

How to Study the Bible 8: Observation – Six Clues in the Text, Part 2

- Six clues to look for in Scripture:

1. Look for things that are **EMPHASIZED**
2. Look for things that are **REPEATED**
3. Look for things that are **RELATED**
4. Look for things that are _____

- Things that are similar stand out.

A. Comparisons using the words _____ and _____

- These words tell you that the writer is using a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two things.

- **EXAMPLES:**

Psa 42.1 *As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.*

Psa 63.1 *O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, **as** in a dry and weary land where there is no water.*

1 Pet 2.2 *Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation.*

Acts 2.2 *And suddenly there came from heaven a sound **like** a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.*

Gen 22.17 *I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring **as** the stars of heaven and **as** the sand that is on the seashore.*

Psa 38.4 *For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: **as** an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.*

Psa 1.1–4 *Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; 2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. 3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. 4 The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.*

Ex 15.11 “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?”

Psa 36.6 Your righteousness is **like** the mountains of God; your judgments are **like** the great deep;

Matt 13.47 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is **like** a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind.

Matt 13.31 He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is **like** a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field.

B. Comparisons not using the words “like” and “as”

• EXAMPLES:

John 15.5 I am the vine; you are the branches.

John 10.9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

John 3.3–7 Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is **born again** he cannot see the kingdom of God.” 4 Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” 5 Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”

John 3.14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

- Get into the habit of looking for these comparisons.
- You will find many of them in Psalms, Proverbs, and the Gospels.

5. Look for things that are _____

- The Bible uses several ways to show contrasts between things.

A. Look for the words _____ and _____

- These words tell you to look for a change in direction.

- **EXAMPLES:**

Matt 5.21–22 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ **22 But** I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment;

Matt 5.27–28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ **28 But** I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Gal 5.19–23 **19** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, **20** idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, **21** envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. **22 But** the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Acts 1.7–8 He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. **8 But** you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 8.25–26 **Now** when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans. **26 Now** an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place.

- **When ever you see LIKE and AS, stop and ask: What is the comparison being made?**
- **Whenever you see BUT and NOW, stop and ask: What is the contrast being made?**

B. Watch for _____

- **Just as things that are alike can be shown through comparisons so can things that are unlike.**
- **EXAMPLE:**

Luke 18.1–8 And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. **2** He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. **3** And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ **4** For a while he refused, but afterward

he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man, 5 yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.’” 6 And the Lord said, “**Hear what the unrighteous judge says. 7 And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? 8 I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily.**

The whole story is a contrast between God and man.

C. Look for _____

- This is another way to show contrast.

- **EXAMPLES:**

John 11.47–48 So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, “What are we to do? **For this man performs many signs. 48 If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.**”

John 18.28 Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor’s headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor’s headquarters, **so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.**

John 1.11 He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

- **OTHER EXAMPLES:**

- Nicodemus, who was a leading teacher of the Jews could not understand the teaching of the One who was the True Teacher of Israel, Jesus Christ.
- The highly moral Pharisees were furthest from the kingdom of God, and prostitutes and tax collectors and children were nearest.
- Jesus shameful death is actually His greatest display of glory.

6. Look for _____ that show action

- **A verb is a word or group of words that indicates:**
 - either that an action takes place (“I thank my God”)
 - or that a state or condition exists (“God is faithful”).
- Verbs are often the most significant indicators of the author’s flow of thought.
- **Ask:**
 - What’s going on in this story?
 - What is the action in this text?
 - What is the writer telling us to do or believe?

- **Circle the verbs in this paragraph:**

Eph 1.3–10 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.*

- **Circle the verbs in this paragraph:**

Rom 1.16–17 *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”*

- **Circle the verbs in this paragraph:**

Rom 12.1–2 *I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Conclusion:

Now you’ve seen six clues to look for in Scripture.

- **Look for things are:**
 - **Emphasized**
 - **Repeated**
 - **Related**
 - **Alike**
 - **Unlike**
 - **Show action**