

Application...working with the mind...

Each Biblical passage has only one correct interpretation; but it may have many applications. The applications may affect your heart and strengthen your love for God, or they affect your mind and improve your ability to discern and perceive, or they can affect your actions and strengthen your moral and ethical convictions. Looking for how the passage may apply to your life is the key to successful Bible study. Consider some of the following questions:

Is there any new appreciation for the **character of God** that you need to respect and obey better?

In addition to the purpose of training for holiness, God's commands, promises, and judgments reveal His character and nature. Love is often defined by social and cultural values, which mute one's perception of God's esteeming love. God's character, nature, and esteeming love are beyond the human scale; can you grasp it? Does the biblical verse reveal any information about God's nature that would affect your heart and love for Him?

Are there any **personal moral** issues to consider?

Today's social and cultural values are relative; any moral value is fine as long as no one is hurt by it. The same applies to what we chose to watch, listen, and imagine. Does this make it right? God's moral standards are absolute; does the biblical passage reveal any information on God's moral standards?

Are there any **personal ethics** to learn?

There are many examples of show what to do as well as what not to do. Society also shows many examples of success and failure; what we achieve seems more important than how we achieve. Is this true? What principles should one live by? Does the biblical passage reveal any biblical principles that would help clarify your responses to various situations?

Are there any **priorities** that need to be reconsidered?

Society and culture determine a large part of our values and priorities. How do you rank your various goals and how will you achieve them? Do you need to reconsider what your priorities are based on? Does the biblical passage reveal any biblical priorities that would realign yours?

There are other questions that can be asked as you explore how the biblical passage will apply to your life. That is the essence of the process of application: wrestle with the Text and examine the interpretation, be open to change both in your understanding of the Bible and your life, and have the courage and humility to change.

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If you're not having a blessed life, it is likely that you fall in the following categories:

1. **Not reading** the Bible.
2. Reading the Bible with **poor observation** skills and **misinterpreting** the Word.
3. **Believing interpretation is the application** of the Bible. Knowledge is not the same as wisdom.
4. **Selective application** of the Word; you apply it only to areas in your life that you feel comfortable.
5. **Denial of a personal sin**; you see the application as being more appropriate for others than yourself.

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.” James 1:22-25. James, in his letter to the greater church, in contrast to Paul who wrote to specific churches or people, is exhorting believers to active obedience instead of passive listening.