

BIBLE 101 — Week 4

Following the Author's Argument Step by Step

Scripture Focus: Romans 12:1–2 · Ephesians 2:8–10 · John 3:16–18

KEY VOCABULARY — scan this before you watch

Term	What It Means
Connectors	Small but powerful words that show how one _____ connects to the next — the mortar holding the bricks together
Conclusion Words	Words like "_____" that signal the author is drawing a conclusion from what came before
Contrast Words	Words like "_____" that set two ideas against each other to highlight a choice or difference
Reason Words	Words like "for" or "_____" that tell you why something is true
Purpose Words	Words like "so that" or "_____" that reveal the goal behind an action

I. THE PROBLEM: RAISIN PICKING

When we read casually, we become people who grab the _____ and throw away the bread.

We pick out those sweet _____ verses — the raisins — but toss out the main argument, the context, the bread.

The fix: move from passively picking out verses to actively following the author's _____.

Good news: you don't need to learn Greek or Hebrew. These clues have been _____ by translators and are hiding in plain sight in every English Bible.

II. THE SOLUTION: HIDDEN ROAD SIGNS

Connectors are small words that act like the _____ holding the bricks of an argument together.

Each connector has a specific _____ to do in building the author's case.

The four big categories to look for:

CONNECTOR TYPE	KEY WORDS	WHAT IT DOES
Conclusion	therefore, _____	Draws a _____ from what came before
Contrast	but, _____	Sets two ideas _____ each other
Reason	for, _____	Tells you _____ something is true

Purpose	so that, _____	Reveals the _____ behind an action
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III. SEEING IT IN ACTION: THREE FAMOUS PASSAGES

Passage 1 — Romans 12:1–2

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice ... Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God.”

— Romans 12:1–2 (ESV)

- **"Therefore"** → Conclusion — this one word swings on the previous _____ chapters of deep theology
- **"But"** → Contrast — a choice between being _____ to the world or being transformed
- **"That"** → Purpose — the goal of transformation is to _____ God's will

Passage 2 — Ephesians 2:8–10

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.”

— Ephesians 2:8–10 (ESV)

- **"For" (v. 8)** → Reason — tells us _____ we are saved: by grace
- **"So that"** → Purpose — the system is designed to eliminate any room for human _____
- **"For" (v. 10)** → Reason — gives a second reason: we are God's _____
- **"For good works"** → Purpose — we are created this way to _____ out the good works God prepared

Passage 3 — John 3:16–18

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

— John 3:16–17 (ESV)

- **"For"** → Reason — the reason for everything that follows is God's _____
- **"That he gave"** → Result — the direct _____ of that love
- **"Not ... but"** → Contrast — not to _____, but to save
- **"Because" (v. 18)** → Reason — judgment comes as a direct result of _____

▮ PAUSE & REFLECT

Pick one of the three passages above. Look at the connectors you've identified. How does seeing the logical structure change your understanding compared to how you've read it before?

IV. THE THREE-STEP PLAYBOOK

Step 1: Grab a pen and literally _____ every connector word in the passage.

Step 2: For each word, pause and ask: What's its _____? Is it a reason, a contrast, a conclusion, or a purpose?

Step 3: After you see the skeleton of the argument, write down the _____ in one sentence.

When you do this, you shift from passively reading words to being an active _____, tracing the author's train of thought.

This technique isn't about giving you answers — it's about equipping you to ask way better _____.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What's the difference between "raisin picking" and following the author's argument? How has your reading habit leaned one way or the other?

2. Choose a passage you read this week. Circle the connectors and identify their jobs. What main point did the author build?

3. Why do you think these connector words are so easy to overlook? What's one practical change you can make to start noticing them?
