

# How to Read and Study Your Bible

## Lesson 8 – October 30, 2011

### Step 1: What did the text mean to the biblical audience?

a. Read seriously and observe the text. What does the text say?

b. Break the passage into manageable parts.

c. Determine the context of the passage.

#### 1) Historical-Cultural Context

a) Biblical author

b) Biblical audience

c) Other elements: geography, social customs, religion, economy, politics, etc.

#### 2) Literary Context

a) Genre, Form

b) Surrounding context

### Literary Context

Someone walks by you and says "Go for it!" – What does that mean?

#### Context determines meaning.

Should I get married?

1 Cor. 7:36c "They should get married."

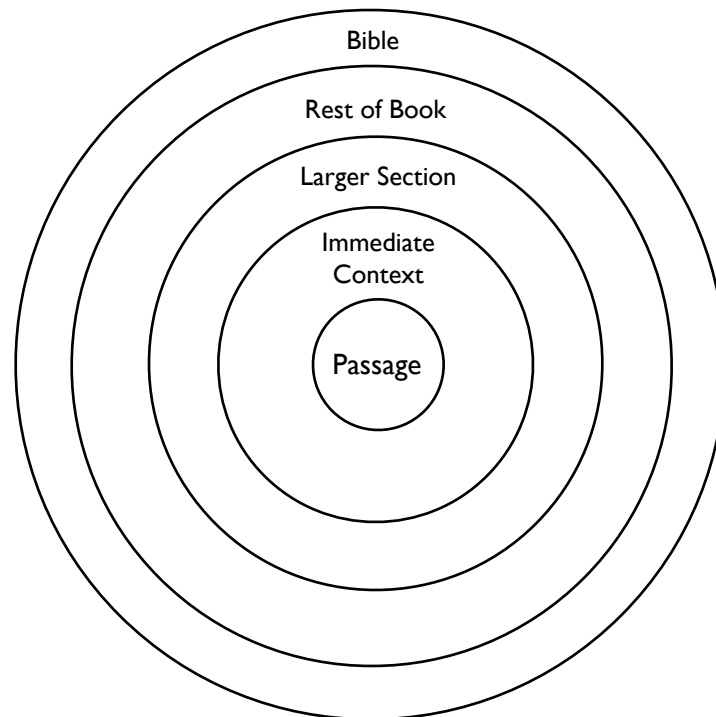
John 13:27 "What you are about to do, do quickly."

**A. Literary genre** = the form a passage takes, e.g., law, prophecy, wisdom, psalm, gospel, narrative, letter, apocalyptic, etc.

Form affects content, different games with their own set of rules, e.g., basketball, football, and soccer.

Covenant of communication = fixed agreement about how the author and reader will communicate.

**B. Surrounding context** = words, sentences, and paragraphs surrounding the passage, e.g., 1 Peter 5:7



### **Proceed Carefully**

- 1) Ignoring the surrounding context, e.g., is 2 Tim. 2:22 about sexual temptation?
- 2) Topical preaching, quoting Scripture without context

### **How to Identify the Surrounding Context?**

- 1) Identify how the book is divided into paragraphs or sections – phrasing.
- 2) Summarize the main idea of each section in about a dozen words or less.
  - a. The topic or main idea of the section – what are we talking about?
  - b. What the author says about the topic or main idea – what are we saying about what we're talking about?
- 3) Explain how the section you are studying relates to the surrounding sections.