

Flecks of Gold

Have you ever picked up this Book and just felt lost? Maybe it was at first just finding the verses everyone was talking about. But then you realize that it is once you find the verse that the frustration really starts. You know you love Jesus but this book....it doesn't make sense.

Then someone like me tells you that without the Holy Spirit it will make no sense to you. Then you begin doubting your faith. Thinking that if I really had the Spirit this book would not be so confusing.

You see other people who seem to devour the book and glean deep truths. They mark up their Bible. Have memorized it. And seem to understand it. But my guess is that those people had someone teach them what to look for. But you feel like you are panning the river for Gold and everyone else is cashing in.

You want to believe the Gold is there. But you wonder if maybe it is not just there for you. When it comes to your Bible study there is no Gold...and there is no Gold Rush for you.

That is why this series is so important. Because Bible study can be so frustrating! I think if we were really honest in this room today. This book often sits on the shelf. Plays little or no role in our day to day lives. Because we just don't get it. We can do devotionals. We can participate in small groups. We depend upon others to teach us. But we don't really hear from God when we open His word. What is worse...we don't even really know where to start. And some of us have felt that way for 30+ years.

This book becomes a symbol of our failure to really walk closely with Jesus. So we just leave it on the shelf. Kind of like a good luck charm. Somehow knowing we have it makes us feel better. But we have no clue how to use it.

I wanted to do this series because what I just described was my experience for several years. No one showed me how to read the Bible. It became my good luck charm.

Yet there was another reason I didn't read the Bible. Deep down...I didn't really want to do all that it said. There were some things I was doing that I knew this book probably would tell me to stop. Somehow. If I didn't really see it or could claim that I didn't fully understand it. I wouldn't be responsible for changing and submitting to it.

My loophole with God was going to be that I didn't really understand. Part of understanding the Bible is having a heart ready to submit to its truth. It requires a submissive heart...A willing Spirit.....A desire to really know....a bit of work to find the treasures...and then the hardest part....choosing to obey..

Bible Study for me changed when I changed. Ask God to give you the Spirit of a submissive learner. Try this prayer, "Hold my hand God, lead me through your words of truth. Your servant is listening. Ready to submit."

We are frustrated because We don't know how to read the Bible. We don't know what to look for in the Bible. We may not want to know what is really in the Bible. We don't want to know bad enough to actually work at it.

Today I want us to put on the goggles and focus on learning. How to Listen to God's Word. How to Look at God's Word.

But first ask yourself these questions How badly do you want to hear? How badly do you want to see? Are you desperate? Do you have to know? Are you seeking first the Kingdom of God and all His righteousness?

When it comes to listening and seeing I think of two desperate men. Monet and Beethoven

Monet was the founder of French Impressionist Painting **IMAGE 1**

A gift for seeing things Visually His talent was in the subtleties of color He could see in colors what others had missed The impressionists began to see light in a new way It was much more natural and involved more feeling They were called impressions for that reason and because the work was at first Heavily criticized for not being complete- it was an impression. Not a finished painting. He was gifted by God to paint what he could see...but he could only paint...what he could see.....This is the same garden 21 years latter. **IMAGE 2**

What others saw as incomplete Monet considered a masterpiece Yet just when his career was peaking...his vision started to fade. **IMAGE 3** The very gift God had given him. It seemed God was taking away Monet became desperate to see

Beethoven **IMAGE 4** A gift for composing God gave him of gift of hearing music no one else could hear.

He also was given a stubborn will to compose what he wanted Not what others or his audiences said they wanted He had perfect pitch and could hear what others did not He too early in his career began to lose the very gift God had given him Yet he became deaf over the years God....What is up with that? Why does someone with a gift for painting become blind? Someone with a gift for music become deaf? It doesn't make sense to me. Why wouldn't God give Monet perfect sight? Why not give Beethoven perfect hearing?

