INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY MANUAL

EMMAUS SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL STUDIES
A DIVISION OF CAMP LURECREST MINISTRIES

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION
- Bible Reading, Meditation and Study ........................................... 9
- S.B.S. Spiritual Warfare Tips ......................................................... 10

## INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY
- Interrogating the Bible ................................................................. 13
- Inductive & Deductive Approach .................................................. 17
- Three Steps of Inductive Bible Study ........................................... 18

## OBSERVATION
- Observation – Introduction .......................................................... 21
- Explanation of Observations ........................................................ 22
- Example Questions for Examining ............................................... 25
- Figures of Speech ........................................................................... 27
- Types of Literature found in the Bible ........................................... 28

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
- Historical Background – Introduction ......................................... 45
- Basic Required Information
  - New Testament ........................................................................... 46
  - Old Testament Narrative .......................................................... 47
  - Prophets ....................................................................................... 48
  - Wisdom Literature ....................................................................... 49
- Ten Methods of Bible Study .......................................................... 50

## INTERPRETATION
- Interpretation – Introduction ....................................................... 54
- Interpretation Questions ............................................................... 55
- Points to Consider When Doing Interpretation ............................... 56
- How to do a Word Study ............................................................... 57
- Example Word Study: "Hospitality" .............................................. 58
- A Brief Definition of 20 Reading Errors ....................................... 61

## APPLICATION
- Application – Introduction .......................................................... 65
- Application – The Goal of Bible Study .......................................... 66
- Personal Application Questions ..................................................... 71
- Broader Application Questions ..................................................... 72
- Final Application Options ............................................................ 73
BUILDING
♦ Building – Introduction ................................................. 77
♦ Example – Philemon ..................................................... 78
♦ Example – Titus 1:5-9..................................................... 79

HORIZONTAL CHART
♦ Structure & Composition ............................................. 83
♦ How to Draw a Horizontal ............................................ 84
♦ Horizontal Chart Lay Out ............................................ 85
♦ Horizontal Samples ................................................... 86
♦ Books of the Bible – Number of Verses ......................... 87

VERTICAL CHARTS
♦ How to draw a Vertical Chart .......................................... 91
♦ Filling in Vertical Charts .............................................. 92
♦ Vertical Chart Lay Out ................................................. 93

SBS REQUIREMENTS
♦ Required Readings .................................................... 97
♦ Step by Step through Charting ..................................... 98
♦ Guideline for Grading Charts ..................................... 100

BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................................................... 105
INTRODUCTION

♦ Bible Reading, Meditation and Study.................................................................9
♦ S.B.S. Spiritual Warfare Tips.................................................................10
Reformer Martin Luther wrote that the true goal of all Bible study is Bible Meditation. The goal of meditation is always application in a life. Of course, neither meditation nor study occur without a primary reading of the text.

**BIBLE READING**

Less than 10% of the church worldwide have read the entire Bible. This is a sad statement given the high price tag of shed blood and spent lives that brought us the good book. Nevertheless facts are facts and we find the church in a very ignorant state.

The value of Bible reading is to get a broad overall perspective on the entire revelation of God. Usually, when Christians are queried about their relation to God’s Word their response will entail what they are reading. This broad overall perspective can be obtained as well by listening to the Word on tape or watching it on Bible videos. The important thing is that the whole word is ingested. The entire Bible can be read aloud in less than 100 hours.

The marvelous value of reading is its utility and accessibility. We can access God’s Word to read virtually anytime night or day in 90% of the world-right now. The problem is that we don’t. This is far from history when in the early days of the reformation Scottish citizens would save up a whole months wage to purchase just one page of the newly translated English Bible. Martin Luther set it as his goal to read through the Bible 5 times a year-apart from his heavy preparation for his teaching and translating.

**BIBLE STUDY**

Bible study involves more in-depth analysis of the Bible than broad and diverse reading. In the SBS we will study each book in some depth—at the same time not overlooking the big picture of Scripture. As well, study of Scripture is slower and more tedious than reading. This makes it also more frustrating at times. In the Jewish Tradition, the faithful were taught that one should never say that he or she was “reading the torah.” The proper statement was always, “study the torah.” The reason for that is the rabbis always felt that the proper attitude to address the Scriptures was always one of careful reflection and not merely a look at the Bible as literature—to be read like Homer or Shakespeare. This Jewish tradition differs significantly from Christian tradition where the great teachers of the church have always encouraged both broad cursory reading and in-depth study. Again, this emphasizes how far away from the rest of Church history we are in the 20th century church when we consider that less than 10% even read it. The SBS uses the Inductive Bible Study method which is an amalgamation of several different study styles employing both sides of the brain and encouraging various learning styles.

**MEDITATION**

Meditation is a thoroughly Jewish/Christian practice rooted all the way back 3,500 years in our tradition. Unfortunately, even fewer Christians meditate on God’s Word than study it. One teacher estimated that less than 1 in 10,000 Christians deliberately meditate on God’s Word as a part of their daily spiritual discipline. Again, this is far from the tradition of the reformers, and the great early fathers of the church. Living a life apart from meditation is a 20th century practice without historical roots in either the Catholic or the Protestant traditions. In fact, when 20th century Christians hear about meditation they usually think about new-age practitioners doing weird things. A great way to stay spiritually fresh is to practice 15 minutes a day of Bible meditation. (See my book “Hooked on the Word” for a lot more information about Bible Meditation) People fry in the ministry because they are spiritual burned out. Meditation is a great way to help one avoid such burn out.
1. **Have a quiet time** - relationship with God & meditating on what you’re learning.

2. **Get yourself a prayer partner(s)** – classmates and/or staff
   - Don’t panic if you “hit a wall.” Depend on the Holy Spirit to bring you through.

3. **Go to worship times & church.**

4. **Ask God to give you opportunities to share** with someone what you are learning.

5. **Be proactive with your health** – get 7-8 hours of sleep a night, workout, eat right, watch the caffeine and sugar intake.

6. **Balance work & social.** Remember why you came. It is important to build relationships but if this becomes priority you will look back on the school with regrets. Get everything out of this time that God wants for you.
   - If you work well with others then find yourself a study group. Ones that will help to keep you focused as well as meet the need for people time and discussion.

7. **Make schedules and stick to them.** Find a system that works for you.

8. **Encourage each other.**
   - Guard against complaining.
   - Be thankful instead. There is always something to be thankful for.
   - If you have a concern or complaint go and see a staff person rather than pulling others into it with you. Help each other with this, “Do I need to hear this? Have you gone to a staff person or the person that you have a complaint against?”

9. **Sabbath Rest.** Take Sundays off (or some time). Do something that refreshes you.

10. **Don’t sin.**
    - Don’t cheat
    - Not doing all your readings and saying that you have.
    - Looking at dictionaries/commentaries/study Bibles for your horizontals or for interpretation helps on the outside. For the times that you do go to other sources always state where you got your information.
      - Don’t get drunk
      - Etc.
INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

♦ Interrogating the Bible .................................................................13
♦ Inductive & Deductive Approach ..............................................17
♦ Three Steps of Inductive Bible Study........................................18
It’s Supposed to be the Other Way Around.
by John H. Stek

Some years ago, a father of ten children deserted his family to become an evangelist. His warrant for doing so? Luke 14:26: “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.”

The man had obviously isolated this verse from the whole of Luke’s testimony and so had convinced himself of the rightness of an action Jesus would have abhorred.

I have seen a condolence card that does less damage but betrays the same misuse of Scripture. It quotes Job 11:16-18 under the heading “To Comfort You”: “You will surely forget your trouble, recalling it only as waters gone by...” The promise has the ring of comfort until you read the rest of the passage. It is part of Zophar’s not-so–subtle accusation “If you put away the sin in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent, then...”

The voice of God

Many of us do not know how to listen to the voice of God in Scripture, because we are trained to view the Bible as a series of verses strung together like pearls on a string, each having its own meaning in itself. We were trained to resort to that treasure trove whenever we felt a need for something from it, plucking the gem that satisfies our quest at the moment.

Ideally, we respond receptively to God’s message. But usually we do not come to the Word ready to listen. Isolated verses have become “God’s will” for us in the circumstances, or they serve as magic words that we use on God to try to manipulate him, or as levers that we employ to get what we want from God. When this is done to rationalize hate-filled motives, the gospel itself is violated. But even when it is done with good intentions, we hamper ourselves from truly hearing God’s word.

Ironically, a long-standing tradition in Bible publishing and certain popular Christian practices has contributed to this “string of pearls” notion of the Bible.

About the time of the Reformation, with its great renewal in Bible study, a numerical grid of chapters and verses was imposed on the biblical text for the sole purpose of facilitating quick and accurate reference. Unfortunately, this tool eventually created misunderstanding. Many who do not know the origin and purpose of the chapter and verse numbers got the impression that they belonged to the original manuscripts and indicated the actual units of composition.

When Bible publishers began printing each verse as a paragraph, readers were further misled into believing that each verse is self-contained. These editorial and layout judgements—originally made at a publishing house and then perpetuated through publishing tradition—have contributed to incorrect notions about the text.

Interrogating the Bible

Some common practices of pastors and Christian teachers have probably had even more impact in creating the “string of pearls” view: the widespread practice of preaching on a single verse, creating devotional readings that jump from verse to verse for the day, memorizing individual verses in Sunday school, devising Bible studies that move through the text verse by verse as if each were a separate unit for study, and studying the Bible topically.

