

How to Study the Bible (6.5)

Pray for wisdom and revelation (Psalm 119:18; 2 Tim 2:7; Eph 1:17).



One goal of Bible study is to understand the author's main point and how he persuades us of that point.

Here are some ways to find the main point —

- Use a literal translation like the ESV.
- Read the whole book at one sitting to get an overview. Then, starting from the beginning, study enough verses to make up a self-contained unit (with commands, conclusions, or a complete story). Move through the book, studying one section at a time.
- Slowly read the section you chose, and notice the clues the author gives to help us see his main point.
 - In *books of teaching* (like Romans or Hosea) you can discover main points by noticing **commands**, **conclusions** (introduced by words like “so,” or “therefore,” or followed by words like “since” or “because”), and maybe **repeated words**. Commands are always main points, but main points can also be promises to trust, truths to understand, or examples to follow.
 - In *books of history* (like the gospels or Genesis) you can discover the author's main point by noticing **what he emphasizes** about events (try asking: who, what, when, where, why, how), noticing **repeated words and ideas**, and thinking about **why** each event is included and **how** they connect to each other.

Once you discover the main point, work on understanding how every part of the passage argues for or explains that main point.

Think through the whole passage until you can explain in your own words the author's main point, and how the rest of the passage persuades us of that main point.

Apply what you have learned. Ask: based on this passage, what is God calling me to believe, desire, or do? Be specific. Then pray over the main point and flow of thought until you are motivated and empowered to obey.

How to Study the Bible (6.5)

Pray for wisdom and revelation (Psalm 119:18; 2 Tim 2:7; Eph 1:17).



One goal of Bible study is to understand the author's main point and how he persuades us of that point.

Here are some ways to find the main point —

- Use a literal translation like the ESV.
- Read the whole book at one sitting to get an overview. Then, starting from the beginning, study enough verses to make up a self-contained unit (with commands, conclusions, or a complete story). Move through the book, studying one section at a time.
- Slowly read the section you chose, and notice the clues the author gives to help us see his main point.
 - In *books of teaching* (like Romans or Hosea) you can discover main points by noticing **commands**, **conclusions** (introduced by words like “so,” or “therefore,” or followed by words like “since” or “because”), and maybe **repeated words**. Commands are always main points, but main points can also be promises to trust, truths to understand, or examples to follow.
 - In *books of history* (like the gospels or Genesis) you can discover the author's main point by noticing **what he emphasizes** about events (try asking: who, what, when, where, why, how), noticing **repeated words and ideas**, and thinking about **why** each event is included and **how** they connect to each other.

Once you discover the main point, work on understanding how every part of the passage argues for or explains that main point.

Think through the whole passage until you can explain in your own words the author's main point, and how the rest of the passage persuades us of that main point.

Apply what you have learned. Ask: based on this passage, what is God calling me to believe, desire, or do? Be specific. Then pray over the main point and flow of thought until you are motivated and empowered to obey.

