

Sheepdog Training Outline

Three Kinds of People

Sheep

- ◆ Grazing animals that worry about eating the grass in front of them and that's about it
- ◆ Follow one another around
- ◆ Only defense is to run
- ◆ We are hard-wired to be sheep. Especially when life is good.
- ◆ When life is good, we tend not to equip ourselves to notice - let alone handle - danger.
- ◆ Even when we sense something isn't OK, we expect people with training to take care of it for us.
- ◆ We are wired to follow our leaders. Or experts

Wolves

- ◆ Cunning predators
- ◆ in society they come in many shapes and positions
- ◆ Wolves take advantage of the weaknesses of others
- ◆ Physical danger IS present today. But, the most important way we need to protect our flock today is in the area of ideas.
- ◆ Wolves take advantage of how people think, and their ignorance on certain matters, and use it for their own personal gain
- ◆ We've all seen these types of wolves in real life. They show up at our workplace, in our youth sports programs. And, unfortunately, (and as Jesus predicted) they show up constantly in churches.
- ◆ They work their way into a flock by lots of charisma and creative manipulation of the Scriptures
- ◆ Two extreme versions would be Jim Jones at Jonestown and David Koresh of the Branch Davidians in Waco.
- ◆ Wolves in the church latch onto doctrines such as the Prosperity Gospel or Universal Unitarianism or LGBTQ affirming doctrines to name a few.
- ◆ These wolves lead the sheep further and further from the Shepherd

Sheepdogs

- ◆ it is the sheepdog's responsibility to protect the flock while it grazes
- ◆ Help move it from place to place.
- ◆ Keep sheep from wandering off
- ◆ Make sure they stay with the group
- ◆ Should predators come near, they will fiercely defend the flock.
- ◆ Part of the flock, but not sheep.
- ◆ More wolf-like than sheep like but they use their traits for protection rather than assault.
- ◆ Rarely kill, just do enough to convince the wolf to go elsewhere.

Christian Sheep

- ◆ Most people think of themselves as more sheepdog than sheep, but the exact opposite is true.
- ◆ Bystander Effect - the more people gather in a location, the more people are drawn to that location. And the more they assume someone else will handle a situation.
- ◆ People tend not to speak up because they don't want to make waves
- ◆ The sheep look to someone else to speak up rather than put their neck on the line.
- ◆ In 2021 The Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University released their American Worldview Inventory report. Part of the report discusses what it means when people say they are a Christian.
 - ◆ 69% of the Christian population are what he labels as “self professed” Christians. The only qualification for this category is that you checked the box saying you are a Christian.
 - ◆ Only 6% of Christians held a consistent Biblical worldview

Let me give you an idea of where this group of people ends to land on their beliefs

- ◆ 72% argue that people are basically good
- ◆ 71% consider feelings, experience, or the input of friends and family as their most trusted sources of moral guidance
- ◆ 64% say that all religious faiths are of equal value
- ◆ 58% believe that if a person is good enough, or does enough good things, they can earn their way into Heaven
- ◆ 58% contend that the Holy Spirit is not a real, living being but is merely a symbol of God's power, presence, or purity
- ◆ 52% claim that determining moral truth is up to each individual; there are no moral absolutes that apply to everyone, all the time
- ◆ Nothing in this list about how baptism should be done, worship music style, leadership organization, or the age of the Earth.

- ◆ The vast majority of people who call themselves Christians reject many of the core doctrines of Christianity.
- ◆ They pretty much think exactly along the lines of the culture.
 - ◆ Because everyone they hang around with is also a sheep
 - ◆ They want to go along to get along
 - ◆ If nobody is speaking up, then whatever is being said must be OK.
 - ◆ They've never been taught or guided any differently.

Called To Be Sheepdogs

Jer 3:15 **15** "And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding."

Act 20:28-31 **28** Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. **29** I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; **30** and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. **31** Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears.

Mat 7:15-20 **15** "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. **16** You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? **17** So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. **18** A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Thus you will recognize them by their fruits."

Mat 24:4-5 **4** And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. **5** For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray."

1Jo 4:1-6 **1** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. **2** By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, **3** and every spirit that does

not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. **4**Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. **5**They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. **6**We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

How To Become A Sheepdog

Act 17.11 **11**Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. (Luke writing about the Bereans)

Rom 16,17-19 **17**I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. **18**For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. **19**For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil.

- ◆ Sheepdog work for the shepherd. Have to know who he is and what he wants to help him move his flock.

1Ti 3.2 **2**Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

Tit 1.9 **9**He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

- ◆ As leaders, we are mandated by Scripture to know it AND be able to teach it

1Pe 3.15 **15**but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you;

- ◆ We are also mandated to be able to make the case for why Christianity is true
- ◆ Most of the time, people in your flock aren't going to read a book you give them. They want to hear answers from YOU because you are a trusted source.