Single-verse memorization has contributed to the problem by giving both Christians and cultists handy tools for propping up their preconceptions. “The truth shall make you free” (John 8:32) is one of the most widely quoted lines in the Bible. I have heard it quoted by sectarianists, claiming that their particular notions are the “truth” that sets people free. I have even heard it on the lips of agnostics, asserting that science provides the “truth” that frees the people from the shackles of religion.

And the well-known proverb, “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Prov.22:6), has troubled many godly parents. They forget that it comes from Proverbs and understand it as though it came from the Law or the Prophets.
They mistakenly hear the “Train...” clause as a commandment and the “when he is old...” clause as a prophecy. They forget that as a proverb this verse offers godly counsel that adults usually reflect the training they received as children.

Topical study has also been enormously influential. “What does the Bible say about...” is the way people often come to Scripture. They use a concordance to find biblical references to the topic under investigation. Then the verses supposedly pertaining to the topic are plucked from the contexts and assembled, and conclusions are drawn.

The misuse of Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias and topical study aids such as a chain-reference Bibles has contributed to the problem. Most theological books are also topically oriented. Theologians want to present what the Bible says about the Trinity, providence, or whatever their special interest is. Having used the topical method of interrogating the Bible, they furnish “proof- texts” to warrant theological assertions. Thus a topical grid as artificial as the numerical one is imposed on the Bible-often with the same misleading results.

We rightly view the Bible as an authoritative book, offering us knowledge of God and his will. But we then tend to use it as we use other authoritative texts, such as the Encyclopaedia Britannica, rather than as a unified narrative of the story of salvation.

Are we interested in information on drunkenness? We turn topically to Barnlett’s Familiar Quotations to find what various wits uttered. We turn topically to Roget’s Thesaurus to find synonyms crude and clever. We turn topically to the Merck Manual to discover alcoholism’s physical symptoms and some suggested treatments.

And we turn to a Bible concordance to find God’s opinion on drink and drunks. But the result of topical investigation is that the authentic message of the Bible’s authors is sometimes suppressed.

**We set the agenda**

Every time we turn to Scripture to ask, “What does the Bible say about...”(and almost every time a preacher searches the Bible for “a text about...”) we set the agenda for Scripture’s speaking. We raise the questions. We control the dialog, allowing the Word of God to speak only to our momentary interests. We do not shut our mouths before God and open our hearts to listen to what God’s Spirit has to say to us.

We can also silence Scripture by the counterfeit kind of listening practiced in too many “Bible study” groups. I read a verse (or a few verses) and ask myself(or someone else): “What does that verse say to you – right now as you hear it?” Most answers provide little more than data for a psychological study of the answerer.

The verse triggers in the hearer an association that reveal more of the respondent than of the Spirit. Our spirits speak, and the Spirit of God is shut off.

I sometimes ask my students in a seminar course on the Former Prophets, “For what might you turn to the book of Joshua?” The responses usually include “to find out what the Bible says about war”, “to learn the boundaries of the various Israelite tribes”; “to read about the life of Joshua”, “to find illustrations of the sovereign working of God”, “to glean some biblical example of obedience and disobedience and their consequences.”

Indeed, one can find in Joshua materials in some way relevant to those questions. But to assume that the author wrote Joshua to serve such purposes is for the reader to control the Bible’s speaking. To use Joshua in this manner is indeed to use it, not to listen to it.

I then ask my students to do something shocking in its simplicity. I tell them to read Joshua from beginning to end in one sitting, to listen closely as the author weaves his narrative, to note how his story begins and how it ends, to pay close attention to the episodes he includes and how each of them contributes to the
outcome, to observe the narrator’s art and the subtle clues he gives to his message, to consider at each stage of reading what the author perceives to be at stake.

I advise them that if they would be hearers of the Word they must let the author of Joshua have his whole say before they presume to know whereof he speaks. And they must all the while be silent and open, letting the author lead them where he will. They must not try to anticipate what he will say.

(Preachers who rummage through the Bible to find texts on which to hang topical or biographical sermons are often guilty of substituting their word for the biblical Word. That such erroneously conceived sermons may motivate people to do good is not an argument against the patient listening to Scripture. Instead, it only confirms an old Dutch proverb that “God can strike a straight blow even with a crooked stick.”)

The translators and editors of the contemporary translations of the Bible seek to achieve a style and layout that invites extended reading of the Bible. As one of the translators of the New International Version, I hoped that many readers would do what they had never done before, namely, read even the longer books of the Bible in one sitting—especially the narrative books (including Job), the Epistles, and Revelation. Only thus would they be reading these books as the authors intended.

To be sure, after a thorough reading of a book, one may focus on smaller passages for close study, meditation, and memorization. Afterward, one may come with questions. Afterward, one may assemble “what Scripture has to say about...” But one should do all this only after having heard the authors out. Let the authors of Scripture set the agenda.

Should no study aids be used—Bible dictionaries, encyclopedias, concordances, commentaries, study Bibles? Surely they should. But they are to be aids for informed reading. They may not, they cannot, become substitutes. There can be no topical summaries that can serve in the place of the Bible—not even if the topics assembled are all “theological.” Whatever study tools one employs, they must be used solely to illumine “what the Spirit has to say to the churches” (Rev. 2-3) through the biblical texts.

Too often we have interrogated the Bible. Too often we have used the Bible. If we would hear the voice of God, we must assume the attitude, and learn the art, of listening to the text the way the authors wrote it.

Christianity Today Oct. 3, 1986
THE INDUCTIVE APPROACH

1. Your conclusions evolve out of what you have observed, seeking to lay aside preconceived ideas.
2. This approach seeks to let the Scriptures speak for itself.
3. This approach studies the Scriptures in context.

THE DEDUCTIVE APPROACH

1. In the deductive approach one comes to the text with a thesis and then seeks out passages to support the thesis.
2. One is dictating to the Scriptures rather than letting the Scriptures speak.
3. One has already, to a certain extent, drawn conclusions before reading the whole text of Scripture in context.
THREE STEPS OF INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

1. OBSERVATION: What does the text say?

2. INTERPRETATION: What did the text mean when it was written? 
   (exegesis) (Meaning to the original readers or hearers)

3. APPLICATION: How does the truth of this passage/book apply to 
   the 21st century? (hermeneutics)

These steps need to be done in their consecutive order. Observation is the foundation and should be done first, followed by interpretation and ending with application. Thorough observation leads to good interpretation and good interpretation leads into life changing application. (See section on “Building”)

BEGIN WITH PRAYER, THE HOLY SPIRIT IS YOUR TEACHER
OBSERVATION

♦ Observation – Introduction .................................................................21
♦ Explanation of Observation...............................................................22
♦ Example Questions for Examining......................................................25
♦ Figures of Speech ..............................................................................27
♦ Types of Literature found in the Bible................................................28
OBSERVATION IS LOOKING AT WHAT THE TEXT SAYS.
Observation is not determining what the text means but simply looking for the "facts" without interpreting them.

THERE ARE TWO PARTS OF OBSERVATION:
I. Noticing
II. Examining

Reading through the text you "notice" things, for example that a word is repeated. Then you continue to "examine" that repeated word and ask further questions like "How often is this word repeated?", "How is this word used?", "In what context is it used?". Examining will help you to thoroughly observe and analyze the text.

LOOK, LOOK, LOOK…Take time for observation. Reading a passage for the first time you will notice a few things. When you read it a second time you will see more… In order to do good observation you need to Look, Look, Look…until looking becomes seeing. (Howard Vos, Effective Bible Study Methods)

On the following pages you will find:
- List of observations: things you can look for and observe.
- List of example questions for examining.
- For examples of noticing and examining see section on "Building".
### EXPLANATION OF OBSERVATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBSERVATION</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Find repeated words.</td>
<td>- Gal: grace, law</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Find repeated ideas and themes.</td>
<td>- 2 Thess: Suffering, Second Coming</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Observe key words. They are key because their meaning is essential in understanding a passage. Sometimes repeated.</td>
<td>- Gal: justification</td>
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</table>
| 4. Observe who.  
- Main characters, people, people groups, author, audience. | - Titus 1:10-12: Circumcision Party, Cretans  
- Titus 1:1: Paul, a servant of God |
| 5. Observe pronouns.  
- I, you, she, they, mine, yours, his, their, who, me, etc. | - Mark 13: Interchange between you and they |
- Events that are taking place.  
- Order of these events. | - Titus1:5: where is Crete?  
| 7. Observe geographical locations on a map. | - Eph 2:6 "...and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus..."  
- Eph 1:4 "...he chose us in him before the foundation of the world...",  
- Matt 27:63: "After three days I will rise again."

| 8. Observe where. | - Eph 2:6 "...and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus..."  
- Eph 1:4 "...he chose us in him before the foundation of the world...",  
- Matt 27:63: "After three days I will rise again."

| 9. Observe when/time element.  
- Before, after, during, while, then, until, when, etc. | - Eph 2:6 "...and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus..."  
- Eph 1:4 "...he chose us in him before the foundation of the world...",  
- Matt 27:63: "After three days I will rise again."

| 10. Observe verb tenses. with | - Eph 2:4-5 "But God...made us alive together  
- Christ" (Past tense)  
- Col 1:24 "Now I rejoice in my sufferings..." (Present tense)  
- 2Tim 4:4 "...will turn away from listening to the truth" (Future tense)  
- Philemon 14: "...not by compulsion but of your own free will."  
- Col 3:5-17 Put to death/Put on.  
- Titus 1:5-16 Character of elders/character of circumcision party. |
| 11. Observe contrasts.  
- Simple contrasts can be identified by the conjunction "but".  
- Broader contrasts of ideas, people, events. | - Eph 2:4-5 "But God...made us alive together  
- Christ" (Past tense)  
- Col 1:24 "Now I rejoice in my sufferings..." (Present tense)  
- 2Tim 4:4 "...will turn away from listening to the truth" (Future tense)  
- Philemon 14: "...not by compulsion but of your own free will."  
- Col 3:5-17 Put to death/Put on.  
- Titus 1:5-16 Character of elders/character of circumcision party. |
12. Observe **comparisons**.
   - Often comparisons are introduced by the words like or as.
   - Also look for comparisons of ideas, events, attitudes, etc.
   - Phil. 17 "...receive him as you would receive me."
   - Ezek 16:48 "your sister Sodom and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done."

