

Dynamic Bible Study

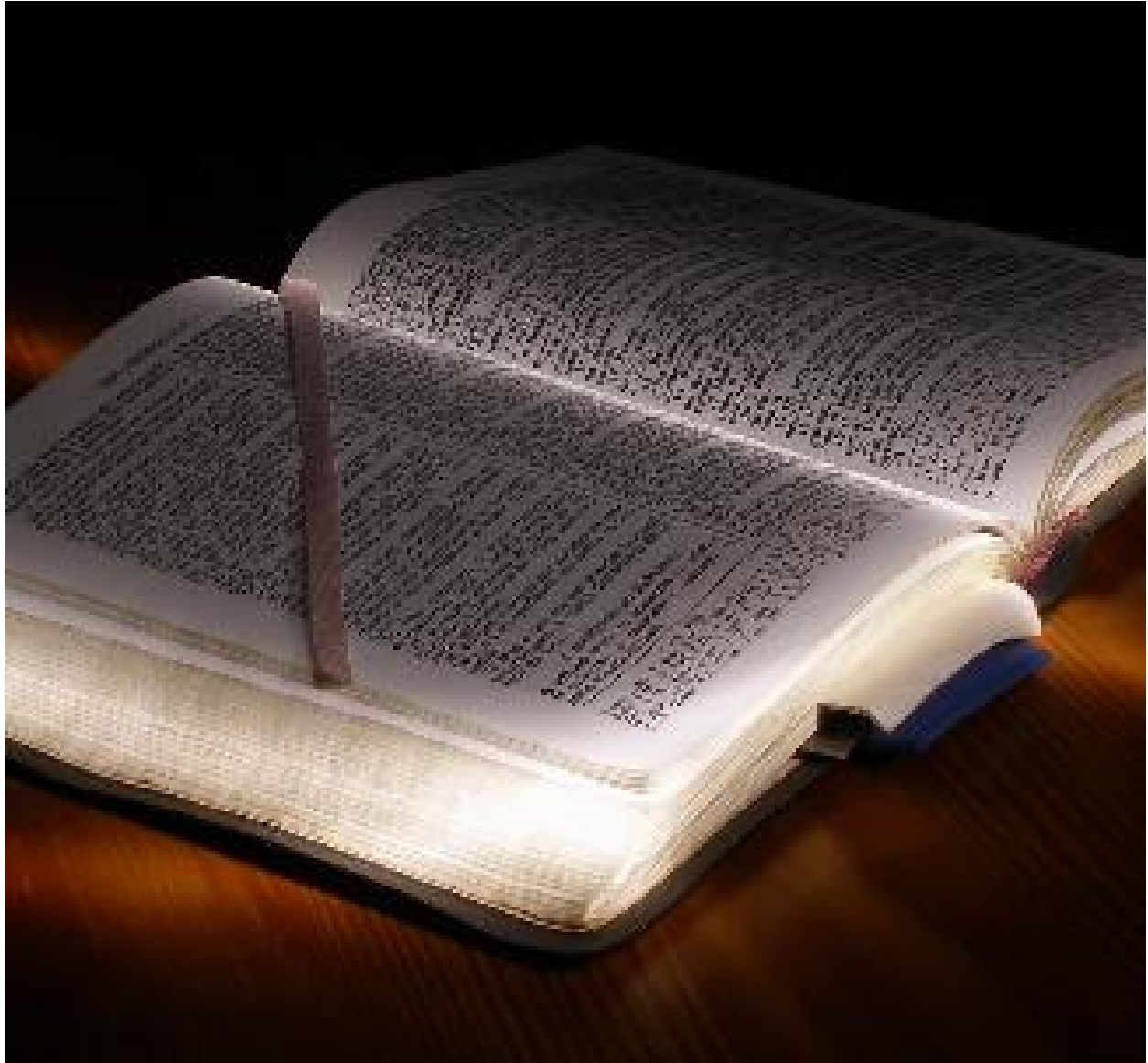


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Introduction

This text is a compilation of a number of Bible study methods. They have been derived from a number of resources. These resources are included in the bibliography section. While all have been used for a number of years, recent popular authors have created a new excitement for some of these methods of study.

Some methods help serve as a basis for other methods. Because of this, you may find that skipping to certain study methods may create a more difficult process of study than going through these methods in the order they are presented. A couple of more lengthy study methods will actually require some understanding of multiple other methods of study. The methods presented here are by no means the end all of study methods. In fact, you will find numerous variations of these studies as well. These are presented simply as an instrument to help you study. You may find your own unique alteration to the method better suited for your personality, learning type, or time schedule.

You are encouraged to use several methods of study and not just stick to your favorite. In fact, you will probably find the most challenging and rewarding study coming from those methods you do not like. The variety of study will help reveal many different insights from the Word of God you would probably have missed had you not varied the method of study.

These methods of study are meant to enhance a person's discovery of the Word of God. They are not meant to replace a personal discovery of God's Word nor God Himself. They are meant to supplement and complement the spiritual journey in which we all find ourselves.

The Synthesis Bible Study Method

Synthesize, here, means to place or put together various parts or elements to make up a whole. This particular method makes use of a “synthetic chart.” The qualities of a synthetic chart are:

1. Clarity – it is understandable at a glance
2. Brevity – it is as concise as you make it
3. Relevancy – it consists of material from the book being studied only
4. Intelligibility – the material is understandable
5. Simplicity – material is not complicated or cluttered
6. Comprehensive – includes material from the book which is significant and inclusive
7. Neatness – material is arranged in an easy-to-follow manner

Steps in the Synthesis Method (including creating a ‘Synthetic Chart’)

Step #1: Charting with Diagonal Lines

Prepare an adequate number of diagonal spaces to record a summary of each paragraph, chapter, or section in the book.

Step #2: Summarizing Paragraphs

In brief, phrase the contents of each paragraph, chapter, or section in the book. Use the space between the diagonal lines to record your summary.

In the lower left hand corner of each diagonal space, state the reference (by chapter and verse) with which each paragraph, chapter, or section begins.

Keep parallel thoughts for paragraph summaries (approximately same number of words, same tense, same sentence, or same phrase structure.)

Step #3: Selecting the Main Divisions

Successive paragraphs or chapters with common topics, themes or that are closely related should be combined.

Title these divisions in parallel structure (similar titles). The title should be general enough to cover the material, yet specific enough to focus in on the content. (Look for repetition of specific words, phrases, or ideas.)

Step #4: Looking for Subdivisions

Clarify the content of each main division. This may be done by further division into subdivisions with appropriate titles or by describing content of main divisions from another perspective.

Step #5: Charting the Main Emphasis

Consider carefully the contents of the book and note in the chart the main emphasis or distinctive of the book. (Hint: Look for repetition of words, phrases, or ideas. Consider also the space devoted to particular subjects or events.)

Step #6: Summarizing the Content of the Entire Book

In a single phrase summarize the content of the book. This summary becomes the basis of the title (subtitle) of the book.

The Synthesis Bible Study Method

Date:

Text:

2. Summaries

4. Divisions

Titles:

3. Main

Divisions:

5. Main Emphasis:

6. Summary:

The Geographical Method

Step #1: Note Significant References

Note significant references in the book being studied.

Step #2: Locate On a Map

Locate on a map the important places in the text.

Step #3: Make a Note of Scale Miles

Make a note of the scale miles on the map.

Step #4: Get Acquainted with the Topography

Consult a relief map to acquaint yourself with the topography of the land.

Step #5: Draw Map

Draw your own map to impress certain geographical details in your mind.

Geographical Bible Study Method

Date:

Text:

1. Note Significant References

2. Locate on Map

3. Make Note of Scale Miles

4. Get Acquainted with Topography (the lay of the land)

5. Draw a Map

The Cultural Background Method

“Culture” refers to the distinctive characteristics of a racial, religious or social group.

