ See what this godly sorrow has

produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter. ¹² So even though I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong or of the injured party, but rather that before God you could see for yourselves how devoted to us you are. ¹³ By all this we are encouraged.

In addition to our own encouragement, we were especially delighted to see how happy Titus was, because his spirit has been refreshed by all of you. ¹⁴ I had boasted to him about you, and you have not embarrassed me. But just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting about you to Titus has proved to be true as well. ¹⁵ And his affection for you is all the greater when he remembers that you were all obedient, receiving him with fear and trembling. ¹⁶ I am glad I can have complete confidence in you.

“Lump and Label” ...Go back over the passage and look for 2-4 “lumps” of content that each express one idea. Give each “lump” a “label.” Try to make your labels as brief as possible.

<i>Lump (verses)</i>	<i>Label</i>

List any questions you have about this passage.

Interpret (What Does it MEAN?)

Use a Dictionary to gain insight...if any of your questions involved a word whose meaning isn't clear, look it up in a dictionary. Or, if a word seems very important to the passage, be sure you're clear on what it means. Record what you find.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to record their findings from a dictionary. The box is currently blank.

Apply (How Does it WORK?)

Make it practical. Now that you have spent some time looking in detail at God's Word, don't stop! Ask yourself, "How does this work...in general...and for ME?" You may find it helpful to look for...

S—a SIN to avoid

P—a PROMISE to claim

E—an EXAMPLE to follow

C—a COMMAND to obey

K—KNOWLEDGE of God to believe

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the lower half of the page. It is intended for the user to write their answers to the questions posed above.