INTRODUCTION

1. This week, in Part 4, we’re going to look at Observation of the Scripture. We are going to get behind the scenes and not teach you bible study but show you a simple an approach how to study to do a Bible study on your own.

2. The secret of Bible study is simply learning to ask the right kind of questions. The more you bombard a particular text with questions, the more you’re going to get out of it. The Bible is a supernatural book and you can study a passage over and over and over and you’ll never hit bottom. There are passages in the Bible you can study for thirty, forty years – the Sermon on the Mount, Psalm 23, the Beatitudes, Romans 8:28 and on and on and on of other passages. Every time you go back to them God shows you something totally different than the first time. You cannot hit bottom. You can never mine the gold out of any particular text because the Bible is a supernatural book. But if you learn the principles of observation you will see things in Scripture you’ve never seen before.

FOUR CATEGORIES OF BIBLE STUDY

There are four categories you use in every Bible study: observation, interpretation, correlation, and application. These four things you will do when you’re going to sit down to look at a passage of Scripture and study it for yourself.

The first step in any Bible study is Observation.

1. Observation: The question you ask is, What does it say?

   a. You simply look at the Bible verse or the story or the text or the passage and you simply observe it. You write down what you observe. It’s whatever you see. You’re not trying to interpret it, you’re not trying to figure out the meaning of it. It’s just what does it say? And you write it down.

   b. Remember the difference between Bible reading and Bible study is you use a pencil or a pen or you type it on your computer. If you’re not making notes then you’re not actually studying the Bible. You’re just reading it. You have to write or record something in order to study. So in observation you simply look at the text and go, what does it say? And you write down, it says this… It says this… It says this… That’s the first step.

Then the second step of Bible study is Interpretation.

2. Interpretation: That’s where you ask the question, What does it mean?

   a. First what does it say and now you ask, what does it mean? People say, doesn’t the Bible mean what it says? No. The Bible means what it means. Because as in every piece of
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communication, we often use metaphors, we use analogies; we use phrases that literally don’t mean what they mean.

b. How you know what it means is by looking at the context around it. For instance, if I give you the word “pin” what does that word mean to you? You might think a rolling pin, a bowling pin, pin the donkey. Did you know that the word “pin” has over sixty different meanings? So you can’t just say of a word, it means this. No, it doesn’t mean that. It means what it means in the context. If I’m talking about wrestling it means I pin you to the floor. So you have to look at the verses around it.

So I ask what does it say, what does it mean?

Then I ask the third step in Bible study which is Correlation.

3. Correlation is what other verses explain it?

a. I ask myself is there anything else in the Bible that would help me understand what I’m reading right now? That’s called correlation. You correlate verses. You compare and you correlate.

b. The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself. You use the Bible to explain the Bible. One of the principles of interpretation is you interpret an unclear passage in light of a clear one. In other words, if you read something in the Bible and it doesn’t make sense, and you don’t know what it means, you look for something else in the Bible that does make sense to explain it.

c. You always use what’s clear to explain what’s unclear. If you don’t get that you’re going to go out and form some cult. You’re going to get some weird idea where you say, I think it means this when it doesn’t mean that at all. There are things that the Bible means. There are things it definitely doesn’t mean. The way you know that is by looking at what the whole Bible says. Part 4 purpose to teach you how to do that.

Then the fourth step in Bible study is Application.

4. Application: That is, What am I going to do about it?

a. What does it say? What does it mean? What other verses explain it? And what will I do about it? No matter what you’re going to study, you’re going to ask these four questions – What does it say, and you write it down; what does it mean? That’s interpretation. What other verses explain it? And what will I do about it?

EXAMPLE TEXT Philippians 2:19-30.

BACKGROUND OF PAUL LETTER: Paul is writing this letter from Rome. Paul is the apostle who wrote much of the New Testament. He’s imprisoned in Rome for his missionary work. He’s due to appear before Caesar. He’s hoping one day to be released to go back to all the
churches that he started. But he’s not able to do this so he’s writing letters to the churches he started.

a. One of the letters that he wrote, he wrote to the church that he started in a city called Philippi, which is a city in Greece. So Paul’s in Italy and he’s writing to a church in Greece. Because he’s writing people in Philippi, it’s called the letter to the Philippians. So the book of Galatians means the people who lived in the city, the area of Galatia. The book called Corinthians, is written to the people who lived in the Greek city of Corinth. These are real cities like Rome. The book of Romans is written to the people who lived in Rome.

b. So he’s writing to the Philippians. They had taken up a love offering for him and sent it to him and now he’s writing them back. The book of Philippians is actually a thank you note. It’s a thank you note which he’s writing to the people saying, Thank you guys for sending me this offering.

