

**How to Study the Bible**  
Grace Bible Fellowship Church – Winter 2020

**TEACHING NOTES**

**Week 2: Observation: Content**

*January 19, 2020 – Basic Observation – taught by Mark Bickel*

**Review: Class Goals**

- Learn how to study the Bible
- Practice what we are learning by studying Ephesians
- **Meet God and be change by Him!**

**Review: OIA** (see OIA Bookmark)

**Observe**

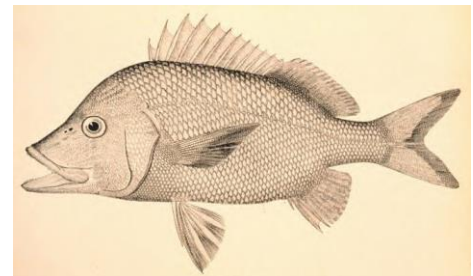
➤ Ask "What Does it Say?"

**Interpret**

➤ Ask "What Does it Mean?"

**Apply**

➤ Ask "How does it Work?"



**Discussion:** The Student, the Fish and Agassiz

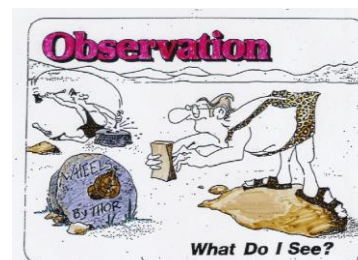
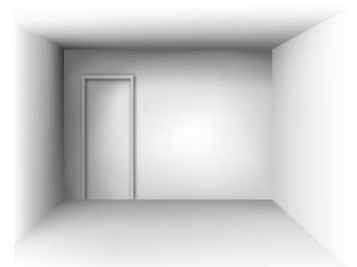
**Read:** "Observe, Interpret, Apply" **page 19** (Finzel's into to Observation and "Student, Fish and Agassiz")

**Group Exercise:** Observe the Room

**Observation: What Do I See ?**

**Graphics:** Observation graphic

**Read:** Traina **page 31**



**Example:** lab class, finger in bottle (Traina page 32)



**Keys to Perceptive Observation:**

**Content**

**Context**

**CONTENT**

**Quote:** "I have six faithful serving men who taught me all I know: Who, What Where, When, Why and how." - Rudyard Kipling

- A) **Who ?** Who is involved, Who is the main character, what are we told about them? What do we learn about the character of God/ Jesus?
- B) **What ?** What is happening? Put yourself there, see it happening? Describe it as fully as possible (from the text). Note verbs and action words. Not flow of events, connecting words. Define any unknown words/ customs.
- C) **Where ?** Look at a map, where is this. Town, country, city. Close by last event, or far away. Religious center, or irreligious area (jews or gentiles).
- D) **When ?** Note time words, things that date it, or tell of progression (before, after, in the time of). How is this linked to other events? What is the culture of the time?
- E) **Why ?** Does the text give a purpose, reason? What would motivate the characters to do this? Does this fit any larger plan?
- F) **How ?** What is the manner in which the events occur. Any underlying means of accomplishing things given. What needed to happen for this to occur?

**\*\* Put yourself in their shoes \*\*** Try to see, smell, touch things. Try to understand the issues and why it is people would do what they did.

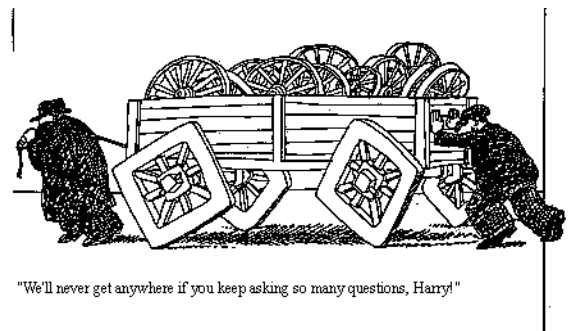
**Look at it from different angles - not just way you have seen it before**

**Graphic:** Square Wheels

**Connections**

*note: we will look at more connections next week*

- A) **Repetition \*\* See lots of this used today! \*\***
- B) Compare / Contrast
- C) Cause / Effect
- D) General to Particular



**Today's Study:** Ephesians 1:3-14 {Page 1, Line 3 – Page 2, Line 18}

**Home Study:** Ephesians 1:15-23 {Page 2, Line18 – Page 2, Line 30}

**Read:** Article 2 "Sherlock Holmes – What We Can Learn from a Felt Hat"

## **How to Study of Ephesians**

{NOTE: we did not complete this in Week 1, so notes repeated here}

### **Manuscript Study**

- **Text only** – no chapters or verse (line numbers simply to help us refer to it as we talk)
- **Mark it up!** – take pages out of binder, draw lines and boxes, write questions and thoughts in margins, use colors and symbols – whatever helps you to see!
- **Stick to passage** – unless passage specifically quotes another we will stick to Ephesians ... certainly at some point in study helpful, even critical to link to all of Bible – BUT need to start with passage and learn to observe well what it says, seeing its unique perspective – so for this class we will normally limit our view to the passage
  - NOTE: Resources can be very helpful ... but again in class we want to stick to the passage – if we need a definition, map, something like that we will grab it – but no reading your study Bible footnotes! – again, we will talk in week 7 about where those fit, but for now resist the temptation

### **House Rules**

- This is a cooking class, not a cafeteria
- The experts are not always right
- We do not always play it straight
- You will reap what you sow!

