**Romans 2023 Series January 1, 2023**

**How to Study the Bible**

1. Invite the **Holy Spirit** to Teach You

* Before even reading a passage, pray
* The Holy Spirit inspired every verse and every word within every verse

2. Discover the **Historical-Cultural Background**

* Who wrote the book?
* When was the book written?
* Why was the book written? What was the situation?
* What was going on in the world at the time of writing? War? Peace? Super-power?
* For whom as the book written? Who was the initial intended audience?

3. Understand the **Literary Genre**

* Literary genre means the type of writing
  + Narrative: Genesis, Matthew, Acts
  + Parables: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
  + Poetry: Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon
  + Law: Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
  + Prophecy: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Jonah, Micah
  + Epistles: Romans, Ephesians, Colossians, Titus
  + Apocalyptic: Revelation, portions of Daniel

4. Determine the **Authorial Intent**

* What did the original author intend the text to mean to the original audience?
  + This is the careful practice known as exegesis which means to “draw out meaning”
  + A text CANNOT mean anything to us that it did not mean to the original hearers / readers
* Never try to put your meaning into a text,   
  even if you have good intentions

5. Consult **Corollary Passages**

* Survey what there the rest of the Bible says about a particular passage
  + In the Gospels, read what the other 3 authors say about the same occasion
  + What does the author say about the same topic elsewhere in Scripture?
  + What do other authors say about the same topic (e.g. Paul vs. Peter)?

6. Prepare **Word Studies** of Critical Words

* What does a specific word mean?
  + English – use a dictionary
  + In the original language: Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek – use a concordance or other dictionaries / lexicons
  + Compare the range of meaning (semantic range) of the same word
  + Word usage: noun, verb, adjective, adverb
  + How often is a word used? Why is it used so frequently or in some cases infrequently?

7. Set Aside **Personal Presuppositions**

**Recommended Bible Study Resources & Tools**

A. Bible Translations: Have at least two in your own personal library

B. An exhaustive concordance that matches your preferred translation

C. A Bible Dictionary

D. A Commentary

E. “How to” Books

**One Final Word**

* All of your study should culminate in some form of application for your daily life
  + If you spend all your time in studying words, phrases, cultural background, and leave no time to consider how it applies to you, you will have missed the major purpose of Bible study

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