13. Observe **conditional statements**.
   - If... (then...)
   - Gal 6:3 "For if any one thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself."

14. Observe **connectives** that reflect reasons, results, and conclusions.
   - Therefore, yet, however, likewise, so then, nevertheless, so that, because, for, etc.
   - Phil 2:8-9 "...and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him..."
   - Phil 2:25-26 "I have found it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, for he has been longing for you all..."

15. Observe:
   - **Commands**
     - Phil 2:14: "Do all things without grumbling or questioning..."
   - **Advice**
     - 1 Tim 5:23: "No longer drink only water, but a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments."
   - **Promises**
     - John 4:14: "...but whoever drinks of the water I give him will never thirst..."n
   - **Warnings**
     - Phil 3:2: "Beware of the dogs, beware of evil workers..."
   - **Predictions**
     - Mark 13:26: "And then they will see the Son of man coming in the clouds..."

16. Observe the **author's logic** in his argument. (see also "Progression")
   - Hebrews: Jesus is superior to prophets, to angels to Moses, etc.

17. Observe **progression**.
   - Does author move to a climax?
   - General to specific?
   - Question to an answer?
   - Statement to an illustration?
   - Teaching to application?
   - Problem to solution?
   - Mark 2:1-3:6 several confrontations between Jesus and Pharisees ending with the climax that they want to kill Jesus.
   - 1Cor 12:7-11 "To each is given a manifestation of the Spirit" followed by the different gifts.
   - Gal 3:23-4:7 statement "We were confined under the law" followed by several illustrations.
   - Eph 1-3 = Teaching, Eph 4-6 = Application
   - 1Cor 5:1-13 - v.1 gives the problem, rest gives the solution.

18. Observe **laws of composition** the author uses. (see section on "Laws of Composition")
   - Mark 11:11-33 Interchange between Temple/Fig tree

   - Eph 1-3 Theology passage begins & ends with praise.

20. Observe **questions and answers**.

   - Mark 10:2-9 Pharisees asked Jesus "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" followed by the answer.
   - Gal 3:19 "Why then the law?" followed by the answer.

21. Observe **illustrations**.

   - Gospels: Parables
   - Prov 6:6-8: Ants.

22. Observe **Old Testament** quotations.

   - Gal 3:6 - "Abraham 'believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness'."  

23. Observe **Figures of Speech**.

   (See section on "Figures of Speech")

   - Matt 23:27 "You are like whitewashed tombs"  
     = Simile

24. Observe **summary statements** the author makes.

   (not writing your own summary statements)

   - Num 1:45: "So, the whole number of people of Israel…was 603,550"

25. Observe **emphatic statements**.

   - Mark 12:43 "Truly, I say to you…"

   - Truly, behold, indeed, I tell you, I Paul, verily, etc.

26. Observe **lists**.

   - Gal 5:22-23 "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace...gentleness, and self-control."

   - A list has 3 or more elements

27. Observe **atmosphere, moods, and emotions**

   - Gal 3:1 "O foolish Galatians!"

   - Gentle, joyful, angry, rebuking, etc.

28. List **things you do not understand**.

   - Col. 2:18: self-abasement.
   - 2 Thess 2:2: man of lawlessness.
## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINING

| 1. REPEATED WORDS | How often repeated?  
In what context is it used?  
What is said about it? |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 2. THEMES/REPEATED IDEAS | What is said about the theme?  
What are the different aspects?  
(E.g. “Suffering” Who is suffering? When are/will they suffer? How?  
What kind of suffering? Reason for suffering? Result of suffering?) |
| 3. KEY WORD | Does the author define it? |
| 4. WHO | What is said about the person/people group in the text? |
| 5. PRONOUNS | To whom does the pronoun refer?  
Is a certain pronoun repeated often?  
Is there a change of pronouns?  
Does the author include himself? |
| 6. WHAT | What events are taking place?  
What is the order of events? |
| 7. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION | What is said about it in the text? |
| 8. WHERE | What is said about it in the text? |
| 9. WHEN/TIME ELEMENT | Is it past, present, future?  
Does it show an order of events? |
| 10. VERB TENSES | When do certain events take place? (Past, present, future?) |
| 11. CONTRAST | What/who is contrasted?  
Is the contrast throughout the paragraph/section/book? |
| 12. COMPARISON | What/who is compared?  
Is the comparison throughout the paragraph/section/book? |
| 13. CONDITIONAL STATEMENT | What is the condition?  
What is the result? |
| 14. CONNECTIVE | What is being connected?  
What does the connective refer back to?  
Does it show a reason?  
Does it show a result?  
Does it show a conclusion? |
| 15. COMMANDS, ADVICE,... | Who is giving the command, advice etc.?  
Who is it directed to? |
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| 16. **AUTHOR’S LOGIC** | How does the author show his train of thought?  
What laws of compositions does he use? |   |
| 17. **PROGRESSION** | Does the author move to a climax?  
General to Specific?  
Question to answer?  
Statement to illustration?  
Teaching to application?  
Problem to solution? |   |
| 18. **LAWS OF COMPOSITION** | What law of composition is used? |   |
| 19. **BEGINNING & END** | Are they addressing the same subject?  
Are there repeated phrases or ideas? |   |
| 20. **QUESTION & ANSWER** | Who is asking the question?  
Who is answering? |   |
| 21. **ILLUSTRATION** | What is illustrated?  
Is it from every day life/personal experience?  
Is it a quote from Scripture?  
Is it a quote from other sources? |   |
| 22. **O.T. QUOTATIONS** | How does the author use the quote?  
To support his argument? As illustration? |   |
| 23. **FIGURE OF SPEECH** | What F.O.S. is used? (see “Figures of Speech)  
How does the author use it?  
What is the mood that goes along with it? |   |
| 24. **SUMMARY STATEMENT** | What is author summarizing? |   |
| 25. **EMPHATIC STATEMENT** | What is the author emphatic about? |   |
| 26. **LIST** | What is the list about?  
Are there categories within the list?  
Is the list complete/exhaustive?  
What is missing in the list? |   |
| 27. **ATMOSPHERE** | What atmosphere words are used?  
Is there a change of atmosphere? |   |
| 28. **THINGS YOU DON’T UNDERSTAND** | What does the text say about it? |   |
FIGURES OF SPEECH

SIMILE - A direct comparison of two things that are essentially different. Characterized by use of: like, as, and so
Example: James 1:10-11, S.o.S. 2:2-3, Matt. 23:27

METAPHOR - An indirect comparison of two things. Asserts that one thing is another. Substitution of the name of one thing for another. Like a simile but the connectives of like, as and so are left out.
Example: Gal. 2:9 - "pillars", Prov. 23:27, Matt. 3:7 - "you brood of vipers"

ALLEGORY - An extended metaphor that has the form of a story.
Example: Literature - Pilgrim’s Progress, Screwtape Letters, Scripture –Gal. 4:21-31

ANALOGY - A rather full comparison showing several points of similarity between unlike things.
Example: John 15:1-9 - "vine and branches"

IRONY - Implies something different, even the opposite of what is stated. Used for the effect of humor or sarcasm.
Example: I Cor. 4:8 and 6:5

PERSONIFICATION - The attribution of life or human qualities to inanimate objects.
Example: Prov. 9:1-3, Prov. 8, Gal. 3:8

APOSTROPHE - Addressing or speaking to things, abstract ideas or imaginary objects.
Example: I Cor. 15:55 - "0 death, where is thy sting?"

HYPERBOLE - Exaggeration, not with the intent to deceive but to emphasize and intensify an impression.
Example: Gal. 4:15 - "You would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me." Mark 9:43 - "If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off..."

RHETORICAL QUESTIONS - These are questions posed for which the author doesn’t expect an answer.
Example: I Cor. 1:13 - "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you?" Matt. 7:16 - "Are grapes gathered from thorns?"

LITOTES - The use of understatement. It is the opposite of hyperbole and is often used as irony.
Example: Acts 15:2 - "no small discussion"

METONYM - The substitution of one term for another.
Example: Rom. 3:30 - "Circumcision" for "Jews", Gal. 3:19 - "Seed" for "Jesus"

SYNEDOCHE - Part of something is mentioned but the whole is meant.
Example: Gal. 1:16 - "Didn’t confer with flesh and blood", James 4:8b

EUPHEMISM - The substitution of a mild, indirect or vague expression for a harsh, blunt one. Euphemisms are used to indirectly discuss such topics as bodily functions, anatomy or unpleasant topics.
Example: Gen. 4:1, Is. 7:20, Deut.28:56,57.

