

## 12 Methods for Bible Study - Handout

Method One - The Devotional Method of Bible Study  
Method Two - The Chapter Summary Method of Bible Study  
Method Three - The Character Quality Method of Bible Study  
Method Four - The Thematic Method of Bible Study  
Method Five - The Biographical Method of Bible Study  
Method Six - The Topical Method of Bible Study  
Method Seven - The Word Study Method of Bible Study  
Method Eight - The Book Background Method of Bible Study  
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Method Eleven - The Book Synthesis Method of Bible Study  
Method Twelve - The Verse by Verse Method of Bible Study

### **Method 1 - The Devotional Method of Bible Study**

In the Devotional Method of Bible study a passage of the Bible, large or small, is read and meditated on until the Holy Spirit guides you to an application of the passage into your life in a way that is personal, practical, possible, and measurable. It is the simplest and least costly in terms of time of all the Bible study methods in this outline. The goal is to take the Bible seriously and to do what it says to do.

#### 1.1 - Tools

##### 1.1.1 - Bible

#### 1.2 - Hints

1.2.1 - This method can be used as part of your quiet times with God

1.2.2 - Requires little investment of time and can be done as you travel or wait for life to catch up to you

#### 1.3 - Steps

Step 1 - Pray for understanding and guidance as you apply the passage into your life.

Step 2 - Meditate on the verse(s) you have chosen for your study

Step 3 - Write out the application you will make from the passage into your life.

Step 4 - Memorize a verse from the passage that summarizes what you have learned.

Step 5 - Assess your application in the weeks that follow for success or failure.

### **Method 2 - The Chapter Summary Method of Bible**

In the Chapter Summary Method of Bible study we attempt to gain an understanding of the contents of any given chapter of the Bible by reading it in its entirety several times (at least five), asking a series of questions relating to the content of the chapter, and ending with a general summary of the chapter. Note that the chapter divisions currently in our Bible are not in the original manuscripts but were added later (about 1,200 AD) by Bishop Stephen Langton in order to make the various parts of the Bible more accessible to the general reader. Although usually well done, at some points the chapter divisions interrupt the natural flow of the text. There are 1,189 chapters in the Protestant Bible so there is a wealth of material to study.

#### 2.1 - Tools

##### 2.1.1 - Bible

##### 2.1.2 - Cross references

#### 2.2 - Hints

2.2.1 - Read the chapter from a Bible without notes in order to encourage fresh insights rather than reaffirming those already found.

2.2.2 - Read the chapter without stopping in order to get a feel for the flow of the chapter.

2.2.3 - Read the chapter in various translations noting important differences discovered.

2.2.4 - Read the chapter aloud but quietly to yourself as an aid to concentration.

#### 2.3 - Steps

Step 1 - Caption - Give the chapter a short but descriptive heading. Headings that are short and/or

convey a vivid image of the chapter are especially beneficial.

Step 2 - Contents - Make a list or outline of the major point of the chapter.

Step 3 - Chief People - Make a list of the major individuals in the chapter, some reference to the surrounding chapters may be necessary.

Step 4 - Central Verse - Select a verse that is significant in the chapter or which you find is important during this study.

Step 5 - Crucial Word(s) - Make a list of the key word(s) of the chapter.

Step 6 - Challenges - List any difficulties you may have with the chapter. What don't you understand? Are there areas of your life that need changing but cannot be changed?

Step 7 - Cross References - Use your cross references to find other passages in the Bible that help you to understand this chapter.

- You should evaluate cross references in steps:

2.3.7.1 - Internal Cross References - Look for cross references within the book you are studying.

2.3.7.2 - External Cross References - Look for cross references within other books by the same author.

2.3.7.3 - Compare with cross references within the same Testament (Old or New)

2.3.7.4 - Compare with cross references within the Bible as a whole.

- There are also several types of cross reference, three are listed below (see your cross reference resource for more details):

2.3.7.5 - Pure Cross Reference – Says almost exactly the same thing as the verse you are studying.

2.3.7.6 - Illustrative Cross Reference – Illustrates what the verse you are studying is saying.

2.3.7.7 - Contrasting Cross Reference – Says the opposite of what the verse you are studying is saying.

Step 8 - Christ Revealed - As the Bible as a whole is the revelation of Jesus Christ (the Old Testament

points to Him, the Gospels give the details of His earthly life, and Acts and the Letters show His activity in the world) it should be possible to find His presence in all areas of the Bible. Find out what you can discover of the nature, ministry, or person of Christ from this chapter.

Step 9 - Central Lesson(s) - List the major lessons taught in the chapter that you have learned at this time (next time you study this chapter entirely new insights may become evident).

Step 10 - Conclusion - Here you will begin to apply what you have learned. Two questions that are important to ask during any application of the Bible are:

2.3.10.1 - How do these insights apply to me personally?

2.3.10.2 - What am I going to do about them?

### **Method Three - The Character Quality Method of Bible**

In the Character Quality Method of Bible study we begin to use tools other than the Bible itself in order to discover what the Bible has to say of specific personal characteristics. A major emphasis of this study method is on personal application of the lessons you will be learning into your own life. The main goal of this method of Bible study is to learn God's view of personal characteristics.

