

Next Steps with the Bible

Going Deeper and Growing Stronger

Week 3: Understanding the Chapters of the Story

For my thoughts,
are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,
declares the Lord.

For as the heavens are
higher than the earth,

so are my ways higher

than your ways and
my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:8-9

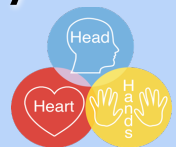




Understanding the Chapters of the Story

1. Review of Week 2

- Reading the Bible **contextually** rather than **haphazardly** (“Lucky dipping”!). Did you hear the one about the guy who . . . ?
- **Historical summary** of the books of the Bible and how they fit together (analysis of details)
- **Theological vista** of the mega-message of the Bible (synthesis of the big picture)
- **Canon, apocrypha, and pseudepigrapha**: key words in the church’s reception of the Bible.
- Btw, how about **Pastor Jim’s message** last Sunday?!





Understanding the Big Story

Creation (Gen 1-2; Ps 8; Heb 11:3)

Anticipation

Consummation

Fall in the first Adam (Gen 3)

Redemption in the second Adam (Rom 5:12-21)

New Creation (John 1:1-5; 2 Cor 4:3-6; 5:17; Rev 21-22)

Become passionate about reading the Bible as a conversation with God.

Become passionate about reading the Bible to:

- ☐ Follow the _____ of godly people. *2 Timothy 3:14*
- ☐ Root your _____ deeply in Christ. *2 Timothy 3:15*
- ☐ Receive _____ truth. *2 Timothy 3:16*
- ☐ Experience life _____. *2 Timothy 3:16*
- ☐ Be equipped for _____. *2 Timothy 3:17*

BEST PRACTICES

FOR BIBLE READING

1. Read as Conversation
2. Be Intentional – time, place, plan, journal
3. Saturate with Prayer
4. Answer Two Questions:
 1. Who is God?
 2. What should I do?
5. Share What you Discover

WHO IS GOD?

Character
Names
Works
Persons (*Father, Son, Holy Spirit*)

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Command to Obey
Promise to Claim
Prayer to Pray
Blessing to Celebrate
Example to Follow
Sin to Avoid
Teaching to Believe
Wisdom to Use
Warning to Heed

Memory Tool: (C, 2P's, BEST, 2W's,)





Understanding the Chapters of the Story

2. Discussion of the Optional Assignment:

Read through Jude and notice where it refers to other books of the Bible.

▪ ***The Bible is full of itself!*** Later authors built on earlier authors (inner-biblical exegesis).

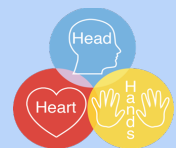
- ***Quotations:*** LOUD AND CLEAR, introduced, several words;
cf. Matt 2:5-6 → Mic 5:2
- ***Allusions:*** softer, less clear, no introduction, fewer words;
cf. Jude 7 → Gen 18-19
- ***Echoes:*** faint, maybe only a single word, debatable;
cf. Jude 23 → Amos 4:11

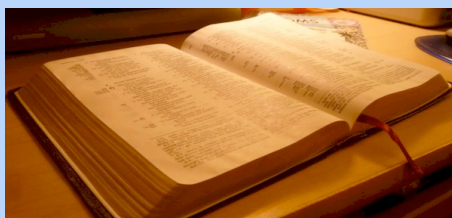


Understanding the Chapters of the Story

2. Discussion of the Optional Assignment:

- What part of the Bible is Jude most interested in?
- Does Jude *quote* the OT, *allude* to it less clearly, or *echo* it more subtly?
- Jude also alludes to the NT, at least in general, in Jude 17-18.
- Notice how much of Jude is similar to 2 Peter 2.





Understanding the Chapters of the Story

3. Getting a Handle on the Different Kinds of Books in the Bible

- Understanding *how* the Bible means is the basis of understanding *what* the Bible means.
- Note how each of the following make meaning:
 - **Historical** (narrative) Books
 - Episodes, heroes and villains, tests and consequences (the moral of the story: 1 Cor 10:1-13)
 - **Poetic** Books
 - Parallel *ideas* (not rhyming sounds) and beautiful *images* that *evoke* rather than *command* a response (Psalm 1:3-4)



Psalm 1 (NIV)

1

Blessed is the one

who does not **walk** in step with the **wicked**
or **stand** in the way that **sinners** take
or **sit** in the company of **mockers**,

2

but whose **delight is in the law** of the Lord,
and who **meditates on his law** day and night.

3

That person is **like a tree planted by streams of water**,
which yields its **fruit** in season
and whose **leaf** does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.

4

Not so the wicked!

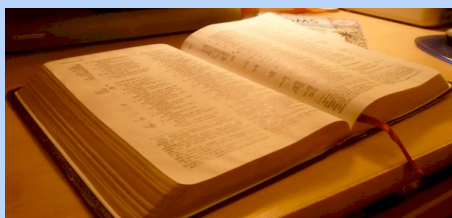
They are **like chaff**
that the wind blows away.

5

Therefore the **wicked** will not stand in the judgment,
nor **sinners** in the assembly of the righteous.

6

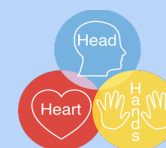
For the Lord watches over the **way of the righteous**,
but the **way of the wicked** leads to destruction.

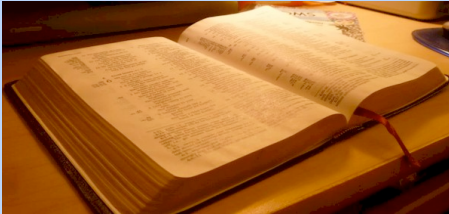


Understanding the Chapters of the Story

3. Getting a Handle on the Different Kinds of Books in the Bible

- **Wisdom Books**
 - Looking at life in a fallen, broken world **realistically**. Take off the rose-colored glasses. (Job, Eccl).
- **Letters** (epistles)
 - **Logical arguments** addressed to specific ancient church situations. Match 'em up with situations we face today.
- **Prophetic Books**
 - **Oracles from God** about judgment and blessing. **Preaching** against sin and calling for repentance, with **promises** of blessing and **warnings** of judgment.



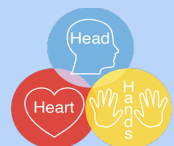


Understanding the Big Story

4. So What? How does all this impact us?



- We are richly blessed to have the **Bible in our language**, along with the freedom and opportunity to study and teach it.
- Jude saw his church's situation in **continuity** with Israel's history as the ongoing one people of God. Do we read the OT like Jude did?
- Jude speaks frankly and clearly about **dangerous teaching** and its judgment. Are we following Jude's example?
- The protestant reformers spoke of the clarity or **perspicuity** of the Bible, but they did not mean that the whole Bible was *equally* clear. Occasionally we encounter difficult passages like Jude 6, 9, 14.





Next Steps with the Bible

Luke 24

²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, **he explained to them** what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. . . . ³² They asked each other, “**Were not our hearts burning within us while he . . . opened the Scriptures to us?**” . . .

⁴⁴ He said to them, “. . . **Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me** in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”

⁴⁵ **Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.** ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ **You are witnesses of these things.**



James Tissot (1836-1902)