ANTHROPOMORPHISM - The practice of describing God in human terms as if he has hands, feet, a face, etc.

TYPES - A type prefigures something or someone to come. A prefiguring symbol such as an Old Testament event prefiguring an event in the New Testament: the Passover foreshadows Christ’s sacrificial death (I Cor. 5:7). It is best to have the type explicitly mentioned in the New Testament.
Example: Romans 5:14,1 Cor. 15:45, John 3:14,15.

SYMBOLS - Something that stands for another meaning in addition to its ordinary meaning. It is usually a visual image that represents an invisible concept. In interpreting symbols one is not free to impose his own interpretation but he must discover the author’s intention by taking into consideration the culture, principles of interpretation, the overall message of the book and in many cases the author’s own specific definition.
Example: Rev. 1:12,20.
The Bible is a unique collection of books. Not only is it written by different authors at different times, but it also displays a variety of literary genres. In order to interpret correctly you need an understanding of these different types of literature.

On the following pages you will find an introduction to the different types of literature in the Bible and some suggestions how to interpret them.

1. Old Testament Narratives
2. Old Testament Law
3. Hebrew Poetry
4. Prophecy
5. Wisdom
6. The Four Gospels
7. The Parables of Jesus
8. Epistles or Letters
9. Book of Revelation (Apocalyptic Literature)
10. Suggestions for studying Eschatology

by JULIAN SPRIGGS - SBS ENGLAND
A) **What are Biblical narratives?**

They are stories about certain events and certain people, and above all about God, God at work in His creation and among His people. He is always the hero. These stories are true, and because we tend to use the word “story” to describe fiction, the word “narrative” is used.

B) **Three levels of Biblical narratives**

1. Universal
   - Plan of God: creation, fall/sin → plan of redemption → Christ → Eternal life

2. God’s Community:
   - History of Israel → Church

3. Individuals:
   - Abraham/Moses → Paul

C) **What narratives are not**

- They are not just stories of events that happened in the past, but records of how God worked through and with people to bring about His purposes. Each story does have main characters and a plot, but the hero is always God.

- They are not allegories or stories filled with hidden meanings

- They do not always teach directly (explicitly), but indirectly (implicitly) through the experiences of others.
  
  e.g. David’s adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband, Uriah (2 Sam 11). Explicit teaching about adultery and murder is found in Ex 20:13,14
  
  “You shall not kill/You shall not commit adultery”
  
  Implicit teaching about them is found in 2 Sam 12 when Nathan confronts David.

- They are not to be dissected so that each episode will have a moral all its own, a special message to the reader. Rather, they must be looked at as a whole. Look for the main point of the narrative.
  
  Remember: God’s ultimate purpose is to have relationship with man, and for man to have relationship with Him. These narratives describe the working out of this purpose.

D) **How to get the most out of OT narrative**

**Observe** what is going on. Read the narrative as a whole. Do not select verses at random and put them together as they were never intended to be.

**Interpret** narratives using these ten principles:
1. They do not usually teach doctrine directly
2. They usually illustrate doctrine(s) taught elsewhere
3. They record what happened, not what should have happened, so there is not always a moral
to the story.
4. What people did was not always a good example for us.
5. Most characters in the OT are far from perfect.
6. We are not always told whether the actions in the narratives are good or bad – we are
expected to judge from teaching elsewhere.
7. All narratives are selective and incomplete, so don’t impose a meaning if you can’t see one.
8. They were not written to answer all our theological questions – they have specific, limited
purposes.
9. Narratives may teach explicitly or implicitly. The latter needs are, prayer and guidance of the
Holy Spirit. We must take out of the narrative, not read into it.
10. God is the Hero of all Biblical narratives.

There is only one main interpretation: - what the author understood and what he meant the
original audience to understand.

Apply what you have learned to your own life. There are many possible applications. For example, the
narrative of David and Bathsheba reinforces the commandments not to commit adultery and not to
murder. It can also show us how easy it is for us to judge others while being blind to our own sin.

The suggestions in this section can also be applied to the book of Acts, which gives a selected account
of the growth and spread of the early church from a totally Jewish base in Jerusalem to a predominantly
Gentile church centered in Rome.
A) What is it?

In the NT, references to “the Law” sometimes refer to the first five books of the Bible (The Pentateuch), sometimes to the whole of the OT, but mostly to the body of laws contained in the Pentateuch from Exodus 20, Leviticus, Numbers to the end of Deuteronomy.

B) Why was it written?

God had set apart a people for Himself to fulfil a special role in His plan of redemption. From this people was to come the Messiah. Therefore God wanted this people to be different, not superior, but different from all others, and to be a light to the Gentiles, so He gave them the Law.

It can be divided into two aspects:

Ritual laws – how to worship God (e.g. Ex 29:10-12)
Civil laws – how to treat others

These two aspects mirror the two greatest laws, to love God and to love your neighbor.

The Law was never designed to enable man to gain salvation and be accepted by God. However, it was designed to show:

- How sinful man is and so his need of God
- How man cannot keep the law on his own and so his need of God
- How merciful and gracious God is

C) In what style was it written?

It was written in the terms of a covenant. There are three types of covenant:

Parity Covenant: this is a covenant between equals. Two parties negotiate and arrive at the terms of the agreement. It is a partnership, like the marriage covenant.

Suzerainty Covenant: the whole book of Deuteronomy is structured after this type of covenant. This is a covenant that is imposed on the lesser party. A king would take certain obligations and the people would take on certain obligations. Yet this covenant is not between equals. It is a commandment and the lesser party has no choice but to accept the covenant, and if they break it, they are transgressors. For example, in Ex 24 Moses reads the Covenant to the people, and in 24:7 the people take an oath to obey it.

Promissory Covenant or Covenant of Grace: this is a legally binding promise given from one side only. In the case of the Abrahamic and the New covenant it is from God's side.

D) Guidelines for reading the Law of the OT

*Do see the OT Law as God's fully inspired word for you.

Don’t see it as God’s direct command to you.
• Do see the OT law as the basis for the Old Covenant, and therefore for Israel’s history. 
  Don’t see it as binding on Christians in the New Covenant except where specifically renewed.

• Do see God’s justice, love and high standards revealed in the OT Law. 
  Don’t forget to see that God’s mercy is made equal to the severity of the standards.

• Don’t see the OT Law as complete. It is not technically comprehensive. 
  Do see it as a model providing examples for the full range of expected behavior.

• Don’t expect the OT Law to be cited frequently by the prophets or the NT. 
  Do remember that the essence of the Law (particularly the two chief laws) is repeated in the 
  prophets and renewed in the NT.

• Do see the OT Law as a generous gift to Israel, bringing much blessing when obeyed. 
  Don’t see it as a grouping of arbitrary, annoying regulations limiting people’s freedom.

Remember: OT Law is pointing towards the need for the Messiah and was never intended as a 
means of salvation.

E) How does the Law apply to Christians?

We must see the Law as a custodian until Christ came, as Paul says (Gal 3:23,24). Christ has come 
and so it is no longer our custodian. Jesus has fulfilled the Law (Mt 5:17) and states the two laws 
upon which the whole law is based (Mt 22:34-40).

The book of Hebrews gives us insight into how Jesus has fulfilled the Law, as a comparison is made 
throughout between the Law and Jesus. Jesus is always shown to be superior.

In Heb 10, the writer compares the daily sacrifice offered by the priests, which could never take 
away the sins of the people but only remind them of their sinfulness, which Jesus’ once for all 
sacrifice for sins (10:11,12).

A useful exercise to understand fully what the writer of Hebrews is saying, and what the 
implications of the Law are, would be to read Hebrews – Leviticus – Hebrews.
More than a third of the Old Testament was written in poetic form. Only Leviticus, Ruth, Esther, Haggai and Malachi contain no poetry. Hebrew poetry was first recognized in 1753. Before then no distinction was made between poetry and prose (no poetry in KJV). The RSV was the first English version of the Bible to print poetry laid out as poetry.

In all languages, poetry is the means of expressing more directly, emotionally and intensely the longings of the human heart. Poetry is easier to remember than prose. Poetry is the language of the heart, expressing moods of joy and despair. It contains many figures of speech, so don’t take it too literally. Images are created using metaphors, comparisons and hyperbole that are used to express spiritual truth.

Poetry helped people express their feelings to God (both positive and negative). It is often a deep expression of struggles and joy in life. Questions are often asked, asking whether God has become silent, is ignoring the author, or whether his love has ceased. These are exactly the types of questions we ask when going through a hard time.

Poetry and songs were most often the author’s response to a situation in his life. For example, David’s response when he heard of Saul and Jonathan’s tragic death is a song of lament (2 Sam 1:19-27).

**Parallelism**
The key to Hebrew poetry is parallelism, rather than meter or rhyme. Parallelism is when a poetic line consists of two parts. The two parts run parallel to each other in one way or another and correspond with each other. It can be known as “thought rhyme”, balancing thought against thought.

There are two basic forms, all others are a variation on these:

1. **Synonymous**
The second line of a poetic verse repeats the thought of the first line in different words. Ps 19:1:

   “The heavens are telling the glory of God”
   and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.”

2. **Antithetic**
Two portions of a verse stand in contrast, often the second line is a negative statement giving force to the positive affirmation in the first line. The second line often starts with “but”. This is particularly common in Proverbs, Prov. 15:1

   “A gentle answer turns away wrath
   but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Is 1:3 gives both of these forms in one verse:

“The ox knows its owner,
and the ass its master’s crib’
but Israel does not know,
my people does not understand.”
A) Which are the prophetic books?