#### 3.1 - Tools

3.1.1 - Bible

3.1.2 - English dictionary

3.1.3 - Bible dictionary

3.1.4 - Lexicon

3.1.5 - Cross references

3.1.6 - Exhaustive concordance

3.1.7 - Topical Bible or topical listings

#### 3.2 - Hints

3.2.1 - Select a character quality that is of interest to you or that you wish to develop or have victory over in your own life.

3.2.2 - This study may take some time, be sure to allocate enough time to complete the study adequately.

### 3.3 - Method

Step 1 - Select the character quality you wish to study, look it up in an English dictionary and make note of the definition

Step 2 - Name and define the opposite quality, again using the English dictionary

Step 3 - Do a simple word study of the character quality first using the Bible dictionary to define the quality from a Biblical perspective. Use the concordance to find other verses containing the same word(s), remembering that often many different English words can be used to translate the same Hebrew or Greek original and vice versa. Then use the lexicon determine the usage by the author(s) of the word(s) defining this quality.

Step 4 - Find some cross references using either the verse listings within your Bible or a dedicated book of cross references such as "The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge." The concordance and topical Bible (such as "Nave's Topical Bible") will also be of benefit in this step.

Step 5 - Do a brief biographical study of at least one person who exhibits the character quality you are studying. Describe in brief the quality and the Bible references to it in this person's life. Use the following questions to help you along:

3.3.5.1 - What shows this quality in this person's life?

3.3.5.2 - How did this quality affect this person's life?

3.3.5.3 - Did this quality help or hinder this person's growth to maturity, spiritual or otherwise? How?

3.3.5.4 - What are the results of this quality in this person's life?

Step 6 - Memorize at least one verse from your study that seems to stand out and which will help you as you apply the lessons you are learning into your own life.

Step 7 - Select a situation or a relationship in which to work on this character quality. Remember that we wish to minimize the negative qualities in our lives and emphasize or enhance the positive qualities. Jonah's stubbornness helps us to see our own in light of its impact on our ability to do the will of God in our lives, whereas Moses' humility before God in spite of his being able to meet God face to face can shed new light on how we are to treat special characteristics of our own lives.

Step 8 - Think of practical methods by which you may apply the positive aspects of your study into your life. If you are studying the quality of encouragement you might wish to go out of your way to encourage Christian behavior in you fellow believers.

Step 9 - Make note of progress as you apply these lessons into your life. This will allow you to evaluate your development in the area you have studied.

### **Method Four - The Thematic Method of Bible Study**

In the thematic method of Bible study you will approach a theme within the Bible and perform a basic study of it. It is shorter than the Topical Method of Bible study, which comes later in these notes, and is much less exhaustive in its scope. In a topical study you would examine each possible verse that relates to your topic of study, including each sub-theme; in a thematic study you will study only those verses that apply directly to a single theme

#### 4.1 - Tools

4.1.1 - Study Bible

4.1.2 - Exhaustive concordance

4.1.3 - Topical Bible or cross references

#### 4.2 - Hints

4.2.1 - Stay narrowly focused on your theme since each associated idea can lead to hundreds of additional cross references causing your simple thematic study to grow quickly into a study requiring a great deal more time and effort than you have allocated.

4.2.2 - Keep your list of questions short as some themes may have one or two hundred references associated with them which, if you have too many questions, would cause you to tire of your study even before it is complete

#### 4.3 - Steps

Step 1 - Choose a theme to study, for your first thematic study you may wish to choose a theme that is relatively simple

Step 2 - Make a list of all the verses you intend to study using the tools described above and select from this list the verses that are most applicable, or important, to your theme

Step 3 - Decide on, and make a list of, the questions you will ask of each verse. If you have written more than five you may wish to choose from this list as five questions is generally more than sufficient for the study

Step 4 - Ask these questions of each verse in your list of step two. You may not be able to obtain an answer for each question in each verse, some verses may only answer one or two of your questions but this does not mean that your verses have been improperly chosen

Step 5 - Draw some conclusions from your study. This would include collating the notes you have made and summarizing the details of the study

Step 6 - Write out a personal application and remember to evaluate your progress.

### **Method Five - The Biographical Method of Bible Study**

#### 5.1 - Tools

5.1.1 - Bible

5.1.2 - Exhaustive and/or biographical concordance

5.1.3 - Topical Bible

5.1.4 - Bible dictionary or encyclopedia

#### 5.2 - Hints

5.2.1 - Remember that the person will often be referred to by means other than his/her proper name in many passages

#### 5.3 - Steps

Step 1 - Choose an individual from the Bible for your study. See the list below for a selection of persons from the Bible.

Step 2 - List all references concerning that person. A concordance will help if the person is referred to in the Bible by their proper name, but you may also wish to look for ambiguous references to the person (i.e. Pharaoh's wife, or: the son of Zebedee).