Can you imagine their frustration? Monet so desperately wanting to see But nothing is clear Look at the Difference between his painting of the bridge in his Japanese garden Early in his life Vs Later in His life

Beethoven desperately wanting to hear But all is silent

Yet many would say that it was precisely their failing senses that made their art and music great. As Beethoven began to lose his hearing He began to change his style He was less concerned about what others thought He put emotion into his music He abandoned all the rules, He became a revolutionary Both amazing and shocking the music world He stood against the tide of very classical music

And changed the direction in which it flowed Most believe none of that would have happened had he not become desperate to hear

Rather than giving up. Their frustration fueled their greatness. They had a sense of urgency That drove their masterpieces When it comes to Bible Study There will be moments When we desperately want to see clearly and hear God And He is going to want us to persevere Like Beethoven we must become desperate to hear the Holy Spirt Like Monet we must become desperate to see what the Holy Spirit wants to reveal to us

It is your desperation to hear and to see God in the Holy Scriptures that determines the persistence and effort you will undergo to find the gold...because you know it is there....because you have been there before. It is your desperation to see and hear from God that defines the experience that you will have when you study the Bible

Christ followers do not read this book alone As a Christ follower we have the Holy Spirit with us giving us guidance Pray that the Holy Spirit will give you A desperation to get to know Him as your study the words in this book But we have to trust, listen and obey what the Holy Spirit teaches us.

Listening to advice reminds me of a friend of mine A friend of mine has only one eye due to a childhood accident He told me a story once of how he and his wife were driving on a country road She knew he had difficulty seeing everything So as they rounded a turn she said "Honey do you see the deer on the road"

He said "Yes thank you...." and then wrecked the car as he ran over 2 deer right in front of him He saw a deer....He didn't realize she was using the word in the plural.

He had not seen all that there was to see.....didn't take time to fully understand the advice he was given Trusted his own limited view...and wrecked the situation.

When we read God's Word our view is limited too. We need to listen to what the Holy Spirit teaches us We need to see all the He wants to show us We must learn to know and trust the Holy Spirit If we don't, we will wreck our lives and run over some things in the process.

A key to Bible Study is not just to pay attention to what you see, but to listen to what the Holy Spirit reveals to you that you didn't see.

4 C's and We are looking at the first one. Content.

So...how do we look and listen to God's Word?

7 Ways We Listen

Thoughtfully We must think through the text Even a text we know very well If we listen thoughtfully we will hear what God has for us We have to analyze what God is saying Each word and idea is there for a specific purpose and reason. You have to unpack it all

Thoroughly To understand the Bible you have to bombard it with questions You have to pour questions all over each page

Main questions Who? Who wrote it? Who read it? Who are the main characters? What? What is happening in the text? What is wrong with the picture? What is the author saying? Where? Where is the writer when they wrote this text? Where are the original readers? Where is the text taking place? When? When was it written? When were the events taking place? Why? Why is the author writing this? Why is this included in Scripture? Why did God think it was so important? Why did the events happen the way they did?

Not every text will answer every question but you need to ask When you begin to ask the Holy Spirit these questions You are on the verge of a breakthrough Bombard the text with questions

Repeatedly Read the text over and over and over Read it with emphasis on different words For God so loved the world...example Read the entire book (letter) Re-read a passage or a verse Take a verse with you and process it all day

Patiently This is going to take time. Plan to abide with Holy Spirit for awhile. God doesn't give up gold to the lazy or those rushing through His truth. Don't jump to application first Be patient with the text and be patient with yourself Relax and enjoy the ride through the text

Imaginatively Use your senses See the sights Smell the Smells Put yourself in the text Connect with the emotions Moses on MT Nebo looking at the promised land he cannot enter Joshua standing there with the weight on his shoulders of leading them there Feel what they feel

Look at the story from the perspective of everyone there. These were real moments in human history. Humans witnessed them. Look at the story from their perspective. The crucifixion was seen differently from the perspective of Mary...Jesus...The others on the cross....The guards...The passerby's....The crowds...Pilate...the typical Jewish person in Jerusalem that day...The Roman people there that day. Caiaphus....The High Priest...Peter who denied Jesus....Judas who betrayed Him...The Shepherd boys who are now men and remember that night 30 years ago....James Jesus' brother who was not yet a believer...Arimethea who provided the tomb....Nicodemus who helped bury Him...The other disciples...John who was there...and others who were hiding.... Same story Viewed from different perspectives

Meditatively Take time to reflect Take time to meditate Not hmmm But accept and reflect on the words said to you.

God's word encourages us to reflect as much as we read We need to spend more time reflecting and less time reading

Ponder on it in your heart Joshua 1:8 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Psalm 1 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Psalm 119 97 97 Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. 98 Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. 99 I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. 100 I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts. 101 I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep your word. 102 I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me. 103 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! 104 Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way. 105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Purposefully We are not just reading to check off a box on our Spiritual to do list We are reading because we want this text to transform our lives.