Major prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel
Minor prophets: The last twelve books of the OT

The terms “major” and “minor” are given according to the length of the books and not to do with how important they are, they are all of equal importance. Prophetic books mainly record the words of the prophet, some give us glimpses of his life history.

B) What does prophecy mean?

Prophecy does involve predicting future events (future to the original readers), but this was only a small aspect of prophecy, and not the prophet’s main purpose. Many Christians mainly look to the prophets for predictions about what is still to happen in our future. The following shows how dangerous this can be:

*Less than 2% of OT prophecy is Messianic (about Jesus)
*Less than 5% specifically describes the New Covenant age
*Less than 1% concerns events yet to come

So, most of the prophesies have already been fulfilled.

C) What is the function of prophecy?

The prophets exhorted God’s people to remain faithful to the Covenant, and so be blessed, and to warn them of the punishment if they did not. Much of the prophet’s work was to repeat the blessings and curses of Deut 28. The prophet acted as a spokesman from God to His people, to speak God’s word of:

*Judgement on the ungodly (sword, famine, disease), calling for true heart repentance – religiosity was not enough.
*A promise of future hope to the faithful remnant. The promise was:
   1) physical restoration after the exile and
   2) spiritual restoration when Messiah came.

D) How should we interpret the prophecies?

We must look at them in historical context, knowing what state Israel or Judah was in politically, economically and spiritually. Remember that they were words from God into a specific historical situation in the nation of Israel or the surrounding nations, and can only be understood in that context.

To find out the historical background, read:
*The relevant chapters in Kings and Chronicles
*Articles in Bible Dictionaries
*The introduction to commentaries

**Remember:**
*Most predictive prophecies have already been fulfilled.*
*They addressed the situation of people of the time they were written, and pointed them forward to the Messiah.*
*Most prophecy is in poetry, containing many figures of speech, similes, metaphors and hyperbole.*

God is the one who makes a promise to man. It is not a two-way agreement – it is one sided, God-sided. God makes it, swears to it, fulfills it and man just receives the benefits of it.
The three main books in this category are Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes. Wisdom literature also is found in other parts of the Bible, especially in the Psalms and Habakkuk.

A) What is wisdom literature?
   It was written as a result of life’s experiences. It was common in many of the countries in the East other than Israel, where wisdom was discussed and argued from observations of life, but wisdom in the Bible must include a fundamental understanding of God and His ways. The underlying theological truth is the Fear of God.
   The wise men were very practical, their wisdom is about how to live life, not how to theorize about it. The authors were seeking to become wise and these books contain the results of their searching.

B) How do we read wisdom literature?
   The books need to be read as a whole to see their context. There are two types of wisdom literature to consider:

*Practical Wisdom – Proverbs*
   Proverbs are short pithy saying giving observations or practical guidelines for successful every-day living, showing the regularities both in nature and in human conduct. Proverbs are observations of life, not promises of prosperity and health. The setting of the book is of a father giving advice to his son, encouraging him to seek wisdom rather than folly. They essentially ask the question what or how?
   Each proverb does not give the whole truth, as the proverbs were written to be memorized. The same subject is covered again and again, each time with a slightly different slant.

*Speculative Wisdom – Job and Ecclesiastes*
   The perplexities of human existence are contemplated at a deeper level, where the popular generalizations of Proverbs fall short of giving adequate answers. More difficult questions are asked about the meaning of life or the problem of suffering. These books essentially ask the question why?

   **Job**
   This book is a long argument about suffering. The “friends” of Job state that he is suffering because he must have sinned. Job says he has not sinned, but he doesn’t know why he’s suffering. In the end God honors Job’s honesty and condemns the friends’ platitudes. There are many lessons to learn on how to be alongside someone who is suffering.

   **Ecclesiastes**
   This book, in the form of a monologue, is about a man looking for meaning to life. He was tried just about everything and nothing satisfies his longing for fulfillment. The climax of the book sums up the search for the meaning of life “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (12:13).
A) What are they?
They are narratives describing the life and teaching of Jesus recorded by his followers.

B) Why were they written, and why four?
All four gospels give a biography of the life of Jesus and His teaching. None of them is complete, nor do we have a complete picture if we interweave all four together. Each writer selects, from tremendous resources, the material that will portray the Jesus that he wants us to see, and writes in the way his hearers will understand.

From their reading of the OT, the Jews were expecting a physical and political kingdom with an all-conquering king. Each of the gospel writers is concerned to show that Jesus brought in a spiritual kingdom with the Son of God as the servant King, who does not have a physical kingdom, but reigns in the kingdom of each heart.

So, the purpose of each writer was not to give a full biography of Jesus, nor to give an exact chronology of events and sayings or exact dates, but to give witness to who Jesus was and to explain the nature of the kingdom He brought.

Therefore, it is essential when reading each gospel, to consider
• The cultural and historical setting that surrounded Jesus.
• The setting of the author's original readers.

C) Who are they written to?
The usual suggestions for the original readers for each of the gospels are:

*Matthew
the Jews
Jesus is the fulfillment of messianic prophecy.
Jesus is the Messiah.

*Mark
Roman believers
(There is much about suffering, maybe to encourage persecuted believers in Rome under Nero).
Jesus is the suffering servant.

*Luke
Gentiles
An orderly account with themes like prayer, women, the Holy Spirit, and the poor.
Jesus is the Savior of Sinners.

*John
All people
That we might believe that Jesus is the Son of God (Jn 20:31).
7 signs, 7 “I am’s”
Jesus is the Son of God.

Note that each gospel is anonymous, but there are clues in each one which indicate who wrote it.
A) What are they?
There are three types:

*The true parable
It is a story with a beginning, a plot and an ending.
E.g.: The Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37).

*A similitude
A picture, taken from everyday life, to make a point.
E.g.: The sower and the seed (Mark 4: 1-20).

*Similes and metaphors
Simile: The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed (Mt 13:31,32).
Metaphor: You are the salt of the earth (Mt 5:13).

B) Why did Jesus use them?
Parables were a generally accepted way of teaching. They were used to stress one particular point and demanded a response from the hearer. They were not meant to be obscure or have hidden meanings.

E.g. The Parable of the Vineyard (Lk 20)
Jesus is talking to the chief priests and scribes and so the parable is addressed to them, and they knew it! (Lk 20:19)

Remember, Jesus never told parables in a vacuum, but to a particular audience. Also note that Jesus revealed the true nature of the kingdom of God through parables.

C) How do we interpret them?
To understand them we need to discover:

*The background in which Jesus was telling the parable
*Who were the people listening
*Details of the pictures Jesus used
*Identify the unexpected turn to the story, which often reveals heart attitudes. E.g.:
   The resentment in the elder son when his younger brother comes home and so much fuss is made of him (Lk 15:25-31)

D) How not to interpret them
Do not allegorize them, finding deep spiritual significance in each detail of the parable. They were intended to make ONE main point and demanded a response by the listener.
We usually write letters with a specific purpose in mind and then add other pieces of information too. The NT letters are similar; there was a reason for writing them.

A) The form of letter writing

The NT letter writers used a Christian version of the Greek style of letter writing that was used throughout the ancient world:

* The name of the writer
* The name(s) of the recipient(s)
* A greeting
* A prayer of thanksgiving
* The body of the letter
* The final greeting and farewell

Not all of these are present in every letter.

B) How should we read them?

Observe what they are saying. Just as you would read a letter from beginning to end, so read the epistles as a whole.

Interpret the epistles in their historical context:
Who were the original readers?
Why was the letter written to them?
What was written specifically to their situation?
What was going on in their church?
What problems were being addressed?
How would they have responded?
What would apply to all time?

Apply the eternal truths to our situation.
Remember the cultural gap – they were written to a Mid-Eastern culture 2,000 years ago.
A) Basic and most important question:
What did this book mean to the original readers? (exegesis).
Most popular books on Revelation do not ask this question. John and the first readers would have understood the book.

B) What (who) is this book about:
The correct title is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1). Keep in mind that the book is primarily about Jesus Christ.

C) What type of literature is it? (another essential question to ask)
1. Apocalyptic (see below)
2. Prophecy A word from God to be obeyed (1:3), not primarily a prediction of the future.
3. Epistle (letter) A vision given to John to be written down and sent to 7 real churches in first century Asia.

The book of Revelation is rooted in the Old Testament. Although there are no quotations, there are constant allusions to OT images.

D) Apocalyptic literature:
A very popular Jewish style of literature between 200 BC and AD 100, but unknown to us today. The message was expressed in vivid or bizarre symbolism, claiming to be a revelation from an angel to a great figure of the past (Abraham, Moses, etc). They expressed the conviction that although times are currently difficult, God will finally intervene and destroy evil, bringing in the Messianic age. (Tracts for hard times). The writers were very pessimistic about the present world, looking to God for deliverance.

Revelation is not a standard apocalyptic book, but shares some of the characteristics of apocalyptic literature.

Revelation and apocalyptic literature used symbols to express spiritual truth, not to frighten or confuse, but to aid understanding. Symbolic language conveys a deeper meaning than everyday language can, but to understand the symbols, we need to know their context. We should ask, “What truth is conveyed by the symbol?” We assume pictorial symbolism and try to picture them, which leads to confusion. They were designed to make us think.

