

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; **week 3:** think; **today:** 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.

Review: Process Step #3: Think

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

There is a childish way of thinking, God does think like me, and this takes focus and time (not hurry). **1 Corinthians 13:11; Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 8:5**

Our attitudes

1. **Humility (Psalm 119:15, 27)**
2. **Wonder (Psalm 119:48; 92:5)**
3. **Steadfastness (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2)**

Our actions

1. **Think about God's word day and night (Psalm 63:6; 119:148)**
2. **Think up (Colossians 3:2)**

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

Our practice: slow down and think

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 one minute, just think about **John 18:1-11**. There will be distractions, but just think about these words. (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**.)

Now, let's move to process step #4.

Process Step #4: Talk

What it is not: talking to others about my opinions. (This is me-focused and is a great way to turn ourselves into Pharisees who know and hypothesize and do nothing. God never calls us to guess about His word.)

What it is: talking with other believers (both alive and dead) to better understand God and His word. (This is God-focused.)

Our attitudes

1. **Incompleteness (Luke 2:52)**

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. If Jesus can increase in wisdom and in favor with God, certainly we should accept we have room to. This attitude creates space for the next attitude.

2. **Teachableness** (Acts 18:24-28)

24 Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. 27 And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; 28 for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

Our actions

1. **Talk** to those willing to **teach** (Acts 28:24-28)
2. Use available **resources** (2 Timothy 4:13) (and go back to them as needed)

Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus [a person] **at Troas** [a city] **when you come—and the books** [*biblion*; a roll: bill, book, scroll, writing], **especially the parchments** [*membrana*; a (written) sheep-skin: parchment].

BLT: learn from others (i.e., we need we)

Our practice: John 18:1-11

Let's practice process step #4. Take a moment to acknowledge our incompleteness (of our knowledge of God and His word) and to approach **John 18:1-11** in a teachable way—in a way that says, "I don't know it all."

Resources exist to help us. Let's learn from others and from others' resources. One resource is blb.org. It has an online interlinear (a verse in the original language on top of a verse in English) that can help with a lot of information about the original.

Who has a question about a word in this text? Let's look up that word. Pull out your phones and go to blb.org.

As you are going to blb.org, let me remind us that this process is additive, not just sequential. Add step #2 to #1. Add step #3 to #1 & #2. Add #4 to #1, #2, and #3.

There are hundreds and hundreds of resources like this. But answering the question, "What's a good resource?" can be overwhelming. Where do we start? With people we know and study with—and with others who have been helpful.

Next week: Process Step #5: Share

Homework (note that these steps are additive)

1. Pray for help in understanding **John 18:1-11**
2. Hear **John 18:1-11** often this week
3. Think about **John 18:1-11** day and night week
4. Talk with someone (dead or alive) about **John 18:1-11** this week
5. Invite a member or non-member

Suggested resources

Daniel L. Akin, *Building a Theological Library*. Last updated 2017. [danielakin.com: danielakin.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/2017-BTL-web.pdf](http://danielakin.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/2017-BTL-web.pdf) (Wake Forrest, NC: Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017).

Kay Arthur, David Arthur, and Pete De Lacy, *How to Study Your Bible* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2010), 157-192.

Jim Fleming, *Online Bible Study*. Last updated August 12, 2015. [OurSundaySchool.com: oursundayschool.com/resources/Online Bible Study \(Teacher\).pdf](http://oursundayschool.com/resources/Online Bible Study (Teacher).pdf).

Mark M. Yarbrough, *How to Read the Bible like a Seminary Professor* (New York, Boston, Nashville: Faith Words, 2015).