

What is it?

What is it about?

How do I talk about it?

Remember, this is written for us, but not to us, so...

1) Exegesis: Hearing the word for them

- Historical context (see your cheat sheet for example questions)
- Literary context (think in paragraphs: why this? why now? what's the point? has he got to the point? What's the larger picture in play here? What are we building to? Have I heard this before?)
- Theological context (how does it speak/what does it say about God?)

How do we do this?

"Reading is the first thing, just reading the Bible." - *Eugene Peterson*

Some Basic Tools

- A pair of eyes (or ears!)
- A good translation(s)
- Good company
- Friends, family, pastors, writers
- And all of this covered in prayer (for wisdom, for patience, for help!)

2) Hermeneutics: Hearing the word for us

Foster an educated imagination by

- Paying attention
- Asking questions

Some good questions to start with:

- Who am I?
- What is my story?
- What am I confronted with?
- Where do I find myself?
- ...And then turn to good company and ask the same thing!

Leading a Bible Study

First...

1. **Read the text**
2. **Be in conversation with the text** (journal, outline, read an article [Peter Enns PDFs], write in your margins!)
3. **Think about it, talk about it, pray about it**

Then, For each session:

1. **Re-read your section**
2. **Ask yourself/remind yourself...**
 - a. **Who am I talking to?**
 - b. **What is the point of this section?** (there may be a few, don't get swamped, people will bring their own questions and curiosities, you keep the main thing the main thing)
 - c. **Is there anything I need to chase down?** (What kind of data do you need to need to have, where/how will you get it)
3. **Then, personally reflect on this section** in light of your own experience (and that of the group) explore what you feel the main point(s) of the section are until you find questions or topics deriving from the intersection of the text and your life that feel relevant to all parties involved (the text, you, the group)
4. **Put it in writing**, don't do all this work with nothing to show for it! Writing it down makes it concrete and honours the time spent by all in a study. Sure, as different people and personalities participate in the group, conversation might go a different direction, but then at least you've got something to improvise from.

It can be helpful to write this down like...

Topic: *I think XY and Z are the main point here*

Question: *So I think it's worth asking...*

Significance: *Because I want to help my group understand / wrestle with / encounter...*

Potential practical application: *So that we can move forward in these practical ways...*

One Way to Approach Scripture

Reading *What Exodus is about*

Describe it! - Exodus (piece by piece) in your own words

Trace out the Narrative's Path - Developing a working outline

Reading *How Exodus is written*

Scenes

Characters

Settings

Plots

Patterns

Unpacking What God Says *Through Exodus?*

What does it mean to be human (our fallen condition)?

Who is God?

How than can/should we live?