

## Bible Study Exercise: Working to Find the FCF

This worksheet is designed to help you to begin to investigate your Bible passage and has been created as an aid to Bryan Chapell's *Christ-Centered Preaching*. It is recommended that you choose a Bible passage in the New Testament for ease of study. You are welcome to use any book or electronic resource available to you. The resources mentioned below are free and can be a help to get you started.

### 1 Identify Your Text

The text you have chosen: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Need Help? Read Chapell *Chapter 3: The Priority of the Text* for help choosing a text)

### 2 Find an initial Fallen Condition Focus (FCF)

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An FCF "is the mutual human condition that contemporary persons share with those to or about whom the text was written that requires the grace of the passage for God's people to glorify and enjoy him." (p.30) Ask, (1) What does the text say? (2) What spiritual concern(s) did the text address (in its context)? (3) What spiritual concerns do listeners share in common with those to (or about) whom the text was written?  
(Need help? Read Chapell *Chapter 2: Obligations of the Sermon* for help understanding the FCF.)

### 3 Use Lexicons, Grammatical Aids, and Analytical Aids

Choose three words that you believe are key to understand in your text. Note particularly important verbs. Find two significant elements of each word that helps you understand your text.

(Need Help? Use [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org). Enter your passage and your translation version. When your text pulls up, make sure "Strong's" at the top of the screen is checked. Now you can click on the Strong's word number next to your passage words to lookup a word. Use some of the references listed under the section titled "Dictionary Aids" to further dig into the word meaning.)

Word	Why is this word significant?
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## 4 Use a Concordance

Choose one word from above and use a concordance to help you investigate it's use in the Bible. How is that word used similarly in different passages? How is that word used differently in different passages?

(Need Help? Use [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org) to find your passage as above. Click the Strong's number next to one of your words. Can you see the section with the title "Greek Inflections of {your word}"? Those are different forms of your Greek word. Click on them one at a time. You are an advanced Bible student! You are now searching for every occurrence of that same Greek word regardless of how it was translated in your Bible.)

## 5 Read Other Translations

Pick three additional translations. Read them. Which four translations have you chosen? Why?

(Need Help? Use [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org) to select different translations. Read [this article](https://www.christianbook.com/page/bibles/about-bibles/about-translations/) (<https://www.christianbook.com/page/bibles/about-bibles/about-translations/>) for an explanation as to the three broad categories of translations. Which category did your selected translations fit into?)

Translations Chosen: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6 Bible Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, and Handbooks

**A.** Use a Bible Dictionary to lookup some key nouns or names in your passage. What are three key findings that help you with your passage?

(Need help? Use [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com). Click "Study" from the menu at the top and then click "More Resources" under the "Study" column. Scroll down and click "Dictionaries/Encyclopedia." Scroll down to "Easton's Bible Dictionary" and click the first letter of the word you want to look up. Find and click on your word.)

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**B.** Use a Bible Handbook to grasp an overview of your book of the Bible. Summarize the book of the Bible where your passage is located below:

(Need Help? There are many Bible Handbooks that are helpful. You can find an archived copy of [Halley's Bible Handbook online](https://archive.org/details/HalleysBibleHandbookHenryH.Halley) (<https://archive.org/details/HalleysBibleHandbookHenryH.Halley>). Read the entire section that talks about your book of the Bible.)

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## Commentaries

Read three commentaries related to your passage. Which commentary did you find most helpful? Why?

(Need Help? You can find commentaries at [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com). Click “Study” from the menu at the top and then click “More Resources” under the “Study” column. Scroll down and click “Commentaries.” Compare the commentaries at [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com) with commentaries found at [biblestudytools.com](http://biblestudytools.com) and [biblehub.com](http://biblehub.com).)

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## Rework Your FCF

From your Study, reformulate your Fallen Condition Focus. Use the back of this piece of paper to answer Chapell’s three questions that will lead to your FCF.

1. What does the text say? (Use historical text-centered language).
  2. What spiritual concern(s) did the text address (in its context)? (Use past-tense language).
  3. What spiritual concerns do listeners share in common with those to (or about) whom the text was written? (Use present-tense language).
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Follow Up: At this point you are ready to begin developing your lesson or sermon. Find supporting elements from the text to explain, amplify, or illustrate your FCF. Is the text directing the reader toward an action, an embrace of truth, or both?