TEXT: In the middle of this book, Philippians 2, here’s what he says, verse 19 “I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, [In other words, I’m in Rome. I hope to send Timothy who’s with me in Rome to you in Philippi] that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. [Because he’d heard news from them.] I have nobody else like him [like Timothy] who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everybody else just looks after his own interest, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proven himself; he’s proved himself as a son with his father, he served with me in the work of the gospel. I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I can see how things go with me. I’m confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon. [He’s saying, I hope I get back to see you soon] but I think it is also necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus [We’ll find out who this guy is in a minute. I’m going to send back to you Epaphroditus] my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, who’s also your messenger because you sent him to take care of my needs. [In other words they sent this guy, Epaphroditus with the offering to Rome and to tell Paul about how they’re doing. So he said he’s your messenger you sent me but I’m going to send him back to you.] For he longs for all of you [he’s homesick] and he’s distressed because you heard that he was ill. And indeed he was ill, in fact he almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but also on me to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. [In other words I’m not just in prison, I would have lost a good friend] Therefore I’m all the more eager to send him [Epaphroditus] so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. So welcome him in the Lord with great joy and honor men like him [circle that phrase “honor men like him”] because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you couldn’t give me.” In other words, you couldn’t be here so you sent him and he risked his life to get from Greece to Rome. You need to welcome with joy and honor, men like him.

a. If you read that passage, you go, that doesn’t seem to be a very deep passage. It’s just kind of a thank you note. It’s like personal note here. In fact you might read this and go, why did God put that in the Bible? Paul’s just talking about a couple of friends – Timothy and Epaphroditus. He goes, you guys sent them to me, I’m going to send him back to you and you need to honor them when they get there. It doesn’t sound like a very meaty passage of Scripture. It doesn’t sound like there’s some deep doctrinal truth. It doesn’t sound like there’s some big encouragement for me. You might even think this is just a passage you read quickly, skip over to get to the really good stuff in the Bible. If you did that you’d be dead wrong. You’d
be dead, dead wrong! **Because you didn’t do the observation and the interpretation to get the true meat out of it.**

1. 2 Timothy 3:16 says this “All Scripture [not part of it, all of it. That means even the stuff that just sounds like personal greetings] is inspired by God and it is useful [it’s all useful] to teach us what is true, to make us realize what’s wrong in our lives, it straightens us out, and it teaches us how to do what’s right.” So even this passage where Paul is just saying, these friends, these coworkers Timothy and Epaphroditus, and by the way, you know what Epaphroditus means? It’s the Greek word that means “from Aphrodite.” So Epaphroditus was obviously not from a Christian family. He’s born in a Gentile or Greek family who named him after the god Aphrodite. Epaphroditus means *from Aphrodite.* He goes, “I’m going to send these guys to you,” but the Bible says it’s all inspired so even this part has something to teach us. And you’re going to see it in just a minute.

2. Romans 15:4 says “For everything [not some things everything] in the Bible was written to teach us [even this part] so that through the endurance and encouragement of Scriptures we might have hope.” This story, this passage I just read you, the Bible leaves it in, God puts it in the Bible for your encouragement and for your hope.

   b. You say, I didn’t get any encouragement or hope out of this. It’s because you haven’t studied it yet. You just read it. But, did go through the **four steps.** What does it say? What does it mean? What else in the Bible says something about it? And what am I going to do about it?

**OBSERVATION:**
**First we start with Observation.** What does it say? What I would do is I would simply look at this. I would read it through several times and I would just write down what I see. Not anything fancy just whatever I see. I see three things in this passage.

   a. **First, I observe that Paul intends to send two men to Philippi.**

   That’s just an observation. There’s nothing fancy about it. Nothing spiritual. It’s just that’s what I see. In verse 19 he says “I hope to send you Timothy.” There’s one of the guys and in verse 25 he says “I think it’s necessary to send Epaphroditus back to you.” He actually came from that church. I’m going to send him back home. So he says I’m going to send two guys to you – Timothy and Epaphroditus.

   b. **The second thing I observe is that Paul endorsed these guys as role models.**

   1. In fact they’re role models who deserve honor. Paul endorsed Timothy and Epaphroditus as role models who deserve honor.