Bible Study

- ◆ How do we test the spirits? How do we spot the wolves? What is the good fruit and the bad fruit? How do we guide the Shepherd's flock?
- ◆ Sheepdog training STARTS with Bible study
- ◆ Before you can give reasons for why Christianity is true, you have to know what Christianity teaches. And that starts with Bible study
- ◆ Being a sheepdog isn't the MAIN reason a Christian should do Bible Study, though. First and foremost, it is to come to know God, the Creator of the Universe, and develop a relationship with HIM. That's the main reason.
- ◆ Our mission statement at CCC: Come, change, commission
- ◆ But, God has designed the world and people for flourishing. His ways are the best ways. And, if we want to make a difference in the world, we need to understand His ways and put them into practice.
- ◆ That all starts with Bible Study

What Bible Study Isn't

- ◆ "Verse of the Day" or Daily Bread - nice but severely lacking
- ◆ Listening to your pastor 45 minutes once a week
- ◆ Not looking for detailed explanations on the 3 positions of Escatology.

Reasons Why People Don't Study Their Bibles

- ◆ For a really long time, I put up excuse after excuse on why I couldn't get X responsibility done. And, it wasn't until I became brutally honest with myself that I was able to enter into a period of personal growth.
- ◆ Many of you may BE studying consistently. The next step in that sheepdog life is to get OTHERS to be consistent. So, you may not have these excuses, but someone you know does. And hopefully you can take what I'm about to say and help someone else get to where you're at.

1. I Don't Have Time

- ◆ Top reason people give for why they can't work out or read a book or get together with people or any other myriad of tasks

- ◆ We all lead busy lives full of work, family responsibilities, and other things we have committed to

Where Has All The Time Gone?

Let's have a look at some areas Americans spend their time in.

1. **Checking Email** - almost 2.5 hours a day.
 2. **Watching TV** - The [average American](#) spends 3.1 hours per day watching TV
 3. **Social Media** - On the average, [people spend almost 2.5 hours on social media a day](#) with Facebook being the highest (58 minutes), followed by Instagram (53 minutes), and Youtube (40 minutes), Tiktok (?)
 4. **Commuting** - [the average American has a one-way commute of 27.6 minutes](#)
- ◆ May not be your exact day, but you probably engage in all of those activities to a one degree or another
 - ◆ Not completely knocking TV watching. That's something my wife and I do together to spend time with one another. It's part of our after dinner routine for an hour or so that we both enjoy.
 - ◆ You show me your calendar and your bank statement and I'll tell you what you care about.
 - ◆ If you care about it, you'll make time for it and NO hurdle will get in your way to understanding it.

The Bible In 30 Minutes

- ◆ If you cut out one 30 minute activity a day (like an episode of your current favorite show that you can watch anytime) you could:
 - ◆ Read the entire book of Ecclesiastes in 1 30 minute sitting. So, one day.
 - ◆ The book of Romans - 2 days.
 - ◆ The Gospel of Mark - 3 days.
 - ◆ The book of Genesis - 7 days.
 - ◆ All the Psalms in 10 days.
 - ◆ All the letters in the New Testament plus the book of Revelation - 15 days.
 - ◆ The entire New Testament in 40 days.
 - ◆ And the entire Old Testament in 120 days.
 - ◆ That means if you spent 30 minutes less a day on Facetagram or Tikbook, you could read the ENTIRE Bible in one year. Twice! And STILL have 45 days left over.

The Bible in 10 Minutes

- ◆ Finding 30 minutes can be tough

- ◆ People don't like to sit and read for enjoyment much anymore
- ◆ What about 10 minutes?
 - ◆ Standing in checkout lines
 - ◆ Waiting for your kids to get out of school or practice
 - ◆ On a commute
 - ◆ On your lunch break
- ◆ Can read the entire Bible in one year 10 minutes a day (I do it in a year and 3 months)
- ◆ Image how much happier you would be with 10 minutes more of God's Word and 10 minutes less reading about the latest presidential scandal

Time In Your Hands

- ◆ I used to be that kid who walked around with his nose in a book
- ◆ Now everyone walks around with their nose in their phones
- ◆ Put your phone to good use!
- ◆ Tons of great Bible study apps and websites
- ◆ Logos
 - ◆ highlighting, note taking, look up words, see where else a name or a word is used
 - ◆ Reading Planners (my fav is chronological)
 - ◆ Fact book (tons of maps and images, what did the Temple of Solomon look like?)
 - ◆ Install on phones, tablets, computers and everything syncs
 - ◆ Group features that let us study together as a group

Time In Your Ears

- ◆ Reading isn't the only way
- ◆ Audiobooks, podcasts, Bible apps that read to you
- ◆ Listen while doing chores, morning jog/walk, commute to and from work

2. I'm Not Smart Enough

- ◆ Flipping through the Bible can be intimidating
- ◆ Full of names, dates, places - most of which are hard to pronounce
- ◆ Following some of the thoughts can be hard. At one point, even Peter says what Paul writes can be confusing
- ◆ It's easy to get frustrated, throw up your hands and quit.
- ◆ It's also easy to think you have to be highly trained to read the Bible because our pastors are highly trained to be able to teach us

Scriptural Directive

- ◆ We are told time and time again that we - the laypeople and not just the pastor - NEED to know Scripture

Jos 1.8 **8**This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Psa 119.105 **105**Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Psa 119,15-16 **15**I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. **16**I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.

