

VII. Commentaries & Bible Dictionaries

If you are going to use a Bible commentary it is best to **use it towards the end of your study**, rather than at the beginning.

Uses of Commentaries:

- Give details
- Checking our own work

When Choosing a Bible Dictionary/Encyclopedia consider:

- Reputation
 - Recency
 - References
 - Relevancy
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How To Study the Bible Schedule

Class 1: The Inductive Study Method Pt 1

Class 2: The Inductive Study Method Pt 2

Class 3: Studying the Old and New Testaments

Class 4: The Bible's Genres

Class 5: Using Commentaries & Other Bible Study Tools

Class 6: Studying Difficult Passages and Familiar Passages

Further Questions?

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Core Seminars—How to Study the Bible Class 5: Using Commentaries & Other Bible Study Tools



I. The Author's Purpose

Intent is clear:

John 20.30-31

Intent is NOT clear:

Four questions for NT epistles & OT prophets

1. Who is writing to whom?
2. What is the situation of the author and reader?
3. Are there any problems or issues explicitly identified as things to be addressed?
4. Are certain things repeated or is there a central idea that holds everything together?

Take-home exercise: 2 Timothy 1:9-10

II. Context

Novel vs. encyclopedia

We should ask how this passage fits into what comes before and after it.

III. Structure

Two questions:

1. Has the author divided his material into sections?
2. How do those sections fit together?

How to determine structure?

1. Look for repeated words or repeated themes.
2. In narratives, look for scene changes.
3. In dialogues, divide the text based on who is speaking.
4. Trace progressions of thought or argument

IV. Parallels

Isaiah 55:6

*Seek the LORD while he may be found;
Call on him while he is near.*

V. Linking Words—What Are They?

- Give examples... *for instance*
- Add information... *Furthermore*
- Summarize... *In short*
- Sequence/show a progression of ideas... *Firstly, secondly, ... finally*
- Give a reason... *Because, For* (2 Chronicles 20:21; 1 Cor. 7:9), *If* (2 Peter 2:4-9)
- Give a result or purpose... *So that*
- Contrast ideas... *However*
- Distinguish... *And*
- Indicate a particular consequence of a preceding statement... *Therefore, Consequently, For this Reason* (Hebrews 4:14-15; Phil. 2:5-11).
- Make a statement conditional ... *If* (Deut. 28:13, 15)
- Tell the purpose behind something or introduce the result of something... *So that* (Eph. 3:16-17; Luke 12:1).

VI. Repetition

Uses of Repetition:

- Repetition highlights the main point of the text (John 6:47-59).
- Repetition reveals the author's opinion/interpretation of the narrative (Daniel 3:1-7).
- Repetition emphasizes the main idea (2 Timothy 2:3-6). Repetition isn't always repeated words or phrases, occasionally it consists of repeated ideas.
- Repetition sets the tone/feeling of the text (Revelation 18:9-11, 15-20). Sometimes the repetition tool can act sort of like the tone and feel tool, providing sense or mood of a passage so as to heighten our sensitivity to the text's point.