

# **WCFS Applied Civics 101; Gibbs & Gibbs**

## **Class 1: Intro to Course; How to Do a Bible Outline**

### **Class 1 Homework Assignments**

#### **HOW TO DO A BIBLE OUTLINE:**

##### **The Big Picture**

The easy and fun thing about outlining is that you can dig into a pile of words with your bare hands and sort what you find into separate trays based on similarities and differences. Well... sort of. The pile is the topic, the paragraphs are the sorting trays and the little compartments in each tray are the sentences filled with words that make their points in many shades of color.

Outlining is not only the best tool for writing, it also is the best tool to understand the content and meaning of someone else's writing. The outliner is a scholar and a critic! You challenge the written page to give forth her goods in simple clarity and meaning. When I was in 5th grade, I was given sorting trays for exploring the written page, these were the one word questions that I still use today. Who? What? When? Where? How? And, Why? These questions help sort all kinds of word piles, or ideas effectively. Scripture is no different, ask these questions whenever you outline a passage. Use the OIA method: Observation, Interpretation, Application. What does it say? What does it mean? What does it mean to me?

I was told that the KJV was written at a 5th grade reading level. The truth is, the basic writing skills of a 5th grader are all you need to master the reading skills needed to read and understand the Bible. Outlining is not grammar intensive, it's idea intensive. With a basic understanding of the complete, simple sentence and the basic paragraph — along with a good dictionary — anyone can take a Bible passage apart and put it back together in a meaningful outline that helps them master the understanding of what they're reading, and explain it to others.

##### **The Complete, Simple Sentence**

In 5th Grade, I was told that a complete sentence has three parts: an action (verb), a doer of the action (subject), and the receiver of the action (object). You must have all three parts for it to be a complete sentence. Every complete sentence ends with a punctuation mark: a period (.), a question mark (?) or an exclamation mark (!).

A sentence is a complete thought. Go! "Go!" is a complete thought. It also is the shortest complete sentence possible. It has a subject, a verb and an object, and it ends with a punctuation mark — an exclamation mark. While the subject and object appear to be missing, they are implied or understood, just not written. The verb, however, must nearly always be written. Most often, the object may be missing because it is implied or understood.

Often, in the Bible, you may find very long sentences and other punctuation marks like the comma (,), colon (:), and the semi colon (;). But if you remember the parts of a complete simple sentence, you can easily make sense of more complex sentences.

Making sense of more complex sentences it's what outlines are all about. And that leads us to the paragraph!

## **The Basic Paragraph**

While a sentence expresses a complete thought, a paragraph discusses a topic. A paragraph is composed of sentences; it is a series of complete thoughts on a specific topic. The parts to a basic paragraph are: the topic sentence, which presents the topic to be discussed; the body, which is several sentences that discuss the topic; and usually a transition, a sentence that summarizes the idea or anticipates the idea in the next paragraph. Often, the topic sentence and transition sentences can be presented in any order and even in the same sentence. This is especially true for creative writing, but the Bible is a little more complex.

The Bible was written over multiple writers over hundreds of years. The authors had varied education levels and at least three different ancient languages not being used today (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek). Modern punctuation in sentences and paragraphing (sorting topical ideas) did not exist. So the Bible in our English translations have had those things added to the passages we read.

One of the biggest helps to reading the Bible is the chapter divisions given to each book. A chapter is like an essay. It is a collection of paragraphs. In an essay, the topic of each paragraph is actually a subtopic of the essay topic. One of your assignments each week will be to outline a specific chapter in the book of Daniel. Each chapter will be a biblical essay to outline. You will use the traditional Roman Numeral Outline method.

## **The Roman Numeral Outline Method**

Essay Title: Each Chapter, having a theme

- I. Topic one, containing all sub-topics related to that topic
  - A. Paragraph one topic, containing all the points from each sentence.
    1. Sentence one point
    2. Sentence two point
    3. Sentence three point
  - B. Paragraph one topic, containing all the points from each sentence.
    1. Sentence one point
    2. Sentence two point
    3. Sentence three point
- II. Topic two, containing all sub-topics related to that topic
  - A. Paragraph one topic, containing all the points from each sentence.
    1. Sentence one point
    2. Sentence two point
    3. Sentence three point
  - B. Paragraph one topic, containing all the points from each sentence.
    1. Sentence one point
    2. Sentence two point
    3. Sentence three point
- III. Topic three, containing all sub-topics related to that topic

- A. Paragraph one topic, containing all the points from each sentence.
    1. Sentence one point
    2. Sentence two point
    3. Sentence three point
  - B. Paragraph one topic, containing all the points from each sentence.
    1. Sentence one point
    2. Sentence two point
    3. Sentence three point
- ETC.,
- A good Bible outline focuses only on the written text presented in a logical fashion.

## **GIBBS & GIBBS, THE CONSTITUTION**

### **Introduction: Key points**

#### **I. The Constitution is the Most Important US Document**

- A. It is the operational blueprint for our government.
- B. It is the guarantor (not grantor) of citizen liberties.
- C. It is a rarely read document.

