

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)

Week 1: pray; **week 2:** hear; **today:** think; **December 9:** talk; **December 16:** share

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.

And, since confidence comes from familiarity, we're going to practice a lot in class.

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: pray before we talk

Let's practice process step #1. Take a moment and ensure we have an attitude of fear, dependence, and expectancy about this text.

Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate this week's text (**John 18:1-11**), ask for wisdom, and pray for the hearing of the other believers in this room.

Review: Process Step #2: Hear

What it is not: hearing is not reading

What it is: hearing the Bible being read out loud

Our attitudes

1. Respect (**Nehemiah 8:1-8**)
2. Deference (**Nehemiah 8:9**)

Our actions

1. Read the Bible out loud to others (**1 Thess. 5:27; 1 Timothy 4:13; Rev. 1:3**)
2. Hear the Bible being read aloud (**1 Thess. 5:27; 1 Timothy 4:13; Rev. 1:3**)

Our practice: hearing isn't reading and hear more often

Let's practice process step #2. Take a moment to consciously respect God's word and to position our hearts to defer to whatever it teaches in **John 18:1-11**.

I'll read **John 18:1-11** out loud, and you please listen.

Now, let's move to process step #3.

Process Step #3: Think

Why do we need to think about God's word?

1 Corinthians 13:11: When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. There is a childish way of thinking. We shouldn't keep a childish mind.

Isaiah 55:8-9: 8 "For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, Nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD.

9 "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. God doesn't think like me—*of*, yes; *like*, no.

Romans 8:5: For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. This takes focus and time and there is nothing here about hurried thoughts.

Our attitudes

1. **Humility** (Psalm 119:15, 27)

I will meditate on Your precepts,
And contemplate Your ways. Not my ways or my words, but His ways & words.

Make me understand the way of Your precepts;
So shall I meditate on Your wonderful works. Not my works, but His works.

2. **Wonder** (Psalm 119:48; 92:5)

My hands also I will lift up to Your commandments,
Which I love,
And I will meditate on Your statutes. I hope there's been times when you think about God's word and you just throw up your hands in wonder.

O Lord, how great are Your works! Your thoughts are very deep. His thoughts are **very deep**. My thoughts are not. Don't blow past His deepness.

3. **Steadfastness** (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2)

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Day and night. Day and night. Day and night.

But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night. Day and night. Day and night.

Our actions

1. Think about God's word **day** and **night** (Psalm 63:6; 119:148)

**When I remember You on my bed,
I meditate on You in the *night* watches.**

**My eyes are awake through the *night* watches,
That I may meditate on Your word. What do we think about when we can't sleep?**

2. Think **up** (Colossians 3:2)

Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. God's word is from above, so that certainly fits in this category.

One caution: Proverbs 23:7 & Hendricks & Hendricks quote about empty vs. filled.

BLTs: Think about God's word day and night and think up.

Our practice: John 18:1-11

Let's practice process step #3. Take a moment to think in a humble way, a way that acknowledges wonder, and a way that steadfastly focuses on **John 18:1-11**.

For the next three minutes, just think about **John 18:1-11**. There will be dozens of distractions, but just think about these words.

Take three minutes and think.

If you feel the need to write down observations, that's fine, but I'd love for you to just think about **John 18:1-11**.

Next week: Process Step #4: Talk

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. Slowly think about **John 18:1-11** often this week
4. Invite a member or non-member

Suggested resource

Howard G. Hendricks and William D. Hendricks, *Living by the Book* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 110-114.