



This is a great tool to help you read and begin to understand God's Word for you.

Observation: "What does it say?" or "What do I see?"

As you look at the verse, what words stick out? Are any words repeated? Look at the context of the verse and passage, specifically looking at the verse prior and following. Is the passage/verse a question, statement, or command?

Is the writer describing something or recounting a story or narrative? What did the author see when they wrote the passage? Try to put yourself in their shoes and make some observations.

Practically, you can mark anything you observe in your bible or in a journal.

Interpretation: "What does it mean?"

What do you think the author intends in this passage? This is where you can ask a bunch of questions of the text and where you seek to find answers to those questions.

For example, if you studied John 11:35 ("Jesus wept") you could ask: Why is Jesus crying? What led Him to start crying? Are there any other times Jesus wept? As you study the passage and its context, you put your questions and answers together as you attempt to interpret the verse/passage.

Application: "How does it work?" or "What do I do?"

Now that we've made some observations and made efforts to understand what the Scripture means, we need to figure out what we do with it.

How does this passage apply to me? What do I do about it? How will this passage impact my life or the lives of those around me?

James 1:22-25 describes a man who looks in the mirror and sees what he looks like and then turns around and forgets what he saw in the mirror. We don't want to be people who look into God's Word and forget what it says. Rather, we want to be people who allow God's Word to change and transform us, so that we might become more and more like Jesus Christ.

Correlation: Where else does this relate to in scripture?

Do you notice any verses connecting to another book or theme in the Bible? For example, the Book of Hebrews is layered with teaching from both the New and Old Testament. The correlations would be where they intertwine.