



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; **week 4:** talk; **today:** 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've practiced 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 John 18:1-11.

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 minute, just think about **John 18:1-11**. Now, let's move to step #4.

Review: Process Step #4: Talk

What it is not: talking to others about my opinions (this is me-focused)

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

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)

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

Let's practice process step #4. Take a moment to acknowledge incompleteness and approach **John 18:1-11** in a teachable way. Ask someone, "What did you observe?"

Process Step #5: Share

Our attitudes

1. **Lowliness** (Proverbs 15:1-2; John 3:30)

**1 A soft answer turns away wrath,
But a harsh word stirs up anger.**

**2 The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly,
But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.** The wise use knowledge (including knowledge of Scripture) wisely—not for our own glory or reputation.

 **He must increase, but I must decrease.** John the Baptist went on a rant at the end of **John 3** and proclaimed that it was not about John, but about Jesus. **Bob Goff:** When we care more about what our faith looks like than what it is, it's time to take a walk around the block.

2. **Intention** (Proverbs 15:28; 26:4-5)

**The heart of the righteous studies how to answer,
But the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.** “How” to answer, not “what.” We should know “what” to answer because Scripture tells us that plainly. But it takes wisdom to know “how” to answer. (It's easier when you know people well.)

**4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly,
Lest you also be like him.**

**5 Answer a fool according to his folly,
Lest he be wise in his own eyes.** We must discern when to engage.

3. **Calm** (Proverbs 17:27)

He who has knowledge spares his words,

 **And a man of understanding is of a calm spirit.** **Dave Ramsey:** When you teach the truth expect people who believe a lie to be angry...sometimes very angry.

4. **Patience** (Proverbs 18:13; 26:17)

**He who answers a matter before he hears it,
It is folly and shame to him.**

 **Speedbumps picture:** we should slow down and listen—and perhaps delay.

 **President Johnson picture.** **17 He who passes by and meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a dog by the ears.** Note that there will be people foolish enough to do this and that there will be those who stand around smiling at the fool doing it. Fools always have an audience.

Our actions

1. **Speak the truth in love** (Ephesians 4:11-16)

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

2. **Trust the Lord with the outcome** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

God is in charge of the outcomes, so let's trust Him and His word to do what He said He and His word will do.

BLT: love others and trust God

Our practice: John 18:1-11

Let's practice process step #5. Take a moment in a lowly, intentional, calm, and patient way to think about how to talk about **John 18:1-11**.

How could we speak the truth of this text in love, trusting God with the outcome?

Summary

This is the process I use to teach. I pray for help. I hear/read the text many times. I think about the text for days and days. I talk to a lot of other believers (some dead, some alive). And I finish by standing in front of you and letting God's word do what God says it will do. And since the age of 16—when I taught the Bible for the first time, He and His word have never let me down—and He never will. Because He and He alone is faithful and true.



Suggested resource

ESV Scripture Journal: Mark (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2016).

Homework (note that these steps are additive)

1. Pray for help in understanding **Mark**
2. Hear **Mark** multiple times
3. Think about **Mark** day and night
4. Talk with someone (dead or alive) about **Mark**
5. Share your insights with others about **Mark**
6. Invite a member and a non-member



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Let's move into our table prayer time.