Discovery Class

Session 9 of 9: Application and Course Synthesis

Clayton Valley Church

Session Goals

- *Write a passage's theme in nine words or less.*
- *Apply a passage using a specific, three-step method.*
- *Complete the whole process, Observation, Interpretation, Application.*

A. Why Is Application Important?

> **James 1:21-22**
> *Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

*Remember the truths from **1 John 2:15-17**.*

Step 1: Observe How the Truths of the Passage Addressed the Original Situation

To avoid superficial moralizing, first isolate the key elements of John's original situation:

The Audience: A late first-century network of house churches facing both internal deception (proto-Gnostic secessionists who downplayed moral obedience) and the surrounding pressures of Greco-Roman pagan society.

The Conflict/Tension: The danger of spiritual compromise with the "world" (kosmos, defined here as the organized human system operating in opposition or indifference to God). John identifies three driving mechanisms of this system:

Desire of the flesh: Cravings for physical self-gratification and unrestrained bodily appetites.

Desire of the eyes: Covetous materialism, visual allure, and the craving to possess whatever is seen.

Pride of life: Arrogant boasting in status, worldly possessions, reputation, or social pedigree.

The Theological Resolution: John presents an exclusive either/or allegiance: love for the Father cannot coexist with devotion to the world's value system. Furthermore, he grounds this warning in reality: the world's system is inherently temporary and decaying, while obedience to God's will yields eternal permanence.

Step 2: Discover How Principles of the Passage Apply to Contemporary Life

A faithful modern parallel shares the core issues addressed by the original biblical text:

Original Biblical Element	Contemporary Element
Believers facing Roman cultural and social pressure	Modern believers embedded in an affluent, media-saturated culture
Desire of the flesh (hedonistic appetites)	Gluttony, addiction, impurity, selfishness
Desire of the eyes (materialistic coveting)	Compulsive consumerism, discontent, living outside means, envious, covetous, never satisfied
Pride of life (social status and pedigree)	Professional posturing, the most likes matter most, trusting in net worth, arrogance
Futility of the fallen world	The fleeting nature of worldly "friends", the false hope of riches, living for comfort and ease

Beware of apparent parallels that do not hold weight. For instance, equating "the world" with enjoying God's good creation (music, food, nature, craftsmanship) distorts the text. The conflict is not between physical matter and spiritual things, but between God's kingdom and a self-glorifying human value system.

Step 3: Make Applications Specific

Vague commitments like "I need to love worldly things less" miss specific calls for change. Seek concrete, real-world scenarios and match the principles you discovered to those situations.

Some Application Scenarios:

- Highschool Student
- Mother of a 3 mo. old infant
- BART commuter to job they want out of
- Retiree facing financial pressures

Table Discussion: Select one of the above scenarios and talk through how 1 John 2:15-17 principles apply.

B. Two Problems to Avoid

a. Complacency

Satisfied with knowledge. Studying becomes the goal instead of the passage's own claim on your life.

b. Judgmentalism

Satisfied with directing truths at others and not yourself. The passage becomes a tool for correcting people rather than a mirror for your own life. Some helpful questions:

How does this truth affect my relationship with God?

How does this truth affect my relationship with others, even my enemy?

C. Developing the Theme

a. Not sensational
Say the true thing plainly rather than the dramatic loudly.

b. Reduce the principles to one statement
Look for repeated verbs, nouns, and phrases across your principles.

c. Use a strong verb
A strong verb stands on its own.

d. Instantly clear
Use the language of the text first, then restate it plainly.

e. Plain and literal
No figurative language.

f. Nine words or fewer
Keep it short and sticky.

Illustration: 1 John 2:15-17 reduces to this theme: ***"Love for God obliterates love for the world system."***

D. Outline: Exegetical and Message

a. Exegetical
How did the writer structure the passage?

b. Message
How will you structure it for someone else?

E. Key Questions for Application

a. So what?

b. How does this truth affect my relationship with God?

c. How does this truth affect my relationship with others?

d. How does this truth change my beliefs about God, myself, or others?

e. Are there commands here I have not obeyed? How specifically must I repent?

f. Are there wrong attitudes or motives in my heart that this passage exposes?

g. Are there new truths to believe?

h. Are there new challenges to face?

i. Are there new examples to follow?

j. Is there specific sin to avoid? If yes, what?

k. Is there a new promise to rest in?

l. Is there a prayer here I can pray?

m. How will I allow these truths to touch and change specific ways I live the life God's given me?

F. Applying It: 3 John 1-4

3 John 1-4

The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth. Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers. [3] *For I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth.* [4] *I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.*

Individual: write your principles, use them to construct your theme. Then bring out three to five applications from the passage.

Principles:

Theme (nine words or fewer):

Applications:

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An Overview of the Process

I. Observation – What does the passage say?

A. Diagraming (p. 20)

B. Observation questions (p. 29)

II. Interpretation – What does the passage mean by what it says?

A. Context (p. 35)

B. Word Relations (p. 45)

C. Literary Mold or Genre (p. 58)

D. General Conclusions (p. 68)

E. Commentaries (p. 68)

F. Theologies (p. 70)

G. Conclusions (pp. 70, 78)

III. Application – How does this passage change my life?

Ask application questions (p. 78)

Please, Always Remember the 'Why'

Proverbs 2:1-5

My son, if you will receive my sayings, And treasure my commandments within you, Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will discern the fear of the LORD, And discover the knowledge of God.

Homework

3 John 9-12
I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church. Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God. Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.

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Assignment: Write out your final theme statement, then write out applications of the passage using at least four of the key questions above.

Then name one habit you prayerfully intend to keep as a result of your time in Discovery Class.

Theme (nine words or fewer)

Application (use at least four key questions pp. 78-79)

One Habit to Keep