Step 3 - Note your first impression of the person after your first reading of the passages

Step 4 - Make a chronological outline of the person's life after your second reading

Step 5 - Obtain some insights into the person after your third reading

Step 6 - Identify some character qualities after your fourth reading

Step 7 - Show how some other Bible truths are illustrated in this person's life

Step 8 - Summarize the main lesson(s) you have learned

Step 9 - Write out a personal application

Step 10 - Make your study transferable

Step 11 - Note someone with whom you will share the results of this study and commit yourself to doing this.

#### A Partial List of Biblical People

The three following lists include some of the major men of the Bible, the minor but important men of the Bible, and the prominent women of the Bible.

Major Men of the Bible

### Major Men of the Bible

1. Abraham
2. Daniel
3. David
4. Elijah
5. Elisha
6. Ezekiel
7. Ezra
8. Isaiah
9. Isaac
10. Jacob
11. Jeremiah
12. Jesus
13. John – apostle
14. Joseph – OT
15. Joshua
16. Moses
17. Nehemiah
18. Paul
19. Peter
20. Pharaoh
21. Samson
22. Samuel
23. Saul – OT
24. Solomon

### Minor but Important Men of the Bible

1. Aaron
2. Abel
3. Abimelech
4. Abner
5. Absalom
6. Achan
7. Adam
8. Ahab
9. Ahithophel
10. Amos
11. Ananias
12. Andrew
13. Apollos
14. Apostles – any
15. Aquila
16. Asa
17. Balaam
18. Barnabas
19. Barzillai

20. Caiaphas
21. Caleb
22. Eli
23. Esau
24. Gehazi
25. Gideon
26. Habakkuk
27. Haggai
28. Haman
29. Herod
30. Hezekiah
31. Hosea
32. Jabez
33. James
34. Jehoshaphat
35. Jeroboam
36. Joab
37. Job
38. John the Baptist
39. Jonah
40. Jonathan
41. Judas Iscariot
42. Judges – any
43. Kings – any
44. Laban
45. Lot
46. Luke
47. Mark
48. Matthew
49. Melchizedek
50. Mephibosheth
51. Mordecai
52. Naaman
53. Nathan
54. Noah
55. Philemon
56. Philip
57. Pontius Pilate
58. Prophets – any
59. Rehoboam
60. Shamgar
61. Silas
62. Stephen
63. Timothy
64. Titus
65. Tychicus
66. Uzziah

67. Zechariah
68. Zedekiah
69. Zephaniah
70. Zerubbabel

### Prominent Women of the Bible

1. Abigail
2. Abishag
3. Anna
4. Bathsheba
5. Deborah
6. Delilah
7. Dinah
8. Dorcas
9. Elizabeth
10. Esther
11. Eunice
12. Eve
13. Hagar
14. Hannah
15. Jezebel
16. Jochebed
17. Leah
18. Lydia
19. Martha
20. Mary – Jesus' mother
21. Mary Magdalene
22. Mary of Bethany
23. Michal
24. Miriam
25. Naaman's maid
26. Naomi
27. Priscilla
28. Queen of Sheba
29. Rachel
30. Rahab
31. Rebecca
32. Ruth
33. Sapphira
34. Sarah
35. The Shunammite
36. Vashti
37. Zipporah

## General Questions for a Biographical Study

Here is a list of seventy questions you can use in constructing a biographical study. You shouldn't try to use every question listed here in a single study. Depending on the depth of your study and the time you have, select the questions you would like to have answered. The questions are categorized into seven major divisions for easier use. As you think of other questions, add them to this list.

### Reputation

- Who wrote what we know about this person?
- What did people say about him/her?
- What did his enemies say about him/her?
- What did his/her family (wife/husband, children, brothers, sisters, parents) say about him/her?
- What did God say about him/her?
- Why do you think God allowed this person to be mentioned in the Bible?

### Tests of Character

- What were his/her aims and motives?
- What was he/she like in his home?
- How did he/she respond to failure? Did he/she get discouraged easily?
- How did he/she respond to adversity? Did he/she handle criticism well?
- How did he/she respond to success? Did he/she get proud when praised?
- How did he/she respond to the trivial and mundane things in life? Was he/she faithful in the little things?
- How quickly did he/she praise God for the good/bad things that happened to him/her?
- How quickly did he/she obey God when told to do something?

### Background

- What can you discover about his/her family and ancestry?
- What does his/her name mean? Why was he/she given that name? Was it ever changed?
- What was his/her home life like? How was he/she raised? Where was he/she raised?
- What were the characteristics of his/her parents? Did they influence him/her?
- Was there anything special about his/her birth?

Where did he/she live? What was his/her everyday life like?

Was he/she exposed to other cultures? Did they affect him/her in any way?

What was the condition of his/her country -- politically and spiritually -- during his/her lifetime?

What kind of training did he/she have? Did he/she have any schooling?

What was his/her occupation?

How long did he/she live? Where did he/she die? How did he/she die?

### Significant Events

Was there any great crisis in his/her life? How did he/she handle it?

What are the great accomplishments for which he/she is remembered?

Did he/she experience a divine 'call'? How did he/she respond to it?

