

Learning How to Read

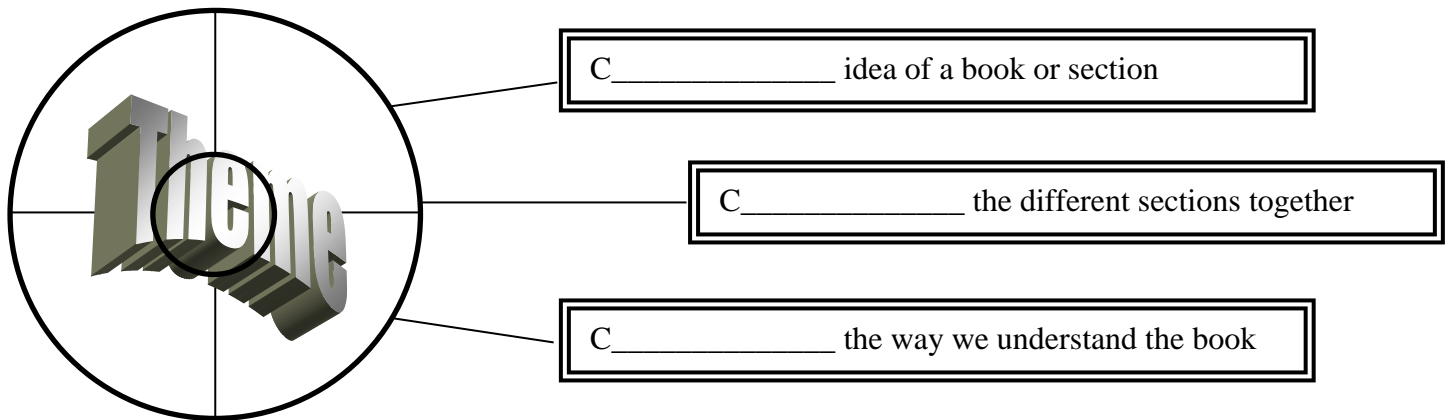
Contra Costa Gospel Church
Adult Sunday School

Themes, Structure, Genre

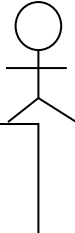
We now have three major principles of interpretation that help us arrive at the “Author’s Intended Meaning”:

- 1) Synthesize the whole before you analyze the parts.
- 2) Don’t analyze the event in isolation. The event always has its place in the larger narrative.
- 3) We must consider both literary and historical contexts in the task of interpreting Scripture.
- 4) From the author, we look for _____, _____, and the _____ of the book.

The theme of a biblical book is described as such:



In order to identify a theme in any part of the Bible, there are a few steps you should take:

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- 1 Read _____ the part of the Bible you are trying to study. Sometimes it’s helpful to read it over more than once.
 - 2 As you read, look for _____ words or phrases that help you identify the main subject the author is writing about. This is the main _____ of the paragraph/chapter/book that everything else seems to talk about.
 - 3 Write one sentence that seems to _____ that topic. It’s not enough to say that the theme of a book is “love,” or “grace,” but you must identify what the author is saying about love or grace. A thematic sentence is usually _____ and to the point.

The following passage is taken from Matthew 24-25, and in this passage, Jesus is teaching about the idea that after He is crucified and resurrected, He will ascend to heaven and then one day in the future come back to earth. This is our belief, that Jesus will come back. This is called the Second Coming.

Read the passage and try to identify a theme or themes in passage. What is the main point the author is talking about? When you have read the passage several times, write a summary thematic sentence below.

³² "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. ³³ Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. ³⁴ I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³⁶ "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹ and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

⁴² "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. ⁴³ But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

⁴⁵ "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. ⁴⁷ I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. ⁴⁸ But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, 'My master is staying away a long time,' ⁴⁹ and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. ⁵⁰ The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. ⁵¹ He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

¹ "At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ² Five of them were foolish and five were wise. ³ The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. ⁴ The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. ⁵ The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

⁶ "At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' ⁷ Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'

⁹ "'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'

¹⁰ "But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.

¹¹ "Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!'

¹² "But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.'

¹³ "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

Summary Thematic Sentence
