

AN EXERCISE IN THE POWER OF THE WORD AND WORD



Put your ideas into words—speak them aloud, write them down. Consider Paul’s advice in his prayer to his friend Philemon (verse 6):

I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

Whether writing or speaking, the sheer act of communicating clarifies, sharpens and develops your thinking. Even if you are preparing an *oral* presentation and not going to use written notes, putting your ideas into writing illuminates in ways which border on the Divine.

Suggestion. When you are studying the Scriptures, and especially when you are planning to teach from them, try putting His words on the right, and put your “rewrite” on the left. You would not believe how the process of exploring His message by using your own words improves your understanding, evokes further thought & research, and clarifies His ideas. Heuristic with a capital H.

- ✓ Most importantly, you realize more clearly what you do not know.
- ✓ You realize the power of His word in ways which fall through the cracks when merely reading silently or aloud.
- ✓ Amazingly new, and old, but important, questions bubble up. These questions are great, pristinely great for teaching!
- ✓ Finally, you uncover missed implications from the last time you read or studied that Scripture passage, every time. Every time. Every time.



AN EXAMPLE: PUTTING PAUL'S PRAYER INTO PRACTICE

Philemon: 1-11. _____

PHILEMON: 1-11

Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker, ²to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that [“that” is not there; should be “who”] meets in your home—

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the [“the” is not there] Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, ⁵because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints.

⁶I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.

⁷Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.

⁸Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, ⁹yet I appeal to you on the basis of love. I then, as Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—¹⁰I appeal to you for my son Onesimus [actually, Ονησιμον, on-ay'-si-mon, “useful;” [3682](#)], who became my son while I was in chains. ¹¹Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.