Some of the factors included in the culture of a people are their nationality, government, religion, language, literature, customs, social life, aims and aspirations, physical environment, geographical location, and relationships with nations around them.

Step #1: Read the Book

Read through the book and note those items with cultural significance.

Step #2: Date the Book

If possible, discover when the book was written (also, when do the events in the book take place.)

Step #3: Note the Locale

Note the location of the people to whom the book was written.

Step #4: Reference Cultural Facts

Note facts of cultural significance about the people to whom the book was written (and about whom the book is written.)

The Cultural Background Bible Study Method

Date:

Text:

1. Note Items of Cultural Significance

2. Date the Book

3. Note the Locale

4. Reference Cultural Facts

The Historical Background Method

The study of the historical backgrounds is a method of biblical research by which we investigate vital events in a given book or passage or such events as are related to it. The purpose is to gain a better understanding of that portion of the Bible. Investigations should include events in the area of politics, religion, sociology, and economics.

Step #1: Repetitive Reading

Read through the book repeatedly, noting any clues which may suggest reasons why the book was written.

Clues for which to be alert:

1. A definite statement by the writer of his purpose in writing the book.
2. Specific problems/needs stated by the author to those whom he is writing.
3. Special emphasis or distinctive in the book.
4. Significant events described in the book.

Step #2: Authorial Information

Note pertinent information about the author.

Step #3: Origin of the Book

Learn when and from where the book was written.

Step #4: Significant Facts

Make note of the significant facts about the intended recipients of the book. There are two main areas to be considered:

1. The culture of the people; including nationality, language, and location.
2. Significant events in the history of the people.

Step #5: Reason for Writing

As a result of your research, state the reasons or purposes for writing the book.

The Historical Background Bible Study Method

Date:

Text:

1. Note reasons for writing while reading

2. Authorial Information:

3. Origin of the Book – Date written:

From where was it written:

4. Significant Facts: Culture of the People:

History of the People:

5. Reason for Writing:

The Biographical Method

Note: When using the various studies below, be careful not to confuse certain individuals who bear the same name but are entirely different personalities. Make certain that you do not confuse individuals who appear in the same narrative.

There are several different types of biographical methods. Each has a different emphasis and therefore yields a slightly different result. The outcome is based on the study used. However, the approach for each is similar.

Types of Biographical Studies:

1. Narrative approach – take up the history of an individual in the general order in which it occurs in the Bible.
 - a. Chronologically
 - b. Instruments God used to bring to a knowledge of Himself
 - c. List various roles an individual played during his life
2. Character Study – concerned with those traits which make up the individual.
3. Combination of Narrative and Character Study – chronology of the subject's life with an evaluation of his character.
4. Linked Individuals – certain individuals cannot be considered without their link to another person.
5. Biography made relevant – sees the various incidents of an individual's life or in the traits of his character certain relevant applications to life today.

Step #1: Read the Text

Read the text (multiple times, if possible.) This may include portions of one or several books. It may include the entire text of a single book or multiple books.

Step# 2: Note All the Significant Biographical Facts

This should include parents, spouse(s), children, extended family, occupation, major life change events, etc.

Step #3: Compare Research to Other Resources

Examine research from commentaries and other texts regarding the person.

Step #4: Organize Material

To the extent it is possible, put material in a chronological biographical sketch.

Step #5: Suggest Relevant Applications

After examining the research on the life of the person, write down what possible life lessons could be learned from this person.

The Biographical Bible Study Method

Date:

Text(s):

1. Read text(s) multiple times

2. Pertinent Biographical Information:

Spouse(s):

Occupation:

Children:

Important Life Events:

Father:

Mother:

Brothers:

Sisters:

Other Key relatives:

3. Compare to other Resources: (list name of resources below)

Commentaries:

Bible Handbooks:

Bible Dictionaries:

Other:

4. Chronological Biographical Sketch:

5. Relevant Application:

The Biographical Bible Study Method (Alternative Method)

This alternative method is one that has been promoted by Peter Rhebergen and the website helpmewithbiblestudy.org. This site has several bible study methods detailed. All of which you will find here in a similar or modified form. This particular method has slight variances from the previous method.

The most obvious difference and probably what presents this method as a particularly well organized method is its reading emphasis. The method necessitates multiple readings of the text of the selected person's life. Each reading has an emphasis on a specific thing. As you read through the steps below, you will notice what these are and they are explained to you. Reading through the text four times and writing your discoveries in the emphasized area will dramatically improve your understand and knowledge of the person.

Though this method is broken out into 11 steps, do not let it intimidate you. Whereas, some of the steps in the previous study had a specific facts orientation, these steps are broader and give the student more freedom in what is written. This also draws from other studies (e.g.; the Character Quality Bible Study Method), so it is a combination of several methods.

Step #1: Select the Person to be studied

Naturally, the first step is to find someone to study. The process for selecting someone can be as diverse as simple interest in a biblical character to part of a book study in which you examine all persons in the book.

If this is your first attempt at this study, then you will want to pick someone about whom a great deal is said but about whom there is not a lot written. By this I mean, pick someone who would be easy to study and the content is detailed but limited. While ultimately we hope to become like Jesus, a biographical study of Jesus would be overwhelming for your first effort. Likewise, David is a great biographical study. He is not nearly as complex a character as some but the amount of material involving David is too extensive for a first time effort. A disciple (aside from the inner four) could be a good start. Some of the prophets, kings, or judges can be a start (recognizing that not all of them displayed good character qualities.)

The key is the find an easy to study the first few times you use any Bible Study method. Until you become familiar with the process. Once you are familiar with the process, you can begin to push yourself with the material you study. To become buried by the material as you attempt to learn the process, will cause frustration, lack of interest, and even burnout.

Step #2: List all references to the person

This is a good place to refer to a concordance. Which concordance (Bible Appendix or Exhaustive or Concise will depend upon the depth of your study). You may also find references by titles or other ambiguous references (e.g.; son of Zebedee).

Step #3: Write first impressions

Make note of the first impression you get of the person. As in real life, the first contact is very important. This study can show the development of a person (good or bad). Knowing what the first impression of a person lays the foundation for this.

Step #4: Make chronological outline

Upon completion of the second reading of all references to the person, put together a simple and general outline of the person's life. Include the major or defining moments in the history of the person.

Step #5: Insights on persons

Read for a third time. This time take notes of insights into the character. This can be a very broad compilation of notes. Do not worry if you have many seemingly unrelated notes regarding insights. The intent is to observe as much as possible.

Do not get bogged down. Keep moving along in the process.

Step #6: Identify character qualities

Read a fourth time. Note qualities in the character of the person you are studying. These character traits may be good or bad or anywhere in between. Try to list them as you come across them. This can help see any progressions in character development. It can help understand the process of developing certain character traits in life.

Step #7: Illustrated Bible truths

After completing the previous steps, it is time to draw some Biblical truths from your study. Based on the biographical sketch as you have completed to this point, determine what is being told through the life of the person. These should be general biblical truths or principles. In other words, what is the truth about this person's life that is true for all persons, all believers, or all unbelievers?

Step #8: Summarize main theme

In a very brief fashion, summarize the main lesson(s) or theme(s) from the life of this person. This should be no more than a couple of sentences.

Step #9: Write personal application

Based on the main lesson or theme, make it personal by turning the truth toward your own life. You should do some internalizing at this point. This is the point where you are asking the question, what does God want me to do with what I have learned?

Step #10: Transfer concepts

This now takes your personal application and the main theme and puts into a lesson from which everyone could benefit. Think of how this principle, theme, or truth might be applied in the lives of those around you.

Step #11: List person with who to share and why

The final step in this particular study is to list a person or persons with whom you wish to share this truth. It might help to write down why you believe God would have you share this with them. Prayerfully consider with ho to share and when the appropriate time is to do so.