We are not reading to get details and information We want to grow in the image of Christ That is the purpose of this book And the purpose of studying it When you pick up this book. Plan to Listen to God. Do it with purpose.

So once we have listened to what the Holy Spirit wants to show us...it is time to look and see what He wants to show us. **IMAGE 5**

But what do we look for? Perhaps you have read your Bible and you are thinking I HAVE looked at it. But I want to encourage all of us to look a bit deeper. God uses patterns and word emphasis to point you to the gold. There are some things you see in God's Word that give you a better understanding

The art of Bible reading is seeing. What makes one person a better student of the Bible than another? They know how to see the Bible. They know what to look for. One of the greatest skills in reading the Bible is to be able to see Both what is there and...What is not there....and What you expected would have been there.

Square Images

Not 16 there is more there Look deeper GIVE THEM TIME.....You have to do that with the Word as well You have to look deeper There are 30 squares.....We have to see...and then look again. Final Answer

So what are we looking for? When we open this book what are the clues that point us to gold. What do I see? What is the context? We are going to look for 6 things That unlock the passage And by seeing clearly. Allow us to listen to what God is saying

6 Ways We Look Repeats Compares Contrasts Connects Communicates Emphasizes We will look at 3 of these today and the rest next week

1. Repeats Leave this slide up

Great Storytellers repeat themselves in order to bring emphasis and to help the audience remember the story. Martin Luther King was a teacher of God's Word. In this speech he key word is repeated...not surprisingly...7 times.

And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today!

We know repetition works...it is the backbone of modern day advertising.

Today, repetition is more popular than ever thanks to the rise of marketing campaigns. When I say "I'm lovin' it" or "Just do it," for example, you know exactly what I mean. We refer to this as branding or advertising, but it's really just a concentrated form of repetition. Hearing the same thing over and over helps you remember it and can build associations with a product or idea.

On a broad scale, the Bible even repeats itself.

Think of the four Gospels, Mathew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each of these books essentially does the same thing; they all record the life, teachings, miracles, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They are an example of repetition on a large scale. But why? Why does the New Testament contain four large books that all describe the same sequence of events?

First, the use of repetition in the Bible usually emphasizes the importance of a person, theme, or event. This makes sense for the Gospels because the story of Jesus' earthly ministry and mission is the most important event in the history of the world. The presence of four distinct accounts of Jesus' life emphasizes His importance.

Second, the repetition of the Gospels offers greater credibility. In the ancient world, legal testimonies were considered valid if they could be substantiated by at least two or three witnesses (see Deuteronomy 19:15). By having four separate accounts written by four distinct witnesses, the Bible offers a highly reliable portrait of who Jesus was and what He did on our behalf.

Third, the use of repetition in the Gospels allowed the biblical authors to approach Jesus' story from different angles and perspectives.

There are other examples of broad scale repeats in the Bible.

For example, the Ten Commandments are repeated in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 because of their critical importance to the Israelites and their understanding of God's law.

Likewise, the Old Testament repeats large portions of entire books, including the books of Kings and Chronicles. Why? Because doing so allows readers to explore the same events from two vastly different perspectives -- 1 and 2 Kings were written before Israel's exile to Babylon, while 1 and 2 Chronicles were written after the Israelites returned to their homeland.

The important thing to remember is that large portions of Scripture aren't repeated by accident. They didn't come about because God decided to cut and paste. Rather, the Bible contains repeated chunks of text because repetition serves a purpose.

The Bible also contains several examples of smaller repeated phrases, themes, and ideas. These smaller examples of repetition typically are typically intended to emphasize the importance of a person or an idea or to highlight an element of character.

Look at what the Word Repeats Does the author intentionally repeat something? Remember what we have learned about the Jewish culture. The did not always have writings....the relied on verbal stories and memory. If you want someone to remember something you repeated it. The author did not forget

Often the same phrase will be repeated throughout multiple verses in the Bible. Look at the promise God gave Moses.

Exodus 6:7 (ESV) 7 I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

Genesis 17:7 (ESV) 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

Leviticus 26:12–13 (ESV) 12 And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people. 13 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their slaves.

Numbers 15:41 (ESV) 41 I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I am the Lord your God."

Jeremiah 7:23 (ESV) 23 But this command I gave them: 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people. And walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you.'

Ezekiel 36:28 (ESV) 28 You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.

So sometimes the entire story repeats...the gospels...sometimes Scriptures repeat...the Ten Commandments...God telling the Israelites, I will be your God and you will be my people....and then we see repeats inside of specific verses.