KEY: **You will reap what you sow!**

## **Intro to Ephesians:**

### **Quotes:**

Calvin's favorite Letter

Coleridge: "the divinest composition of man"

Others: "Pinnacle of Paul's writing"

John Mackay, former President Princeton Seminary:

"to this book I owe my life"

"I saw a new world ... Everything was new ... I had a new outlook, new experiences, new attitudes to other people. I loved God. Jesus Christ became the centre of everything ... I had been 'quicken'd'; I was really alive."

## **Overview of Ephesians:**

**Genre:** Epistle / Letter

**Two Parts:** Chapter 1-3: Theological Foundation, What God has Done  
Chapter 4-6: Application, How We Should Live

**Outline** (from John Stott)

Introduction (1:1-2)

**I] New Life**

- A) Every spiritual blessing (1:3-14)
- B) A prayer for knowledge (1:15-23)
- C) Resurrected with Christ (2:1-10)

**II] New Society**

- A) A Single new humanity (2:11-22)
- B) Paul's unique privilege (3:1-13)
- C) Confidence in God's power (3:14-21)

**III] New Standards**

- A) Unity and diversity in the Church {service and maturity}{4:1-16}
- B) A new set of clothes {put off and put on} (4:17-5:4)
- C) More incentives to righteousness (5:5-21)

**IV] New Relationships**

- A) Husbands and wives (5:21-33)
- B) Parents and children, Masters and slaves (6:1-9)
- C) Principalities and Powers (6:10-20)

Conclusion (6:21-24)

***NOTE: There are several helpful charts, maps, summaries of Ephesians in the notebook immediately after the Ephesians Manuscript***

## **Week 2: Ephesians 1:3-14**

*May 6, 2012 – God’s Party – taught by Mark Bickel*

### **Ephesians 1:3-14 {Page 1, Line 3 – Page 2, Line 18}**

#### **OBSERVATION**

##### **Get the Facts**

A) Look for **key themes** that jump out you - start with **repeated words!**

(God - 47 X in 20 lines - 14 verses!)

(Note also - this is all **1 sentence** in the original)

B) look for **Who, What, When, Where, Why and How.**

**Who is this section about? What do they do?**

**1) Who: God** (father, Jesus, HS, he...) - occurs **47 x** in these 20 lines!

**What:** What does God do ?

- give Grace and Peace
- blessed
- **bless us** - with every spiritual blessing
- **chose us** - before foundation of world - to be holy
- **destined us** - in love - to be sons
- **has a purpose** - does things according to it
- gives grace - freely
- gives redemption - **forgive trespasses** - according to grace
- **lavish riches of grace** on us
- **makes known wisdom** - mystery of will
- has plan - set forth in Christ - for fullness of time
- uniting everything - in heaven and earth
- accomplished will
- **destines and appoints us** - to live to his glory
- seals us with Holy Spirit
- **guarantees our inheritance**

**Summary:** God has a plan, which he is working out. It involves Him choosing to lavish grace on us, for His glory.

**Note: Trinity : Father elect, Christ redeem, Spirit seal**

2) **Who: You** (you, we, us, our...) - occurs at least **17 x**, plus other inferences  
{note: you is "Saints who are Faithful" , all who fit that description}

**What:** What do You do or have done to you ?

- Saints - faithful
- Grace and Peace to us
- We are blessed
- we are chosen
- we should be holy and blameless - purpose of the choosing
- we are destined - to be his sons
- we have grace freely bestowed on us
- we have redemption - forgiveness of our sins
- we know the mystery of his will
- we hope in Christ - and are then destined and appointed to live for his Praise and glory
- we have heard and believed gospel - then were sealed with HS
- we have a guaranteed inheritance, which we will acquire

**Summary:** we were chosen for blessing as sons, forgiven to be holy, and sealed for future glory.

3) **Note Voice:**

**God: Active verbs** : God DOING everything

**You: Passive verbs** God doing it TO US

4) **When?** When does all this occur?

**Past:** Election - God has had a plan from the start

**Present:** Adoption - We are now adopted as Sons, currently getting grace

**Future :** Unification : sealed for inheritance, All things under Christ

5) **Where?** Does the passage say where it takes place?