What crucial decisions did he/she have to make? How did they affect him/her? Others?

Did any recurring problem keep coming up in his/her life?

Where did he/she succeed? Where did he/she fail? Why?

How did the environment and circumstances affect him/her?

What part did he/she play in the history of God's plan?

Did he/she believe in the sovereignty of God (God's control over all events)?

### Relationships

How did he/she get along with other people? Was he/she a loner? Was he/she a team person?

How did he/she treat other people? Did he/she use them or serve them?

What was his/her wife/husband like? How did she/he influence him/her/her?

What were his/her children like? How did they influence him/her?

Who were his/her close companions? What were they like? How did they influence him/her?

Who were his/her enemies? What were they like? How did they influence him/her?

What influence did he/she have on others? On his nation? On other nations?

Did he/she take care of his family? How did his/her children turn out?

Did his/her friends and family help or hinder him/her in serving the Lord?

Did he/she train anyone to take his place? Did he/she leave a "Timothy" (disciple) behind?

#### Personality

What type of person was he/she? What made him/her the way he/she was?

Was his/her temperament choleric, melancholic, sanguine, or phlegmatic?

What were the outstanding strengths in his/her character? What traits did he/she have?

Did his/her life show any development of character as time passed? Was there growth and progression there?

What were his/her particular faults and weaknesses?

What were his/her particular sins? What steps led to those sins?

In what area was his/her greatest battle: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, or pride of life, ...etc.?

What were the results of his/her sins and weaknesses?

Did he/she ever get the victory over his particular sins and weaknesses?

What qualities made him/her a success or failure?

A List of Positive Character Qualities to Find

A Servant

Agreeableness

Balance

Boldness

Bravery

Calmness

Carefulness

Cautiousness

Characterized by the

Beatitudes

Chasteness

Cheerfulness

Cleanliness

Compassionate

Confidence

Consideration

Contentedness

Courageousness

Courteousness

Creativity

Dedication

Deference

Dependability

Determinate

Diligence

Discernment

Discipline

Discreetness

Durableness

Earnestness

Energy

Enthusiasm

Fairness

Faithfulness

Flexibleness Forgiveness

Generosity

Gentleness

Good Stewardship

Gratefulness

Honesty

Humbleness

Independence

Industry

Integrity

Kindness

Lovingness

Loyalty

Man of Faith

Meekness

Mercifulness

Moderateness Modesty

Obedience Observer

Optimism

Orderliness

Patience

Peacemaking

Perspective

Positiveness

Pureness

Quietness

Resourcefulness

Respectfulness

Reverence

Righteousness

Sacrifice

Self-control

Self-denying

Self-giving

Sense of Humor Sensitivity

Sincerity

Stability

Submissiveness

Sympathy

Thankfulness

Thriftiness

Tolerance

Trustworthiness

Uncomplaining

Uncompromising

Wholeheartedness

Wisdom

Zealousness

A List of Negative  
Character Qualities to Find  
A Busybody  
A Cop-out  
A Doubter  
A Drunkard  
A Liar  
A Sluggard  
A Worrier  
Adulterous  
Angry Without Cause  
Annoying  
Apathetic  
Apostate  
Argumentative  
Arrogant  
Ashamed of Christ  
Backbiter  
Bigoted  
Bitter  
Blasphemous  
Boastful  
Callous  
Careless  
Coarse Complaining  
Compromising  
Conceited  
Covetous  
Cowardly  
Crafty/Sly  
Cruel  
Deceitful  
Dishonest  
Disobedient  
Disrespectful  
Doctrinally Off  
Dogmatic  
Double-minded  
Envious  
Fearful

Fears Men  
Fickle  
Flatterer  
Foolish  
Forgetful  
Forgets God  
Fornicator  
Friend of the World  
Gluttonous  
Gossiper  
Greedy  
Grudging  
Halfhearted  
Harsh  
Headstrong  
Humorless  
Hypocritical  
Idle  
Idolatrous  
Immodest  
Immoral  
Impolite  
Impulsive  
Independent Spirit  
Indifferent  
Inhuman  
Insensitive  
Insulting  
Irritating  
Jealous  
Lazy  
Legalistic  
Libelous  
Loves Men's Praise  
Lukewarm  
Lusts for Power  
Malicious  
Manipulative  
Murmurer  
Negligent

Prejudiced  
Presumptuous  
Procrastinator  
Profane  
Proud  
Rebellious  
Rejoices in Evil  
Reprobate  
Rude/Gross  
Sarcastic  
Scornful  
Self-righteous  
Selfish  
Sensual  
Shallow  
Shortsighted  
Slanderer  
Stingy  
Stubborn  
Talkative  
Tyrannical  
Unclean  
Undisciplined  
Unfair  
Unfaithful  
Unforgiving  
Ungrateful  
Unkind  
Unreliable  
Unsociable  
Vain  
Violent  
Wasteful  
Wavering  
Worldly



## **Method Six - The Topical Method of Bible Study**

Previously you encountered the Thematic Method of Bible study in which you studied a narrow theme of the Bible in simple detail asking prepared questions of verses from a chosen list. With the topical study you will study a topic of the Bible, which may contain several themes, and you will not be asking prepared questions, instead you will be recording all insights you find from your study. The topical method will usually take longer than the thematic so you will want to assure yourself that sufficient time is available to at least make a significant start on the study.