   2. In verse 20 Paul says about Timothy “I have no one else like him.” You might just read that and just jump all over it. But friends, that is the greatest endorsement you could ever receive as a Christian. Paul is the greatest Christian who’s ever lived next to Jesus Christ our Lord himself. And Paul says I’ve got nobody in the world like Timothy. If Paul said that about you, that means you’re at the top of the heap. You’re on the A list. You’re the very best
Christian he knows. If Paul said about you, I’ve got nobody else like you that would be the greatest possible compliment you could ever receive for your faith. So this is not a small issue here. Now I’ve got to pay attention. He says, I’ve got nobody like Timothy.

3. Then about Epaphroditus he says in verse 29 “Welcome him and honor men like him.” Honor men like him! So he’s saying whatever these guys are doing – they’re unusual, they’re unique and they are worthy of honor. You need to follow them and you need to honor them.

4. Notice in both of them, says “like him.” Circle that phrase. Anytime you see a phrase used twice in Scripture it means God’s telling you something. I have nobody else like him – Timothy. Honor men like him – Epaphroditus.

That naturally makes me ask the third observation question:

c. Third Question, So what are these guys like? Why are they so special? Why are they worthy of honor? Why do they deserve to be praised? What are these guys actually doing in their lives that make them so special? So I would ask that question. Then I would read through the passage again and I find that Paul, from observation I see, Paul says five things about these guys.

1. Verse 20 and 21, he says about Timothy “He takes a genuine interest in you.”

2. In verse 22 he says about Timothy “He has proved himself.”

3. In verse 25 he says about Epaphroditus “He’s my brother, my fellow worker and my fellow soldier.” I’ve got to figure out what that means.

4. In verse 26 he says “He longs for all of you and he is distressed.” (this guy Epaphroditus.)

5. In verse 27-30 he says “He almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life.”

See what I’ve done? All I’ve done is I’ve read it and I wrote down what I saw. Paul’s talking about two guys. He’s going to send them back to Philippi. He endorses them as role models. And he says we ought to honor them. These guys have five characteristics in their lives. That’s observation.

d. One of the best books on Observation or how to read the bible is “Living by the Book” by Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks.

INTERPRETATION: Now we go to interpretation. What does it mean? This passage is an extremely powerful passage because it gives us the five marks of what it means to be a man of God. The five marks of what it means to be a godly man. Or for that matter, a godly woman. If you want to be the kind of person God blesses, if you want God to use you, if you want God’s power in your life, you better study this passage. Because it tells us the five characteristics of the man of God or woman of God for that matter, that we see in these guys that we are to build into our lives, we are to like them and we are to honor others like them. So now let’s go back and
let’s look at the five things we observed and say, What does it actually mean? Let’s look at it in detail.

First characteristic of a godly man He is caring.

a. **Verse 21**, we find the first characteristic. Paul says about Timothy, “*I have no one else like him.*” Why is nobody else like him? Because “*He takes a genuine interest in your welfare and everybody else only looks out for their own interest.*” He says that’s rare. That’s unusual. That’s different. I’ve got nobody like him. He has a genuine interest in your welfare and nobody else does that. They all look out for their own interest.

1. One of the ways you interpret Scripture is by comparing it to other translations. In English, fortunately, we have dozens of translations of the Bible. You say, why do we need so many translations? **Because no single word adequately can explain another word in a language. Often it takes a phrase to explain a word.**

2. For instance the Bible is written in over eleven thousand Hebrew and Greek words. **But the average English translation, no matter which one you’ve got, uses only about eight thousand English words. That means something is getting left out in the fuller meaning.**

3. For instance, in English we only have one word for “love.” Love. And we use it to refer to everything. I say, I love Jesus Christ… I love my wife… I love popcorn… I love America… I love music… I’ve just used the same word in multiple different ways.

4. Greek was much more technical, much more precise than that. For instance in Greek they have four words for love: *eros* we get erotic love from that – sexual love. *Storge* which means strong love. *Phileo* which means brotherly love. Philadelphia is the city of brotherly love. And *agape* which is unconditional love. And all of these words are used in Scripture. So there are different words where we only have one word.

5. So you look in different translations. Every translation has an interpretation in it. **So by looking at different translations, you can get a bigger interpretation without having to know any Greek or any Hebrew.** That’s a good thing. That’s an advantage of somebody who speaks English.

