

# Day 6 - Applying God's Word

While there are certainly some difficult passages of Scripture to understand, our problem is more often not with understanding the Bible – in general, God has made the Bible extremely clear – but in applying it to our own lives (and doing so appropriately). Just like hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating, applying God's Word is a discipline that we must train ourselves to do (and to do well). It is a natural conclusion of these other methods of taking in God's Word, and it is expected of us.

Read *James 1:22-25*.

What does this passage command us to be?

*(doers of the God's Word, not hearers only; in other words, we must apply God's Word to our own lives)*

If God wants us to be doers of his Word, then we can be confident that he also wants us to find an application every time we come to his Word. Let me be clear, there are many Scriptures that are direct commands to people who are not us. Not every command in Scripture can be applied to us by ripping that command out and sticking it in our own life, and sometimes the application to us is simply to respond in awe, wonder, and praise to our great God. The point is, there is always an application, and we must discipline ourselves to find an application every time we come to God's Word.

Let's practice with a text that is often misunderstood and, therefore, misapplied.

Read *Philippians 4:13*. Now read *Philippians 4:10-20*.

Having read the immediate context of *Philippians 4:13*, what does this verse mean?

*(Paul is able to be content no matter the circumstances because of Christ who strengthens him)*

This verse is not about winning football games or band competitions. It is about being contentment in Christ. Understanding the meaning of this passage, applying it is much easier.

How does the *Philippians 4:13* apply to us? *(We too can be content in all circumstances if we, like Paul, find our contentment in Christ.)*

Here are some other questions we can ask in order to help us apply God's Word. Does this text reveal something I should believe about God? Does it reveal something I should praise or thank or trust God for? Does it reveal something I should pray about for myself or others? Does it reveal something I need to change, decide, or do?

Perhaps one of the most overlooked questions that should be considered before applying any part of God's Word to our life is this – how does this passage go through Christ before it comes to me?

Especially when it comes to the Old Testament (but in the New Testament too), we must be careful to go through Christ before we apply anything to ourselves. Likewise, we must consider if an application is reserved for those who are in Christ (like the application from Philippians 4:13 is) and be careful not to misapply it to unbelievers, giving them a false hope.

Use these questions as you seek to cultivate the discipline of applying God's Word to your life. Let the disciplines of hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating help to guide you as you apply God's Word rightly. Try to think of a specific application for every passage of Scripture you read this week.

Close your time of family worship in a time of prayer, asking God to make right application of his Word clear to you as you hear, read, study, memorize, and meditate on his Word day and night.