

“BASIC TRAINING” Master Notes – Sessions 1-3

Learning & Doing the Basics of Personal Bible Study!

The Basics: An Overview

An Inductive (3-Step) Approach!

Step 1. *Observation* - Explore!

What does the passage say?

Step 2. *Interpretation* - Explain!

What does the passage mean?

Step 3. *Application* - Express!

What does the passage mean for me?

Session 1. The *WHY* of Bible Study

During this session we will discuss:

- ⦿ Why Should we Study the Bible?
- ⦿ Ten Good Reasons for Studying the Bible
- ⦿ Why Don't we Study the Bible More?
- ⦿ How do I Study the Bible for Myself?
- ⦿ Why Study The Bible?

How would you finish the sentences:

The best reason for studying the Bible is....

- ⦿ **REVELATION** - to know more about God!
- ⦿ **TRANSFORMATION** - to become more like God! Our goal is transformation NOT Information!

The best resource for studying and interpreting the Bible is....

...The Bible *ITSELF*! God's Word = God's Sword!

Let's see what the Bible has to say about itself!

“Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” Ephesians 6:17

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any doubled-edged sword.” Hebrews 4:12

Quotable Quote: “When you know what God says, what He means, and how to put His truths into practice, you will be equipped for every circumstance of life.”

Kay Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible – The Lasting Rewards of the Inductive Method*

Why Study the Bible? (continued)

What Reasons Does Jesus Give?

“It is written, man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”
Matthew 4:4

“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.” John 17:17

What Reasons Does Paul Give?

2 Timothy 3:15-17 - “You have known the scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is God-breathed and useful for...

teaching – showing us the...*right path to take!*

rebuking – pointing out when we...*get off the path!*

correcting – getting us back...*on the right path!*

training - keeping us...*on the right path!*

...in righteousness so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

What Reasons Does David Give?

Consider the reasons David gives in Psalm 19: 7-13 for studying God’s word!

- It revives us!
- It makes us wise!
- It gives us joy!
- It keeps us from sin!

What Do You Think? Which one of these four reasons (given by David) encourages you the most to want to study God’s word more? Why?

Group Activity: Write out the reasons David gives for studying God’s word in Psalm 119.

☉ vs. 9-16 vs. 25-32 vs. 97-10 vs. 129-133 vs. 140-144

In what ways are the reasons for studying God’s word the *same* in these two Psalms?

“Great peace have they who love your law and *nothing* can make them stumble.” Psalm 119:165

What Others Have Said:

Martin Luther - “I have covenanted with my Lord that he should not send me visions or dreams or even angels. I am content with the gift of the Scriptures, which teaches and supplies *all* that is necessary, both for this life and that which is to come.”

George Mueller - “The vigor of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thought. Great has been the blessing from consecutive, diligent, daily study.”

Top 10 Reasons to Study the Bible Source: Robert West, *How To Study the Bible*

1. To settle the issue of our own...*salvation*
2. To grow...*spiritually*
3. To receive personal blessing...& *encouragement*
4. To receive personal...*guidance*
5. To defend ourselves against the...*devil* (check out 1 John 2:14)
6. To effectively teach God's truth to the next...*generation*
7. To be able to...*counsel others*
8. To be ready to speak with...*unbelievers about Christ*
9. To know that the teachings of others is...*the truth of God*
10. To present ourselves...*approved of God*

2 Timothy 2:15 - "Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God *approved* (tested), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing – rightfully handling and skillfully teaching the word of truth." Amplified Bible

Why Do Personal Bible Study? The Answer is Simple and Obvious...

- ⊙ We NEED it! (2 Tim. 3:15)
- ⊙ God EXPECTS it! (Col. 3:16)
- ⊙ That SETTLES it! (Ps. 119:16)

Corrie Ten Boom put it simply... "God said it, I believe it, that settles it."

- ⊙ Let's Face it...We Need it!

Why Don't we Study the Bible More?

We believe the myths!

- ⊙ The Bible is too...*difficult to understand*
- ⊙ The Bible is too...*boring to read and study*
- ⊙ Why Don't we Study the Bible?(cont.)

We battle with the fears!

- ⊙ Fear of not...*learning enough soon enough*
- ⊙ Fear of drawing...*wrong conclusions*
- ⊙ Fear of misleading...*ourselves or others*

Why Don't we Study the Bible? (cont.)