If the writer wants to make it obvious...they repeat the word immediately. The number of times a word is repeated is important as well. Three being the Key. Three was the number of perfection.

Revelation 4:8 (ESV) 8 And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

Ezekiel 21:27 (ESV) 27 A ruin, ruin, ruin I will make it. This also shall not be, until he comes, the one to whom judgment belongs, and I will give it to him.

Jeremiah 22:29 (ESV) 29 O land, land, land, hear the word of the Lord!

Peter denied Jesus three times...three repeats....and Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him three times....three repeated affirmations.

Other times they repeat the same phrase throughout a passage.

Psalms 136:1–9 (ESV) 1 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. 2 Give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever. 3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever; 4 to him who alone does great wonders, for his steadfast love endures forever;

The writer continues this same phrase for 26 verses. What do you think he wanted the reader to remember?

Matthew 5:3–12 (ESV) 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

2 Corinthians 1:3–7 (ESV) 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 5 For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. 6 If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. 7 Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

2 Words that don't go together "Comfort" and "Sufferings" But with God they do Repetition emphasizes this By noticing what the Word repeats you begin to see nuggets You see how the author wanted us to see comfort in suffering

1 John 2:15–17 (ESV) 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

The World is all throughout the book of 1 John Love is all throughout the book of 1 John
By repeating these things John is pointing us to Gold Their is a love of this world and a supernatural love of God Repetition shows us that these two contrasts are critical to John's Message

Why do they repeat things? When I repeat stories people tell me that I have already told them that?

In English (and other languages), adverbs are common, not so much in Hebrew or Greek. We have different words to describe the intensity of something. For example, red, redder, reddest. Or sad, sadder, saddest. Or holy, holier, holiest. But in Hebrew, there aren't different words to describe the intensity, thus they would use a word multiple times to describe the intensity. Thus "holy, holy, holy" would be equivalent to "holiest" in English and would describe something that is the most "holy".

We will also see this when we get to lists. The greatest emphasis first in the list because they didn't really have a lot of adverbs to use.

In General, we see repeats in Scripture **for three primary reasons...**

1. To Emphasize Jesus Christ

The four Gospels Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, for example, serve to emphasize the truth of Christ's existence, life, ministry, death and resurrection. The four accounts coming from four different people – supported by other people such as Paul, David, Isaiah, and even Moses – confirm His identity.

2. To remind us of God's promises

Man has limited memory and is thus forgetful at times. God knows that man is made from dust and is thus limited in his capabilities, and so He keeps reminding us of His promises by repeating them. We might forget His promises, but He won't.

The Bible tells us that God makes good on His words. He does whatever He says, even if it means we have to wait for a long time. When we grow older we might forget the promises God said to us as young people, but He will never forget them.

3. To remind us of what God has done

When God did great things...people often built altars to mark the place so that their children and future generations would remember what God had done there. Repeats in Scripture are altars of Scripture....they remind us of what great thing God has done.

Things repeated in the Bible are like specks of Gold in the River. They tell you that if you persists and abide...the gold is coming soon. Never ignore things that are repeated in Scripture.

When you see them, start praying. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you why He repeated those words of Scripture. Remember no word in the Bible is there by accident. If the writer took the time to repeat something....God wanted it repeated for a good reason. Repeats are like a sign that says...."Gold Here"

2. Compares

Does the author compare items, individuals, or concepts? Simile uses "like" or "as"

When you see something that is compared....neither side was chosen by accident. Comparisons are invitations to meditate.

Let me give you an example. Psalm 42

Psalm 42:1–2 (ESV) 1 As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

Like a Deer pants for flowing streams....my soul pants for you.

You can read it and move on...skimming the surface....or you have been invited to meditate....How does a deer pant for water? Why flowing water? Why a deer and not some other animal? Why pants and not seeks, or desires, or looks, needs?

David is the writer of this Psalm. He spent a lot of time out in the wild. We know that at a young age, he fought with the lion and the bear...and survived. But deer are docile animals...we have them in our neighborhood....they are harmless animals. I have never seen any of our deers pant....what is David talking about? There is only one time that you will see a deer pant.....and it is not in your neighborhood....But in the wild, they are a delicacy of lions. In the wild when a lion spots a deer, he gives the deer a hot chase.

PHOTO The deer runs at high speed till (if lucky) the predator (lion or tiger or cheeter) gives up the chase.

