

TheWordWorks

General Bible Handling Training

Module 1

Getting the Main Point and Purpose

Aim of module:

(More) Practice getting the main point and purpose of any bible passage

Recap (from GBHT_M1_1_Bible Handling Training Part 1)

The **Big Idea** of a passage consists of 3 things (see GBHT_M1_1 - Bible Handling Training Part 1)

Main Point: The main point is the main thing/truth the author is saying in that passage, captured in one summary sentence.

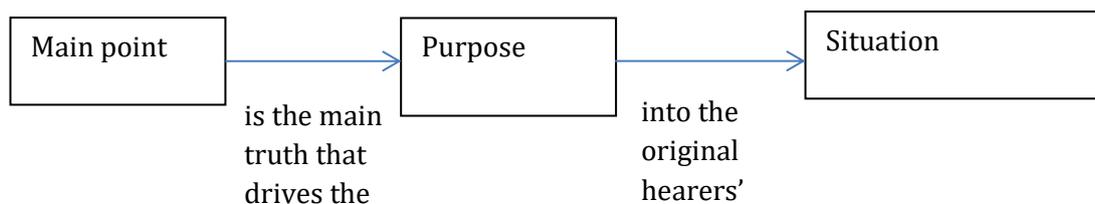
Purpose: When a bible author states a truth (i.e. the main point), he has a specific purpose for doing so. He wants that truth to do something to the original readers. The effect the main point was meant to have on the original readers is called the author's purpose. The purpose statement should be an **active sentence** outlining how God wants the readers to respond to what he's said. (General rule is that purpose statements need a verb!).

Ask yourself:

- how is this passage meant to shape *their* thinking? Are there truths to be believed? Are there attitudes that need to be fostered?
- how is this passage meant to shape their living? Are there behaviours to be modified?
- how is it meant to make *them* feel? E.g. Psalm 47

Situation: The situation is particular circumstance of the original hearers which the original author is writing to address (See GBHT_M1_3- Getting the situation")

The relationship between these 3 elements of the main point is summarised in the diagram below:



See worked examples of Main point and Purpose from Mark 1:16-34, Isaiah 13:1-14:2 and Isaiah 22 in the **GBHT_M1_1_Bible Handling Training Part 1**

Exercise – Getting the main point and purpose

Have a go writing out the main point and purpose of 3 of the following passages

| Passage | Author's main point | Author's purpose (should start with a verb) |
|---------------------|---------------------|---|
| Colossians 1:1-14 | | |
| Colossians 1:15-23 | | |
| Colossians 1:24-2:7 | | |
| Colossians 2:8-23 | | |
| Colossians 3:1-17 | | |
| Colossians 3:18-4:6 | | |
| Colossians 4:7-18 | | |

TheWordWork's working

These are by no means the final word! Compare it with your own answers.

The Situation - From GBHT_M1_3 - Getting the situation

False teachers were deceiving the Colossians (2:4, 8) that in order to grow and have fullness as Christians (the Colossians needed to abide by OT practices (2:16-17) and live ascetic lives that promote mystic access to God (2:18-23). That's why the gospel of Jesus is presented as the all-sufficient way to growth and fullness (1:6, 10, 19, 28; 2:7, 19; 3:16; 4:12)

| Passage | Author's main point | Author's purpose | Comments |
|----------|--|---|---|
| 1:1-14 | The gospel is all-sufficient for ongoing growth | Know that the gospel you received is all-sufficient for ongoing spiritual growth | Paul highlights how the gospel they first received caused growth (Vs 3-8) and prays that this all-sufficient gospel will continue growing them (Vs 9-14) |
| 1:15-23 | The gospel is all-sufficient to make you perfectly pleasing to God because Jesus is all-supreme over everything | Continue trusting the gospel for spiritual growth, confident in Jesus' all-supremacy | 1:15-23 shows why the gospel is all-sufficient for growth. Vs 23 is the key verse highlighting the author's purpose |
| 1:24-2:7 | Paul suffers because he's been tasked by God to proclaim the gospel of Jesus which can grow people in spiritual maturity | Don't be deceived by persuasive arguments (regarding how to grow spiritually). Walk in the Jesus Paul proclaims | 1:24-2:3 is Paul's defence of why he is suffering in prison. The purpose can be found clearly in 2:4 and 6. |
| 2:8-23 | You have all of God because you've been filled by the supreme Christ. You're a new-flesh, forgiven person because of Jesus' death and resurrection | Don't be kidnapped by these false teachers! | The purpose is found in the opening verse, Vs 8. Vs 16-23 reveal what they are not to be kidnapped by. Vs 9-15 show why they are not to be kidnapped: They already have it all in Jesus. |
| 3:1-17 | You are new people in Christ | Take off the old man clothes. Put on new man clothes. | The purpose is found in 3:5, 8 and 12. The main point which drives the purpose (note the "therefore" in Vs 5 and Vs 12) is found in Vs 1-4. |
| 3:18-4:6 | Our new relationship with Jesus drives new relationships with other people | [Different purposes for different groups of people] | 3:18-4:6 is an elaboration of 3:17. While 3:1-17 shows new identity living within the church community, 3:18-4:6 shows new identity living in all spheres of life (i.e. what it means to "do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus" in 3:17) |
| 4:7-18 | Sticking to the gospel for spiritual maturity is a team effort | Help each other to stick to the gospel for spiritual maturity | 4:7-14 = Others help you stick to the gospel for spiritual maturity 4:15-18 = Help each other stick to the gospel for spiritual maturity |