

Thesis Statement Method



A BIBLE STUDY METHOD
ENRICH YOUR STUDY TOOL

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The Thesis Statement Method

THESIS STATEMENTS AND EXEGESIS

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness”- 2 Timothy 3:16.

Since scripture is authoritative, **we want to utilize scripture to inform our interpretation.** Properly approaching scripture in this way, we let scripture guide our insights, messages, and applications. **This method of reading scripture is called exegesis.**

Each section of the text is read with an eye toward consolidating and synthesizing what the author is saying into one simple phrase or sentence. **This is a thesis statement: a phrase or sentence that carries the weight and meaning of the entire section in one simple, easily applicable statement.** In order to do this, we will break each chapter down into bite-sized segments (pericopes). Keep in mind, this methodology works best when used to interpret epistles.

PERICOPES

A pericope is an extract from a text. In the Bible, a pericope is usually sectioned by paragraph breaks. These paragraphs or pericopes usually communicate one central idea. The task of the reader is to ask, “What does this author want to communicate to me in this section or pericope?” The answer to this question will likely get the reader close to developing a thesis statement that is exegetically sound.

EPISTLES

An epistle is a letter. An epistle in the context of the New Testament refers to one of the letters usually written to a church by one of the apostles. Examples: Romans was written by Paul to the church in Rome. 1 & 2 Corinthians were written by Paul to the church in Corinth. **Most of the New Testament books are actually epistles or letters written with a particular audience, occasion, and purpose in mind.**

GUIDELINES FOR CREATING A THESIS STATEMENT:

- Do not make a section a command if it is not a command.
- Keep the original purpose of the text. (Do not soften a command to be a suggestion)
- Keep your thesis statement as short as possible.
- Include all of the necessary ideas of the section.
- Keep it simple and replicable.

USING YOUR THESIS STATEMENTS TO STUDY

STEP 1 IDENTIFY PERICOPES

Start by identifying the pericopes in a single chapter. Using the above guidelines, create a thesis statement for each pericope for the entire chapter. It may be difficult, but try not to focus on the chapter as a whole yet. Look at each pericope as its own individual section.

STEP 2 LOOK AT THE WHOLE CHAPTER

Review your thesis statements for the chapter and determine- is there a common theme in this chapter? What stands out as a thread being pulled through the whole chapter?

STEP 3 CONSIDER THE CONTEXT

Consider the context of the book you are studying. Based on what you know from previous chapters, or what the author has stated as their purpose, does this provide any new insights that you can apply to your understanding of what you've read so far?

STEP 4 APPLY THE TEXT

The focus in seeking to apply scripture to your life is really seeking to understand the principles being taught and revealed in the text to the original audience that can be applied to our lives today. We won't always see what we're supposed to "do" in the text. However, we will always see "how" we're supposed to live as followers of Christ. The principle truths we see in the text stand the test of time, they are applicable to our lives beyond our season or circumstance, and rest within God's broader story of redemption.

Based on your insights, answer the following questions to apply what you've learned:

What does this teach me about God?

In light of that, what does this teach me about myself?

What does this teach me about the life that God desires for me?