Biographical Bible Study Method

Date:	1.Person:
2.Scripture References:	4.Chronological Outline:
3.First Impressions:	
5.General Insights:	6: Character Qualities:
7.Illustrated Bible Truth:	8.Lesson Summary:
9.Personal Application:	
10.Transerable Concept:	11.Person with whom to share:

The Biographical Brief Bible Study Method

Step #1: Select Character to Study

Pick the person about who wish to know more or learn from.

Step #2: List all Scripture References pertaining to the character

Using a concordance make a list of all the references about this person. Be sure to include background references, references made in later writings, etc.

Step #3: Write details of person's life.

After reading all the references, write notes about the person's life, work, and personal traits. Find out as much as you can about the person's background. Note places where the person lived or travelled. How do they differ from persons they knew or with whom they had interactions.

Step #4: Summarize the main lesson(s).

Based on what you have noted, write a brief summary of the main theme(s) or lesson(s) that can be taken from this person's life.

The Biographical Brief Bible Study Method

Date:

1. Character:

2. Scriptural References:

3. Detail Person's Life:

4. Summarize Main Life Lesson:

The Participatory Method

This method is promoted by Energion.com. It is meant to be a basic study outline. There are additional details for how to interpret and study various genres found within Scripture. To get additional details, check out the website.

Step #1: Overview

Look at the forest, not the trees. Read the text multiple times (3 times or more.)
Memorizing certain texts within the reading is useful. Use different versions to help with your concentration.

Step #2: Background

- A. Who wrote the passage?
- B. To whom is it written?
- C. Situation?
- D. What type of literature? (Poem; song/hymn; story/narrative; history; parable; allegory; doctrinal teaching; wisdom literature; prophetic oracle; vision report; prayer; letter.

Step #3: The Central Cycle (Repeat as needed)

- A. Meditation – formulation of fact questions? Formulation of thought questions?
- B. Outlining – Use outlining to trace the relationships between the various parts of the verse. Find the main point. (What is the passage about?)
- C. Comparison – What are the key words? Where else are the words found?
- D. Research – Look at outlines in other resources (study Bibles and Bible handbooks). Look at key words in Bible dictionaries, Bible encyclopedias, and handbooks. Compare notes with commentaries (critical, exegetical, devotional).

Step #4: Comparing with Current Experience

- A. Books on current Christian experience (Does the author describe an experience that is similar to what is seen in the passage? How is it similar? How is it different?)
- B. Ask others

Step #5: Comparing with Past Experience

- A. Church Fathers
- B. Classical Commentaries

Step #6: Sharing

- A. How has this applied in my experience?
- B. Share with someone relating to their experience.

The Participatory Bible Study Method			
Date:		Text:	
1.Read Text Multiple Times			
2.Background:			
Author:		Purpose in writing:	
Recipient:		Other:	
Genre:			
3.Central Cycle:			
Meditation:	Fact Questions	Thought Formulation	Other
Personal	Other resources	4.Current Experience	5.Past Experience
Outline			
Key Words		Other uses of same word	
6.Sharing			

The Inductive Method

Inductive Bible Study is one of the most popular forms of Bible Study. Because of its continued growth in popularity, many versions or slightly different formats exist. The reasons for the popularity are inherently good, but can lead to an improper focus. The personal focus can tend to push interpretation out of context or read into the passage a situational interpretation. While some biblical principles can be broadened into other situations, not every passage can be altered based on the readers current circumstances. The user of this method and its variations must do due diligence in making certain the scrutiny of the passage is based on authorial intent, not situational interpretation.

The method described initially below is one of the more popular. Variations will follow.

Step #1: Read it:

- A. Read the book 3 times in an easy to read translation
- B. Read the chapter 3 times in a good translation
- C. Read the verses 3 times, verse by verse and in order

Step #2: Observe it: Ask "What does the passage say?"

- A. Give the book these looks:
 1. Purpose
 2. Repeated word(s)/phrase(s)
 3. Person(s) involved
 4. Time/sequence of events
 5. Look for person(s), place(s), idea(s)
 6. Logical connections (key words for this are: Therefore; Since; So; Thus; Because; etc)
- B. Note verbs. Look up nouns.
- C. Compare to similar verse(s)
- D. Notice what is being taught
- E. Notice promises made
- F. Notice the underlying principle(s)/implication(s)
- G. Notice literary type(s)
- H. If necessary, examine alternative translation(s)

Step #3: Scrutinize it: Ask "What does the passage mean?"

- A. Ask the definite six: Who? What? Where? When? How? Why?
- B. Are there commands?
- C. Are there promises?
- D. Are there comparison(s)/contrast(s)?
- E. Is there cause(s)/effect(s)?
- F. Are there problems and solutions?

Step #4: Apply it:

- A. How does this apply to me?

- B. What can I model in my life?
- C. What can I teach?
- D. What can I share with someone?

The Inductive Bible Study Method

Date:

Text:

1.Read the text multiple times:

Book

Chapter

Verse

2.Observation:

3.Scrutinization:

4.Application:

The Inductive Study Method (Alternative)

The chart below is an alternative to the Inductive Study Method mentioned above. It is produced by *Into Thy Word Ministries*. You can get more information about this method and more details regarding this ministry at www.intothyword.org. The chart is self-explanatory, so it is reproduced without commentary.

Into Thy Word Ministries Presents: **“THE CHART” for Inductive Bible Study**

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart”

STEP I & II: PRAY & HOW

STEP III: OBSERVE IT

STEP IIIB & IV: QUESTIONS

STEP V & VI: KNOW IT & Apply

<p>Passage: _____ Chapter & Paragraph Titles?</p> <p>PRAY, direct your will, make a commitment; Look at the whole book, then Chapters, & then verses</p> <p>Write the passage down in your own words, or outline it, or write the key precepts down)</p> <p>Key Verses:</p> <p>Key Words:</p>	<p>Observations: What does this passage say?</p> <p>Give the “looks” observe grammar & literary style</p> <p>Biblical Statements:</p> <p>Is there a sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?</p>	<p>Observations: What does this passage mean?</p> <p>Ask questions, be aware of making errors, use “tools,” implications, “ who what where, when, how, & why”</p> <p>What is God telling me?</p> <p>How am I encouraged and strengthened?</p> <p>My Questions:</p>	<p>Application: How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?</p> <p>Make an emotional identification! Look for the answers, dig personally, and let it effect you!</p> <p>How can I be changed so I can learn and grow?</p> <p>What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?</p> <p>When Will I Do It?</p>
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Record other information and prayer items here and on the back (for more Inductive questions see [Inductive Bible Study Channel intothyword.org](http://www.intothyword.org))

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The Inductive Study Method (Alternative)

Step #1: Observation

- A. Identify the context of the book from which the passage comes.
(Who wrote it, to whom it was written, and what was going on in the receiving culture at the time of the writing.)
- B. Identify the immediate context of the passage.
(What is the atmosphere or tone of the author, what problems or issues has been addressed in previous chapters.)
- C. Identify the literary form or genre.
(Is it poetry, narrative, rhetorical argument, etc.)
- D. Identify the structure of the passage.
(What sentences are connected grammatically? Are there any thought progressions? Any repetitious thoughts, words, or phrases?)
- E. Identify any words whose meanings are not clear or for which there could be multiple meanings.
This is important. If the meanings of the word would be different, it would change the key message of a passage.

Step #2: Interpretation

Warnings for interpretation: 1) Avoid allegorizing, stay with the normal meaning unless the context demands it; 2) Avoid simply identifying what it means to you today; 3) Identify any metaphors, figures of speech and parables in historical context.

- A. Identify Timeless Principles
Look for clues that a given statement might be expressing a timeless theological principle.
- B. List different options.
List all the different options the passage could mean.
- C. Select the best option based on all the observations.
Based on all the information gathered, which is the most reasonable interpretation?

