

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY - PBS

1. PBS - Definition:

Involves hard work and deep understanding of the text. Studying is the discipline and purposeful application of the mind to acquire and retain knowledge. Bible study is finding out the meaning of a particular Biblical passage, understanding the text as its author explains it for personal application.

2. Five ways of knowing Bible:

1. Hearing (Retaining Power 30%)
2. Reading (Retaining Power 40%)
3. Meditation (Retaining Power 50%)
4. Studying (Retaining Power about 80%)
5. Memorising (Retaining Power about 90%)

3. Purpose of PBS

- To grow in spiritual life
- To grow in the knowledge of God and His will
- To understand the Biblical truths in a proper way
- To meet the spiritual needs of others
- To overcome false teaching and cults

4. Preparation for PBS:

4.1 Qualification (Essential)

- A new heart - I Cor 2:14
- A Hungry heart - I Peter 2:3
- An obedient heart - Psalms 119: 98-100
- A Teachable heart - Isa 50:4

4.2 Tools for PBS

- Bible in mother tongue
- Different versions of the Bible (Viz., KJV (1611); NKJV; NASB; TEV; NEB; LB; Paraphrase; NIV; J.B. Philips; Catholic versions etc., - I John 3: 6,9
- Language Dictionary
- Note Book or file
- Bible Dictionary
- Bible Handbook, Atlas etc.,
- Bible concordance

5.0 Three steps of Inductive Bible Study:

OBSERVATION: Noting down what is said in the text, not from our memory or sentiment or fantasy. It means act of recognising and noting down facts. It is to find out “WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE REALLY SAY?”

INTERPRETATION: Determining the meaning of the observed facts to see what the author wanted his then readers to understand. It is to understand “WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE REALLY MEAN TO THE PEOPLE THEN?”

APPLICATION: Personally accepting and actively responding now to the truth learned. It is to know “WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE REALLY MEAN TODAY TO ME?”

6.0 OBSERVATION:**6.1 Points to ponder in Observation:**

- The Literary form (Narrative, discourse, poetry, Apocalyptic)
- Repeated words & phrases (Mt. 28:18-20; Lk.12:16-21; Rom. 7:7-25; law, sin, death, good)
- Time words (after, then, immediately, the next day)
- Place words (sea of Galilee Mk. 1:1-20, Judea)
- Comparisons / Contrasts (I Jn. 3:10; Eph. 4:9; Eph. 5:8-16; 2:1-2)
- Related entitles (Mt. 10:8)
- Unknown words and phrases (Lk. 15:1-7; Pharisee, parable)
- Connectives and linking words (so, then, but, for, therefore, now, since, because, as)
- Figurative expressions (Mk. 1:17, Fishers, 7 sandals; Mk. 2:17, doctor, sickman, v19 - Bridegroom, lion, bearing fruit; I Cor.3:16 Temple of God; I Peter 2:2, New born babies, metaphor; similie)
- Grammatical elements (Noun, Verbs, Adverbs)
- Mood: Praise, despair, hope, warning, encouragement.

6.2 Seven Fact Finding Questions:

1. What ? Event, incident and argument
2. Who? People
3. When? Time
4. Where? Place
5. Why? Reason or purpose
6. How? Method and manner
7. So? Result

7.0 INTERPRETATION

The main purpose of interpretation is to know what God / the author has in his mind; What did those facts mean to those people who were living then is the objective of this step.

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION:

1. Interpret according to context. con-with text - passage; What comes after the passage and what has gone before.
2. Interpret according to the right meaning of the word
3. Interpret according to the plan and purpose of the author
4. Interpret according to the historical, Geographical, cultural, social and religious background. The first and primary meaning of the passage is what it meant in its historical and cultural context, i.e., what people living then ought to have understood.
5. Interpret according to the whole purpose of the Bible. Compare Scripture with Scripture.
6. Interpret according to the grammar Tense, verbs, nouns, etc.

8.0 APPLICATION:

Real goal of Bible Study is to live a life which would glorify God. Bible learning is not for human knowledge. Our response can be expressed in different ways.

- By obeying God's commands and prohibitions; some thing we ought to do and something we are not to do in O.T; some are historical for that time and some are timeless.
- By claiming His promises and avoiding His threats (conditional and Unconditional promises)
- By learning from good and bad Bible Characters.