

Women of the Word: Chapter 4 Study with Perspective

*"Before you can hear it with your ears, hear it with theirs.
Before you can understand it today, understand it back then."*

~ The 5 P's of Bible Study: Purpose, Perspective, Patience, Process, Prayer ~

Exegesis: the process of excavating the **original meaning** of a passage.

- It asks us to take on the perspective of the **author** and his **audience** in their original setting.
- It gives us the historical and cultural perspective to properly **interpret** Scripture.

5 Archaeological Questions to Ask:**1. Who wrote it?**

Knowing who wrote something helps us understand why a text is written one way and not another, and it helps us judge the credibility of what was written.

2. When was it written?

Knowing the approximate date that a book was written helps us to consider the cultural factors that influences its writing.

3. To whom was it written?

Knowing the original audience that the book was written to helps us to see the text within the original context and protects against misapplication of Scripture.

4. In what style was it written?

Knowing the genre (historical narrative, parables/storytelling, law, poetry wisdom literature, prophecy) that the book is written in helps us understand the language used in the perspective of the original hearers.

5. Why was it written?

Knowing the purpose for which a text was written guards us from reading it solely for our own purposes.

Tools for Study:

- A good study Bible
- A good Bible commentary or handbook

Women of the Word: Chapter 5 Study with Patience

As for [the seed] in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience. Luke 8:15

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The concept of delaying gratification [studying with patience] can be difficult to learn and practice in a patience-optional culture that celebrates **immediate** satiation of every desire.

Sound Bible study is rooted in a celebration of **delayed** gratification. The Bible wants to challenge and **stretch** your understanding as it reveals a mosaic of the majesty of God one passage at a time, one day at a time, across a lifetime.

*Learning the Bible is a quest for knowledge, but it is ultimately a quest for **understanding**. It aims to shape the way we **think**.*

Patience with **Yourself**

- Becoming a student of any subject requires **effort**
- The process of gaining understanding is not **easy** and can be frustrating
- Learning the Bible requires work and **discipline**

We tend to react in one of two ways:

- We **give up** – we allow sermons, podcasts, books, or blogs to be our sole source of intake for the Bible.
- We look for a **shortcut** – as soon as we feel lost in a text, we run to the notes in our study Bible or commentary immediately.

Embracing the dissonance of feeling lost, rather than avoiding it (giving up) or dully it (looking for a shortcut), will actually place us in the best possible position to learn. We must extend ourselves permission to get lost and patience to find our way to understand.

Patience with **Circumstances**

- We cannot rely on life giving us ample opportunity to **study** the Bible
- Give the Lord what you can and **trust** that He will honor your faithfulness in the small things
- Trust that the Lord **knows** your circumstances better than you do and that He **sees** your desire to learn and grow

Chapters 4 and 5: Questions for Reflection

1. Think of your favorite book outside the Bible. How does knowing some basic facts about the author affect the way you read the book? How have you found the same to be true when reading a book of the Bible, with regard to its human authors?
2. Which of the genres do you find the most difficult to read? Which seems the most straightforward? How does the difficulty of the genre impact which books of the Bible you tend to spend time in?
3. What is the biggest error you've ever made in interpreting or applying a verse or passage? How might a better understanding of the "archeological questions" have helped you? Be specific.
4. Think about some of the benefits of delayed gratification across multiple areas of your life. How can similar benefits be found in studying the Bible?
5. Do you expect to be frustrated when you study the Bible? If not, how could expecting to be frustrated help you study? If you do expect to be frustrated (and therefore perhaps avoid study), what kind of encouragement can you take from this chapter?
6. Describe the difference between viewing time in the Word as debit account versus a savings account. Which way have you been accustomed to seeing the time you spend in the Word? How can our stage of life affect which vantage point we take?