

## **Bible Study Methods**

### **Context**

After working on phrases and sentences, what is the next step in studying the Bible?

- You might be tempted to say verse or chapter, but remember these were not original, and while they are helpful for referencing, they can be wrong.
- So, you might be tempted to say, “Well, look at the whole paragraph”. But while these are usually accurate, but they are also not original.

Today we are going to be looking at understanding thought units. We do this through context.

### **Context is key**

- An example from John 12:32.
- 2 Samuel

### **Structure**

- Two helpful questions:
  - How has the author broken down his material into sections?
  - How do these sections fit together?
- The goal: To understand how the author wanted his text to be read and split up.
- Some section identifiers:
  - Bookends—a structural technique where some words or details come at the start of a section and the end of one.
    - Example: Matthew 5:3-10 “The kingdom of heaven”
  - Chiasm
    - Follows a pattern as such
      - A
        - B
          - C
          - C
        - B
      - A.

- An example:

now the whole earth  
 had one language and the same words...  
 they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.  
 And they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks...”  
 Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a  
 tower...”  
 And the Lord came down  
 to see the city and the tower, which the children of man  
 had built.  
 And the Lord said...“Come, let us go down and there confuse”  
 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused  
 the language  
 of all the earth.

- Examples of Chiasm in bigger sections:

Daniel ch. 2: Prophecy of four kingdoms to come, culminating in God’s eternal kingdom.  
 Ch. 3: God saves His people from death (fiery furnace)  
 Ch. 4: God is sovereign over kings (Neb.)  
 Ch. 5: God is sovereign over kings (Belshazzar)  
 Ch. 6 God saves His people from death (lions)  
 Ch. 7 : Prophecy of four kingdoms to come, culminating in God’s eternal kingdom.

### **Textual features/clues**

- We are seeking to find the features in the text that help us see how the author was splitting up his text.
  - We want to look for details or patterns that can help see this.
  - Look for related topics or subjects
- Examples:
  - Isaiah 40:1-11-the use of the word voice
  - 1 Corinthians 8-10
    - How are 10:8 and 8:1 connected?