

**Assignment:** Ephesians 4:20-24

1. Read paragraph several times
2. Create sentence structure
3. Identify key phrase
4. Identify key words
5. List key questions

Extra Credit

🔑 **Key Number Two: Interpretation**

(What Does it Mean? )

1. Define Key Words with a concordance.
2. Do a background Study of the Book.
3. Write out text using your own words.
4. What other texts relate to this passage?

Places to Look:

[www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)

[www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com)

[www.biblehub.com](http://www.biblehub.com)

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)



***Lesson 5: Interpreting the New Testament Epistles***

The New Testament Epistles are the easiest to understand and apply to our everyday lives. An Epistle is nothing more than a letter written by an individual to a person, local church, or a regional area of believers.



The purpose of each epistle was to address a situation that had arisen so look for the key issues. This is called task theology.

Remember that the order of books (letters) is not chronological, but rather put in the order of length. Almost all of the letters fit into the time line of the book of Acts.

So let's get started...

## 🔑 **Key Number One: Observation** (What does it say?)

### **A. The General Structure of a New Testament Letter**

Salutation

Thanksgiving & Prayer

Introduction

Body of Letter

Farewell

See Handout for N.T. letter outlines

### **B. Observation Steps**

#### **1. Read the Text Several Times**

Practice Text: Ephesians 4:17-19

<sup>17</sup> So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.

<sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. <sup>19</sup> Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.

#### **2. Create a Sentence and Paragraph structure**

<sup>17</sup> So I tell you this,

and insist on it in the Lord,

that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do,

in the futility of their thinking.

<sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding  
and separated from the life of God

because of the ignorance that is in them

due to the hardening of their hearts.

<sup>19</sup> Having lost all sensitivity,

they have given themselves over to sensuality

so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and

they are full of greed.

#### **3. Identify Key Phrase - double underline**

#### **4. Identify Key Words**

Link Words – underline

Key Words – circle

Command Words – draw a box

Cause and Effect – draw arrow

#### **5. List Key Questions, i.e. (Leads to Interpretation)**

Who is Paul talking to?

What does it mean?

darkened their understanding?

When were they not to live like the Gentiles?

Where is this taking place?

Why didn't Paul want them to live this way?

How does a person's heart become hardened?