We struggle with our **excuses!**

- ⊙ Not enough...*time in the day to do it*
- ⊙ Takes too much...*energy and effort*

Quotable Quote: “Here, then, is the real problem of our negligence. We fail in our duty to study God’s word not so much because it is difficult to understand, not so much because it is dull and boring, but because it is work... Our problem is not a lack of intelligence or a lack of passion. Our problem is that we are lazy.” R.C. Sproul, *Knowing Scripture*

Did you know... The average person spends the following amount of hours each year:

- ⊙ *Working*..... 2,000 hrs *Sleeping*.....3,000 hrs *Eating*.....550 hrs
- ⊙ *Watching TV*.....500 hrs Not to mention the countless hours spent playing *video games* on a computer, cell phone, i-pad, X-box, etc. etc. etc.

Quotable Quote: “Every person in the world has exactly the same amount of time each week – 168 hours. And you will spend some of those hours on things you think are important. You don’t *have* time for everything; you must *make* time for the things that really count. It’s not a matter of time, but a matter of priorities.” Rick Warren, *Dynamic Bible Study Methods*

How Do I Study The Bible Intentionally & Personally?

Start with the **HEART!**

“Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their **heart.**” Psalm 119:2

“Search me O God and know my **heart**... and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:23-24

David uses the word “heart” 14x’s alone in Psalm 119 (see vs. 58). The Hebrew word is *leb* and means “the center or the middle” (i.e. man’s spirit). It is also seen as “the seat of the will” (man’s inner throne).

Remember KISS! Keep It **Simple** and **Short!**

Have a **plan** in mind and put it into **practice!**

What is **My** plan?

Time: When will you start? What time of day? How long will you spend?

Place: Where will you do your study?

Content: What will you study?

Remember, Come to God’s Word with:

- ⊙ A sense of **ANTICIPATION** not obligation
- ⊙ An attitude of **GRATITUDE** not legalism

“Then all the people went away...to *celebrate* with great joy, because they now *understood* the words that had been made know to them.” Nehemiah 8:12 Let’s Love it! Read it! Study it!

Session 2. A Closer View – Personal Bible Study Approach

“BASIC TRAINING” *Learning and Doing the Basics of Personal Bible Study!*

OBSERVATION – Getting the Big Picture!

“Open my eyes that I may see wonderful thing in your law.” Psalm 119:18

Be an Investigator!

Observe the basic facts and key information in the passage by asking and answering the 5 W’s.

Proverbs 2:4 “look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure.”

2 Peter 1:3-5 says, “He has given us his very great and precious promises (over 10,000 in the Bible)...For this reason, make every effort to add to your faith...knowledge.”

The 5 W’s of Observation

When reading the passage, ask yourself the 5 W’s.

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

WHO? Types of Questions (example: Sermon on the Mount)

WHO is doing most of the speaking in the passage? (the speaker) – “Jesus...he” (Matt. 4:23...5:1)

WHO is being spoken to in the passage? (the audience) – “the crowds...his disciples” (5:1)

WHO is being spoken about in the passage? (the main characters) – “You (crowd/disciples)... Pharisees (5:20)... teachers of the law.” (7:29)

Note: Main characters can be *individuals* or *groups* (i.e. the disciples, Pharisees, teachers of the law”

Let’s Practice!

Read Mark 3:20-35 **WHO** is doing most of the *speaking* and **WHO** is being *spoken to* and...**WHO** is being *spoken about* in the passage?

Speaker?

Audience?

Main Characters?

*Note the individuals and groups in the above

The 5 W's of Observation (continued)

WHAT? Types of Questions:

- ⊙ *What **happened** in the story? What major events took place?*
- ⊙ *What **topics** are covered? What major teachings or ideas are presented?*
- ⊙ *What **promises**, truths, commands or warnings are given?*
- ⊙ *What key **words or phrases** are used or repeated?*
- ⊙ *What type of **literature** is used? Is it a narrative story, history, poetry, prophecy, or basic theology?*

Types of literature

Narrative story = Gospels, Esther, Ruth, Genesis, etc.

History = Acts, Exodus, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, etc.

Poetry = Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Job, etc.

Prophecy = Revelations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, minor prophets, etc.

Theology = Paul's Epistles, Hebrews, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, etc.