One characteristic of the book of Revelation is that John helps us in explaining many of the symbols he uses. We must look for these explanations and use them as a basis for interpretation.

Most problems in interpreting Revelation come from an over-literal interpretation, especially with the numbers. Most, if not all the time, numbers are used to express concepts, rather than statistical units. Only a few different numbers and their multiples are actually used in the book:

4
7 (3 ½)
12 (24, 144, 144,000)
10 (1000)

In apocalyptic literature, numbers had standard meanings.
3 The divine number (of the Trinity)
4 The created world, or universe (4 corners of earth)
7 The perfect number (3 + 4) God's completeness, perfection, fullness or totality. The OT is full of sevens, as is Revelation.
10 The complete human number, worldly power
12 God's covenant community (3 x 4) (12 tribes, 12 disciples)
6 Falling short of perfection

E) Key words
Look for references to the readers experiencing suffering and martyrdom because of their testimony to Jesus. Notice the calls to faithfulness to Jesus. Notice also that although God's people will experience tribulation, they will never experience the wrath of God, which is reserved for unbelievers and those who persecute the church.

F) Historical background
What problems were facing the 7 churches?

1. Jewish hostility
2. Infiltration by false teachers
3. Caesar worship

The cult of Caesar worship was strong in late first century Asia. The current Roman emperor was claimed to be an incarnation of a god, and all citizens were required to worship the emperor. Once a year, all people had to go to the Roman temple, burn a pinch of incense to Caesar and say “Caesar is Lord”. This obviously caused problems to the Christians who could only say, “Jesus is Lord”. The choice was to worship Christ OR Caesar, remember John was in prison on the isle of Patmos because of his testimony to Jesus (1:9).

In revelation, John lets his readers look behind the events of the day to see the spiritual situation. John shows that Satan inspired the lie that the emperor was God to deceive the whole population of the Roman Empire. The empire is personified as a beast demanding worship, inspired by the dragon, Satan.

G) Fundamental message for all time:
Conflict comes whenever the state demands worship and allegiance that is only due to God and the Lamb. The beast is a picture of anti-Christian government in all times – The Roman government for John's times and many others since. The Christians are called to a faithful testimony to Jesus.

The book of Revelation brings the encouraging message to those being persecuted that despite present appearances, God is in control of history and of the church. Even though the church will experience suffering and death, it will be triumphant in Christ, who will judge his enemies and save his people.

H) Key verse of book
17:14 They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.
Eschatology is a Greek word meaning the study of the last things, Jesus’ second coming, the final judgement and the new heaven and new earth.

A) Where do we get our ideas of eschatology?

We need to get our ideas from the Bible, rather than primarily from books, tapes, magazines or teaching from people, these need to be tested (1 Thess 5:19-22). Our knowledge and prophecy is imperfect (1 Cor 13:9-12).

B) How should we approach the biblical passages on eschatology?

7 principles:

1. Keep in mind the two basic purposes of teaching on eschatology:
   • A call to a holy and blameless life (2 Pet 3)
   • A comfort to those suffering in this life

2. Start with the clear passages. Then with that light approach the more difficult passages. Don’t start with Daniel and Revelation, but with the gospels and Paul.

3. The priority of NT over OT. Use the searchlight of the NT to study the OT, rather than the candle of the OT to study the NT. See how the NT writers saw fulfillment of prophecies, especially those concerning the nation of Israel (Amos 9:11-12, Acts 15:16-17).

4. Remember that prophecy is always clear after its fulfillment (the prophecies concerning Jesus’ first coming were not fully understood until after the event). In looking at eschatology, we are looking to the future – so no one can be dogmatic. No one knows what exactly is going to happen.

5. In studying Daniel, Revelation and other difficult books, as in all books, remember the basic principle of interpretation. What did this mean to the author and the original readers?

6. Be aware of apocalyptic language, where symbolic language is used to describe spiritual things.

7. Do not build a big doctrine on something that is only mentioned once, or only obscurely. For example, the Millennium is only mentioned ONCE. Build your doctrine from things that are mentioned frequently and consistently in more than one book, and in NT as well as OT.
KNOWING THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF A BOOK IS NEEDED TO DO GOOD INTERPRETATION.

- It will give information about the situation of the reader/hearer and the author. It will help us understand why the author wrote the book and how the original reader/hearer would have understood it.
- Answering the Basic Required Information – questions (B.R.I.) will give you a good overview of the Historical Background.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

In answering the B.R.I. questions you always need to look at Internal Evidence first. After that you can look at External Evidence.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE

- In the book itself
- Other books of the Bible that might help.

Make sure you write down the verse reference of where you got the information.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

- Bible Dictionaries/Encyclopedias
- History books
- Books about customs and culture
- Atlases
- Class handouts

♦ Use two or more external sources; different dictionaries and encyclopedias will show different opinions.
♦ ALWAYS give credit to your source!

Put your answers on a separate sheet of paper. Label clearly the questions and answers.
- As you read through the text, mark verses that will help you with the Historical Background.
- You have to do the B.R.I. before you start your vertical charts because it will be key in interpreting the book. If needed you can add or change information after you are done charting.
- Support and defend your answer. Dialogue with external sources, don’t just copy it.
1. Critical Method
   For each question, look internally first, then externally. After that form a conclusion and state the reason for arriving at that conclusion.
   a. Who wrote the book?
   b. When was it written?
   c. To whom was it written?
   d. From where was it written?

2. Historical Method
   a. What is the historical setting of the book? What is the cultural situation of the reader and/or hearer (if applicable) regarding:
      i. Politics
      ii. Religion
      iii. Social
      Look internally first to find all clues, then look externally.
   b. If it is an Epistle, when was the church founded?
      Look internally, then externally. Form a conclusion.
   c. Who makes up the church?
      Look internally in the book being studied as well as from other books of the NT (ex. Acts)
   d. What are their strengths and weaknesses?
      Look internally in the book being studied as well as from other books of the NT (ex. Acts)

3. Literary Method
   What are all the types of literature that are used in this book? Give the specific references where each is found.
   If there are other notable forms of literature used, please give an example.

   If it is an epistle, identify the elements of an Ancient Greek Letter.
   - name of author
   - name of recipient
   - greeting
   - prayer of thanksgiving
   - body of the letter
   - final greeting and farewell

4. Survey Method
   Please do not use external sources.
   a. What is the main idea of the book?
   b. What is the major reason that the book was written?

   [For the Gospels and Acts you don't have to answer 2 b-c-d]
1. **Critical Method**
   For each question, look internally first, then externally. After that form a conclusion and state the reason for arriving at that conclusion.
   a. Who wrote the book?
   b. When was it written?
   c. To whom was it written?
   d. From where was it written?

2. **Historical Method**
   Look internally first to find all clues, then look externally.
   a. What was God doing in Israel’s history at this time? (Original Hearer) Look at these different aspects:
      i. Political
      ii. Religious
      iii. Social
   b. What is the political, religious, & social situation of the Original Reader?

3. **Literary Method**
   What are all the types of literature that are used in this book? Give the specific references where each is found.
   If there are other notable forms of literature used, please give an example.

4. **Survey Method**
   Please do not use external sources.
   a. What is the main idea of the book?
   b. What is the major reason that the book was written?
1. Critical Method
   For each question, look internally first, then externally. After that form a conclusion and state the reason for arriving at that conclusion.
   a. Who wrote the book?
   b. When:
      1. were the prophecies spoken?
      2. were the prophecies written/compiled?
   c. Audience:
      1. To whom were the prophecies spoken to? (original hearer)
      2. For whom was the book written/compiled for? (original reader)
   d. From where was it written?

2. Historical Method
   Look internally first, then refer to external sources.
   a. What is the political situation:
      1. World Powers
      2. Israel or Judah’s political situation
      3. Alliances or important battles
   b. What is the religious situation in Israel, Judah, and surrounding significant nations?
   c. List any contemporary prophets.

3. Literary Method
   What are all the types of literature that are used in this book? Give the specific references where each is found.

4. Survey Method
   Please do not use external sources.
   a. What is the main idea of the book?
   b. What is the major reason that:
      1. the prophecies were spoken?
      2. the book was written/compiled?
1. Critical Method
   For each question, look internally first, then externally. After that form a conclusion and state the reason for arriving at that conclusion.
   a. Who wrote the book?
   b. When was it written?
   c. To whom was it written?
   d. From where was it written?

2. Literary Method
   What are all the types of literature that are used in this book? Give the specific references where each is found.

3. Survey Method
   Please do not use external sources.
   a. What is the main idea of the book?
   b. What is the major reason that the book was written?
In the Inductive Approach to the Bible there are various methods of Bible study that can be used. Below is a list of 10 methods, most of which we will use in each book we study.

1. **SURVEY METHOD**
   Reading through rapidly and getting the overall impression, the big picture. What are the recurring words, ideas, persons, and events? What is the style and atmosphere of the book? You should do at least three readings just getting the overall view and main idea of the book.

2. **ANALYTICAL METHOD**
   This is an examination of the separate parts.
   - Browse a book
   - Define divisions
   - Select sections or segments
   - Probe paragraphs
   - Search sentences
   - Weigh words
   - Trace themes

3. **SYNTHETIC METHOD**
   This is the opposite of the analytical method, which looks at the book in detail. This is similar to the Survey Method in that after you have looked at book in detail, you then look again at the overall view, the big picture, in light of the study you have done on the detailed passages, seeing a theme(s) throughout the book.