6. So a couple of other translations of this verse. It says “*Timothy genuinely cares for you while others only care about themselves.*” He says that’s why he’s worthy of honor. The Phillips translation says “*They’re all wrapped up in their own affairs.*”

So here we have the first characteristic of a godly man.

b. **A godly man is caring.**

1. A godly man is compassionate, he’s caring, he’s unselfish. He thinks about others. He’s not just thinking about himself. He’s unselfish. He’s not self-centered. He is caring. Timothy genuinely cares about you. Everybody else is only interested in their own
agenda, their own business, their own things that they’ve got to. He says, that is worthy of honor.

2. We need to hear more message about this today. Because everything in our culture, teaches you to be self-centered, not unselfish. Everything in our culture teaches you to care only about you, not about anybody else. Every advertisement is all about you: “We do it all for you. Have it your way. You deserve the best. You deserve a break today. Look out for number one. I’ve got to think of what’s best for me.” No ad is telling you to be unselfish. All music, all movies, all TV shows, novels, magazines, video games are all about you, the consumer. It’s not about you helping anybody else.

3. So it is rare to find an unselfish man. It’s rare. Paul says I don’t have anybody like him who genuinely cares about other people. Everybody else is only caring about themselves. They’re not self-giving. They’re self-centered.

4. Single women before you marry you need to know how to identify a selfish man before it’s too late. How to identify a selfish man before it’s too late.

   a. **Does he only talk about himself? That’s a sign.**

   b. Does he ever open the door for you?

   c. Has he ever brought you a meal because he knew you were too busy to eat and he sensed it and you didn’t have to tell him. That is a caring person who’s more interested in just his own agenda.

   d. Does he ever go out of his way to make sure you feel safe?

   e. Does he ever ask for your opinion on anything?

   f. Does he ever ask you for sex? He says “If you love me, you’ll let me.” You say, “If you love me you’ll wait.” And by the way, women you need to understand this, women need a reason for sex; men just need a place. That’s just the way they’re wired. You need to understand that. So if he asks you for sex, he’s a loser. And if you say no and he pouts he’s a double loser. Run the other way!

   g. Will he cancel his plans if you’re sick so he can take care of you? That’s an unselfish man.

   h. Is he obsessed with his appearance?

   i. Will he do something that he doesn’t like to do just to be able to spend more time with you? That’s an unselfish man.

   j. Does he pick up his messes? Or expect you to pick them up?

2. Second Characteristic of Godly man is that he is **consistent.**
a. The second thing we learn about Timothy it says verse 22 “Timothy has proved himself. [circle that] because as a son with his father, he has served with me in the work of the gospel.” In the God’s Word translation it says “You know what kind of person Timothy proved to be.” The word “proven” there means tested. It means verified, it means checked out, it means determined reliable. This guy is ram tough. This guy is dependable. This guy is reliable. This guy has proven faithful, is what the Bible calls it – faithful.

b. The greatest ability in life is dependability in life. The number of people who are dependable, who don’t flip flop, who keep their word, who do what they say, who keep their promises even when it hurts them, is unusual.

c. What is needed today are men who are consistent. That’s number two. God is looking for men who are caring and…

d. Second Characteristic of Godly man is that he is consistent.

1. Proven trustworthy, not wishy-washy. Dependable, faithful, keep you word. Men of conviction and character.

2. You know the difference between conviction and an opinion? An opinion is something you’ll argue about; a conviction is something you’ll die for.

3. Do you have any conviction in your life? You are not ready to live until you know what you’re willing to die for. Are you willing to die for anything? Until you know and have made that list “I would die for this… I would die for this … And I would die for this…” you are not living, you are just existing. God is looking for consistent men. Godly men are not just caring, they are consistent. They are proven reliable. They’re committed to God’s standard. And they are consistent in their values. They don’t act this way with one group of people and this way with another group of people and this way with another group of people. They’re not flimsy, where they’re moody – this day they’re this way and another day they’re this way.

4. It’s a trite cliché but it’s true: If you don’t stand for something you will fall for anything.

A godly man is caring – he doesn’t just care about his own agenda. He cares about other people. And a godly man is consistent. He’s proven reliable.

Third Characteristic of A godly man is cooperative.

a. Three, next verse. He says in vs. 25 “I send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and my fellow worker and my fellow soldier.” He gives us three metaphors here that are relational – brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier. He says “He’s also your messenger because you sent him to me to take care of my needs.” You sent him to bring me good word of you.
Each of these three metaphors has something in common. What they have in common is cooperation.