Psa 119,47-48 **47**for I find my delight in your commandments, which I love. **48**I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes.

Rom 15.4 **4**For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

2Ti 3,16-17 **16**All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17**that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

Tit 1.9 **9**He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Watching For Wolves

Mat 7.15 **15**"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

1Jo 4.3 **3**and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the

world already.

1Pe 5.8 **8**Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

2Jo 1.7 **7**For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

2Pe 2.1 **1**But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

1Jo 4.1 **1**Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Mat 7.21 **21**"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

- ◆ The Bible isn't directing everyone that they need to be able to give a talk on the differing views of Eschatology. Or to be able to fill in for Doc if he's gone
- ◆ But we ARE required to make the Word a part of our lives and be able to teach it to our kids.
- ◆ It is a guidebook to recognize the wolves
- ◆ The requirement for us to know the Word is clear
- ◆ We need to know the Word to transform ourselves AND the lives of others AND to make sure the flock we are in charge of is protected from the wolves.
- ◆ It is the laypeople who need to know the Word well enough that if their pastor starts going off the rails they can either correct him lovingly or get rid of him. (Doc would ask this of us).
- ◆ God would not have required us to know the Scriptures if they were out of our ability to know them.
- ◆ And I don't buy the excuse that people aren't smart enough.
 - ◆ How many of you have a favorite movie you can recite almost word for word?
 - ◆ Or an album you can sing word for word?

- ◆ Or if you wanted to debate who the best Laker was or the best Dodger or why the 1969 Chevy Camaro ZL1 is the most perfect car ever created?
- ◆ I bet if I tapped into what you're interested in, we could talk about it for hours. Why? Because you're passionate about it
- ◆ We DO have to put in a little more work now because we are 2000 years removed from the context Scripture was written in.
- ◆ TONS of resources available to help us do this!

Some Guidance Required

- ◆ Giving a new Christian a Bible, a pat on the back, and a "go get 'em Tiger" is like giving a kid a loaded shotgun without any safety training.
- ◆ We wrong so many new believers by telling them "you need to read your Bible" and not giving them any direction.
- ◆ The act of reading is easy enough. But, developing the ability to interpret what is going on and then apply it to your life accurately is something that takes time and guidance.
- ◆ If you're new to this, find a mature Christian who has had more experience in Bible study and get some guidance
- ◆ If you don't know who to ask, PLEASE. ask me!
- ◆ *How To Read A Book* by Mortimer J. Adler
- ◆ *How To Read The Bible For All It's Worth* by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart
- ◆ *Living By The Book* by Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks
- ◆ If you've been doing this for a while, be that mentor someone else needs. Especially for your family

Learning Disabilities

- ◆ I will always advocate for reading physical books.
- ◆ Acknowledge that learning disabilities like dyslexia are a thing.
- ◆ Reading can be frustrating for millions of people - not because they aren't smart enough, but because their brains are wired different
- ◆ Audio Bibles are wonderful for those who struggle with reading. Or have free time to listen while doing other things
- ◆ Logos can read the verses to you

3. I Don't Know Which Bible To Pick

- ◆ Many of you probably already have a translation you like
- ◆ You probably use it because you grew up with it or someone suggested it to you
- ◆ If you already have one, fine. You can use this dialog to help others pick one.

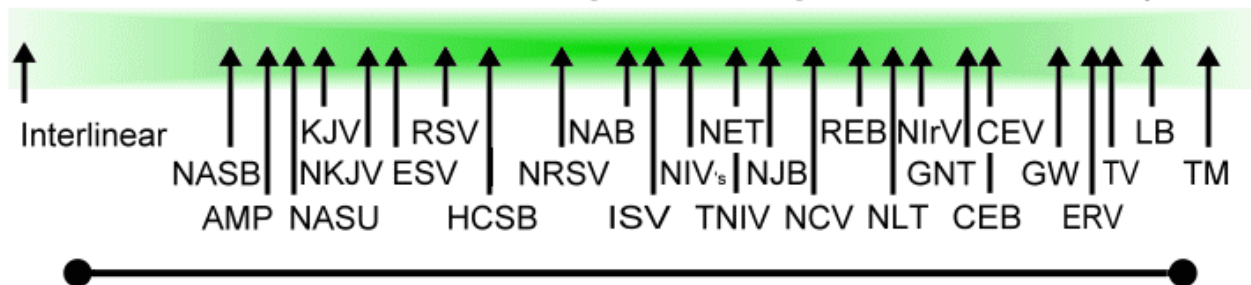
- ◆ Help you give a better answer than "I don't know... it's what my pastor uses."
- ◆ Search Amazon for "Bible" and you'll get 70,000 results Just in English

Why Are There So Many Choices?

