

**From the Preacher's Pen...** Sometimes it seems like every preacher is saying the same thing, writing the same articles, making the same points. Every wonder about that? Apparently, every Christian is susceptible to making the same mistakes that are "common to mankind."

One of those important reminds comes into play every time we open our Bible to use what God says. To truly handle God's word correctly and accurately we must always get the context right. No prophecy, no word ever spoken by God may be used indiscriminately to mean whatever we want it to mean. It means what God says it means!

All that is to introduce a great lesson from a brother that we must never forget:

## A Critical Bible Study Tip

There's an age-old preacher joke that tells of a man who decided to let his Bible fall open where it may in order to find guidance in his life. The first verse he happened to turn to was Matthew 27:5 which says Judas "went and hanged himself." Since he was not sure how this verse applied to himself, he flipped to another passage and the Bible fell open to Luke 10:37: "Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." The man was quite upset and he did not know how he could ever obey that, so he decided to turn to one more place. Again he opened the Bible at random and to his horror his finger fell upon John 13:27: "Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."

While that story is obviously an exaggerated fictitious one given to make a funny point, it's sadly not too far off of some of the real life Bible study mistakes that are often made. One extreme case that made the internet rounds a while back featured this page-a-day calendar quotation:

Of course, if you look that verse up you'll notice that it's not a heavenly promise from our loving Father, but a temptation offered to Jesus by Satan. Again, you might say that that's an extreme example. And it probably is. But contextual errors are far too common. While we rightly charge the world with misusing Matthew 7:1 for their judgment-free agenda, we have to be careful that we aren't doing the same.

How many graduating seniors receive a card containing Jeremiah 29:11 ("I know the plans that I have for you...") at the end of every school year? Conversely, how many of them are Israelites facing decades of Babylonian captivity? How often has "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13) been used by athletes and

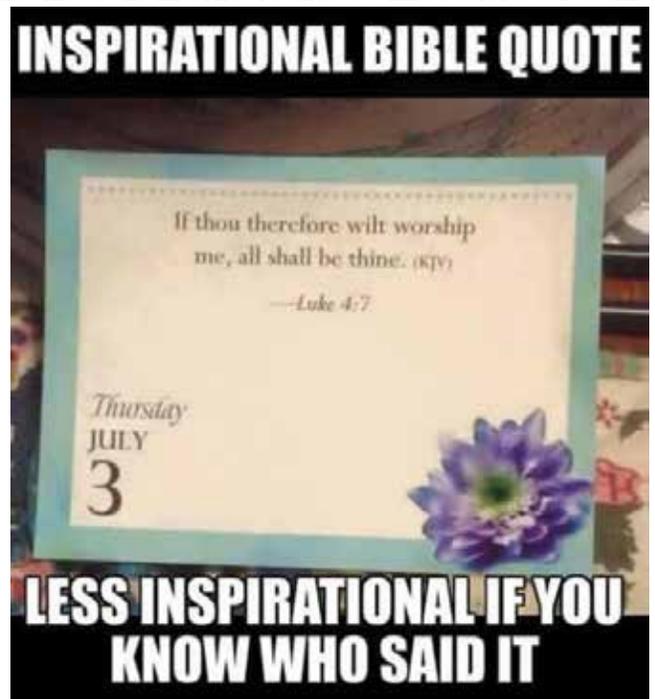
ladder-climbers to give confidence for their ambitions? How many of them know that the verse was written by an imprisoned apostle Paul to address thriving in such a difficult situation? How many Sunday morning private worship services have been conducted on

the basis of Matthew 18:20 ("For where two or three have gathered in My name, I am there in their midst")? How many of those had anything to do with witnesses gathering to administer church discipline as Jesus was addressing in Matthew 18:15-19?

What's missing from each of those interpretations is the critical key that must govern all of our Bible study efforts, and that is this simple fact:

**Context is king.** Grasping the context isn't just something we have to do to make sure we don't badly misuse the Bible – it's the single most important step in understanding each Bible verse as it is meant to be understood. No verse means what you or I think it means. It means precisely what the context tells us it means. While topical studies and sermons have their value, they leave the door open for misinterpretation as we jump from verse to verse to verse,

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### Opportunities to worship, study & serve:

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY ..... 10 AM

WORSHIP ..... 11 AM

EVENING WORSHIP ..... 6 PM

WEDNESDAY ..... 7 PM

THURSDAY LADIES' BIBLE CLASS ..... 10 AM

Congregational Potluck 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday  
each month after morning worship  
(except June, July & August)

**Welcome to all!**  
**We are glad you are here!**

**Enter to Worship...**  
**Leave to Serve**

**Welcome to our visitors today!** We hope & pray you'll be blessed by your time with us & will join us again soon!

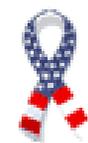
**Visitors Last Week included:** Bryant & Ruby Dukes of Colorado Springs, CO; Steve & Pauline Stump of Camarillo, CA; Brian, Tonya, Stephanie & Lindsay Graham of Chandler, AZ.