Note: Some can be a combination (i.e. Job, Genesis)

Let's Practice! Refer back to Mark 3:20-35

What happened in the story? What events took place?

1. Jesus speaks to a crowd in a house (vs.20)
2. Jesus' family comes to get him, thinking he's ***crazy*** (vs. 21)
3. Teachers ***accuse*** Jesus of demon possession (vs. 22, 30)
4. Jesus tells divided kingdom ***parable*** (vs. 23-27)
5. Jesus discusses eternal sin (vs. 28-29) and who is a part of his heavenly family (vs.31-34)

Note: This passage raises some interpretive questions?

What Topics are covered? Satan's demise, forgiveness, eternal sin

What truth or promise is given? All sins but one can be forgiven

What type of literature is it? Combines narrative story, history, & theology

WHERE? Types of Questions:

- ⊙ *Where did the author write **from** (origin)?*
- ⊙ *Where did the author write **to** (destination)?*
- ⊙ *Where did or will these events **occur**? (identification)*

Geographical place? Did the event occur in Israel, Greece, Rome, etc.?

Physical structure? Did the event/teaching occur in the temple, synagogue, house, in a boat, on a lake or mountain top, etc.?

WHEN? Types of Questions:

When did this teaching or event occur?

- ⊙ *In **time**?* - When did this event occur in the day or in history?
- ⊙ *In **sequence**?* - What occurred before or after this event or teaching?
- ⊙ *In **life**?* - When does the event take place in the author's life?

WHY? Types of Questions:

- ⊙ *Why is this event or teaching **mentioned** at this time? (author's reason) See: Col. 2:4*
- ⊙ *Why is so **much or little** said about this event or subject? (author's motivation) See: Matt. 5:1*
- ⊙ *Why do the **people respond as they do** to the event or teaching ? (author's description) See: Mark 3:20-22*

Let's Practice! Read Mathew 13:1-15 and answer the 5 W's.

Who?

- ⊙ Jesus speaks to "large crowds" (vs.2) and disciples (vs.10)

What?

- ⊙ Jesus taught "many things in parables" (vs. 3) including the soils

Where?

- ⊙ By the lake in Galilee near the house (vs. 2).

When

- ⊙ "That same day" (vs. 1) What else happened that day?

Why?

- ⊙ "That is why I speak to them in parables" (vs. 13).

Quotable Quote: "The secret of dynamic Bible study is knowing how to ask the right questions... the more questions you ask about the text under study, the more you will get out of it." Rick Warren, *Dynamic Bible Study Methods*

Taking the Next Step!

Suggested study: Use the *Bible Study Guide Sheet* to do a study on one of the psalms or a short letter like Philemon or Jude.

Suggested reading: How to Study the Bible, Robert West. Chapter 2 (pp. 33-55)

Session 3. OBSERVATION – Part 2.

Quotable Quote! “Don’t let a feeling of inadequacy keep you from the delight of learning the Bible on your own...Don’t settle only for spiritual food that’s been “predigested” by others...Experience the joy of discovering Biblical insights firsthand through your own Bible study.” Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines For The Christian Life*

Principles of Observation – Things to remember when observing the Bible

1. **Observation** before interpretation! – Find out what the passage says before... *you try to find out what it means (5 W’s)*. *Illus.* Puzzle: start with the outside edges and work inward.
2. **Overview** before Closer view! – Get the big picture and the main points... *before trying to dig deeper* (i.e. use the 3 R’s - read, reread, review the passage).
3. **Objective** before Subjective! Look for the facts first (i.e. people, places, events)... *before tackling more complex question, difficult doctrinal themes or views.* *Look for clear teachings and simple truths.*

Quotable Quote: “Accurate interpretation and correct application rest on the accuracy of our observations...Therefore, it is vital that you develop observation skills, even if it is time-consuming.” Kay Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible – The Lasting Rewards of the Inductive Method*

Practical Ideas for Observation - Things to do when observing the Bible

Remember to **have fun** discovering treasures. DON’T be afraid to **mark up or color** your Bible; it’s not wrong or sacreligious!

Use **colored markers or pencils** to color-code verses.

Example: **Blue** for Truths to know! **Yellow** for Promises to claim!

Green for Commands to keep! **Red** for repeated or key words!

Use **Notations/markings system** - to identify key words or repeated words/phrases, to emphasize important concepts, to show connections, contrasts, or comparisons.

