

Handling the Word

How to Study the Bible Faithfully

Lesson Seven Leader Guide

Application - What Must I Do With This?

Private leader document

This guide follows the participant notes with prompts, cautions, brief summaries, and prayer points that are simple enough to use as you lead.

Lesson Overview

Main question: What must I do with this?

Main idea: Faithful application responds to God's Word with trust and obedience after we have listened carefully through observation, context, interpretation, and genre.

Key text: James 1:22-25

Supporting passages: Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 10:25-37; Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 4:8-9

Suggested length: 60 to 75 minutes. Give James 1 and Matthew 7 room to breathe rather than rushing.

Intended outcomes

- He sees application as a faithful response to God, not a way to prove his worth.
- He avoids rushed, vague, or self-centred application.
- He practises asking what to believe, confess, trust, obey, pray, give thanks for, or change.
- He leaves encouraged that one small faithful step still matters.

Leader emphasis

Keep this gospel-rooted. Application is not moralism, pressure, or self-improvement. We respond because God has spoken, Christ has redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit helps us walk in truth.

Helpful phrase to repeat

Do not apply before listening. But do not listen without responding.

Recommended Session Flow

Time	Section	Purpose
5 min	Welcome and check-in	Review Session Six practice and pre-reading with grace.
2 min	Opening prayer	Ask for faithful listening and obedience.
8 min	Question and principle	Application as response after careful study.
12 min	James 1:22-25	Hearing, doing, the mirror, and continuing in the Word.
12 min	Matthew 7:24-27	Both builders hear; the wise builder does.
15 min	Luke 10:25-37	A clear call to specific mercy.
12 min	Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 4:8-9	Application shapes worship, thinking, and practice.
6 min	Pull together and practise	Set one simple weekly practice and pray.

Leader Posture

- Keep it rooted in grace and the help of the Spirit.
- Push gently toward specifics - one faithful step this week is clearer than "be better".
- If he feels overwhelmed, make the response smaller, not heavier.
- Application may involve belief, repentance, prayer, trust, thanks, worship, or action.
- Keep Christ central. We obey as redeemed people, not as people trying to earn acceptance.

1. Welcome, Prayer, and Check-In - 7 minutes

Aim: Begin relationally and connect this lesson to careful interpretation.

Questions/prompts

- How has your week been?
- How did you go with Session Six practice and pre-reading?
- When you read **James 1:22-25**, what did it make you think about hearing and doing?

Listen for / draw out

- Evidence that he is moving from quick answers to careful reading.
- Any guilt or pressure if he did not complete the practice.
- A simple thought from James 1 about hearing, doing, and the mirror.

Brief teaching summary

Session Seven brings the pathway toward response. We have learned to observe, read in context, interpret carefully, and notice genre. Now we ask how God's Word should shape our life before Him.

Pastoral note

If he did little or none of the practice, begin with grace. The goal is not to review failure, but to keep learning how to return to the Word.

2. Today's Question and Application Principle - 8 minutes

Aim: Introduce the core question: What must I do with this?

Questions/prompts

- What do you think application means?
- What can go wrong if we rush to application too quickly?
- What can go wrong if we understand a passage but never respond?
- Why should application be specific, not vague?

Brief teaching summary

Application is not the first step in Bible study, but it is necessary. After careful listening, we ask how the passage should shape our faith, thoughts, desires, choices, words, and actions.

Pastoral note

Application is not about proving worth. We respond because God has spoken and because Christ has redeemed us.

3. Read **James 1:22-25** - 12 minutes

Aim: Show that the Word is not only to be heard, but continued in and obeyed.

Questions/prompts

- What warning is given about hearing without doing?
- What picture does James use with the mirror?
- What blessing is connected with continuing in the Word?
- What might it look like to be a doer of the Word this week?

Listen for / draw out

- Hearing without doing deceives us.
- The mirror shows what is true, but the hearer must respond.
- Continuing in the Word matters.
- A doer of the Word takes a concrete step, even if it is small.

Brief teaching summary

James presses the point clearly: Bible study is incomplete if it ends with hearing only. The Word reveals what is true, and the faithful response is to continue in it and obey.

Pastoral note

The mirror is not given to shame us into hiding, but to show what needs attention before the Lord.

4. Read **Matthew 7:24-27** - 12 minutes

Aim: Show that obedience is the difference between merely hearing Jesus' words and building wisely on them.