Step #3: Correlation

- A. Correlate first to passages by the same author.
- B. Correlate next to passages in the same testament and/or the same dispensation.
- C. Correlate Gospels to the Epistles.
- D. Correlate between the Old Testament and New Testament where a reason indicated by Scripture.
- E. Correlate to your theology.
- F. Make your decision on what principle the passage was meant by God to convey.

Step #4: Application

- A. Convert the timeless truth or theological principle into a personal principle.
- B. Identify what decisions you need to make because of it.

- C. Identify what the expected outcomes (fruit) of those changes would look like.
- D. Share your insights, decisions, and expected outcomes with a friend, mentor, or accountability partner.

The Inductive Bible Study Method (Alternative)

Date:

Text:

1.Observation

Context:

Genre:

Structure of passage:

Key Words:

Possible Meanings of Key Words:

2.Interpretation

Principles:

Optional meanings:

Based on research, best meaning:

3.Correlation

Author:

Same Testament:

Other Testament: (If text requires it)

Main Principle:

4.Application:

The “OICA” Inductive Bible Study Method

“OICA” is an acronym that sums up most Inductive Bible Study Methods. The major difference in this method to other inductive Bible studies is the focus of the observation. While the questions asked (things to be observed) will be discussed below, it is important to recognize the variation of this technique.

The variation of this technique lies in the observation taking a ‘first look’ feel. In other words, each time you read the passage, you should consider it as if you have never read it. The questions do not deal so much with the technical aspects of the passage (structure, genre, etc.) as much as it does the observable plot of the text. This will become clearer as you enter into Step #1.

Step #1: Observation

While reading the passage selected for study, ask the following questions:

1. Who is involved?
2. What are they doing?
3. Where are they? Where are they going?
4. When did this happen, what happened before, what will happen afterwards?
5. Why is this happening, what happened to lead up to this event?
6. Had this been foretold?

The final question is a key in the variation of this method to others. While the question may be inserted into other inductive methods, it is not as clearly a point of focus. The foretelling of events can give great insight into the mind, heart, and spirit of the characters as they abide, reject, or struggle with what is foretold.

Step #2: Interpretation

The recommended mindset here is that of a detective. You are studying and looking for clues to the meaning or purpose of the text. You are seeking answers to questions like: what does the passage mean, what is being said? What message is the author trying to communicate to the original readers? (How would the original readers understand it?) Why is this here? Is there a theological significance for including the text where it is?

A note to me made here is the reminder that: when the plain sense of the Bible makes common sense, seek no other sense. In other words, if the understood meaning is simple, you do not have to try to find a more complicated answer. Remember, the Bible was not written for or to scholars, but common people. So, there is a common sense and practical understanding and interpretation for the text.

Step #3: Correlate

Sometimes this step can actually be done along with Step #2. Correlation is simply bringing into the understanding of the text or relevant texts of Scripture. Since the Bible is a cohesive and whole document, it does not contradict itself nor does it provide error. So, the Bible is always the best interpreter of the text. Certainly, if the Bible says this is what a passage means – this is the only interpretation you will want to take. No more, no less.

A concordance is the tool of choice for this step. If there is a cross-reference system in your Bible, it too can provide great help. Some study bibles (e.g.; Thompson Chain Reference) is also a good tool for this stage of study.

Step #4: Application

Application is what takes place beginning with your study and occurring in day to day life. It is important not rush the Application process by not fully understanding the meaning of the text. To miss the meaning is to miss the application. If you have a faulty interpretation, your application (no matter how noble or godly it may appear) will be faulty. So, refrain from making any applications until you fully understand the text.

Here is a good place to use the SPACEPETS acrostic to come to your application:

1. Sin to confess?
2. Promise to claim?
3. Attitude to change?
4. Command to obey?
5. Example to follow?
6. Prayer to pray?
7. Error to avoid?
8. Truth to believe?
9. Something to praise God for?

The 'OICA' Inductive Bible Study Method

Date:

Text:

1.Observation:

2.Interpretation:

3.Correlation:

4.Application:

The Devotional Method

Rick Warren describes this method of Bible Study as “taking a passage of Bible, large or small, and prayerfully meditating on it until the Holy Spirit shows you a way to apply its truth to your own life...” There are four marks of whether you have successfully engaged the Devotional Method: personal application; practical application; possible application; and provable application.

Step #1: Pray for insight on how to apply the passage

Step #2: Meditate on the verse(s) you have chosen to study

- A. Visualize the scene of the narrative in your mind.
- B. Emphasize words in the passage under study.
- C. Paraphrase the passage under study.
- D. Personalize the passage you are studying.
- E. Use the SPACEPETS acrostic.
 - 10. Sin to confess?
 - 11. Promise to claim?
 - 12. Attitude to change?
 - 13. Command to obey?
 - 14. Example to follow?
 - 15. Prayer to pray?
 - 16. Error to avoid?
 - 17. Truth to believe?
 - 18. Something to praise God for?
- F. Pray the verse or passage back to God

Step #3: Write out an application

This is where the application should be personal; practical; possible; and provable

- A. Personal: “I need to...”
- B. Practical: “I need to lose some weight.”
- C. Possible: “I need to lose 10 pounds of weight.”
- D. Provable: “I need to lose 10 pounds of weight before the end of the month.”

It is important to write out applications that might also have use in the future. Just because the truth or application may not strike where you are now, does not mean it will not be of value in the future. It might also be of help to someone else who is going through a situation where the application is of value.

Step #4: Memorize a key verse from your study

Memorizing a key verse helps to continue to meditate on the passage long after it has been studied. Methods of memorization will be discussed in a later chapter.

Following is an example of a form you can use for the Devotional Method of study:

The Devotional Bible Study Method

Date:

Text:

1. Prayer:

2. Meditation: (Remember SPACEPETS acrostic)

3. Application:

4. Memorization:

The Devotional Bible Study Method (Alternative Method)

This five step method has gained popularity over the last several years. Though there can be some misuse of the final step, as always, a wise and discerning use will provide incredible spiritual benefit and blessing.

Step #1: Read

The beginning of a good devotional study (or any study for that matter) is to read the text or passage. You will want to make sure to read the selected passage in an understandable translation. Try to avoid a paraphrase for this study. A tendency may be to even use a devotional study Bible for a Devotional Bible Study. Unless your desire is for someone to supply the thoughts and insights to you, this should be avoided. Creating your own devotional is much more fruitful and rewarding.

Step #2: Record

The recording process is not difficult. Simply take notes of the text that is being studied. Write down anything of interest or anything that is noteworthy as you read the passage a second time. A pencil in hand and a note pad or the chart which follows (if you do not wish to take notes in your Bible) will provide a wealth of information by the time you are done.

Step #3: Research

Someone once wrote "Bible truth is clear and simple, but at the same time it has deep meaning." The process of this step is to examine the passage and other passages to see if the deeper meaning can be found. Understand that the simple and clear meaning is true but some texts have a deeper more profound meaning to the original readers. Write down any other passages that might help discover what the passages says.

Step #4: Relate

Once you have discovered other passages that are directly related to your text or indirectly by dealing with your theme or topic, it is time to draw these relationships out into the open. For each related verse from your research, write down the details pertinent to your text or passage. This will give you a more detailed understanding for which you will meditate.

Step #5: Reflect

This is the meditation or devotional part of the study. Here through prayerful meditation, you take the knowledge you have gained and allow it to open the eyes of your heart and mind. Soak up the knowledge in such a way that it has meaning in your walk with God. This takes the word from the page and imprints it in your mind and heart so that you might be obedient in following its instruction.

