

CHAPTER NINE

You have done a lot of work! Give yourself a terrific praise. We have one more task for today and this is perhaps the most challenging! We must work on writing a 10 word sentence that captures the passage. A 10 word sentence should contain words from the passage; be concise and be used as a recall mechanism. Some hints: think what is the most glaring lesson, or the most important feature of this passage. What actually happened here? Is a person the key focal point or is it a time or a principle? Try out several ideas and no short cuts!

For example in Matthew 14 we might write as a 10 word subject sentence:

After Jesus feeds 5000, he prays while disciples face storm.

OR

Jesus feeds 5000, sends disciples away, prays, walks on water.

Just keep working on it until you feel comfortable that if asked what this passage is about your mind would instantly recall it as you wrote it. A 10 word sentence helps the mind recall the crucial issues found in the passage under discussion or study.

Now in addition, we must work on dividing the passage into workable segments. You probably have already found several “breaking” points as you studied; that is where the passage seems to have certain verses that just harmonize together as opposed to other parts of the passage. That is why sequencing the passage helps. You begin to see where the passage unfolds and has natural stopping and starting points. After you have divided the passage where you “think” it should fall, see if you can give each section a simple title. You can repeat the same word but it is not necessary. The point is to write out your division “titles” so that you can see the flow, recall the sequence, recall the main ideas of each section. There is no concrete method for doing this nor is there a right or wrong way. You must follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. Scholars and Bible translators often divide passages differently and you can as well. Often it helps to look to see what the scholars have determined. You may agree or disagree. One way to not be biased by what others think is to use a Bible that has no divisions and write out your own and then go to several other versions to see how “close” you came to what others thought.

In helping you to analyze the passage it helps to dissect it in time order. Again working through Matt 14:22-36, dissect the story asking yourself: what happened first, next and so on. Make a simple time line of events. This will also help you divide the passage and to build your divisions.

Sample Analysis

Here is one that this author did with the example passage of Matt 14:

- 1. Immediately after Jesus fed the crowds he
 - a. made disciples get into the boat and go ahead of him
 - b. dispersed the crowds
 - c. went up the mountain (to pray)
- 2. Evening came
 - a. Jesus was alone
 - b. Boat was facing turbulent winds
- 3. Night ending
 - a. Jesus came walking on water
 - b. Disciples saw and were fearful
 - c. Disciples thought Jesus a ghost

Taking those ideas, here is a sample of the third column with the 10 words subject sentence (a summary of the passage) and the divisions along with a phrase or sentence that tells about that section. **REMEMBER:** There is no right or wrong. You must do what the Holy Spirit reveals to you.

**Sample Worksheet on Subject Sentences,
Divisions - SEE SAMPLE →**

This passage lent itself to the repetition of the name of Jesus and what He did. Other passages may or may not lend themselves to this type of recall.

NOW YOUR ASSIGNMENT:

Try writing out your own 10 word subject sentence and dividing up the same passage.
List your divisions with verses and subheadings.

10 WORD SUBJECT SENTENCE DIVISIONS/SECTIONS
After Jesus feeds 5000, he prays while disciples face storm.
Vs. 22-23 Jesus spends time in prayer
Vs. 24-27 Jesus comes to storm tossed disciples
Vs. 28-31 Jesus saves sinking Peter
Vs. 32-36 Jesus calms storm and disciples worship

Figure 1-10 word sentence and divisions