Questions/prompts

- What do both men hear?
- What makes the wise man different from the foolish man?
- What happens when the storm comes?
- How does obedience connect with building on the right foundation?

Brief teaching summary

Jesus contrasts hearing with doing. The wise life is built by receiving His words and putting them into practice.

Pastoral note

Let the warning stand, but hold out the hope: Jesus teaches us how to build on the rock.

5. Read **Luke 10:25-37** - 15 minutes

Aim: Use the Good Samaritan to show that faithful application becomes specific and practical.

Questions/prompts

- What question is asked at the beginning?
- How does Jesus answer through the parable?
- Who showed mercy?
- What does Jesus tell the man to do at the end?

Listen for / draw out

- The lawyer asks about eternal life and then about who his neighbour is.
- Jesus exposes the heart and defines neighbour-love through mercy.
- The Samaritan is the one who showed mercy.
- Jesus says, "Go and do likewise."

Brief teaching summary

Luke 10 shows application becoming concrete. Jesus does not leave the man with an abstract discussion. He brings the truth down to mercy shown to a real neighbour.

Pastoral note

Do not reduce this to "be nice". Let the passage define mercy: seeing need, drawing near, giving care, and accepting cost.

6. **Romans 12** and **Philippians 4** - 12 minutes

Aim: Show that application flows from God's mercies and shapes both the mind and the life.

Questions/prompts

- In **Romans 12:1-2**, what does Paul urge believers to do in view of God's mercies?
- What should not shape us?
- How does the renewing of the mind connect with living before God?
- In **Philippians 4:8-9**, what are believers told to meditate on and practise?

Brief teaching summary

Faithful application is a whole-life response. **Romans 12** grounds obedience in God's mercies. **Philippians 4** reminds us that faithful response includes what we think about and what we practise.

Pastoral note

Sometimes the faithful response is to trust truth, renew the mind, give thanks, or change what we allow to rule our thoughts.

7. Pulling It Together and This Week's Practice - 6 minutes

Aim: Help him summarise the lesson and leave with one achievable step.

Questions/prompts

- Finish this sentence: Application helps me...
- What is one danger of vague application?
- Which question is most useful: believe, confess, trust, obey, pray, give thanks, or change?
- Would reading **Matthew 7:24-27** twice this week be realistic?

Brief teaching summary

This week's aim is simple: read carefully and write one honest sentence about what hearing Jesus' words and doing them could look like.

Pastoral note

End with encouragement, not pressure. The goal is not to change everything at once. The goal is one faithful step before the Lord.

If He Gets Stuck

Gentle responses

- I do not know what to do - choose one question: believe, confess, trust, obey, pray, give thanks, or change. Pick one small response.
- My response seems too small - small faithful steps still matter before the Lord. Make it specific for this week.
- I feel guilty - conviction should lead us toward Christ, not into hiding. Name one step of repentance or trust.
- This is too vague - make it concrete: who, what, when, or how? Write one clear sentence.

Key Truths to Reinforce

- Application is a faithful response to God's Word.
- Good application comes after careful listening.
- Hearing without doing leads to self-deception.
- Obedience is not a way to earn God's love; it is a response to His grace.
- Application may involve belief, confession, trust, obedience, prayer, thanks, worship, or change.
- Specific application is usually more helpful than vague intention.

What to Avoid

- Avoid guilt-heavy pressure.
- Avoid vague responses like "try harder" or "be better".
- Avoid moralism detached from Christ and grace.
- Avoid applying before the passage has been observed and understood.
- Avoid assuming every application must be outward action.
- Avoid overloading him with too many changes at once.

Optional Extra Scriptures

John 14:15 - love for Christ is connected to keeping His commandments. **Psalms 119:105** - God's Word is a lamp and light. **1 John 2:3-6** - knowing Him is connected to keeping His commandments. **Colossians 3:17** - Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. **2 Timothy 3:16-17** - Scripture equips for every good work.

Suggested closing prayer

Father, thank You for giving us Your Word. Help us not to be hearers only. Teach us to listen carefully, understand faithfully, and respond with trust and obedience. Show us one faithful step to take, and help us walk in it by Your grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Leader Reflection After the Session

Briefly note what encouraged him, where he seemed unsure, and what should be followed up next time.