The Devotional Bible Study Method (Alternative)

Date:

Text:

1.Read:

2.Record:

3.Research:

4.Relate:

5. Reflect:

The Chapter Summary Method

This method of study varies from the Chapter Analysis Method and Book Summary Method in several ways. These methods will be discussed in a later chapter and their differences will be clear. Studying by the Chapter Summary Method requires an understanding that the Bible did not originally have chapters and verses. The breakdown of chapters and verses was set in the 13th century. Therefore, the breaks may or may not coincide with the natural break in thought of the original author. Even the English translations were given some different chapter and verse breaks than you find in the Hebrew and Greek translations. (Most noticeably you see this in the book of Daniel.) Some discernment and common sense should be exercised when using this method or any method that is heavily dependent on the chapter or verse breaks.

Noting the drawbacks may turn you off to this method. It is, however, quite an easy method to learn and to use. It can be used for all 1,189 chapters of the Bible and, if done well, can serve as a great resource for further study. It does not require outside resources which makes it even more user friendly. It involves 10 steps which consist of the following procedure (alliterated by Rick Warren as: Caption; Contents; Chief People; Choice Verse; Crucial Word(s); Challenges; Cross-References; Christ Seen; Central Lessons; and Conclusion):

Step #1: Title the Chapter

Give the chapter a short descriptive title. The more memorable the title, the better to recall in your future study. Admittedly, this can only be done after you have read the chapter several times. The more you read the chapter the easier to create a title. (Alternate methods use this step at the end of the study.)

Step #2: Summarize the chapter

Write a brief summary, outline or description of the chapter. Be sure to use your own words when writing the summary. This is not merely a recitation of the passage, but an exercise to show understanding or comprehension of the text.

Step #3: List Characters

Make a list of the primary or key figures in the text. Questions such as: "Who are the main players in the text? Who is this text about? Are there significant people mentioned?" are appropriate to consider when making the list.

Step #4: Key Verse

Every chapter generally has a verse around which the chapter revolves. It is the verse that best seems to sum up the chapter. It is the theme around which a narrative revolves or the lesson to be learned. It may be the crux of an argument presents by the writer. It is usually a verse upon which you would write an application to life.

Step #5: Key Word(s)

This is similar to other methods in which key words are discovered. Look for words that are repeated or emphasized in special ways throughout the selected text. It will likely be the word that is the topic of the text or upon which the text is based. If you could summarize what the chapter is about with a key word or a few key words, what would they be?

Step #6: Notations for further study

Make a note of words, phrases, ideas or concepts that you do not readily understand. These may be based on context, word choice, or complexity of an argument. Anything that you do not grasp after reading a few times should be noted here. This can serve as a basis for further study.

Step #7: Cross-References

Most Bible translations include cross-references to help clarify or elaborate on a point. Certain texts are closely related to other texts in different chapters, books, or testament. Look up the cross-references in the text. This allows Scripture to help interpret Scripture.

Step #8: Christological revelation

The Word of God is God's revelation of Himself and His work through Jesus Christ. The Law and the Prophets all point toward the Messiah. The New Testament reveals that Messiah and the impact He has on God's creation. Make note of what the text reveals about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Step #9: Core Truth(s)

Write down principles, insights, lessons, etc. that you learn from this chapter. Ask yourself what is God trying to say to His people through this passage? What is the central thought or theme of the text.

Step #10: Application

Based on what you have learned and written, what does this mean for how you live life today? This is the point where the rubber meets the road. In other words, if there is a way to live these insights out on a daily basis, how could it be done?

The Chapter Summary Bible Study Method

Date:

Text:

1. Chapter Title

2. Chapter Summary

3. List Character(s)

4. Key Verse(s)

5. Key Word(s)

6. Notes for Further Study:

7. Cross-references

8. Christological Revelation(s)

9. Core Truth(s)

10. Application

The Thematic Method

The purpose of this method of Bible Study is to investigate a specific theme found in Scripture. This particular study necessitates the use of additional reference tools in many cases. This serves as a scaled down Topical Bible Study Method. It takes a broader topic and narrows the scope of interest concerning that topic. This may be the preferred method if a topic is too broad or referenced extensively in Scripture. This method limits the number of verses examined and does not impose as many questions on the text.

Step#1: Theme Selection

Select theme for study. It is recommended that for the first few times you use this method that the theme is short and simple. It generally takes time to develop a mindset that is disciplined enough to stay within the scope of your study. Therefore, limiting the text selection initially will help develop proficiency in the simpler themes. Themes and their questions may become more developed as your familiarity with this method and suggested resources increases.

Step#2: List of Verses to Study

This is a simple list of all the verses referring to your selected theme. You should be mindful to include synonyms and similar words. Select the most important verses to consider for study. Depending on the number of verses and the scope of the theme, this may vary from a few verses to an extensive list. Do your best to limit the passages select to what you believe you need to understand the theme. If you want to know all there is, you should use the Topical Bible Study Method.

There are a number of resources you can use for this section of your study. It is recommended that you use an exhaustive concordance, such as Strong's. A study Bible or Topical Bible would also be good tools to use. Try to stick with tools that do not already have commentary regarding the verses. At this point, you are simply looking for a list to work from. You will develop your own comments regarding the theme.

Step #3: Questions to Ask

Formulate questions that you would like to know about your theme. These may seem cursory at first. As you develop your own personal style, you will find the questions that speak to your themes that satisfy your interest. It is important to remember that there may only be one question necessary to ask for a selected theme. This means you must be careful with each study not to force questions on the text or theme that do not bear value to the truth of the theme.

Step #4: Ask Questions of Each Scripture Reference

Read through your reference verses asking your set of questions to each verse. Again, as in the formulation of the questions, not every verse selected for your thematic study will answer every question. So, it is okay to have some verses without answers to some questions. In fact, most verse will not be able to answer every question you have posed to the theme. If you are struggling with answering the questions, consider rephrasing the question or changing it completely. It may be necessary to start Step #3 over in some instances.

Step #5: Conclusions

In simplest terms, summarize the answers to your questions. Based on what you answered, how could you best sum up what you know about the selected theme. This should simply restate or paraphrase the facts of your study. These are not statements of personal reflection. This is focused on understanding the theme in Scripture.

Step #6: Application

Write out the personal applications that can be drawn from your conclusions. If the application requires it, be sure to make it measurable. Make it something that you can show progress or achievement.

The Topical Bible Study Method

R. A. Torrey was arguably one of the foremost proponents of topical Bible study. He offers for directives when conducting this type of study: 1) Be systematic; 2) Be thorough; 3) Be exact; 4) Arrange your results in an orderly way and write them down. Certainly this is good counsel for any type of Bible Study. It is essential to the Topical Bible Study Method.

The Topical Bible Study Method is designed to give the student of God's Word a comprehensive knowledge of a particular subject or topic. It consists of taking a topic and examining the topic throughout Scripture by chapter, book, testament or the entirety of Scripture. By examining a topic, especially as it is related through both testaments, a person has a better understanding of how the topic is developed in a personal way. Personal application is discovered through the process of seeing the development of the topic in the selected scope of study.

The Topical Method also can make extensive use of a topical Bible or cross-referencing system. Nave's Topical Bible or the Thompson Chain Reference Bible might supply the easiest tools by which this method can be accomplished. However, a complete dependency on these tools should not prevent the student from the discipline of relying on his/her own skills for this method. These tools should be used more extensively as you begin using this method. They should be used less and less as you develop your own skill set in this study.

The Topical Bible Study Method, like several other methods, has several variations. Some of these will be shown later. Overall, most of the topical methods have similar steps or processes though which you must go. The most basic method is as follows:

Step #1: Select Topic of Study

Many things can dictate or give rise to the selection of a topic for study. The best is always to select a topic the Holy Spirit leads you to consider. There are several ways in which this may take place but only through prayer can you be more certain the topic is proper. It might be placed on your heart by a life situation taking place or is about to take place. This can be true for your life or someone else with whom you are acquainted and for whom you have been praying.