- ◆ When I was getting started I knew nothing about translations and wanted the one "closest to what Jesus said"
- ◆ Do you speak Hebrew? Greek? No? You need an English translation
- ◆ Two philosophies
 - ◆ formal equivalence or "word-for-word" - as directly to English as possible.
 - ◆ functional equivalence or "thought-for-thought". - focus more on the author's intended meaning.
- ◆ "Tengo calor"
 - ◆ "I have heat" - word for word
 - ◆ "I'm hot" - thought for thought
 - ◆ "I could burst into flames at any minute" - paraphrase
- ◆ Most bibles will tell you which philosophy they use. Most use a little bit of both.
- ◆ There is a spectrum

English Bible Translation Comparison

Word for Word ←————→ Thought for Thought —————→ Paraphrase



NASB / NASU - New American Standard (11)
AMP - Amplified Bible (12)
ESV* - English Standard Version (9.5)
ERV^ - Easy to Read Version (3.5)
KJV* - King James Version (13)
NKJV - New King James Version (9)
RSV* - Revised Standard Version (11)
HCSB - Holman Christian Standard (8)
NRSV^^ - New Revised Standard (10.5)
NAB* - New American Bible (7)
NIV - New International Version (8)
NIV1^ - NIV [UK only, 1996 edition] (8)
NIV2011^^ - NIV Revision (8)
CEB^^ - Common English Bible (7)

TNIV^ - Today's NIV (7.5)
NJB* - New Jerusalem Bible (7.5)
NCV^ - New Century Version (5)
REB (NEB)*^ - Revised English Bible (7)
NLT^ - New Living Translation (6.5)
NirV - New International Reader's (3.5)
GNT (GNB/TEV)* - Good News Translation (6)
CEV^^ - Contemporary English (5)
ISV^^ - International Standard Version (8.5)
GW - God's Word (4.5)
LB - Living Bible (8.5)
TM - The Message (4.5)
NET^^ - NET Bible (7)
TV - The Voice (7)



^^ No gender neutral language for God, careful/moderate inclusive language regarding mankind.

^ Gender neutral language * Apocrypha available or included (#) Approximate overall reading grade level

- ◆ KJV, NRSV, ESV, and NASB - word for words
- ◆ NLT, GW, and CEV - thought for thought

- ◆ NIV, NET, and CEB - middle ground
- ◆ The Message - paraphrase
- ◆ Word for word tries to be as accurate to the original as possible. Sometimes makes it harder to read.
- ◆ Thought for thought is easier to read. But, you are relying on the editors to translate the thoughts of the original and not just the words.
- ◆ Idioms are the biggest place to see differences
- ◆ In Amos 4:6, we can see how idioms written in Hebrew 3000 years ago don't translate directly very well.

NASB (word-for-word) "I gave you cleanness of teeth in all of your cities"

NIV (median): "I gave you empty stomachs in every city"

NET (median): "I gave you no food to eat in any of your cities"

This is a great example of why translating idioms literally doesn't work because idioms don't mean what they say. The median and thought-for-thought translations attempt to tell us what the idiom means, but the word-for-word translations give us the most accurate translation of the original words and expect us to do the work to get the meaning.

Translations To Avoid

- ◆ Most of the ones already listed will serve you well.
- ◆ Translations to avoid have some common characteristics
 - ◆ translated by one or two people rather than a committee
 - ◆ authors say they have been given special, unique revelation from God
 - ◆ they say the originals have been corrupted
 - ◆ things their new "revelation" "corrects"
 - ◆ most often the thing that gets "corrected" is who Jesus was (Mormons & JWs).
- ◆ Three translations that every Christian should avoid
 - ◆ are the Inspired/JST Bible (Mormons),
 - ◆ the New World Translation (Jehovah's Witness),
 - ◆ the Passion Translation.
 - ◆ author claims to follow orthodox Christian teachings, but there is a lot of things that he changes.
 - ◆ tends to add a lot more words
 - ◆ elevates the inner power of mankind in a very New Age kind of way.
 - ◆ claims he was given direct, special revelation on how things should be translated
 - ◆ Has no translation credentials

| | ◆ | numerous scholars have spoken out against it

Which Translation Should You Use?

- ◆ | just starting out - NIV
- ◆ | once comfortable - ESV or NASB
- ◆ | in truth - MULTIPLE