

APPLICATION

Application is the means by which one answers the question, “What difference does it make?”

Context, observation, and interpretation are so important because they determine how you act. A lack of understanding or laziness in observing and interpreting leads to inaccurate application, the result of which is a life ordered apart from God.

Application is where the rubber meets the road. It is what validates faith, and is inseparable from it.

Principles of Application:

1. Relevant. After identifying the universal truth of the text, make a practical determination that is applicable to a contemporary need.
2. Accurate. Do not compromise the universal truth to produce a desired result. Avoid extremes. A majority of the time accurate application is somewhere in the middle.
3. Concise. Work to establish a specific, concrete, and if possible measurable plan of action.

Hindrances:

1. Too many differences . . . wide gap of barriers to determining the universal truth.
2. Ignorance.
3. Cultural pressure.
4. Hardness of heart.
5. Overemphasis on action.

Roadblocks:

1. Affirmation without activation.
2. Christianity without Christ-likeness.
3. Selectivity without sensitivity.
4. Emotion without volition.

*“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”
~ Jesus of Nazareth*

REAL WORLD SCENARIOS

Scenario #1

You've been reaching out to and praying for a friend for a while. Finally she accepts your invitation and goes to church with you, where she hears the gospel. The Holy Spirit is clearly moving in her heart and it is obvious she is ready to respond. You ask her if she is ready to place her faith in Christ and she says "yes, but I don't know how." Which Scripture passage do you point her to and why?

- A. Revelation 3:20 – *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.*
- B. Romans 10:9-10 – *If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*
- C. Mark 13:13 – *Everyone will hate you because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.*

Scenario #2

One of the members of your community group is struggling financially. He's consistently had deals fall through and is worried about his future. He feels like he's in the right job but is uncertain that the Lord will help him meet his financial goals and is having a hard time trusting God. Which Scripture passage do you point him to and why?

- A. Philippians 4:13 – *I can do all this through him who gives me strength.*
- B. Habakkuk 1:5 – *Look . . . and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.*
- C. Proverbs 3:5-6 – *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

Scenario #3

A couple is having trouble resolving conflict in their marriage so they come to you for help. The wife struggles with control and consistently disrespects her husband by speaking harshly to him, while the husband tends to get angry and escalate the situation. Each struggles to forgive and harbors bitterness against the other. Which Scripture passage do you point them to and why?

- A. Ephesians 4:29 – *Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*
- B. Mark 10:4 – *Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.*
- C. Proverbs 26:5 – *Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes.*