The best caution to give is not to select a topic because you are trying to 'prove' something to someone else. The topic will bare itself out on its own. This warning goes not only for the selection of a topic, but also for the direction the study takes. Do NOT dictate to the text what you wish for it to say, but let the text dictate to you the meaning God intended.

Step #2: List Words

Compile a list of words related to the topic you wish to study. These might be the actual word, variations, or synonyms of the word. In some instances, it might be wise to consider antonyms of the words.

Step #3: List Scripture References

This step is where a concordance like Strong's or Nave's Topical Bible is extremely valuable. Certainly a concordance in the back of your Bible can help. Usually, however, these concordances are abridged and only include the more popular references. A good topical study will necessitate a more extensive or complete referencing.

Step #4: Study each reference

List each reference you are studying for the given topic. Note any observations or insights you receive regarding the topic in this text. Careful consideration should be given to the context of the topic to insure a proper understanding of it.

This step in the process gives you the option of asking as much as you can or want of the topic in the text. If you have any trouble getting started or knowing where to go in asking your questions, remember who, what, where, when, why, and how questions.

It is important to define all key words that relate to your topic. It is also important to know which definition of those key words is applicable for the proper understanding in the context.

Step #5: Group related references

As you study the references, you most likely will discover certain themes, ideas, situations that run through the topic. You may discover it is necessary to consider certain verses in relation to others. This helps this step come together.

Step #5 is to take those verses that have a natural affinity to be joined together to be cross-referenced and grouped together. You will want to put those references that deal with the same area of your topic together. Categorize them into major themes.

Step #6: Organize into an outline

By grouping the references and notes into major themes, you now have the basis for a general outline of your topic. Based on the major categories in which you have grouped your references and notes, make a general outline of your topic by putting the major themes into a logical pattern or progression. (This is extremely valuable as a study habit. You are more apt to remember and even share your topic of study with others.)

Step #7: Summarize and Apply your study

Condense your findings into a single and brief paragraph.

Once you have written a brief paragraph, write out a practical application of these things discovered by your study.

The Topical Bible Study Method

Date: _____ | 1.Topic: _____

2.Related Words:

3.List References:

4.Reference	Cross-Reference(s)	Observations/Insights

5.Major Themes of Topic:

6.General Outline:

7.Summary Paragraph:

Application:

The Condensed Topical Bible Study Method

This method is a condensed version of a Topical Bible Study. It has its pros and cons. It is a good study method if you do not have a large number of tools or time. It can be done fairly quickly and easily. It can give a brief overview of a topic. It can provide summary of a topic at a glance.

The negative aspects of this study can be overcome as long as they are understood. This method is not for an in-depth analysis of a topic. It does not provide exhaustive study of a topic as other studies allow. It also may only give certain aspects or perspectives of a topic or theme. This can some times cause a shallow, misconstrued or imbalanced view of your selected topic. Knowing these limitations going into the study method or understanding them when reviewing your study will prevent such problems.

Step #1: Select a theme

See previous chapter on theme or topic selection.

Step #2: Write out references

Make a list of references from a concordance, topical Bible or other sources regarding your topic.

Step #3: Write out the Biblical truth of the references

The next step is to read each reference you have listed and write out the biblical truth that is revealed regarding your topic or theme.

Step #4: Write your application(s)

For each verse studied, make an application for your topic. These may be simple or complex, but should be based on the context of the text(s).

The Word Bible Study Method

The Word Bible Study Method is a very valuable method of study when done properly. The richness this study adds to any reading or study of the Word of God can never truly be calculated. Rick Warren describes his version of this study as “a microscopic look at the origin, definition, occurrences, and uses of a particular word, especially as it relates to the context of a passage of Scripture.” The method enhances the understanding of not just the English interpretation but the Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek which underlies it. This study can help someone begin to grasp the original languages and see the beauty and richness of the original texts. It also helps a student of the Word more readily understand the interpretive decisions scholar make in interpretation.

This study should always be done with great care. The scope of interpretation is some times broad. This will be discussed in the steps below.

Step #1: Select the Word to be studied.

Decide from the particular text you are studying what word you would like to examine in more depth. This may be a word whose meaning is vague or has multiple meanings or depths of meaning. Words studied should have an impact on the meaning of the broader text.

Step #2: Find its English definition.

Find and write out the English definition of the word selected. You should include all meanings that relate to the meaning of the word in the text. (e.g., if the word is ‘run,’ of the over 20 definitions listed under this word, it would probably not enhance your study to include those referring to computer programs or women’s pantyhose or stockings!) Also include any synonyms or antonyms that might be listed in the definition.

Step #3: Compare translations.

Examine the verse in other translations of Scripture. List the alternative words used by other translations. As you compare the words consider why this particular word or variation of the word was selected.

Note: This should not be done with a paraphrase version of the Bible. Paraphrases are normally variations of the English translations as opposed to interpretations of the original texts. While they have their purposes, paraphrases or novelizations of the Bible are not a good base upon which to do this or any other in depth study.

Step #4: Write down the definition of the Original Word.

Look up the word in a Bible dictionary or Hebrew/Aramaic/Greek lexicon. You may also use a word study book or in some instances, an exhaustive concordance. If you are interested in the original word, you will want to write out the word and its pronunciation.

Step #5: Check the word occurrences in the Bible.

Using a concordance (preferably an exhaustive concordance) make note of how many times the word is used in the Bible. Consider what books (or chapters) use the word most

frequently. The first usage of the word in the Bible and in the chapter should be noted, as well.

Step #6: Find the root meaning of the original word.

This step will require some research from specific resources. A Bible dictionary or encyclopedia, a word study set, theological dictionary or lexicon of the original language will have the best description. For those who are interested in a much deeper analysis may want to examine certain biblical or scholarly journals.

Step #7: Discover the word's usage in the Bible.

This may seem like a duplication of Step #5. This takes the two previous steps to another level. This step pushes the study to the level of examining how the word was used or understood during the time the text was written. This is important as you consider the changes of meaning in words over time. Certain English words have made transformations in the last 40 years. So, imagine the change of words over a few millennia. This step is greatly simplified by theological dictionaries and certain lexicons.

Step #8: Write out an application.

Based upon the original understanding of the word, what principle or application can be made to a current setting. Write out that application in as specific terms as possible.

The Book Background Bible Study Method

Step #1: Choose the Subject or Book of the Bible

This can be the most difficult or the easiest step in the entire process. It is easy if you already have a person, subject, place or book in mind that you wish to study. If you do not, it can be difficult narrowing this study to one subject.

One of the major considerations when selecting the subject is the tools available for your study. There are so many tools you may get bogged down in the process. The possible tools are: journals and periodicals (literally hundreds from which to choose), websites (ditto), concordances, dictionaries, commentaries, books on the subject, computer programs, sermon notes, podcasts, etc. Please see the chapter on recommended tools. Your decision can be based on access or lack of access to any number of these tools.

Step #2: List reference tools

List the tools that will be used during the process of this study. The chart has categories of tools so that all you must do is list the name of the work in the appropriate area. By doing this it helps in a number of ways: 1) a record of tools helps organize your study by listing only the tools used; 2) should access to another tool come about, you know at a glance if the tool was used for this particular study (This can help slowly introduce you to this method. You can limit the number or the types of tools used and as you become more familiar with this method or the tools add them into this study; 3) you can see if you are using too many types of tools in one area. This encourages a broader more balanced use of tools.

Step #3: Study the geography

Study the geography of Palestine and the Near East. Note cities, countries, mountain ranges, deserts, elevation, rainfall, vegetation, river, lakes, seas, and major roads.

Understanding the geography of the Near East will help you to answer the question of how what you are studying is affected by the geography.

This step is to list the geographical insights you gain regarding the subject or book you are studying.

Step #4: Note the history

Consider the history surrounding what you are studying. What events preceded what you are studying? What is the timeline of what you are studying? What historical impact does this have later? Knowing the historical context and chronology of the biblical story will give greater insight into what you are studying.