**Earth and Heaven**

**Universal in scope**

6) **How** does all this occur?

**In Christ:**

- Notice he is Lord (king, ruler), Jesus (person), Christ (messiah)
- we are faithful - in Christ
- God blessed us - in Christ
- God chose us - In Christ
- God destined us as sons - through Christ
- God bestowed glorious grace on us - in the Beloved
- we have redemption - in Christ
- God set forth purpose - in Christ
- God will unite all things - in Christ
- we have been destined for praise - In Christ
- we first hoped - in Christ
- we were sealed - In Christ
- we have believed - In Christ

**Summary:** God acts, and we are saved, only in Christ. It is Christ's life, death, resurrection, ascension and coming again that everything else in all history revolves around. **In and Through Him God accomplishes all his purposes.**

7) **Why** does God do all this? (What is the stated purpose?)

- that we should be holy and blameless
- to the praise of his glorious grace
- purpose - to unite all things in Christ
- purpose - that we live for the praise of his glory
- to the praise of his glory

**Summary: It's all for God's Glory**

## **INTERPRETATION**

### **A) Overall Theme: It's God's Party**

God had a plan from before the foundation of the world, he is executing it, it will not fail, it is all encompassing, and it will culminate in him bringing everything together under His rule. That plan has been executed in Christ, with Christ as the center and key. And it is all for God's Glory !

I once heard a story of a kid who went to a Birthday party. As the kid whose birthday it was opened his massive stack of presents this other kid just pouted. Finally a parent pulled him aside and made a very profound, very true statement. She simple said "It is not your party!"

**This life is not our party!**

**It's God's party, for his purposes and for his glory!**

### **B) Our Place: Receiver of Overwhelming Blessing**

But the absolutely amazing part is God has put us in the plan, and not as an object of wrath, like we deserve. And not even in some minor role. He has chosen to actually adopt us as sons. And as such he has redeemed us, forgiven our sins, and lavished on us all grace.

Do you sense Paul's excitement and utterly flabbergasted state - He just starts laying on the descriptions of God's glorious, lavish, rich, grace. He can hardly even describe how marvelous it all is

And God has gone so far as to let us in on the grand mysteries of his love and his plan, and to send us his sprit as a guarantee of the glorious inheritance that awaits us.

And all this so that we could actually be holy and blameless. So that we could actually live for the praise of his glory.

**John Piper puts it this way:**

**"God's happiness is the delight he has in himself.** Before creation he rejoiced in the image of his glory in the person of his son. Then the joy of God 'went public' in the works of creation and redemption. These works delight the heart of God because they reflect his glory. He does everything he does to preserve and display that glory, for in this his soul rejoices.



All the works of God culminate in the praises of his redeemed people. The climax of his happiness is the delight he takes in the echos of his excellence in the praises of his saints. This praise is the consummation of our own joy in God. Therefore God's pursuit of praise from us and our pursuit of pleasure in him are the same pursuit."

**"The happiness of God in God is the foundation of our happiness in God. For God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him."**

**C) Overall Tone: Worship / Encouragement**

One final, important note : **Did you notice the tone / style of the writing ?**

Which of the following best describes this section:

- a list of the attributes of God, and how I should respond to them
- a theological treatise on Predestination
- an apologetic (defense) against false notions of God
- an encouragement to rest in God because he's done everything and there is nothing left for us to do
- a challenge to go out and live right and do all God wants us to
- **a song of worship and adoration to God**

We should always look at the form of the passage and the tone of it.

In this case it is a personal letter. It is written not to confront error, and it is not written a theological treatise or a list of attributes. The entire first section is much more of a song of praise and a prayer in response to it.

**Good Theology MUST lead to Doxology!**

## **APPLICATION**

Take time this week to apply the passage. But apply it along the lines of the key points of Interpretation. Therefore:

- 1) You'll want to look at your own heart and see **if you really believe and act as if it is God's party**, or if you act as if it is your party. Who serves who and who gets the glory?
- 2) **Do you see and appreciate your position**. God has lavished all this on you. You are significant, not because you are doing something for God, but because He has chosen to do all this for you! **Be encouraged**. (Unless of course you do not fit the salutation "The Saints who are Faithful in Christ Jesus", in which case this should cause you to cry out God for forgiveness and salvation so you do get His grace)
- 3) **Worship God !** Just stop and worship and praise Him.

## **PRAY**

\* In the Daily Reading Packet you will find review questions to help you apply this section, and some guidance for reading and thinking about the rest of chapter 1. The goal for the next section is to use the OIA card and to find literary connections.

## **Home Study:**

**Ephesians 1:15-23** {Page 2, Line 18 – Page 2, Line 30}

**Read:** Article 2 "Sherlock Holmes – What We Can Learn from a Felt Hat"