### 6.1 - Tools

#### 6.1.1 - Bible

6.1.2 - Exhaustive concordance and/or cross references

#### 6.1.3 - Topical Bible

### 6.2 - Hints (taken from Dr. R. A. Torrey)

6.2.1 - Be systematic by listing all the concepts related to your topic, being as comprehensive as possible and study each idea individually and in systematic and logical order.

6.2.2 - Be thorough by as much as possible making a study of every verse that relates to the topic.

6.2.3 - Be exact, trying to get the exact meaning for each verse you are studying. Remember not to remove the verses from their context but use the context to help you in your study.

### 6.3 - Steps

Step 1 - Compile a list of words related to the topic you will study

Step 2 - Collect all references relating to each word

Step 3 - Consider each reference individually

Step 4 - Compare and group the references

Step 5 - Condense the results of your study into a brief outline

Step 6 - Conclude your study

## **Method Seven - The Word Study Method of Bible Study**

### 7.1 - Tools

7.1.1 - Bible and several alternate translations

7.1.2 - Exhaustive concordance

7.1.3 - Bible dictionary or encyclopedia

7.1.4 - Set of word studies

7.1.5 - English dictionary

### 7.2 - Hints

7.2.1 - Remember that often a single word in the original language may be replaced by many different words, or even phrases, when translated into English.

7.2.2 - An exhaustive concordance such as Strong's or Young's are especially valuable for this study since they associate each discrete original word to its English translation.

### 7.3 - Steps

Step 1 - Choose the word you will study

Step 2 - Find its English definition in the English dictionary

Step 3 - Compare treatments of the word in the various translations

Step 4 - Note the definition of the original word (Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic)

Step 5 - Discover just where the word is used in the Bible

7.3.5.1 - How often does it occur?

7.3.5.2 - In which books is it found?

7.3.5.3 - In which book is it used most?

7.3.5.4 - Where does the word first appear?

7.3.5.5 - Where does it first appear in the book you are studying?

7.3.5.6 - Which writers used the word?

Step 6 - Find the origin and root meaning of the word, how the word was used by the secular culture of the day

Step 7 - Determine how the word was used in the Bible and how it would have been understood in the culture to which the Bible was originally addressed

Step 8 - Write an application  
A Suggested List of Key Words for the Word Study Method of Bible Study

A Suggested List of Key Words for the Word Study Method of Bible Study

Adoption  
Adversary  
Apostle  
Atonement  
Baptize  
Believe  
Bless  
Body  
Call  
Chasten  
Christ  
Church  
Confess  
Covenant  
Death  
Disciple  
Everlasting  
Evil  
Faint  
Faith  
Favour  
Fear  
Fellowship

Flesh  
Good  
Gospel  
Grace  
Hear  
Hell  
Holy  
Hope  
Immanuel  
Iniquity  
Jehovah  
Jesus  
Judgment  
Kingdom  
Know  
Law  
Laying on of Hands  
Life  
Light  
Lord  
Love  
Lust  
Manifest  
Marriage  
Mediator  
Meek  
Mercy  
Mind  
Minister  
Miracle  
Mystery  
Name  
Obey  
Passover  
Peace

Perfect  
Perish  
Preach  
Propitiation  
Reconcile  
Redeem  
Remnant  
Repent  
Rest  
Resurrection  
Righteous  
Sabbath  
Sacrifice  
Saint  
Sanctify  
Save  
Servant  
Sin  
Soul  
Spirit  
Temptation  
Trial  
Truth  
Understand  
Vain  
Vision  
Watch  
Wisdom  
Witness  
Word  
World  
Worship

## **Method Eight - The Book Background Method of Bible Study**

### 8.1 - Tools

- 8.1.1 - Bible dictionary and/or bible encyclopedia
- 8.1.2 - Bible handbook
- 8.1.3 - Bible atlas
- 8.1.4 - Various tools that allow you to experience

in your time the environment of the Biblical cultures

### 8.2 - Steps

Step 1 - Choose the subject or book of the Bible

Step 2 - List your reference tools so that at the end of the study you can see which were of the greatest help in your study.

Step 3 - Discover what you are able of the following:

- 8.2.3.1 - Who is the writer of the book
- 8.2.3.2 - What is the date of the book
- 8.2.3.3 - Where was the book written
- 8.2.3.4 - For whom was the book written
- 8.2.3.5 - Why was the book written
- 8.2.3.6 - How does the book fit into the Bible

overall ;in addition, what light can be shed on the study when the book is evaluated in the following contexts:

- Geographical setting
- Historical events, prior, occurring, or expected
- Culture of the day
  
- Political situation
- Anticipation of coming events or personage(s)

Step 4 - Summarize your research

Step 5 - Write out your personal application

## **Method Nine - The Book Survey Method of Bible Study**

The Book Survey Method of Bible study is the first of three methods of Bible study that, together, give you an extremely comprehensive view of each book of the Bible. These three will require the greatest effort on your part but will

ultimately yield the best results when used properly. Each of the three emphasizes a different aspect of one overall process of study which are:

Survey - Method 9 - Book Survey Method - in which you will obtain a detailed overview of a particular book of the Bible

Analysis - Method 10 - Chapter Analysis Method - in which you will study everything in each chapter in great detail

Synthesis - Method 11 - Book Synthesis Method - in which you will take what you learned in the previous two study stages and put it all back together, drawing conclusions as you go and gaining an appreciation of the whole of the book.