Examples:

- ⊙ Underline key points, words or phrases “in Christ”
- ⊙ Circle or box important or repeated words (Grace) [peace]
- ⊙ [Bracket] similar/major concepts {by faith}
- ⊙ Arrows to show connections Law → death
- ⊙ (Parenthesis) around key ideas (salvation)
- ⊙ Shapes/icons to identify things, people trinity, heart, fortress, king, rock, etc.

Practical Ideas for Observation (cont.)

Use the **Bible margins** to record the 5 W's and other findings

Identify (*) and list a **key verse** in the passage, chapter or book

Make a **simple outline** by creating your own title/sub-titles with verse divisions by chapter or main sections in passage.

Write a **summary sentence** for the chapter or passage

Use a **journal or notebook** to jot down your ideas & thoughts from your study for later review and usage.

Let's Practice!

Re-read Psalm 19 and do the following as assigned by colors:

1. Use these suggested ***notations*** for the psalm: (circle) or [box] synonyms for God's word, underline adjectives describing the word, and then [bracket] the benefits of studying His word.
2. Use ***icons & shapes*** to represent certain picture words like rock.
3. Identify what you think is the ***key verse*** with an *asterisk.
4. Develop a ***title & sub-titles*** with verse divisions
5. Write a short ***summary sentence*** for the psalm

Remember: You can make up **Your Own** notation or color-code scheme.

Quotable Quotes:

"Dynamic Bible study involves *writing down* what you have observed and discovered." Rick Warren, *Dynamic Bible Study Methods*

Chuck Swindoll, "If your Bible is falling apart, chances are good your life is NOT!"

John MacArthur, "Read and study your Bible until your blood starts Bibling!"

Tom Kehn, "Get into the Bible until the Bible gets into you!"

Which quote resonates most with you? Why?

Prominent Words in Observation

When reading a passage, observe key types of words depicting the 7 C's below:

1. **Comparisons** – “like, as” (synonyms) show similarities between two or more things
2. **Contrasts** – “than, yet, however, instead” (antonyms) show differences between things
3. **Conjunctions** – “and, but, or” helps to bring together related ideas or to separate distinct ideas/thoughts
4. **Conditions** – “if, then, only, before” show stipulations, additional requirements, order or sequencing
5. **Conclusions** – “thus, therefore” summarizes or brings to a conclusion a previous thought
6. **Connections** – “through, by, that, for” give further explanations or shows inter-relationships
7. **Correlations** – “in, above, under, up, with, by” (prepositions) show spatial or spiritual dimensions
(personal pronouns) “him, her, I, my, we, me, they, them” show individual/corporate opportunity or responsibility

Quotable Quote: “Seven easily overlooked but important words are *therefore, and, but, that, for, because, and if*...considering these seven words helps us better understand the structure and meaning of the text.” Robert West, [How to Study the Bible](#)

Let's practice! Read passage as assigned, to find where any of the seven *easily overlooked* words are used and how often (list the verse were the word is found):

Romans 12:1-21 NIV Translation Example: “Therefore” used 1 time in vs. 1

- ⊙ *and* (vs. 2, 4, 5, 14) used 4x's
- ⊙ *but* (vs. 2, 3, 11, 16, & 21) used 5x's
- ⊙ *For* (vs. 3) used 1x
- ⊙ *If* (vs. 6, 7, 8, 18, & 20) used 10x's

* Note: The words “that” & “because” were NOT used in the NIV (see: Rom. 8:18)

Ephesians 5:1-21 NIV translation

- ⊙ *and* (vs. 1, 2, 5, 10) used 4x's
- ⊙ *but* (vs. 3, 5, 8, 11, 13, 17) used 6x's
- ⊙ *For* (vs. 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 12, 14, 20 & 21) used 9x's
- ⊙ *because* (vs. 3, 16) used 2x's

* Note: the words “if” & “that” were NOT used in the NIV (see Eph. 2:6-7)

Practical Observation Tools include Exhaustive **Concordance**, Bible **Handbook**, Bible **Atlas**, Bible **Encyclopedia**, Bible **Manners & Customs**

Suggested study: Select one of the Psalms and complete the *Practical Ideas of Observation* used today.

Suggested reading: [How to Study the Bible](#), Robert West. Chapter 3 (pp. 57-70)