

Bible Study Methods - Part 3

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Introduction. This message picks up on ransacking the text.

I. Ransacking the text.

A. Share with me some of your observations on your reading of I Peter.

1. This is a book of spiritual biography.
2. Peter exhorts believers to endure hardships.
3. Most verbs in this book are in the imperative mood.
4. Believers are told to hold the faith in I Peter even in the face of trials.
5. Peter deals not with the beginning of faith but the continuing of faith.
6. Faith is a process, changing the whole of life.
7. Peter also deals with suffering persecution.
8. Peter emphasizes relationship with God.

B. This process of thinking is the way of deciding what a book is really teaching.

1. The vertical relationship determines the horizontal relationships.
2. This is why the structure of the book is crucial to its message.
3. Initial observations are rarely understood fully until the book has been studied completely.

C. What comparisons exist in I Peter?

1. Christ is the example in this book.
2. Peter uses Jesus as the primary leverage in motivating a believer to persevere in suffering.
3. The Navigators are motivators and need to take a lesson from Peter by realizing motivation comes from looking at Jesus Christ.
4. We need to motivate people to study the Word because it is the power of God.
 - a. The Christian community will not motivate because sometimes it is in error.

- b. Peer pressure will not motivate believers to get in the Word.
- c. Only Jesus Christ will motivate a believer to get in the Word and obey God by sharing his faith.
- d. Motivation is the basis of all education and there is no greater leverage than looking at Jesus Christ.

D. More observations.

1. This book is written to scattered believers.
2. The thrust of Peter's epistle is related to the mouth.
3. Believers need to praise God even in difficult circumstances.
4. Eschatology is embraced when believers realize their sure hope is sure now.
5. The subject of one another is strong in I Peter.
6. This book reveals how Jesus Christ changed Peter's life.
 - a. He learned patience.
 - b. He learned more about prayer.
 - c. He learned endurance.
 - d. He learned humility.
 - e. He learned submission, which is a sign of strength.
 1. Wives submit to husbands.
 2. All submit one to another.
7. Peter's attitude comes through not in a changed concept but in his changed attitude.
 - a. A change of attitude affects behavior.
 - b. A changed behavior changes actions.
 - c. If we don't have a proper attitude we won't submit to anyone.
8. Peter emphasizes holiness.
 - a. I dare you to define holiness in terms of sanctification.
 - b. Holiness is accompanied by joy even in the midst of testing.

1. We are to enjoy the Christian life.
2. We are not to endure the Christian life.
3. Legalism is not to affect holiness.

9. Peter emphasizes the Word of God.

- a. Propositionally.
- b. Personally.

10. Peter employs the Old Testament quite a bit.

- a. Noah is spoken of here.
- b. Abraham is spoken of here.
- c. The priesthood is spoken of here.
- d. Satan is revealed here through suffering and service, as in 2 Corinthians.
 1. Satan likes to inflict suffering.
 2. Satan likes to hinder service.
 3. Satan challenges believers in crucial areas, not trivial ones.
 4. Believers have authority over Satan but he does not give up hassling us.
 5. Satan likes to attack immediately following a time of spiritual effectiveness.
 6. When my attitude deteriorates I succumb to Satan's attack.
 7. Satan is crafty (Genesis 3:1)
 8. Don't underestimate Satan's deception.
 9. We will all come to the point in ministry where we must fall on our faces and pray, "Lord unless you do something I've had it."
 10. We need this because the human being is the only animal whose head swells when patted on the back.
 11. Pride will bring us down if we're not careful.

11. Responsibility to ward others is emphasized here.

- a. This is the heartbeat of the church.
- b. Believers need one another.

12. Salvation is emphasized here.

- a. Salvation is more than an insurance policy.
- b. Salvation is the basis of life.
- c. Salvation produces a right relationship to God and thus to others.

E. In all these observations we have discovered crucial aspects of I Peter.

- 1. The more we study the more we will know about it.
- 2. This orientation gives us a feel for the book.
- 3. This triggers my mind so that I come to the book with understanding.

F. There are three stages in studying a book.

- 1. The mind is marked by first impressions.
- 2. First impressions become repeated impressions.
- 3. Repeated impressions become confirmed impressions.
 - a. With a little thinking you can take any one of these observations and understand that it is right and why it is right.
 - b. The mind is like a muscle and works best by giving it time increments to category information.
 - 1. Read.
 - 2. Think and write things out.
 - 3. Give it time to sink in.
 - 4. Read again.
 - 5. Think and write again.
 - c. This process of repeated reading, writing will refine what we are learning and also prepare the mind for discovering new insights.
 - d. This is why the average person doesn't benefit more from study.

- e. Giving time to digest information is crucial to understanding.
 - 1. If I promised you a 20 dollar bill you would collect them. If you would collect thoughts like money you would make great progress.
 - 2. I walk with my wife and we think together as we walk.
 - 3. If I can write my thoughts down clearly the thoughts are mine. This approach to learning is gold.
- f. Most people get excited about other's pearls, but we need to get excited about our own pearls.
- g. Discovery is still the most exciting part of learning.
- h. We need to get excited about the right things.

G. Filing things that I learn is important.

- 1. I file everything; most of my work in seminary was kindling for my fire place.
- 2. What I discover through personal study is precious.
- 3. I file things by book; I have 10 to 15 folders on books.
- 4. I can speak as long as people want.
- 7. The more I spend in the book the less I spend in secondary sources.
- 6. Secondary sources are good but they are no substitute for personal discovery in the Word of God.
- 7. There are no limitations in personal discovery.

H. Take I Peter and draw a chart that sections the book off by paragraphs.

- 1. Give a title to each paragraph, either analytical or descriptive title for teaching.
- 2. Give titles that summarize each paragraph.
- 3. Next determine the relationship between paragraphs.
- 4. Look for things that are alike or dissimilar to see what it says.
 - a. Does it have anything to do with salvation?
 - b. If so how does this paragraph relate to then nest, especially when a "therefore" connects the two paragraphs,
 - c. Spend as much time as you want on this process.