Third Characteristic of A godly man is cooperative.

a. He said, he’s my brother, he’s my fellow worker and he’s my fellow soldier. Why? Because the Christian life is a family, it’s a fellowship, and it’s a fight.

b. First, we are a family. He says, he’s my brother. We’re related. Did you know that the phrase brother and sister is used about 133 times in the Bible to refer to Christians. For thousands of years church members always referred to each other as brothers and sisters – Brother So and So and Sister So and So. We sometimes get away from thinking that we but we need to remember we are brother and sisters in Christ because the church is a family not an institution.

c. The Bible tells us in Scripture that we are to treat older women in the church as mothers, we’re to treat older men in the church as fathers, we’re to treat the younger men in the church as brothers and we are to treat the younger woman in the church as sisters. Why? Because we’re a family. We’re children in God’s family. And we are brothers and sisters. There is a relationship there.

d. And not only are we a family, we’re a fellowship. We’re fellow workers. That means we have the same task, the same mission, the same great commission. We’re to work together, we’re to serve together. We’re fellow workers.

e. Not only that, we’re co-laborers in arms. We’re comrades in arms. We’re fellow soldiers. Because we have the same battle, we have the same enemy – Satan. So we support each other, we encourage each other. That’s why we have small groups because we’re in this together.

f. A godly man is cooperative. When you see a guy who goes, I don’t need anybody else. I’m a lone ranger. He’s not a godly man. When you see somebody who says I don’t really need to go to church, I don’t need a small group, I don’t need anybody else, he’s proving that he doesn’t know how much he needs what he needs. Because nobody has it all together. We need each other. You have strengths that I need, I have strengths that you need and we need each other.

g. And godly men cooperate. They’re not lone rangers. They’re not difficult to get along with. They know how to be on a team. They’re team players. They know how to work. They know how to give and take. In business, guys will pay maximum bucks for people who have relational skills, guys who have a team member mentality, who know how to play on a team, who are not the independent jerks who just go off and do their own thing.

h. Paul of all people is a super star, a spiritual super star. Yet even he knows we’re better together, that we get more done when we work together. He recognizes that we need each other. And a godly man knows how to work with others, knows how to be a team player, isn’t difficult.
He’s relationally cooperative. He’s caring, he notices other people’s needs and not just his own, he’s consistent, you can count on him to keep his word and he is cooperative.

This is the fourth characteristic of a godly man that **he is considerate.**

a. In verse 26, it talks about Epaphroditus and it says “For he [Epaphroditus] longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill.” Notice the emotional content. What’s going on here?

b. Here’s a church over here in Greece called the church of Philippi that’s started by Paul. Paul is in prison in Rome in Italy. They take up a love offering to send to Paul. Then they say, we need somebody to take it. One of the business men in the church Epaphroditus goes, I’ll do it. He’s going to have to walk. There are no planes, trains, automobiles. He’s going to have to walk all the way around from Greece to Italy. They’re going to be bandits and there’s going to be no motels, no hotels. He’s going to have to leave his business behind for a few months while he goes and does this. He’s doing this at great personal expense.

c. On the way Epaphroditus gets sick and nearly dies delivering the offering which the people say, we entrust in you. We believe you won’t spend it, you won’t rip us off, you’ll get it to the right place it needs to go. Because you have integrity. On the way he nearly dies. When word gets back to the home church, Epaphroditus nearly died on a PEACE trip! He was out there and he got so sick, they got all worried.

d. What is his reaction? He is distressed by their distress. He is concerned about their concerns. He’s worried about the fact that they’re worried about him. He’s not thinking about himself. He’s thinking about how his actions and his words are causing grief to other people.

e. This is the fourth characteristic of a godly man. **He is considerate.**

1. Considerate means you think not just what other people say, but you think of their emotions. You think of how what you say and how you act is going to affect other people. It says he longs for you because he’s distressed because you heard he was ill. He’s distressed about their distress.

2. Are you ever distressed about anybody else’s distress? Are you ever worried about anybody else’s worries? Are you ever concerned when somebody else is afraid? Or do you just go, Get over it!

3. A godly man is considerate. He’s considerate. He’s concerned about the feelings of others.

4. Sometimes I’ll hear a guy say, “I just say what I think.” They almost like brag about it. Like, I just tell it like it is. There’s a word for that. Rude! Any idiot can say what he thinks. It takes a mature man to hold his mouth when he knows he needs to hold it. Babies say what they
think. Little kids say, they just blurt it out. They have no filter on their mouth. If you have no filter, don’t be proud of it. “I just say what I say and I let the chips fall…” Then you’re not a very mature man. You’re just flat out rude. And you don’t know how to be a grown up. Because grownups know there’s a time to say things and a time to not say things. So don’t be proud of rudeness. A godly man is considerate.

