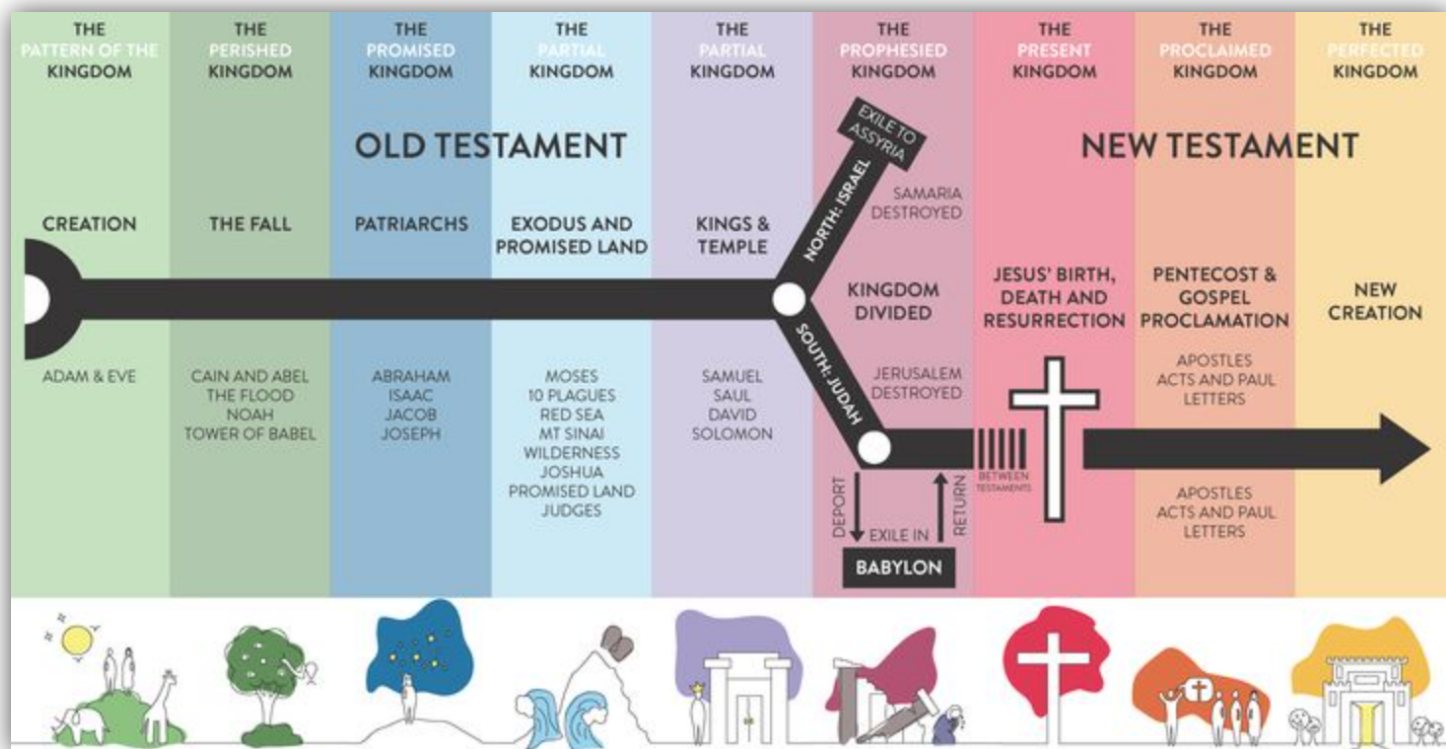


STEP UP IN FAITH

HOW TO READ A BIBLE PASSAGE, PART 1

OPENING REFLECTION

- Take a few minutes to jot down some notes, and then – in a shortened form – share your understanding of how the Bible story goes from Genesis to Revelation, as much to as little as you can. Big-picture summary!



REVIEWING LAST FEW WEEKS:

- What is a worldview?
- How many books are in the Bible? How is the Bible divided up?
- What kinds of books can you find in the Bible?

STEP UP IN FAITH

HOW TO READ A BIBLE PASSAGE, PART 1

TODAY, WE ARE GOING TO LEARN HOW WE SIT DOWN TO A BIBLE PASSAGE TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS.

Let's read together Matthew 14:22-33.

First, read it out loud. Underline or make note of some details in the story that you find interesting or strange.

Then take a minute to answer the following questions:

- What do you think it would have been like to be in the boat with the disciples that night? What details in the story make you think that?
- What do you think of Peter's request of Jesus in verse 28?
- Do you know someone who is bold like Peter?
- Why do you think Peter started sinking in verse 30?
- Have you ever doubted what you were seeing at a given moment, like the disciples are in this story?



You are invited to watch this video, published by Christ in Youth: <https://t.ly/sdw0T>

After watching this video, how would you say this passage from Matthew 14, written almost 2,000 years ago, applies to you?

STEP UP IN FAITH

HOW TO READ A BIBLE PASSAGE, PART 1

4-STEP PROCESS TO READING AND UNDERSTANDING A BIBLE PASSAGE

STEP 1: READ THE PASSAGE OR STORY CAREFULLY.

- Read it more than once, paying attention to each word and phrase. It can be helpful to read it out loud sometimes. The goal is to be able to envision what is happening.
 - *Are there certain words or details that repeat themselves?*
 - *Are there common themes or ideas that run throughout the text?*
 - *What details might be significant in the passage?*
 - *What's happening to / within each character in the story?*
 - *How old are the characters? What kind of people are they?*

STEP 2: THINK ABOUT THE CONTEXT OF THE STORY OR PASSAGE.

- What is going on around the passage that may make a difference for how I understand it?
 - *What type of literature is it? Will that make a difference for how I read it?*
 - *What time period was it written in? What issues were the people dealing with at that time?*
 - *Who wrote it?*
 - *Who was the intended audience?*
 - *What happened just before it was written in the story? Just after?*

STEP 3: THINK ABOUT THE CONTEXT OF YOUR LIFE TODAY.

- What may influence how I come to read or understand this story?
 - *What is going on within the world around us that is similar to the time of this passage? What is different?*
 - *What culture am I a part of? How do people handle relationships today?*
 - *What themes or patterns keep popping up in my life?*
 - *What are the biggest issues I/we are dealing with today?*

STEP 4: PUT IT ALL TOGETHER.

- Holding the story, its context, and my context in balance, how might this passage influence me today?
 - *What themes do I see in the passage that apply to me?*
 - *What is the author trying to get at in this passage?*
 - *What can I learn from that?*
 - *Are there similarities between what I'm going through and what the people of the Bible are going through? What differences are there?*

STEP UP IN FAITH

HOW TO READ A BIBLE PASSAGE, PART 1

In the video you watched, you can see this teacher going through this process as he teaches the story. For example:



- “Sometimes God feels far away from us” = STEP 3, thinking about our context
- “Peter stands up and shouts out to Jesus” = STEP 1, reading the story carefully
- “Peter drops everything to follow Jesus” = STEP 2, thinking about the context of the story
- “A lot of things can happen in an instant” = STEP 3, thinking about our context
- “Though Jesus may feel far away, he’s always right there to grab you” = STEP 4, putting it together

Let’s finish up today by practicing, with Luke 19:1-10.

Jot your notes down below as you go through this process.

STEP 1: As I read the story carefully, I noticed...

STEP 2: Some things I know or noticed about the context of the story.

STEP 3: Here are some things I know about my own context.

STEP 4: Here’s what I think this story could mean for me.