**Our Prayer List:** Keep the following in prayer this week as you "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17): Nora McNeil, Matthew Odom, Lois Nowlin, Heather Ries, Hunter Shirley, Rene Turner, Ruth West, Everett Martin, Anna Mae Hardin, Guy Turpin, Jennette Ivory, Eric Aragon, the Najera family, Bill Hall, Reta Wallace, Jim & Ann Holder, Wally Myers and...

**Our Missionaries:** Jack Farber and Aaron Knotts and families.

**Previously Announced Family & Friends:** Robin & Marc Estabrook (Julie Evan's sister & nephew), David Reffner (Flora Doster's grandson with MS), Art Stoneking (friend of Carl Catozzi, cancer), Leslie Hill (John's mother, cancer), Jeremiah Haller (Flora Doster's grandson), Annette (Cindy Turpin's sister), Cole Myers (grandson of friend of Myers), Sheila Simpson, Lillian Wilhite & Danny Wilhite (relatives of Lynn Shirley), Teresa Acosta, Rosemary Glasier (Crystal Mora-Landroth's mother), John Hoover's relatives with personal difficulties, Shelly Cooper (friend of Carl Catozzi), Justin Gall (friend of Michalyn in rehab from an auto accident), Lucas Espinoza (Brian Campbell's friend), Sharon Laurita (Barbara Grubbs friend, cancer), Kaesha Raffterfer (Gene Pinkston's cousin, cancer), Randy Landreth's dad (cancer), Chuck Keels (friend of Grubbs with cancer), Terri Fillipski (cancer, Julie Evans' cousin).

**Special Requests:** WBS & WEI Bible study students; Kevin & Nancy Chambers & World Christian Broadcasting; Judy Hagner, son Preston, daughter Angela & son James. Brandi Schroeder (Flora Doster's granddaughter with MS); Dallas Purcella's mother; Paulina's father (Arnold); Julie's father; Laurel's father, Marla Henderson's father.



**OUR MILITARY PERSONNEL:** Nate Panka (Cleo Wise's grandson); Javier Najera; Fernando Najera, Frank Torres (Javier's brother & cousin); Eric Shirley; Trevor Farrow (Allen's son); Scott Hoover (John's son); Ariel Gomez; Paul Sipes & April Belovedstone (Sue Wolfe's son & daughter); Robert Strickland (Cleo Wise's grand-nephew); Ismael Lopez; Robinson Goldman (Cindy Turpin's son-in-law) Nathan Bagley.

**New:**

**Jason:** son of Carl Catozzi in need of prayers.

**Dr. Yanni:** friend of John Hoover with cancer.

**Susan Fowler:** friend of Bob & Sherry Harrison with MS.

**Michelle Harrison:** daughter of Bob & Sherry, spiritual struggles.

**Michael Lightheart:** son-in-law of Flora Doster, health problems.

**Carlene Cunningham:** Jeanne Martin's sister-in-law with cancer.

**Andy Newland:** friend of Odom's daughter, Jeri, with cancer.

**Amy Vestle:** lupus.

**Jim Henness:** friend of Odom's with back problems.

**Jimmy Handtegen:** friend of David Davis following a stroke.

**Curt Odom:** back problems.

**Derwin Jackson & family:** with his job.

**Eugene Pinkston:** while on the road.

**Sean & Vickie:** Carl Catozzi's friends with struggles in their lives.

**Terri Hoover:** John's daughter-in-law with serious health issues.

**Michalyn Grubbs friend/co-worker:** in need of prayers.

**Monica Lopez:** George Mora's aunt with breast cancer.

**The Jenkins family:** friends of Sue Wolfe with struggles.

**Grandson of Jackie Odom's friend:** still improving!

**Rhett Booher:** Gary & Toni Pierce's grandson with chronic migraines from Traumatic Brain Injury while in the Army.

**Melinda Wendt:** Julie Evan's aunt in hospice.

**Jacob Shirley:** struggles.

**Marty Hall:** son of the Halls recovering from surgery.

**Ray Stephenson family:** youngest son's cancer has spread.

**Kristi Martin:** needs our prayers.

**Allen Farrow & family:** as he prepares for his brother's passing.

**Ann Holder:** in Oasis room D-105.

**Ann Mae Hardin:** now home from Oasis.

**Jerry Odom:** recovering from shoulder surgery

**LaVerne Jackson's mother:** with heart blood-clots.

**Also Our New Christians, those travelling and especially those with spiritual struggles.**

## Champions for Change! For NM Christian Children's Home

Cans are available in the foyer. Time to take one, fill and return it. We are also collecting *Liquid Dishwasher Detergent* for the home..