List all the historically relevant facts regarding your text.

Step #5: Discover the culture

This step lays the groundwork for understanding what affect the message has on the people and the people on the message. In an agrarian culture, an agricultural parable has greater impact and unique perspective. For a cultural understanding, consider: clothing type; professions and trades; art; music; literature; philosophy; religions and their rites;

manners and customs; family life and roles; architecture; belief systems. In other words, consider the way people lived to every extent possible.

List the insight you gained considering how people lived at the time of the text.

Step #6: Look at the political environment

Because of the vast influence of the political climate in biblical and Near East history, special study of the political environment is needed. Knowing the history of the kings or rulers of the various countries in Scripture helps understand better why people responded (or did not respond) in the manner they did.

Countries such as the Roman Empire, Greece, Israel, Persia, Philistia, Egypt, the Babylonian Empire are marked by their rise, declines, victories and defeats. The succession or end of rulers has a radical impact on biblical history.

Write a brief summary of the political environment for the time you are studying. This may require a short relating of any political event that sets the stage for the time period (e.g.; the Book of Judges.)

Step #7: Summarize your research

This step is the compilation and summary of the previous steps. You will want to write about the things that give greater insight into the events or influence of events in your subject of study. Pay particular attention to noting the things that directly impacted the characters or events of the subject.

Step #8: Write out personal application (optional)

This is an optional step for this method. The aim of all study should be to walk away from the study of the text with something you can change or do in response to what God has revealed. This may be more difficult to come up with for this type of study because of the various depth levels at which this study may be accomplished.

Making this step optional is not license to not do it, but gives consideration to the fact this step may or may not be properly done if the study is very basic.

The Book Background Bible Study Method

Date:	Text:
1.Subject:	
2.Tools: Bible Translation:	Dictionary:
Encyclopedia:	Handbook:
Commentary:	
Journal/Periodical:	
Book:	
3.Geography:	
4.History:	
5.Culture:	
6.Politics:	
7.Summary:	
8.Application:	

The Book Survey Bible Study Method

Step #1: Read the Book

There are some simple rules to follow for this particular read through of the book you have selected. First, read through the book completely in one effort. With the exception of a few books, most books of the Bible can be read through in their entirety without consuming too much effort. Longer books can be divided into two readings. The idea is to get a general picture of the book. The best way to do that is to read it through completely without interruption.

Second, do not pay attention to modern divisions and notations. You should remember the Bible did not originally have chapters and verses or headings. These came many centuries later. So, read focusing on the text and the general flow of information.

If the book is short enough, you might attempt to read it in a variety of translations. This will give a broader perspective and you may pick up on things in the text that translators of one version did not emphasize or word in such a way to grab your attention.

Step #2: Note what you read

Read through the book again, but do it with a pen or pencil in hand. Write notes concerning what you are reading this time through the text. Here is a list of some of the important things to examine in the text: Category (Law/Prophets/Epistle/etc.); impressions; key words/phrases; key verse; genre; tone or mood; major theme; major character(s); and major section(s) of the book.

Step #3: Do a background study

This step can be the complete Bible Background Bible Study in a previous chapter or a modified, scaled-down version. Refer to Chapter XX for instructions.

If you opt for a quicker, scaled down version, be certain to get the following details at the minimum: Author of the book (who did God inspire to write it); date of the book (when); from where did the author write it (where); to whom the author write the book; and why was the book written (why), what is the author writing about (what).

Naturally, any additional information regarding history, geography, culture, etc is beneficial. Detailing any connection between this book and others is also important.

Step #4: Chart the books content

Chart the content of the book in a similar fashion as related in the Book Synthesis Bible Study Method in Chapter XX. The methodology related in that chapter applies here. Again, a modified or scaled down version can work.

A smaller and condensed generic chart is included in the sample chart that follows. You may divide each line into the required number of division.

Step #5: Make a tentative outline of the book

Based on the major and minor divisions of the text as you completed them in Step #4, make a simple (and tentative outline). This should be a working outline. Using pencil for this step is encouraged if you have been using a pen prior to this. Using a pencil will allow you to make adjustments to the outline without making a complete mess of your chart.

This should be simple outline. You do not need a point, sub-point, or sub-sub-point for every verse. However, every verse should be included in the outline. For example, a transition verse can be grouped with verses before or after it if the context allows and it does not need a point of its own.

Step #6: Write out a personal application

Write out a brief application based on what you have discovered surveying the book. It should be concise and to the point. It should not be more than 2-3 sentences at most. Writing 1 sentence will generally show you have caught the major theme of the book.

The Book Survey Bible Study Method		
Date:	Text:	
1. Read the book – translation(s) used:		
2 Notes – Category:	Genre:	Tone:
Key Word/phrase:		Key Verse:
Major Theme:	Major Characters:	
Impressions:		
Major Sections:		
3. Background Study – Author:	Date:	
From Where:	To Whom:	
Why:		
What the author writing about:		
4. Book Contents:		
Major Divisions		
Title Divisions		
Text for Divisions		
Division content		
Division Summary		
5. Tentative Outline:		
6. Application:		

The Chapter Analysis Bible Study Method

Step #1: Write chapter summary

After selecting and reading the chapter (preferably multiple times in varied translations), you should summarize the chapter. There are a few methods of summarization you may use. If you choose to do more than one method to summarize the chapter, you should do another Chapter Analysis.

Method one is to simply paraphrase the chapter. This is taking the chapter and its content and rewording it with your own style. A comparison with a paraphrase version of the Bible can help you with this.

Another method is a general or simple outline. As mentioned in previous study methods, you do not have to have a point for every verse, but every verse should be included in a point. You do not want this to be a complicated outline. There will be an Outline Bible Study Method in a later chapter which you will probably wish to use for a detailed outline.

A third method is to write a condensed version. This is basically rewriting the text without modifying clauses and phrases. You use the subjects, verbs, and objects in a simple sentence format.

A fourth method is to give a brief of the chapter. Unlike the paraphrase or condensed version, this is a basic retelling of the chapter in 3-4 sentences. It is a brief paragraph in your own words detailing the chapter. As a paraphrase takes phrases or sentences and rewords them, this method takes the general idea of a sentence, verse or paragraph and sums it up in a single sentence or phrase. The key to this method is to put it in terms you are comfortable with as you understand the text.

Step #2: List observations

In a verse by verse fashion, write your observations concerning the text. Consider what the verse says. This step simply asks the question, "What does this say?"

Be sure to note any difficult words, clauses, verses, etc. that you encounter. This will help you begin asking the necessary questions in the next step.

Step #3: Ask interpretation questions

This begins the more in-depth analysis of the text. This is when the *Why* and *What* questions become very important. This stage of the process forces thinking in regards to the text. This is where the difficult things are also studied. Questions, like: "What does this mean?" or "Why is this important?" come into play.

As you ask these questions of the text, always remember to consider the context when answering. In fact, this step is more about answering the question of meaning than anything else and context is critical to meaning.

Step #4: Cross-reference with other scriptures

After discovering meaning to the verse, it is important to determine if there is truly a biblical foundation for the meaning. The best method or means for interpreting Scripture is Scripture. Since the Word of God is without error or contradiction, then if you have a proper interpretation in Step #3, you should find verification somewhere else in the Bible.

Step #4 is simply listing the references that validate your interpretation. You may have to do some leg work with Strong's Concordance or another resource tool. But finding a few Scriptures to validate your work is always rewarding. If it does not validate your work, a proper understanding is always worth the work.

Step #5: List possible applications

Based on your interpretation and validation of the interpretation, how does the text apply to real life? List some of the possible ways this Scripture might be applied to real life today.