The basic goal of the Book Survey Method of Bible study is to gain a detailed understanding as to why the book was written, its context, its theme, its structure, and its content.

### 9.1 - Tools

- 9.1.1 - Bible and several additional modern translations
- 9.1.2 - Bible dictionary and/or Bible encyclopedia
- 9.1.3 - Bible handbook, such as Unger's or Halley's
- 9.1.4 - Old and New Testament surveys
- 9.1.5 - Cultural contextualization tools

### 9.2 - Hints

9.2.1 - If you have already done a Book Background Bible study on the book you may wish to refer to it for background information useful to you in this study

### 9.3 - Steps

Step 1 - Read the book following the suggestions below:

9.3.1.1 - Read through the book in one sitting. After Psalms Isaiah is the Bible's largest book and the average reader can read through it in a few hours. Reading the book in this manner gives you a good overview of its contents. For the larger books you may wish to divide it into two more

manageable sections which you can then read with a break between.

9.3.1.2 - Read through the book in a recent translation so that the language usage is current and will not distract from the contents of the book.

9.3.1.3 - Read through the book as though the verse and chapter divisions are non-existent so as to get the flow of the book and the relationship of its ideas to one another.

9.3.1.4 - Read through the book several times, you will be surprised at what you notice in a second or third reading that you missed originally.

9.3.1.5 - Read through the book without referring to any external notes of any kind, it is important to concentrate upon the text of the book itself without using any interpretive device.

9.3.1.6 - Read through the book with prayer, asking God to speak to you through this study and open your eyes to the lesson(s) he/she wants you to learn.

9.3.1.7 - Read through the book with pen or pencil in hand and begin to take notes and make observations on what you are reading on the second or third time through.

Step 2 - Make notes on what you read, this step actually begins toward the end of step one. Write down your impressions of the book and important details that you discover. Use the following list to guide you:

9.3.2.1 - Is the book written in one of the following genres: Historic, poetic, prophetic, law, biographic, correspondence, narrative, etc. See the section earlier on types of literature in the Bible.

9.3.2.2 - Note your first impressions as you read the book. What do you think was the purpose of the author?

9.3.2.3 - What words does the author use frequently? What words does the author consider important or significant?

9.3.2.4 - Is there a key verse to the book or a key statement?

9.3.2.5 - What is the literary style of the author? How does the style of writing relate to the message of the book?

9.3.2.6 - Does the author reveal his emotions? How would the readers have responded to this emotion? How do you respond to this emotion?

9.3.2.7 - Make note of what you believe to be the main theme(s) of the book. Is there a major thrust to the book?

9.3.2.8 - How is the book structured? Remember that our chapters and verses (and often our paragraphs) were all added centuries after the original authors completed their work. Around what aspects of reality (people, geography, events, time, etc.) is the book centered?

9.3.2.9 - How do people fit into the book? Are there central characters and if so what part(s) do they play in the book?

Step 3 - Do a background study of the book. In this step you will essentially be following the outline given in the Book Background Method of Bible study.

Step 4 - Make a horizontal chart of the book's contents. A horizontal chart is a pictorial representation of the book on one or two sheets of paper and which allows you to visually grasp the general details of the book. Follow these steps to make a horizontal chart:

9.3.4.1 - On a single sheet of paper, or at the most two, make as many vertical columns as there are chapters in the book you are studying.

9.3.4.2 - Re-read the book and note the major divisions, usually similar to the chapter divisions though not always, and make headings relating to these divisions in as few words as possible.

9.3.4.3 - Read through the book again, yes this will be the fifth time you read the book, and think of a short title for each chapter and record them just below the divisions of the previous step, above each of the columns. Some characteristics of good titles are that they are:

- short, usually one to four words
- picturesque, helping you visualize the chapter contents
- from the text if possible
- unique and not used as chapter titles of earlier studies

- able to show where in the book the chapter falls

9.3.4.4 - Read through the book again and create a series of titles for the paragraphs

Step 5 - Make a preliminary outline of the book from all that you have done before. You are concentrating on the major points of the book as later you will be using the Book Synthesis Method in which you will make a detailed outline of the book. Some helpful points:

9.3.5.1 - Make an preliminary outline of the book, concentrating on the major points.

9.3.5.2 - Have your outline organized in sequence of descending importance. List major points first followed by the minor points.

9.3.5.3 - Use paragraphs will help with the outline as they are generally grouped around major ideas.