4. **CRITICAL METHOD**
   Who wrote the book? To whom was it written? When was it written? Date? What is the reason for writing the book?

5. **HISTORICAL METHOD**
   Understanding the book in its historical context. What is the historical setting and what is life like at that time? For example, if it is an Epistle, when was the church founded? Who makes up the church? What are their strengths and weaknesses? Try and recreate the setting and atmosphere of the time.

6. **COMPARITIVE METHOD**
   This is taking one passage of Scripture and comparing it with another passage because Scripture interprets Scripture.

7. **TOPICAL METHOD**
   a. Biographical
   b. Theological
   c. Psychological
   d. Geographical
   e. Political
   f. Cultural
   g. Sociological
   h. Scientific

8. **LITERARY METHOD**
   What kind of literature is the book or passage?
   The two large groups are:
   - **PROSE**: Prose is the plain speech of mankind or the ordinary form of written or spoken language. Prose is the medium used in newspapers, novels, magazines, etc.
   - **POETRY**: One third of the Old Testament is Hebrew poetry, which makes use of parallelism and figures of speech. Meter and rhyme are not characteristics of Hebrew poetry. Poetry is written in stanza form.
   (See section on "Types of Literature" for more details.)

9. **RHETORICAL METHOD**
   This is the use of figures of speech to communicate concepts.
   (See section on "Figures of Speech")

10. **DEVOTIONAL METHOD**
    Same as Application.
    (See section on "Application")

Taken from: James Sire, *Scripture Twisting*, IVP.
INTERPRETATION IS DETERMINING WHAT THE BOOK OR PASSAGE MEANT WHEN IT WAS FIRST WRITTEN.
Interpretation is not what it means to the 21st century reader.

With interpretation you need to consider:
★ Author
★ Original Reader – the people to whom the book was written
★ Original Hearer – the people that were present when the actual events took place and heard the words that were spoken. (E.g. the people who heard Jesus teach)
There will not be an Original Hearer for each book.
★ Historical and Cultural Background.
★ Literary context.

INTERPRETATION BUILDS ON THE FOUNDATION OF OBSERVATION.
★ Thorough observation results in better interpretation.
★ Observation focuses on "What does the text say?"
  Interpretation builds on that and asks "Why is this said?"
★ For more information and examples of how to build your interpretation on your observation see section on "Building".
We have completed a list of questions, which you can ask, that will aid you in moving into the second step of Bible study. You can apply these questions in an overview fashion to the whole book or to specific passages, sections or segments.

1. What are the **author's concerns, convictions, and emotions**?

2. What are the **original reader's/ hearer's concerns, questions, struggles, problems, emotions, strengths, and weaknesses**?

3. Ask **meaning** questions.
   - Meaning to the original reader/hearer?
   - Meaning of Figure of Speech?
   - Meaning of a word, term or concept?
     Look at context of passage and book, other writings of author, concordance, word study books etc.

4. What is the **Historical Background**?
   - What is the situation of the reader/hearer? (see #2)
   - What events took place that are relevant to the reader's situation and when did they take place?
   - Are there political and geographical factors that need consideration?
   - Are there cultural issues that need consideration?

5. Bombard the text with **Why-questions**.
   - Why is this said?
   - Why is this repeated?
   - Etc.

6. What does this **imply**?

Consider the **Literary context**. Context is the connection of thought that runs through a passage.
- **Ask questions like**: How does a certain passage fit with the rest? What is the author’s train of thought? How does he build his argument? How and why does author use certain Laws of Composition.
- Context needs to be considered on various levels:
  a. **Immediate**: the surrounding verses
  b. **Section**: within the section of the horizontal
  c. **Book**: how does it fit within the big picture of the book? What was the author’s purpose for writing the book?
  d. **Bible**: How does it fit within the big picture of the whole Bible?
    - Scripture interprets scripture. Scripture will not contradict scripture.
    - Use clear passages of Scripture to interpret obscure passages.
1. Does the author give his own interpretation? Does he interpret his use of symbols? Does he state why he wrote the book?

2. When the author quotes Scripture, look up the quoted passages and observe their context. Why does he use this passage? Does it prove a point, illustrate a truth, support the author’s argument or contribute to the emotion of the passage?

3. Have I taken into consideration the type of literature and how it should be interpreted?

4. Is this literal or figurative (Figures of Speech) language? Interpret accordingly.

5. Have I committed one of the 20 reading errors? (See "A Brief Definition of 20 Reading Errors")

6. Read the book or passage in a different translation.

7. Interpret the Scripture in a simple fashion. Do not treat the Scripture in a mystical fashion. Interpret the Word of God in a natural, normal sense as you would any other book. This means that you do make allowances for different types of literature, figures of speech and elements of composition.

8. It is very important to do thorough observation first. You must gather facts before making conclusions. Use material gained in observation to back up your interpretation. If you’re having difficulty with interpretation, go back and do more observations.

9. Consult Bible Dictionaries, atlases and historical background resource material for unanswered questions or more information.

10. Consult a commentary. **Do this last.** Use the commentary as a tool, not a crutch. Dialogue with the commentary. What did you learn from the commentary? Do you agree of disagree with the author’s conclusion?
A WORD STUDY IS NOT:

1. Only looking up the usage of a word in a concordance.
2. Only listing the passages in an orderly manner and preaching on them.
3. Only looking up the Greek or Hebrew meaning in a Bible word book or Dictionary.
4. Only praying over and preaching about the essence of what one has found.

A WORD STUDY IS:

• Doing all four tasks listed above PLUS:

5. Noting all significant contexts where the word is used:
   Immediate (10 verses before and after)
   Segment
   Section
   Division
   Book
   Author
   The Testament
   The Bible

   DESCRIBE THE CONTEXTS!

6. Classifying and comparing the contexts

7. Classifying the different ways used in the different context

8. Concluding - Give a good basic definition of the word as it is used.

9. Apply the word where it is applicable in your situation.
EXAMPLE WORD STUDY - “HOSPITALITY”

1. **Look up the uses of the word in a concordance:**
   - Romans 12:13 “Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality."
   - 1 Timothy 3:2 "Now a bishop must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sensible, dignified, hospitable, an apt teacher."
   - Titus 1:8 "but hospitable, a lover of goodness, master of himself, self-controlled;"
   - 1 Peter 4:9 "Practice hospitality ungrudgingly to one another."

2. **List the passages in an orderly manner:**
   Romans 12:13
   1 Timothy 3:2
   Titus 1:8
   1 Peter 4:9

3. **The Greek meaning** is a combination of 2 words meaning a "love of strangers."
   Vine’s Greek Word Book (dictionary) or an Exhaustive Concordance will show this. In the concordance, look up the number (next to the listing in the verse list of the concordance). Then go to the back of the concordance and find the Greek definition.

4. **The significant contexts are:**
   a. **Context** for Romans 12:13
      **Immediate:** 10 verses before and after this passage discuss both Christian duties toward one another. Spiritual gifts, faith, prophecy, love and teaching precedes this passage. Blessing persecutors, submitting to government authority and paying taxes follows.
      **Segment:** Basically the same as the immediate context.
      **Section:** Chapters 12 and 13 comprise this section. Both of these chapters discuss broad Christian responsibilities without the great specificity of Chapters 14 and 15.
      **Division:** This half of the book from 12:1ff describes proper Christian conduct based on the way that God has been merciful to the Christian. Due to that mercy, the Christian must also be merciful to others by showing hospitality. Hospitality is a good work based on the fact that God has already been merciful to us by saving us.
      **Book:** Hospitality flies squarely in the face of the way Jewish and Gentile Christians were treating each other in the city of Rome.
      **Author:** Paul mentions hospitality 3 times in 3 different books.
      **Testament:** In the context of the whole New Testament, hospitality is another outworking of the love of God in our lives. God’s love is practical.
      **The Bible:** Both Testaments encourage us to practice hospitality.

   b. **Context** for 1 Timothy 3:2:
      **Immediate:** Paul moves from talking about church services to qualifications for church leadership. The following 10 verses discuss the same thing.
      **Segment:** The segment also is the same as the immediate context for this one.
      **Section:** Sections are difficult for 1 Timothy.
      **Division:** Same as section
      **Book:** The gist of 1 Timothy is behavior; thus hospitable behavior is appropriate to talk about in a book discussing Christian behavior.
      **Author:** Same as Romans.
      **Testament:** Same as Romans.
      **Bible:** Same as Romans.

   c. **Context** for Titus 1:8
      **Immediate:** Before this passage Paul is discussing the same things here as in 1 Timothy 3.
Although there is more of a diatribe against false teachers in this passage. Hospitality is a contrast to the false teachers.

Segment: This is the same as the immediate context for this passage.
Section: Basically the same as the segment for Titus.
Division: Same as segment and sections.
Book: Titus portrays grace making good deeds. Thus hospitality is one of the good deeds that true teachers of the gospel perform.
Author: Same as Romans.
Testament: Same as Romans.
Bible: Same as Romans.

d. Context for 1 Peter 4:9
   Immediate: Peter describes many elements of Christian conduct in all of chapter 4. Hospitality is simply another correct thing for Christians to do in the midst of suffering, as this is the context for 1 Peter. This is very similar to Romans.
   Segment: This whole segment is discussing conduct.
   Section: Same as segment except for closing statements.
   Division: Same.
   Author: This is the only place that Peter mentions hospitality.
   Testament/Bible: Same as above.