Step #6: Write concluding thoughts

This step is not quite what you may think. Go back and review what you have done in the previous steps. Write down any additional thoughts you may have regarding the chapter. List any words, topics, themes, etc that may be of interest for additional study. Write any thoughts that come to mind as you review your work.

Step #7: Title the Chapter

Based on your analysis of the chapter, give it an appropriate title. Make it your own. Refrain from using paragraph headings from your Bible or titles given by commentators or others (e.g. 1 Corinthians 13 "The Love Chapter").

Step #8: Write primary application

Now that you have completed your analysis and know several things that can be taken from the chapter, write a single application. Be concise and realistic in how you apply the chapter.

The Chapter Analysis Bible Study Method

Date:

Text:

7.Title:

1.Chapter Summary:

2.Observations

3.Interpretation

4.Cross-References

5.Applications

6.Concluding thoughts:

8.Application:

The Character Quality Bible Study Method

The Character Quality Bible Study Method is an important facet of Bible Study for the Christian. As part of the process of becoming more like Christ, the Christian is often challenged to take on the character and nature of Christ. To examine the character of men and women of God is a great method in knowing what it means to be like Christ. The object is not to change behavior or to “act” like Christ, but to be transformed into His image. Therefore, application of this study method should involve changing the heart and mind, so that our actions are modified.

Step #1: Name the quality

Naturally, the first step is to select the character quality you wish to study. This can come from a predetermined list, something noted from a previous study, or a certain quality recognized as present or lacking in yourself or others.

Write the character quality and the biblical character you are studying.

Step #2: Note the opposite quality

What is the antonym of this particular quality? Be careful with this. Some times what we believe are opposites are not really the opposite. For example, what is the opposite of compassion? Is it apathy or is it cold-heartedness? Is it something else entirely? Special consideration should be given for this step. Some times knowing the opposite character quality helps reveal something about the quality itself.

Step #3: Complete a Word Study

Unlike a full Word Study or Topical Study, this should be a simple and brief study. (Naturally, you can do a full Word or Topical Study, if you desire to do so.) This will give a basic understanding and provide some direction as you study the character. This will also help narrow or limit the scope of your study to the character quality under consideration.

Step #4: List cross-references

Scriptural references will help give a better understanding of what the Bible says about the character trait. Not all of our ideas regarding character traits are biblical. So, let Scripture give its own meaning.

Step #5: Complete a brief biographical study

Again, an extensive Biographical Study is not necessary here. You want to stay focused on the events that helped shape the character trait in the person studied. Detail briefly the circumstances, events, or beliefs that characterize or show how the trait is developed.

Step #6: Memorize a source verse

Select (preferably) one verse that gives insight and direction in regards to this particular trait. Write it out. Commit it to memory. A Scripture Memory Method is included in a later chapter. Refer to Chapter XX for a simple yet effective method of Scripture Memorization.

Write out the memory verse including its reference.

Step #7: Consider a situation or relationship in which to apply this trait

Prayerfully consider a situation or relationship in which you find yourself that the specific character trait is needed. Do not write out the plan or application yet, but determine the place to apply this trait in a godly fashion.

You do not necessarily have to write out a great deal of detail for this. Simply write the name of the relationship or situation.

Step #8: Plan a specific project

Now that you have a target or goal in mind, develop a plan to display this trait. Be sure to not overwhelm yourself with too intricate of details. Simple plan a few short steps to accomplish the plan.

Step #9: Write a personal application

As part of the fulfillment of this character trait, it is important to visualize what it will look like on you! Write a personal application about what change will take place or must take place as this trait is realized in and through you.

The Verse-by-Verse Bible Study Method

The Verse-by-verse Bible Study Method can be one of the most fruitful and frustrating methods of study. My personal preference is a combination of the verse-by-verse and a modified version of the parallel study. My personal preference for commentaries is verse-by-verse. There are several pros and cons for this study. The cons are more warnings than detractions from the study method. Please consider them carefully as you proceed.

The reward of this study is gleaning as much from a verse as is possible at the time of the study. To dissect a verse completely and examine it fully is very rewarding and fruitful. You will most likely never regret using this method of study. You will discover things you never saw before when you focus verse by verse on a text.

Be careful however as you proceed. You will want to make certain that this not simply a 'verse' study but a 'verse-by-verse' study. To focus on one verse without regard to the verses around it or tied to it is to rob it of its context. If context is not considered it is too easy to manipulate the meaning of the verse to our own ideology.

Also, this particular method uses no other tools but Scripture. This is not a bad thing, but should be done carefully by those who have not spent a great deal of time studying scripture (and even by some who have spent a great deal of time studying Scripture!) This should be approached prayerfully, reverently, and methodically. Like all other Bible Study methods, there is no reason to rush through this study.

Step #1: Write Verse

Write the verse verbatim from a reliable translation.

Step #2: Write Personal Paraphrase

Using your own words, paraphrase the verse. The key in paraphrasing is to write how you would have said it or written it if you were the author writing to you.

Step #3: List questions, answers, and observations

After examining the verse, write any questions you have regarding the text. If you can answer the question, do so. Note anything that you observe about the text. These questions, answers, and observations can be about words, phrases people, doctrines, themes, topics, etc that you come across on the text.

Step #4: Find cross-references for the verse

List any verse that relate to the verse you are studying. These verses may expand on an idea in the text, give further details to the situation, or simply support the main thrust of the verse. You can write the word(s) you are cross-referencing and its references beneath it. This list can serve as the basis for topical or word studies at a later date.

Step #5: Record insights from the verse

As you have studied the verse, write down thoughts about what the verse is saying. Particularly note new discoveries in the text. Some insights may require examining several verses, as opposed to the one particular verse under consideration. This is why it is important to consider the context of the verse.

Step #6: Write a brief application for the verse

Based on all the information gathered and written down, write a brief and personal application of this verse. It should be specific to you. However, the biblical principle upon which it is based should be applicable to all believers.

The Application Method

Step #1: Read – open the Bible and read the passage; get a general idea of the story

Step #2: Understand – know what all the words mean; learn the facts; see the concepts

Step #3: Comprehend – find the biblical principles, the timeless truths that God wants to communicate

Step #4: Apply – see myself in the story and how the biblical principles relate to my life; make the timeless truths timely; see what God wants me to do

Step #5: Do – design an action plan; obey God and put into practice *now* what he has taught me in His word

The Application Method

Passage:

Date:

Understand:

Words:

Facts:

Concepts:

Biblical Principles:

Application:

Action Plan:

The African Bible Study Method

This Bible Study Method was introduced by the African delegation to the Lambeth Conference of the Anglican Church. It is known by both names: “Lambeth” and “African.” It is designed for a group study.

- Step #1: One person reads the passage slowly.
- Step #2: Each person identifies the word or phrase that catches their attention. (Best to limit to 1 minute or less.)
- Step #3: Each shares the word or phrase around the group.
(No discussion)
- Step #4: Another person reads the passage slowly (from a different translation, if possible.)
- Step #5: Each person identifies where this passage touches their lives today.
- Step #6: Each person shares this response.
- Step #7: Passage is read a third time (again, in a different translation, if possible.)
- Step #8: Each person names or writes “From what I have heard or shared, what do I believe God wants me to do or to be? Is God inviting me to change in any way?”
- Step #9: Each person shares their response. (No discussion)

Traditionally this group study ends with each person praying for the one sitting to their right.

This study can be done individually by following the steps above and reading the passage in different translations.

The Book Study Method

- Step #1: Mark and underline important passages in the book.
- Step #2: Outline the book.
- Step #3: List the names of principle characters; tell who they are and their significance.
- Step #4: Select from each chapter key verses to memorize.
- Step #5: List teachings from which to learn.
- Step #6: Consider the characteristics revealed of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

The Book Study Method

Book:

Date:

Outline:

Principle Characters:

Key Verses for Memorization:

Selected Teachings:

Revealed characteristics of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit:

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