At this point the deer is exhausted, short of breath, gasping, panting. Deer are fast, they can leap, they can run for a long time. But they cannot handle heat very well. Panting is their way of cooling down. So when a deer is chased....Like an athlete who just completed a race, all it wants is water. At this state the deer pants towards (after) the water brooks because its life depends on water. If it does not get water and the predator chases again, it will just submit to death. So it pants searching for water....

That's how David's (and all children of God) soul should pant after God! The living God. The true God. Satan is attacking us...we need to living water of God's Word to survive.

Deer, and dogs, do not need to be trained to pant—and they do not need to be trained to drink water. Thirst, and a knowledge of how to satisfy that thirst, comes naturally to them. And, I would say, in following St. Augustine, that the thirst of our soul for God comes naturally to us as well. Everyone is searching for a way to have that thirst satisfied. Some seek to satisfy that thirst in healthy ways, others in unhealthy ways.

So why does the deer pant for running water? **PHOTO** A river or stream if the deer runs through it will throw off its scent and protect it from a predator.

Comparisons invite you to meditate...It is in the study of the example that you find the gold.

I should pant for God like a deer pants for water....I am being chased by Satan...I am helpless...He wants to destroy me. I need to run with all that I have toward Jesus. I need to get to Him. I need His Spirit to throw off the scent of my sins...I need to be cleansed, refreshed, and protected.

Then often the Spirit will remind you of other verses...

John 7:37–39 (ESV) 37 On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' " 39 Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

When I run to Jesus....run to God....He seals me with the Holy Spirit and Satan can't destroy me anymore. He covers the scent of my sins with His righteousness. I never have to run from Satan again.

In Christ we become like a deer that the Lion can't touch...A deer that defeats a Lion....the Deer becomes something new....

Comparisons are inviting you to spend time...to abide...more flecks of Gold....inviting you to stay for the real lesson.

There are different kinds of comparison.

Direct Comparisons

John 3:14–15 (ESV) 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

1 Peter 2:1–3 (ESV) 1 So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. 2 Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.

Metaphors

"Implied Comparisons"

John 15:1 (ESV) 1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

James 3:3–5 (ESV) 3 If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. 4 Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. 5 So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!

Bits and rudders a metaphor for the tongue Word pictures that help us understand the power of the tongue

Allegory- An Image sets up a deeper meaning

Galatians 4:21–24 (ESV) 21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. 23 But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise. 24 Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar.

2 Covenants. A Slave Covenant. A free Covenant. The Allegory is that in our relationship with Christ we are under one of these covenants We are either still in slavery to our sin without Christ or Free from our sin in Christ

3. Contrasts

Items Individuals or Things

Look for the Word "But" It is one of the most important words you will see in Scripture When it comes to Bible Study, "Buts are Big"

Proverbs 14:31–35 (ESV) 31 Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him. 32 The wicked is overthrown through his evil doing, but the righteous finds refuge in his death. 33 Wisdom rests in the heart of a man of understanding, but it makes itself known even in the midst of fools. 34 Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. 35 A servant who deals wisely has the king's favor, but his wrath falls on one who acts shamefully.

Romans 6:23 (ESV) 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Genesis 6:6–8 (ESV) 6 And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7 So the Lord said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

So we are working our way through the First "C" Content. We read through the text to feel the emotion....We listen...and We Look.

We **listen in 7 ways**: Thoughtfully Thoroughly Repeatedly Patiently Imaginatively Meditatively Purposefully

Looking for 6 Things What does the Word Repeat? What does the Word Compare? What does the Word Contrast? Then Three for next week. What does the Word Connect? How does the Word Communicate? What does the Word emphasize?

You will not see all these in a single passage But when you see them...they point you to a deeper understanding. The Holy Spirit uses these things to guide you to see what you would not otherwise see Like flecks of Gold in your pan They tell you the nuggets are nearby

I started this series telling you about my patient Ned 94 years old From Wickenburg Arizona Who panned for gold his entire life He knew the gold was there because He had experienced the thrill of finding it Ned, How do you find gold? You must believe it is there You must be willing to put in the effort to find it You must slow down and Someone needs to teach you how to look for it

Be Patient! Take your time. Learn to be patient. It may start out looking like this **Monet Picture** If you learn how to see the text- You will see things you have never seen before And this text will become alive and your vision will become clearer. **Monet Picture** This book is a treasure We must dig for Gold. Do you believe it is there? Are you willing to work for it? Let's Pray