

Reading the Bible for Comprehension

1. Find a pericope
 1. Bible story headings
 2. www.textweek.com
 1. scripture index
 2. pick a book
 3. Start with Genesis, Exodus, Gospels, or Acts. Steer clear of Psalms, Proverbs, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, etc. for now.
2. Identify **Trouble in the Bible**: What is going on? What's the problem the characters are facing?
 1. If you need help, use footnotes and a commentary. Here are two commentaries popular in Methodist circles.
 1. Asbury Bible Commentary at <https://www.biblegateway.com/resources/asbury-bible-commentary/toc/>
 2. Wesley's Notes at <http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/wesleys-explanatory-notes/>. These are a little harder to read but are quite good.
3. Identify: **Trouble in the World**: What would that trouble look like today? How does the trouble they faced in the scripture story translate to the modern world?
 1. Be creative.
 2. Remember that times change, but people are basically the same.
 3. Think about current events.
4. Identify: **God's Grace in the Bible**: How does God resolve the trouble in the Bible? Is it with love, words, action? What answers the trouble?
5. Identify: **God's Grace in the World**: What does the resolution offered in the last step look like when applied to the trouble you identified the step before? What's the good news for today?
 1. Step 4 should provide the resolution to step 2.
 2. Step 5 should provide the resolution to step

Example: Noah's Ark

1. Find Pericope online.
2. Trouble in the Bible:
 - a. A flood was rising.
 - b. The people were so bad God sent a flood to destroy the world.
 - c. People didn't believe Noah, made fun of him when he started building
3. Trouble in the world.
 - a. We sometimes feel like flood waters are rising around us, whether its because of climate issues or just the situation we're in. We sometimes feel like we're going to be swept away by forces beyond our control.
 - b. People do bad things now. It seems like the world gets worse and worse all the time.
 - c. Sometimes we are asked to do things that others don't understand or mock because of our faith.
4. God's grace in the Bible.
 - a. Even the flood ended. God provided a rainbow as a promise that God would never destroy the world by flood again.
 - b. God found a faithful man worth saving. He prepared Noah to save his family from the flood.
 - c. Noah and his family weren't just right but saved from danger. People's opinions didn't matter once the flood came.
5. God's grace in the world.
 - a. When the "waters" rise on us, we can rest assured that this will not be what takes us. Instead, we lean on God's promises and wait out the storm in faithfulness like Noah did.
 - b. God looks out for the faithful today. Our faithfulness matters.
 - c. When we do things God asks us to do, God saves us. It doesn't matter what people think. It matters that we do what God asks.