

The Krapf Academy Workshops

PREACHING FROM THE BIBLICAL STORIES

Name: _____ Passage: _____ Date: _____

This worksheet helps us to dig into the narrative (story) passages of Scripture. The goal is to go deep into the text while also getting a broad, “whole-Bible” view of the story. As you work through each step, remember to take notes—*exegetical* and *preaching*—and use the two-column method on the back page. This page will become the most important part of sermon preparation. You can reduce information on the other pages to headings and reminders.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: what participants should be able to do.

- Identify the literary, historical, cultural and biblical context of a narrative (story) passage.
- Trace the characters, actions, repeated words and structure of the story.
- State the author’s main point in one clear sentence and support it from the text.
- Connect the passage responsibly to God’s character and to Christ and the gospel.
- Form applications for believers and unbelievers that arise from the passage’s main point.

WORKSHOP PLAN: a suggested 90-minute sequence.

- **5 minutes** – Introduce the learning outcomes and chosen passage.
- **15 minutes** – Demonstrate the method briefly using the worked example.
- **20 minutes** – Small groups complete the five readings and record observations.
- **15 minutes** – Small groups agree on the structure and main point.
- **15 minutes** – Groups trace the biblical-theological and gospel connections.
- **10 minutes** – Participants formulate applications and test them against the passage.
- **10 minutes** – Participants present the final workshop output and receive feedback.

READING: Read the story through five times. Here you are getting to know the story. Do some background study, notice the context, the characters, and the keywords.

Five purposeful readings

1. Read for the overall movement, effect and feel of the story.
2. Read for the setting, context and order in which the characters appear.
3. Read for actions, dialogue, repeated words, contrasts and surprises.
4. Read for the structure of the story and the author's main point.
5. Read for what the story teaches about God, Christ, the gospel and faithful response.

SMALL-GROUP EXERCISE: Groups compare their observations and select three details that most help to explain the author's main point.

1. Context

- a. **The literary context**—what type of literature? Is the story set in poetry, law, or prophecy? Are there songs, poetry, prophecy, or teaching in the story?
- b. **The immediate context** – what goes before and after the story? This is important for understanding the story's setting and the scene before you.
- c. **The historical context:** you need to do some background reading on the book's authorship. What were the circumstances of the author's audience? This is important to understanding why the story was written for the original audience.
- d. **The cultural context** – what details are relevant to life as it was lived in this place at this time? This will include geographical and historical points that may relate to the story.
- e. **The biblical context** – are there biblical references or connections to previous parts of the Bible that have significance in the story? These may be implied (not stated, but assumed), or stated or quoted directly. It will help to go back and read these.

2. Characters

- a. Is the character an individual or a group (married couples, family, armies, etc.)?
- b. In what order do the characters appear? What condition are the characters in? What actions do they take? What statements or requests do they make?

3. Keywords

- a. What words are essential to the story? Make a list of keywords. This will help you to get the essential story and embed it in your memory. Making a list of keywords will force you to examine the story and help you tell it without looking at the text.

EXEGESIS: here we go deeper into the text, asking questions, sifting through details.

1. Know the meaning of words.

With commentaries, concordances, dictionaries, other Bible translations, and Bible apps, you can dig into the meaning of the words. Taking the time to go through the text word by word will take you deeper into the meaning of words. You will get helpful insights by taking the time to do this.

- a. What words have various meanings? Are there any idioms or figures of speech?
- b. What words have significant meaning (e.g., theological, spiritual meaning or practical application)?

2. Analyse the grammar.

- a. Notice the verbs, repeated verbs, or a series of verbs that form a particular event.
- b. Are there significant **prepositions** (e.g., in, at, on, of, to, by or with), **transition words** (e.g., conjunctive adverbs like now, although, therefore, however, then, hence) or **conjunctions** (e.g., and, but, or, so, yet, for)? These may form natural divisions in the story, add an important emphasis or indicate a contrast.
- c. Notice the nouns and pronouns. Are they plural or singular? Are they proper nouns or abstract nouns (an idea, emotion, or state of being)?

3. Repeated words/phrases

- a. What words or phrases are repeated? This becomes especially significant when words or phrases repeat at the beginning and end.

4. Other features to look for in the story.

- a. Are there similarities or contrasts throughout the story?
- b. Are there significant sights, sounds, or smells in the story?
- c. Are there any unexpected features or surprises in the story?
- d. Are there any unanswered questions in the text, something that needs further research?

5. Outline

The author has organised the story in a certain way to emphasise a point or to develop a theme. Creating an outline will help us understand the story's flow and meaning and help us discover why the author told the story.

- a. Develop the outline of the story in sections using verse references (this is not a sermon outline). This will help you find the flow and the emphasis of the passage.