#### **II. The Duty of American Christians**

- A. Every American Christian should have a basic understanding of their Constitutional Rights and how it affects them, especially their religious liberties.
- B. The Scriptures speak clearly to the Christian's duties to human government.
  1. God judges all nations, regardless of their general religious beliefs and practices – You will see this clearly in the Book of Daniel.
  2. God commands every Christian to actively pray for the nation in which they have domicile, as a citizen or otherwise. (The what and why of prayer is enlightened by scriptures like 1Timothy 2:1-4 and the US Constitution.)
  3. Romans 13 and 1Peter 2:13ff both reveal the plain command to obey God's ordained human government, and requires obedience in light of the potential impact God-fearing believers might have on human governments, regardless of their favor or disfavor upon Christians.

#### **III. The Danger to Religious Liberties**

- A. Unused Liberties become vestigial freedoms that can easily be lost.
- B. Obedience to governments is a boundary that begins and ends with a man's or woman's sincerely held religious belief before God.
  1. We ought always to obey God.
  2. We are bound to disobey government when it attempts to dislodge our obedience to God.
  3. Warning: the Christian citizen has the privilege of asserting his rights as a citizen, rights that a non-citizen does not have.
    - a. The citizen must exhaust his rights as a citizen before he disobeys.
    - b. This process is called *redress of grievances*.
    - c. The *Redress of Grievances* opens the door to influence by engagement with the government.

d. Moreover, government officials may be personally influenced for good, regardless how the government itself responds.

## Chapter One: Government Was God's Idea

### I. GOVERNMENT WAS ORDAINED BY GOD AS HIS DIVINE ORDER.

#### A. God introduced government in Genesis 9:5-6.

1. The commandment came through the requirement of capital punishment for capital crimes.
2. Scripture clearly states that God ordained government. (What does ordained mean?)
  - a. Romans 13:1, says: *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.* - Rom 13:1 NKJV
  - b. Colossians 1:15-17, says: *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.* - Col 1:15-17 NKJV
3. The Bible does not mandate any particular form of government, but all government arises from God's authority, not man's consent. He established three institutions whose nexus is sensitive at best and open to overreach.

#### a. The Home

1. Ordained in Genesis 1 & 2.
  2. Genesis 1:26-29,
    - a. Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; ...So God created man in His [own] image.
    - b. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ...
    - c. In the image of God He created him:
      - (1). Male, and
      - (2). Female He created them.
    - d. Then God blessed them, and God said to them,
      - (1). Be fruitful and multiply;
      - (2). Fill the earth and subdue it;
        - (a). Have dominion over the fish of the sea,
        - (b). Over the birds of the air, and
        - (c). Over every living thing that moves on the earth.
    - e. And God said, "See, I have given you:
      - (1). Every herb [that] yields seed which [is] on the face of all the earth,
- and
- (2). Every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.
  - f. Authority re-established after Noah's flood. - Gen 9:5-6
    - (1). Surely for your lifeblood I will demand [a reckoning]; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man.

- (2). From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.
- (3). Whoever sheds man's blood,
  - (a). By man his blood shall be shed;
  - (b). For in the image of God He made man.

**b. The Church**

- 1. Ordained in Ephesians 2:19-22
- 2. Ephesians 2:19-22,
  - a. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,
  - b. Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
    - (1). Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner[stone],
    - (2). In whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,
    - (3). In whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

**c. Human Government**

- 1. Ordained in Genesis 9:5-6
- 2. Genesis 9:5-6,
  - a. "Surely for your lifeblood I will demand [a reckoning];
    - (1). From the hand of every beast I will require it, and
    - (2). From the hand of man.
    - (3). From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.
  - b. "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed;
  - c. For in the image of God He made man.
- 3. What about governments that refuse to acknowledge God?

**II. Governments are Raised up by God.**

A. Good or Bad, God has raised up and ordained the authority of every government that has ever existed. Examine the scriptures to see examples of good government, or at least good government leaders. Be able to name at least 3.

B. Some are good, and promote the freedom of religion and the freedom of one's conscience before God. Examine the scriptures to see examples of bad government, or at least bad government leaders. Be able to name at least 3.

C. God's eternal purposes are always accomplished through the governments he establishes. (See Romans 8:28)

- 1. To punish evildoers as a group of people.
- 2. To provide the context for deliverance and salvation.

D. Christians can play an important and active role in every form of government established, good or bad.

**III. Faithful Christians Must Obey Government.**

A. Obedience to the Government is obedience to God.

B. Christians are good citizens because they obey God.

C. Christians must obey just and unjust governments.

D. Credible Faith: Christians may only disobey that part of a law which violates their sincerely held religious beliefs before God.

1. Credibility means that you can demonstrate consistency of actions that an objective observer would recognize as a sincerely held religious belief.
2. "Sincerely held religious belief" means that you have a heart-felt conviction before God that you are compelled to obey, whether or not the laws of the government permit it.
3. Conviction, not Preference: A preference is a behavior that you can and do set aside when circumstances require it or allow it. Example: I prefer to not wear a mask in public; however, if I want to shop in a particular store, and they require me to wear a mask or not be admitted, I comply in good conscience, because wearing a mask is not a sin against my sincerely held religious belief. (See Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8 to explore this significant standard of behavior further.
4. Remember the Gold Standard of Romans 14, *Do you have faith? Have [it] to yourself before God. Happy [is] he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because [he does] not [eat] from faith; for whatever [is] not from faith is sin.* - Rom 14:22-23 NKJV