

Reading Strategies

Forty-three quick-reading chapters are organized around three traditional steps of methodical Bible study: observation, interpretation, and application. However, this book is anything but traditional. Written in the first person, the book reads like the counsel of a seasoned veteran who for over five decades has practiced its title, *Living by the Book*. It also reflects the creative genius of its coauthor and publisher in that even the flaired script of Hendricks's handwriting, so often seen on the whiteboard or overhead projection, has been memorably captured on the printed page in lifelike examples of grammatical layouts and chart illustrations. This alone makes the book a nostalgic memento for his former students.

The book first introduces the skill of observation. Here the authors suggest 10 reading strategies and six key things an observer should be prepared to see in the Bible. The 10 strategies include reading thoughtfully, repeatedly, patiently, selectively, prayerfully, imaginatively meditatively, purposefully, acquisitively, and telescopically. The six things to look for are items that are emphasized, repeated, related, alike, different, or true to life. The observation process is taught inductively, beginning with one verse and progressing to the paragraph, section, and the synthesis of an entire book.

The skills for interpretation are organized around the five C's of Content, Context, Comparisons, Culture, and Consultation. Separate treatments stress sensitivity to genre, understanding the various contexts, the value of word studies, and the contribution of figurative language. Usually absent in most inductive approaches, the chapter on Consultation seeks to help ward off the arrogance of isolated individualism by recommending an introductory library of concordances, dictionaries, handbooks, atlases, and commentary series with which the student can benefit and compare notes with other students of the Scriptures. Brief chapters on bridging the cultural gap and building the principles of the passage conclude the interpretation section...

(Bibliotheca Sacra, Vol. 152, January-March, 1995, Number 605, 97, Book Reviews: By the Faculty of Dallas Theological Seminary, Lin M. William, Editor. This excerpt is part of a Review by Mark L. Bailey on the book, *Living by the Book* by Howard G. Hendricks and William D. Hendricks, Chicago: Moody Press, 1991, 349)