6. The narrative movement

- a. Identify the initial situation, the problem or conflict, the turning point, the resolution, and the situation at the end.
- b. What changes between the beginning and the end? Who or what causes the change?

7. The narrator's emphasis

- a. What receives the most space or attention? Where does the story slow down?
- b. What information is given or withheld? Is there repetition, contrast, irony, suspense, or surprise?

8. Check Interpretation

- a. Does the passage merely describe what happened, or does it commend what happened?
- b. How does the rest of Scripture assess the actions in this story? Is the event unique, or does it establish a pattern?
- c. Does the passage provide a command, promise, warning, example, or principle?

9. Test the main point

- a. Does the proposed main point account for the beginning, turning point, and ending of the story?
- b. Does it explain why the story appears here, reflect the narrator's emphasis, and arise directly from the passage?

WORKING EXAMPLE: Genesis 3:1-24

- **Context:** Created perfect and placed in a perfect environment, Adam and his wife rebel against God and bring all humanity into a state of sin and suffering.
- **Characters:** Satan (the serpent), Adam and his wife (considered as one couple or, for deeper analysis, as individuals) and God.
- **Movement:** Satan comes into the garden subtly but purposefully and tempts Adam and his wife. She is deceived; he is not—together they eat the forbidden fruit. God comes seeking them; he will curse Satan irreparably and offer salvation to humanity.
- **Main point:** Despite the cosmic war that Satan now wages against God, this story shows that God is in control and will have the victory.

- **Gospel connection:** God declares that Satan will be defeated and that those who trust God will be delivered from the curse of death that hangs over humanity.
- **Application:** Despite sin and suffering on this earth, faith in the One who will reverse the curse (Jesus) brings peace and hope that one day we will eat of the tree of life.

GROUP EXERCISE: Write an alternative one-sentence main point, then show which details in Genesis 3:1-24 support or correct it.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY: here we want to find connections with other parts of Scripture.

The Bible is one story. It is the story of God's plan of salvation in Jesus Christ, told through history and biography, through prophecy and poetry. In every part of the Bible, therefore, we find theological themes that link it all together, like threads running through a piece of fabric. This area of study highlights the story's theological significance and connects it to the rest of Scripture.

Locate the story in redemptive history

Where does this passage belong in the Bible's unfolding story—creation, fall, promise, covenant, kingdom, exile, restoration, Christ, Church, or new creation? What stage of God's saving plan has been reached?

1. What does the story teach us about God?

Are there any manifestations of God's attributes? Look for significant manifestations of God's providence, his power over creation, his love for his people, his warrior activity for his people, his all-knowing activity, or his everywhere-present nature.

- What theological themes can you find in the story? Trace the theme through the rest of Scripture.
- What does this story add to the theological theme or themes? Is this story unique?

2. What does the story teach us about Christ and the Gospel?

Jesus said that the Scripture testifies of him (John 5:39). We need to look for Jesus in every story.

- How does the passage connect us to Christ? Is Christ typified in people, offices, or things?
- What part of the gospel is the author dealing with?

Think of the gospel in two categories: **redemption accomplished** (what Jesus has done: his life, death, burial and resurrection), and **redemption applied** (how all that Jesus has done is applied to sinners). This will include the theological concepts of justification, sanctification, glorification, etc. Does the story speak to any of these areas of redemption?

APPLICATION: look for lessons & applying the story to us in our situation.**1. The main point**

By this time, you should be able to state the main point of the story in one short sentence.

- a. State the main point of the story. State why you think this is the main point. Reasoning this through will help you form arguments and points for your sermon.

2. Check each proposed application

- Does it arise from the passage's main point rather than from an incidental detail?
- Is the text describing an event, commanding a response, or recording something unique?
- Does the application reflect what the passage teaches about God, Christ and the gospel?
- Does it respect the difference between the original audience and hearers today?

Working through these checks will safeguard you from bringing your own prejudices into the story and will help you preach the text the way God intended.

3. Lessons taught in the text.

- a. What lessons are taught in the story? You may be able to identify many lessons, primary, secondary, etc. You will want to identify them in order of emphasis, importance, and how well you can show (develop) the lesson from the text. From these, you can develop a sermon or a series of sermons.
- b. What lessons can be addressed to believers?
- c. What lessons can be addressed to unbelievers?

FINAL WORKSHOP OUTPUT: demonstrate what you have learned.

- A one-sentence statement of the author's main point.
- A short outline showing the movement of the story.
- One statement about what the passage teaches concerning God.
- One responsible connection to Christ and the gospel.
- One application for believers and one application for unbelievers.

GROUP REVIEW: Exchange your completed summary with another participant. Each person should identify one strength and ask one question that would make the interpretation clearer or more faithful to the text.

You are now ready to begin writing a sermon and present this passage to your people