

Talking about the Bible

Review: Assumptions, Objectives, and Assertions

Assumptions (belief without definitive proof)

1. **All believers talk about the Bible** (informally and/or formally)
2. **Believers don't always follow a very Bible-informed process** (when talking about the Bible)
3. **In our current age of outrage, believers can do better**

Objectives (what we want in talking about the Bible)

1. **Be prepared** (**Titus 2:1-5**) (be prepared for old age)
2. **Be faithful** (**1 Corinthians 4:1-2**) (we are stewards of God's word)
3. **Be engaging** (heads, hearts, and hands)

Assertions (these things are true)

1. **God tells us what the Bible is** (God's authoritative, inerrant, clear, necessary, and sufficient word; HT: Wayne Grudem; **2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12**)
2. **God tells us what the Bible gives** (**2 Peter 1:1-4**)
3. **God tells us the resources He provides** (To help believers talk about the Bible, God has given us His Spirit, His Word, and His church to help us. The Holy Spirit and the Bible provide illumination and the church provides confirmation (and/or rebuke). And we scale up and down as opportunities and wisdom dictates.)

Schedule (where we're going, Lord willing)

Last week: Introduction & praying; **today:** hearing; **December 2:** thinking; **December 9:** talking; **December 16:** sharing

Overview of this series

The Bible gives us ideas on how to approach talking about the Bible. These include praying for help, hearing God's word, thinking about God's word, talking to others about God's word, and finally sharing God's word.

There's no single passage that walks us through all of these steps, but this series is about looking across the Scriptures to see what the Bible tells us about how to talk about the Bible—because if the Bible gives us all things for life and godliness, it will certainly tell us how to use the Bible.

Review: Process Step #1: Pray

Our attitudes

1. Fear (**Proverbs 9:10**)
2. Dependence (**2 Chronicles 20**)
3. Expectancy (**Psalm 119:18; James 1:5**)

Our actions

1. Pray for illumination (**1 Corinthians 2:12; Ephesians 1:15-21**)
2. Pray for wisdom (**James 1:5**)
3. Pray for hearing for the hearers (**Revelation 2:7a, 11a, 17a, 29; 3:6, 13, 22**)

Our practice: Process Step #1: Pray

Let's practice last week's lesson as we start this week's lesson. Take a moment and ensure you have an attitude of fear, dependence, and expectancy about the Scripture we are about to hear.

Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate this week's text (**John 18**), ask for wisdom, and pray for the hearing of the other believers in this room.

Now, let's transition to this week's lesson.

Process Step #2: Hear

What it is not

Hearing is not **reading**. Hearing is hearing.

There's nothing wrong with reading—reading the Bible is encouraged in the Bible. The Bible commands kings and spiritual leaders to be able to read the Bible and a special blessing is given in **Revelation** for reading **Revelation**, but the majority of commands in the Bible for consuming God's word are around hearing, not reading. We'll talk more about reading and how to read in next week's lesson.

What it is

Hearing the Bible being read **out loud** (in Bible times, live by another believer).

Here are a few takeaways from a few passages where the Bible is read out loud.

Our attitudes

1. Respect (Nehemiah 8:1-8)

1 Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that *was* in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded Israel. **2** So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who *could* hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month. **3** Then he read from it in the open square that *was* in front of the Water Gate from morning until midday, before the men and women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people *were attentive* to the Book of the Law.

4 So Ezra the scribe stood on a platform of wood which they had made for the purpose; and beside him, at his right hand, stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Urijah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah; and at his left hand Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbadana, Zechariah, *and* Meshullam. **5** And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was *standing* above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. **6** And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God.

Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground.

7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law; and the people *stood* in their place. **8** So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped *them* to understand the reading.

How often does the way we listen mimic these listeners' approach?

2. Deference (Nehemiah 8:9) (Merriam Webster: (1) respect and esteem due a superior or an elder, (2) affected or ingratiating regard for another's wishes)

And Nehemiah, who *was* the governor, Ezra the priest *and* scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day *is* holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn nor weep." For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law. These people were moved by how their lives did not match what the word of God said and they wept. They deferred to the Scripture on how their lives were to be lived. May the same be said of us.

Our actions

1. **Read the Bible out loud to others (1 Thessalonians 5:27; 1 Timothy 4:13; Revelation 1:3)**

I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

2. **Hear the Bible being read aloud (1 Thessalonians 5:27; 1 Timothy 4:13; Revelation 1:3)**

I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

BLTs: Hearing is not reading. We should hear more often.

Our practice: John 18:1-11

Now, please join me in practicing this week's lesson. Please take a moment to consciously respect God's word and to position your heart to defer to whatever it teaches in **John 18**.

I'll read **John 18:1-11** out loud, then I'll ask for volunteers at each table to read **John 18:1-11** out loud at your table as well. Once you have completed reading **John 18:1-11** out loud at your table, you are free to begin the table prayer time.

John 18:1-11 (NKJV)

Betrayal and Arrest in Gethsemane

1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.

2 And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. 3 Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. 4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

5 They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth."

Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. 6 Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

7 Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?"

And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

8 Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way," 9 that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none."

10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"

Let's get one volunteer at each table to read **John 18:1-11** out loud at your table. Once you have completed reading **John 18:1-11** out loud at your table, you are free to begin the table prayer time.

Next week: Process Step #3: Think

Homework (note that these steps are additive)

1. Ask the Holy Spirit for help in understanding **John 18:1-11**
2. Hear **John 18:1-11** as many times as you can this week
3. Invite a member or non-member

Suggested resource

Jeffrey Arthurs, *Devote Yourself to the Public Reading of Scripture: The Transforming Power of the Well-Spoken Word* (Kregel Academic & Professional, 2012)