5. 1 Peter 3:7, “Husbands be considerate as you live with your wives.” Be considerate. We’re not by nature considerate. In fact we’re typically inconsiderate in so many areas. In fact this is the number one cause of marriage problems. The number one cause of marriage problems is simple selfishness. I want what I want, you want what you want and we’re inconsiderate of each other. We’re inconsiderate primarily in our decisions, how we make decisions. We’re inconsiderate of each other’s fears. We’re inconsiderate of sex. We’re inconsiderate of communication.

a. When it comes to sexual makeup, the physiological makeup between a man and a woman look like this… It’s pretty simple for a man. He’s got an on and off switch. Women, they’ve got enormous dials and gages and buttons, it’s all got to be tuned in just right. For men it’s just on and off.

b. We must be considerate of each other. God wired women that way. And God wired men that way. So it’s not like one is better than the other. It’s just the way God wired men and the way God wired women. That’s the physiological difference.

c. How men and women make decisions are also very different. Here’s an example. Let’s say you’ve got to go to the Gap to buy a pair of pants. If you’re going to go to the Gap, first the woman goes in and she makes a detour to Macy’s, stops at every store in the mall on the way, then goes by the J C Penney’s and stops at every store there, goes down to Nordstrom and Sears, comes back and finally goes into Gap.

d. The male he just makes a bee line for Gap.

e. So in buying a pair of jeans it takes the male six minutes and thirty-three bucks. The female, it takes three hours, twenty-six minutes and costs almost nine hundred bucks. Because she bought a bunch of other things on the way while she was planning to go… That’s just the way we are. We need to be considerate of each other.

f. The idea of decision making. The chances of a man winning an argument. In the dating stage he’s got a fifty-fifty chance of winning the argument. Once they get engaged it drops to twenty percent. Once you’re married, forget it guys! Don’t even worry about it.

g. I talked to a guy once married seventy-two years. I said, what’s your secret? He said, just two words. I said, Really? You’re married seventy-two years and only two words. What are the words? He said, “Yes dear.”

So the godly man is considerate.

Lastly a Godly man is courageous.
a. verse 27 says, “Indeed [talking about Epaphroditus] he was ill, and he almost died... he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help that you couldn’t give me.” He’s saying you guys in Philippi, you couldn’t come and help me when I was in prison in Rome. So you sent Epaphroditus and on the way, trying to walk from Greece to Rome he nearly died.

b. Circle the phrase “risking his life.” Because this is the fifth characteristic of a man of God. A man of God is caring, he thinks about others not just himself. He’s consistent, he keeps his word. He’s proven trustworthy. He’s cooperative. He’s a brother, he’s a fellow worker, he’s a fellow soldier. He’s considerate. He’s worried about how you are feeling emotionally. He listens to your emotions.

c. A godly man is courageous.

1. He risked his life, almost died for the work of Christ. Risking his life to make up for the help that you couldn’t give him. A godly man, like we said earlier, is fearless. Lord, make us fearless.

2. Notice what he’s courageous about. “Risking his life to make up for the help that you couldn’t give me.” He’s courageous not for his own benefit. He’s taking risks for the benefit of others and the kingdom of God.

3. There are a whole lot of guys today who take risks for themselves. They’ll go climb mountains and scale walls and surf enormous waves and bet the farm on a business deal as long as they’re going to personally benefit from it. I’m not talking about risking, doing risky stuff so that you can get a rush thrill from an extreme sport, or risking something so that you can get glory. Or risking something so that you can make a lot of money. I’m talking about risking for the benefit of somebody else.


5. He made an inconvenient journey for the benefit of another – he made a PEACE trip. He puts the cause of Christ before comfort. Paul’s in prison in Rome, he’s in Greece. The church takes up a love offering. No planes, no trains, no automobiles. And he volunteers to be the courier and he nearly dies. Yet he perseveres in spite of his pain. He’s committed to finishing what he started.

6. There aren’t many men like this today. It’s very rare. Most people say, I’ll live for Christ when it’s convenient. I love church as long as there’s not a good game on. If it’s coming on soon I will leave early because the game is more important to me than God.

7. God uses courageous people who put people before profit and who put courage before comfort and convenience. Who put service before security. Who take a risk for the kingdom of God. Who serve God and others with reckless abandonment. That’s a godly man. And Paul says you need to honor men like that.
8. The phrase “He risked his life” in Greek literally is “he hazarded his life.” It’s a gambling term. He’s going to roll the dice. “I don’t know if I’m going to make it back but I’m going to make sure that offering for that church gets to Paul in Rome. And if I die trying, so be it, I die trying.” He is God’s great gambler.