9.3.5.4 - Compare your outline to those done by others to see where they differ and where they are similar.

Step 6 - Write out a personal application and remember to return periodically to this step so that you can evaluate your progress.

### **Method Ten - The Chapter Analysis Method of Bible Study**

The Chapter Analysis Method of Bible study picks up where the Book Summary Method of Bible study leaves off. You now have a reasonable grasp of the overall picture of the book, what it means, why it was written, etc. and you are now able to begin to examine the individual items making up the book. The best way of subdividing a book of the Bible is to use the chapter divisions, since these are generally accurate, and to study each chapter in detail. You will examine each paragraph, sentence, and word in a detailed and systematic manner.

The Chapter Analysis Method of Bible study is the second of three methods of Bible study that, together, give you an extremely comprehensive view of each book of the Bible. These three will require the greatest effort on your part but will ultimately yield the best results when used

properly. Each of the three emphasizes a different aspect of one overall process of study which are:

Survey - Method 9 - Book Survey Method -in which you will obtain a detailed overview of a particular book of the Bible

Analysis - Method 10 - Chapter Analysis Method - in which you will study everything in each chapter in great detail

Synthesis - Method 11 - Book Synthesis Method -in which you will take what you learned in the previous two study stages and put it all back together, drawing conclusions as you go and gaining an appreciation of the whole of the book.

### 10.1 - Tools

10.1.1 - Bible and several additional modern translations

10.1.2 - Bible dictionary and/or Bible encyclopedia

10.1.3 - Bible handbook, such as Unger's or Halley's

10.1.4 - Old and New Testament surveys

10.1.5 - Cultural contextualization tools

### 10.2 - Steps

Step 1 - Create a chapter summary. First read the chapter several times over, making some general observations on the chapter as a whole. Once you have completed this process describe the content of the chapter, summarizing it in one of the following ways:

10.2.1 - Paraphrase the chapter, rephrasing it in your own words in such a way that you could read it to an other person in a way that they would understand.

10.2.2 - Outline the chapter, following the internal paragraph divisions of the chapter. Give each paragraph a heading and place the subpoints of the paragraph beneath.

10.2.3 - Rewrite the chapter leaving out all modifying clauses and phrases. You would write

out the chapter using just the subjects, verbs, and objects.

Step 2 - Note your observations and insights. Look at every detail of the chapter, examining each sentence and word, and writing down everything you see. Refer to the section on the OICA approach to Bible study involving observation for some assistance in this step. On the following page you will also find a list of things to look for in a Bible passage.

Step 3 - Ask detailed questions of the chapter. Write upon the form each question you ask even if you cannot find an answer for it now. The time may come when you do find an answer to the question in an other study and be able then to place it here as well. Be sure to note any difficulties you have with the passage so that you can research them in the future. Refer to the list below to help you find answers to your questions:

10.2.3.1 - Observe the context of the passage, refer to step two of the Book Survey Method of Bible study for assistance here.

10.2.3.2 - Define the words and phrases used so that you have the correct meaning of the structural components of the passage.

10.2.3.3 - The structure and grammar of a passage is of benefit to help you to understand the flow of ideas and concepts within the passage so that you can see them in relation to each other.

10.2.3.4 - Use other translations to see if their use of English is more understandable.

10.2.3.5 - Try to view the passage against its background (historic, cultural, geographic, economic, social, current events, etc.). Use your Bible dictionary or encyclopedia to obtain this information.

10.2.3.6 - See what other passages in the Bible say about the concepts covered within this chapter. This is actually done more thoroughly in step four.

10.2.3.7 - If all other means have failed refer to a commentary and compare your interpretation of the passage with that of the commentator.

Step 4 - Correlate your chapter with other Bible passages. See step seven of the Chapter Summary Method of Bible study for help on using cross references.

Step 5 - Make a list of some possible applications. You will not be attempting to apply all that you write here, you are making a list for future reference and from which, in step seven, you will choose one application to work into your life.

Step 6 - Formulate and make note of some conclusions. After reviewing the first five steps of this study write down your conclusions on the chapter. You may discover additional information during this step which you should also note.

Step 7 - Write out one application from the list you compiled in step five. Be sure that it is practical and that it is applicable to your life. Remember to return to your written application in the near future so that you can evaluate your progress.  
What to Look for in a Chapter Analysis Study

Listed here in brief form are 30 items to look for in your observation part of the Chapter Analysis Method of Bible study:

Ask the six vital observation questions: What? Who? Where? When? Why? How?

Look for key words.

Look for repeated words and phrases.

Look for questions being asked.

Look for answers being given.

Look for commands.

Look for warnings.

Look for comparisons - things that are alike.

Look for contrasts - things that are different.

Look for illustrations.

Look for causes and effects and reasons for doing things.

Look for promises and their conditions for fulfillment.

Look for progression from the general to the specific.

Look for progression from the specific to the general.

Look for steps of progression in a narrative or biography.

Look for lists of things.

Look for results.

Look for advice, admonitions, and attitudes.

Look for the tone of the passage - emotional atmosphere.

Look for connectives, articles, and prepositions.

