

# Listening Guide

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### Introduction

[1] Observe Psalm 119:34 and identify the three things the psalmist asked God for.

### Interpretation's Three Understandings

[2] Think for a moment about these three things we must understand as interpreters. How important do you think each of them is? Do you think one is most or least important?

### We Must Understand the Interpreter

[3] Realizing that we are finite beings attempting to understand an infinite God, take a moment and ask God's Holy Spirit to show you areas where He can prepare you to be the best Bible reader possible.

[4] Ask yourself the following questions as you read in this section about five things we should examine in ourselves. Consider writing your responses in your journal.

[5] How deeply do I trust God and the truth and authority of His Word?

[6] Do I believe the Holy Spirit can teach me things in the Bible that I can't see without His divine guidance?

[7] How committed am I to investing the time and effort to become a better Bible student than I am now?

[8] Am I able and willing – even excited – to put myself under God's authority and respond to His teachings?

[9] How willing am I to let God's Word be my teacher even when it disagrees with my own ideas or previous assumptions?

### **We Must Understand the Bible**

[10] What is the interpreter's first goal?

**[11]** Why is achieving the first goal sometimes difficult?

**[12]** From your experience with biblical literature, name a few ways the biblical culture is different from yours.

**[13]** Do you have a favorite biblical genre? Are there any that you find difficult or less appealing to read?

**[14]** How skilled are you in regular communication? Do you find oral communication easier or more difficult than written communication?

**[15]** How strongly do you agree or disagree with the analysis that communication is confused when interpreting the Bible because human readers don't understand the message (and not because God wasn't certain of his message or wasn't clear about it)?

**[16]** If taken seriously, how would this point influence the way we approach our Bible study process?

**[17]** Describe exegesis and hermeneutics in your own words.

**[18]** Now explain the difference between them.

**[19]** If you are clear on this two-step interpretation process move ahead in the lesson. If you are still trying to get your mind around it, go back to the beginning of this section before moving on.

**[20]** To test your understanding of exegesis and hermeneutics write a short paragraph summarizing their meaning, the difference between them, and how they relate to each other. If you are unable to do that, review the material until you are confident you can.

**[21]** Pray that God will guide you to a person you would enjoy studying with and then write down a few names of people who might be good study partners.

**[22]** Review the objectives.

Using the criteria in this lesson, describe yourself as a Bible interpreter.

Describe how your understanding of the Bible may help and/or hinder your ability to interpret it accurately.

Explain how Bible interpretation works.

### **Reflection**

Record one new fact or insight you discovered in this lesson.

### **Application**

We are our own greatest asset or liability when we study the Bible. What attributes will be your greatest assets as a Bible student and what are some areas for prayer and adjustment?