9. There are many guys gambling their lives on stupid stuff today. Instead of gambling on stuff that will make their lives count and last forever. He’s God’s gambler. He’s gambling his life for Jesus Christ.

10. Is your commitment to Christ deep enough to cause you to risk anything in your life for it? Or is it just a convenient faith?

11. **Today Christianity is filled with limp religion.** There’s no teeth in it. No commitment, no sacrifice, no heroes. I thank God that Saddleback Church is filled with godly men. We would not have the PEACE Plan if it weren’t filled with men who were godly gamblers. You don’t start great ministries without having a bunch of guys who says, We’ll do it Pastor. We’re going for it.”

12. Think of the excuses Epaphroditus could have used, “I’ve got a business to run… I’ve got a family to take care of… I have kids in school… You’re going to ask me to leave my work, to leave my shop and to take two or three months to travel to another nation to help another church?” “You’re asking me to leave my home for a couple months and go help some church to get started in Rome or London or Berlin or Buenos Aires? No, no! I’ve got my agenda.”

13. Paul says I don’t have anybody like Timothy. He genuinely cares about other people and not just his own agenda. That is a godly man. That is a man who made his life count for more than golf. For more than making money. For more than having fun.

14. This is the second stage. First, observation. What does it say? Then we looked at interpretation – what does it mean? It’s saying these people are worthy of honor. What kind of people are worthy of honor – caring, consistent, cooperative, considerate, courageous people.

**CORRELATION**

Now we go to the third thing which is Correlation. Correlation is we ask in a Bible study, is there anything else in the Bible that will help me understand this passage?

a. The first question I’d ask is, is there anything else in the Bible about these guys named Timothy and Epaphroditus? And the answer is oh yeah. In fact, there are two complete books in the Bible about Timothy. They’re called 1 and 2 Timothy. So I could go on and I could read 1 and 2 Timothy and find out a whole lot more about why this guy Paul says there’s nobody else like him.

b. Then what about Epaphroditus? He’s mentioned one other time. Later on in this book, two chapters later in Philippians 4, it tells us why they sent him. So I’d ask that.
c. Another thing I might ask is, does the Bible have anything to say about these qualities—about caring, about consistency, cooperating and consideration and courage. So I would go and find what does the Bible says about these things?

d. **Tools for correlation:** To do that you have to use what’s called a concordance. You can buy one of these at one of your local bookstores or online at CBD.com or Amazon. A concordance is a word index of every word in the Bible. So it shows you what the Bible says about every single word. It’s a word index. Depending on your translation, if you have a New International Version translation you want to get a New International Version concordance. If you have a Living Bible translation you want a Living Bible concordance. This one is Strong’s Exhaustive concordance. It’s the King James version. It has every word in it.

   a. If I want to say, What does the Bible say about debt? I’m in debt right now. I’d look up the word “debt” and it would give me every single verse in the Bible on debt, that uses the word “debt.” If I said, what about business.” Are there any business principles in the Bible? What does the Bible say about business? And I’d say, let’s look up the word “business.” I’d find the word “business” and it gives me every verse in the Bible on business. If I say, What about success? I want to be successful in life. What does the Bible say about success? And I would look up the word “success” and it would give me every verse in the Bible on success.

   b. An exhaustive concordance is one that has every word in the Bible. That’s the one you want. It’ll tell you where every “the” is if you want to do a Bible study on the word “the.” I don’t recommend it but…

   c. Mr. Most study Bibles themselves, a study Bible is a Bible that has some study tools added into it. At the end of the study Bible it has what’s called a baby concordance. It’s a smaller index of words. It doesn’t have every word. But it has a few of the main words to help you look up. Sometimes you can remember a word in a verse but you don’t know where it is. Like for instance, “For God so loved the world…” I don’t know where that one is. Let’s look up the word “world.” And it would tell you the main verses that use the word “world.” Then you’d know where that verse is in the Bible. It’s an index.

   d. You need one of these to do to correlation. You **can’t do correlation any other way.**

You’ve got to get a concordance.

   e. If you want to go deeper into the Word, it is important that to take a small group class that teaches you on how to use **Tools for Effective Bible Study.** Tools you need for study. You need to read that.

   f. If you like to study lots of translations you’re going to want to get a bible software program that gives all the concordances of all the translations together. There are so many out there on the market. There is a popular one called WordSearch. WordSearch has fifteen different translations. You can read it in the New International Version, the New Living, the New Century. You can read one verse at a time and see how it compares in each different translation. This gives you an interpretation as you read through these.