*Pickup is scheduled for April 28*

## Upcoming Events...

**Potluck: TODAY** — Group #3 [Cheryl Aragon's group] set-up, serve & clean-up

**Monthly Singing:** March 26 at 2:30 [here](#).

**5th Wednesday Prayer & Song Meeting:** March 29.

**Men's Business Meeting:** April 2 after evening worship.

## A Critical Bible Study Tip

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and when we aren't governed by context we can make a verse say basically anything we want it to. In fact, the only true way to understand a verse is to first gain an understanding of the surrounding verses and chapters, and really even the entire book in which it appears.

How does one begin understanding verses contextually? If you can, try reading through an entire book (in one sitting if you can manage it, as this article suggests). Use a study Bible or a commentary's introduction to the book you're in and find where they discuss the occasion and themes of the book. Then, work on zooming in on your text. Develop a working synopsis of the chapter containing your verse. Gain an understanding of the paragraph or section (highlighted by bold verse numbers in some versions) in which your verse appears. Then, examine the verse itself. See what it's saying as a part of that context.

It might sound like a lot of work initially, but it really isn't. Once you develop a greater knowledge of a book of the Bible, each section becomes easier to understand, and with that each verse falls into place. And, the truth is, it's easier than topical study. Instead of having to memorize lists of verses on all kinds of different topics, knowing a book and what it discusses helps us have a greater, more cohesive knowledge of the Bible. And, of course, the work is worth it. It may be easier to just look up every verse on a topic in a concordance, but it doesn't lead us to greater learning and creates the possibility of a disastrous misinterpretation. Make context the key to your Bible study.

— Jack Wilkie, reprinted by permission from [focuspressblog.com](http://focuspressblog.com) at [www.focuspress.org/2017/03/08/critical-bible-study-tip/](http://www.focuspress.org/2017/03/08/critical-bible-study-tip/)

It's a lesson we must continue to remember, Bible Study is NOT the same as simply reading the Bible. Lot's of folks read the Bible and yet are never children of the King. *Be diligent to present yourself before God as one tried and true, an unashamed worker, correctly handling the word of truth* (2 Timothy 2:15). Always make it your goal to know the Word that you may truly know God the author.

— Lester P. Bagley

*Praise  
the  
Lord*

**We welcome the Chavez family as they placed  
their membership with us last Lord's Day.  
Be sure to meet and get to know Allison,  
Anthony, Alexis, Arianna & Isiah**



**Last Week: 14+ Pew-Packers**



**Be "in the picture" every week!**

✓ *Checkup* ✓  
*How are we doing?*

*Attendance Last Week:*

*Sunday Morning Bible Class = 77*

*Sunday Morning Worship = 128*

*Sunday Evening Worship = 70*

*Wednesday Evening = 57*

*Giving*

*2017 Weekly Budget = \$3,180.00*

*Contribution Last Week = \$2,881.00*

Church of Christ  
805 East Racine Place  
Casa Grande, AZ 85122

Postage

**TO:**

## Privileged to Serve

### Sunday Morning March 19

Adult Bible Class: • *Acts of the Apostles* ..... Lester Bagley  
Announcements: ..... Allen Farrow  
Song Leader: ..... Curt Odom  
Prayer: ..... Charlie Stephenson  
Serve Communion: ..... Wayne Hoover, John Hoover, Kim Myers, Delbert White, Brian Campbell  
Sermon: • *Matthew 23* ..... Lester Bagley  
Closing Prayer: ..... Mike Evans

*Count Contribution: Curt Odom & Max Compton*

### Sunday Evening March 19

Song Leader: ..... Curt Odom  
Prayer: ..... Jim Holder  
Sermon: • *Who's the Betrayer?* ..... Lester Bagley  
Serve Communion: ..... Kim Myers  
Closing Prayer: ..... Delbert White

### Wednesday Evening March 22

Song Leader: ..... George Mora  
Prayer: ..... Jerry Odom  
Devo: ..... Jim Holder  
Closing Prayer: ..... Curt Odom

## Anniversaries



March 28: *Tom & Adele Fink*  
April 5: *Archie & Karen Peterson*  
April 15: *Delbert & Sue White*  
April 25: *Michael & Barbara Grubbs*  
May 1: *Dell & Carla Hartfield*  
May 14: *Brett & Jessica Myers*

## Birthdays



March 20: *Brittani Perez*  
March 22: *Sherri Fields*  
March 26: *Anna Mae Hardin*  
March 30: *Nelwynn Holland*  
April 3: *Sue White*  
April 4: *Archie Peterson*  
April 6: *Alexis Mora*  
April 8: *Ariel Gomez*