Look for explanations.

Look for Old Testament quotes in the New Testament.

Look for the literary form.

Look for paradoxes.

Look for emphasis through the use of space - proportion.

Look for planned exaggerations or hyperboles.

Look at the grammatical construction of each sentence.

Look for the use of the current events of the times.

Look for the force of the verbs.

Look for anything unusual or unexpected.

The above are just a few of the things you can look for in your observation step in you Bible study.

Don't let this long list discourage you. You shouldn't try to do each one of the suggested items. It will take time for you to get into the habit of seeing more and more things in the text. The more you practice observing, the more alert you will become. So remember: look, search, observe, then write your findings down!

### **Method Eleven - The Book Synthesis Method of Bible Study**

In the Book Synthesis Method of Bible study we will summarize and condense the lessons learned previously. The word synthesis indicates the putting together of the discrete items that together compose a whole; thus in the Book Synthesis Method of Bible study we will put back together the details we extracted from the book through our previous two studies.

The Book Synthesis Method of Bible study is the last of three methods of Bible study that, together,

give you an extremely comprehensive view of each book of the Bible. These three will require the greatest effort on your part but will ultimately yield the best results when used properly. Each of the three emphasizes a different aspect of one overall process of study which are:

Survey - Method 9 - Book Survey Method -in which you will obtain a detailed overview of a particular book of the Bible

Analysis - Method 10 - Chapter Analysis Method - in which you will study everything in each chapter in great detail

Synthesis - Method 11 - Book Synthesis Method -in which you will take what you learned in the previous two study stages and put it all back together, drawing conclusions as you go and gaining an appreciation of the whole of the book.

#### 11.1 - Tools

11.1.1 - Bible and several additional modern translations

11.1.2 - Bible dictionary and/or Bible encyclopedia

11.1.3 - Bible handbook, such as Unger's or Halley's

11.1.4 - Old and New Testament surveys

11.1.5 - Cultural contextualization tools

#### 11.2 - Hints

11.2.1 - Have the results of both your Book Survey Method and your Chapter Analysis Method available and complete, you will need to refer to them frequently during this study.

#### 11.3 - Steps

Step 1 - Reread the book several times in the same manner as you did in the Book Survey method

Step 2 - Write out a detailed, final, outline using the preliminary outline from your Book Survey and the passage summaries from your Chapter Analysis. These, when coupled with your current readings, will allow you to put this outline in its final form.

Step 3 - Write down a descriptive book title using the same methods by which you gave titles to each section in your Chapter Analysis. The title should be original and define the contents of the book in as few words as possible.

Step 4 - Make a summary of your insights. You will here summarize the major and minor themes as well as the conclusions of the book as you discovered them in the previous two studies. Avoid commentaries for the moment as you are attempting to arrive at your own understanding of the Bible. Feel free to add new ideas you have discovered during the readings in step one.

Step 5 - Write out a personal application. Review all applications listed in your Book Survey and Chapter Analysis studies, noting any which you have not yet completed and making definite plans to complete them in the near future if not immediately. If all are complete select other potential applications and make plans to implement these in your life as soon as possible.

Step 6 - Share the results of your study with other. The Christian faith is unique in that each of us is individually saved through Christ Jesus, yet our carrying out of that faith is best done in a community of believers. Time and again we as Christians are referred to in the New Testament as the Body of Christ and we are encouraged to build each other up in the faith:

Ephesians 4:11-16 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom

the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

One of the ways in which the building up other Christians takes place is to share with them what you have learned of God, be it through Bible studies such as this or illuminations from the Holy Spirit.

### **Method Twelve - The Verse by Verse Method of Bible Study**

In the Verse by Verse Method of Bible study you will select a passage of the Bible and examine it in great detail, asking questions of it, finding cross references to it, and paraphrasing each verse within it. The Verse by Verse Bible study concludes with your obtaining a practical, personal application for each verse in the study.

#### 12.1 - Tools

12.1.1 - Bible

12.1.2 - Cross references

12.1.3 - Exhaustive concordance

12.1.4 - Bible dictionary and/or encyclopedia

12.1.5 - Word studies

#### 12.2 - Hints

12.2.1 - If you are short on time you can do this study without the reference tools above, except for the Bible of course.

#### 12.3 - Steps

Step 1 - Write out each verse of the passage in your own words, striving for accuracy and not referring to other paraphrases except by way of example. You are attempting to put the passage into your own words, not into the words of another person.

Step 2 - List any questions you have on any verse in your study, note any answers you are able to find, and record any observations you have made on that verse. Do this for each verse in the study. It



may be helpful for you to indicate questions, answers, and observations with the letters Q, A, or O so that each will be easier to find upon returning to the study at other times.

Step 3 - Find some cross references for each verse, trying for at least one for each verse, and indicate if the reference is for a specific word, phrase, or concept within that verse.

Step 4 - For each verse note any insights you have found in your study.

Step 5 - Write a brief personal application for each verse or, failing that, make note of some devotional thought to which you may return in a Devotional Bible study and build upon it.

<https://bible.org/article/12-methods-bible-study>

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