   g. Let’s say you want to study Timothy. What else is there about Timothy? You are going to study Timothy in every translation and it’s going to tell you all the verses on Timothy in
the Bible. He’s first mentioned in Acts 16:1 and Acts 16:2 and Acts 16:3 and Acts 17; and You just go through the Bible and find every verse on Timothy.

h. Or let’s say you want to study the word “considerate” because you need to be more considerate of my husband… you need to be more considerate of my wife. So you put that word “considerate” in there and you hit all. The word “considerate” is used eighteen times in the Bible. You would just start going down and looking at them. And it’s highlighted. Like, Philippians 4:5 “Let everyone know how considerate you are.” See how cool that is?

But that’s how you would do correlation.

APPLICATION: Finally you come to the fourth thing in Bible study which is Application.

a. Remember this is the most important thing of all. You’ve heard me say this before: You only believe the parts of the Bible you actually do. It’s not enough to study the Bible. Study is not enough. Study will give you a big brain, little heart. You’ve got to do it.

b. Remember “Don’t deceive yourselves. Don’t merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.” James 1:22. So you want to do what it says.

c. Nine questions to ask about any text. It is called SPACEPETS

1. Is there a sin to confess?
2. Is there a promise to claim?
3. Is there an attitude to change?
4. Is there command to obey?
5. Is there an example to follow?
6. Is there a prayer to pray in this verse?
7. Is there an error to avoid?
8. Is there a truth to believe?
9. Is there something I can thank God for?

d. You would do SPACEPETS in this passage. Is there a sin to confess? Maybe. Is there a promise to claim? No. Is there an attitude to change? Yes. I need to change that attitude. Is there a command to obey? Yes. Honor men like this. Is there an example to follow? Yes. Five. Five examples. The example of consistency, the example of caring, the example of cooperating, the example of being considerate, the example of being courageous.

e. So you would look at this. The command to obey – honor. The example to follow – five. An attitude to change – yes. Then I would write out a sentence on what I’m going to do about it. Personal, practical, possible, provable, and set a date. I’d write out a date.

f. Let me give you couple of examples of what you might have as an application of what we just studied.

a. First it says “Honor those like this.” So I’d go, do I know anybody like this? Do I know any men in my life who are caring and consistent and cooperative and considerate and
courageous? Do I know anybody like that? Then I need to honor them. It may be your dad. It may be your husband, a brother, a boyfriend. It may be a Christian friend that you know. Somebody you know. The Bible commands you to honor those godly men. So you figure out a way to honor them this week. You write them a thank you note. In my case you could have sent me Cinnabons before the Daniel Plan. The bottom line is you look for ways to thank people.

So I first would say, how can I honor other people? If you know somebody who is consistent, caring, cooperative, considerate, courageous you do that.

b. Then the second application I would go, which of these am I going to work on in my life this week? Which one am I the weakest on? Do I need to be more considerate? Do I need to be more courageous for the cause of Christ? Do I need to be more caring and think about other people and not think just about my own agenda and my business deal and my needs? Do I need to be more cooperative and actually be part of a team, be in a small group? You write down which one you’re going to work on.

c. This message is desperately needed today. Because we are in a culture that idolizes celebrities. Shallow people doing shallow things. And we’ve put them on the cover of magazines and pay them millions of dollars to be shallow. Today we pay millions of dollars to guys who are thugs and ought to be in prison. But they’re called celebrities. And guys who consistently move from one woman to the next in serial adultery and we act like it doesn’t even matter. It’s nonsense. What we desperately need today are men of God. What we desperately need today are women of God. Who are caring, consistent, cooperative, considerate and courageous.

And you thought this passage had nothing to say!

Prayer:

“I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” Psalm 119:11. You cannot be a godly man, you cannot be godly woman unless you build your life on the Word and it’s in your heart and mind. Father, I want to thank you for men in this church who have proven worthy of honor by caring about more than just their business or themselves. For those who have been consistent and have served you in tough times as well as easy times. Lord, we need all of these in our lives. Help every man and every woman to be more courageous, to be willing to walk eight hundred miles to deliver an offering if that’s what it takes. To be willing to go to another country and serve in a Saddleback Church if that’s what it takes. Help us to be considerate of each other’s fears and weaknesses and differences. May we use the model of Timothy and Epaphroditus to motivate us to change in Jesus’ name. Amen