5. Classifying and Comparing Contexts
Geographic comparison and contrast: these letters targeted Four areas. They are Ephesus, Rome, Crete and a broader unspecified region in the Roman Empire.

Ephesus and Crete were very similar in cultural background and setting. Both were deeply involved in cultic witchcraft and there was not much persecution in either area when Titus was sent to Crete and when 1 Timothy was written to Ephesus.

Rome ruled the world. The background for Romans was one of cultural diversity and strong racist tendencies. Thus, hospitality called for an end to racism.

1 Peter went to a broader unspecified location in the Roman Empire. Persecution existed there.

The dates for the books were:

- Romans - 57 AD
- Titus - 57 AD
- 1 Timothy - 64 AD
- 1 Peter - 64 AD

During the earlier dates there was relative peace in the empire with not a lot of persecution toward the church except from the Jews. The last date marked a heavy persecution of the church by the Roman government due to Nero’s craziness.

- Romans deals with racism.
- 1 Peter deals with suffering.
- Titus deals with the effects of grace.
- 1 Timothy discusses proper conduct in the household of God.

Although there are similarities in the contexts, these seem to be four different situations.

6. Classifying the different usages in the different contexts. It appears that there are three main usages for hospitality in these four different contexts.
   1. The right thing to do as a Christian (Romans, 1 Peter.)
   2. A mark of leadership in the Church (Titus, 1 Timothy.)
   3. A pragmatic help to suffering Christians (1 Peter.)
7. Concluding
A good basic definition of hospitality: To care for and show love for strangers (usually in a practical way.)

8. Application
It is especially important for me as a person in a place of spiritual responsibility to show God's hospitality for people. This is not only practical but it also brands me as a Biblical ministry.
A BRIEF DEFINITION OF 20 READING ERRORS

1. Inaccurate quotation – A Biblical text is referred to but is either not quoted in the way the text appears in any standard translation or is wrongly attributed.

2. Twisted Translation – The Biblical text is retranslated not in accordance with sound Greek scholarship.

3. The Biblical Hook – A text of Scripture is quoted primarily as a device to grasp the attention of readers or listeners and then followed by teaching which is so non-Biblical that it would appear far more dubious to most people had it not been preceded by a reference to Scripture.

4. Ignoring the Immediate Context – A text of Scripture is quoted but removed from the surrounding verses, which form the immediate framework for its meaning.

5. Collapsing Contexts – Two or more verses, which have little or nothing to do with each other, are put together as if one were a commentary on the other.

6. Over-specification – A more detailed or specific conclusion than is legitimate is drawn from a Biblical text.

7. Word Play – A word or phrase from a Biblical translation is examined and interpreted as if the revelation had been given in that language.

8. The Figurative Fallacy – Either mistaking literal language for figurative, or mistaking figurative language for literal language.

9. Speculative Readings of Predictive Prophecy – A predictive prophecy is too readily explained by the occurrence of specific events, despite the fact that equally committed Biblical scholars consider the interpretation highly dubious.

10. Saying but not Citing – A writer says that the Bible says such and such but such not cite a specific text (which often indicates that there may be no such text at all).

11. Selective Citing – To substantiate a given argument, only a limited number of texts are quoted: the total teaching of Scripture on that subject would lead to a conclusion different from that of the writer.

12. Inadequate Evidence – A hasty generalization is drawn from too little evidence.

13. Confused Definition – A Biblical term is misunderstood in such a way that an essential Biblical doctrine is distorted or rejected.

14. Ignoring Alternative Explanation – A specific interpretation is given to a Biblical text or set of texts, which could well be or have been interpreted in quite a different fashion, but these alternatives are not considered.

15. The Obvious Fallacy – Words like, obviously, undoubtedly, certainly, “all reasonable people hold that” and so forth are substituted for logical reasons.

16. Virtue by Association – A person associates his or her teaching with the teaching of figures accepted as authoritative by traditional Christians.
17. **Esoteric** (understood by or meant for only a select few) **Interpretation** – Under the assumption that the Bible has a hidden esoteric (private, secret) meaning which is open only to those who are initiated into its secrets, the interpreter declares the significance of Biblical passages without giving much, if any, explanation for his or her interpretation.

18. **Supplementing Biblical Authority** – New revelations from post-Biblical prophets either replaces or is added to the Bible as authority.

19. **Rejecting Biblical Authority** – Either the Bible as a whole or texts from the Bible are examined and rejected because they do not square with other authorities, such as reason or other revelation.

20. **World View Confusion** – This is cultural misinterpretation and misapplication of Biblical passages.

Source: James Sire, *Scripture Twisting* p. 155ff, IVP
APPLICATION

- Application – Introduction ..............................................................................................65
- Application – The Goal of Bible Study ...........................................................................66
- Personal Application Questions .......................................................................................71
- Broader Application Questions .......................................................................................72
- Final Application Options ...............................................................................................73
APPLICATION: HOW DO THE TIMELESS TRUTHS OF THIS BOOK OR PASSAGE RELATE TO MY LIFE IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

APPLICATION BUILDS ON YOUR OBSERVATIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS.
- The quality and depth of your application will depend on quality and depth of your observation and interpretation.
- With application you take the observations and interpretations and determine what the Timeless Truths are. (See "Application: The Goal of Bible Study")

APPLICATION IS THE GOAL OF BIBLE STUDY!
The Scriptures demand a response and changed lives. Application is looking into the mirror of the Scriptures and walking away a changed person.

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But he who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer that forgets but a doer that acts, he shall be blessed in his doing." ~ JAMES 1.22-25
The Goal of Application

As we immerse ourselves in Scripture, our goal is to develop within ourselves the mind and heart of God. We want to be able to think and to respond to every situation the way God himself would. As we renew our minds with Scripture, being careful to put its teachings into practice, we are transformed from spiritual caterpillars to beautiful butterflies that reflect the grace and glory of Jesus Christ.

The 3 Steps of Application

Step 1: Understanding the Original Situation

- God's Word is Timely
  He spoke to specific situations, problems, and questions. Throughout the Bible God becomes personally involved in people’s lives. He doesn’t offer pious platitudes but rather speaks directly to their needs in ways that are appropriate to their situations. This is good because we are given examples that are concrete rather than abstract. But the concrete nature of Scripture also creates problems. Our situations, problems, and questions are not always directly related to those of the Bible. Therefore, God’s word to them does not always seem immediately relevant to us.

- Timely, Yet Timeless
  Fortunately, Scripture is not only timely but timeless. Just as God spoke to the original audience, so he still speaks to us throughout the pages of Scripture. Because we share a common humanity with the people of the Bible, we discover a universal dimension in the problems they faced and the solutions God gave them. Our job is to find out how to apply those passages that seem outdated and irrelevant, those which are so timely that they appear to have lost their timeless dimension, and how to apply those portions of Scripture that were written to questions, needs, and problems we no longer face.

- Becoming a Time Traveler: Crossing the Barriers
  a. Crossing the Time Barrier
     We often lack important information regarding the historical context in which the events of the Bible took place. Unless we understand this, we may hear what the author is saying, but we don’t know why he is saying it.
  b. Crossing the Cultural Barrier
     The events of the Bible took place in many different cultures: Egyptian, Canaanite, Babylonian, Jewish, Greek, and Roman (to name a few). It is not uncommon, therefore, to read about customs or beliefs that seem strange to us since they are so far removed from twentieth-century culture.
  c. Crossing the Geographical Barrier
     As we learn about biblical geography, many Bible passages take on new meaning. There are several ways to become familiar with biblical geography. Many Bibles include maps for the reader to consult. A good Bible atlas or a Bible dictionary can also supply valuable information about unfamiliar places.

Application: The Goal of Bible Study
**Crossing the Reading Barrier**
Our success in understanding the Bible will depend on how skillfully we are at reading. One aspect, therefore, of learning how to study the Bible focuses on acquiring reading skills-the kind of skills that will help us whether we are reading the Bible, a novel, a magazine, or a newspaper.

Some guidelines:
- Identify the Type of Literature.
- Get an Overview of the Book.
- Study the Book Passage by Passage.
- Be Sensitive to the Mood of the Book.

**STEP 2: FINDING GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

Learning to generalize is one of the most important steps in applying the Bible. When, on the surface, a passage seems to have little application to our situation today; we need to look beneath the surface for a general principle.

**Levels of Application**
The Bible contains many levels of application. These levels are like a pyramid, with only a few commands at the pinnacle and all the other commands at various levels between the pinnacle and the base. The principles at the top of the pyramid are fewer in number because they are more general and abstract. The commands nearer to the base of the pyramid are more numerous because they are more specific, detailed, and concrete. The commands sometimes seem pointless or obscure until we move up to the higher levels on the pyramid to discover the principles or reason for the commands. Conversely, the principles near the top of the pyramid often seem vague and abstract until they are fleshed out by the more concrete principles near the base. If we realize every passage of scripture is part of the larger biblical pyramid with its various levels, applying the Bible becomes much easier. If a passage appears too specific to apply to our situation, we simply move up a level, looking for a general principle to apply.

- Level 1: The Most Specific
- Level 2: More General
- Level 3: The Most General

**Finding General Principles: 3 Important Questions to Ask**

Question 1: Does the author state a general principle?
Question 2: Why was this specific command/instruction given?
Question 3: Does the broader context reveal a general principle?

**Principles Vs Proof-texts**
Finding general principles in Scripture is not the same as looking for proof-texts. Neither is attempt to tie up the truths of Scripture into neat little propositional packages. Rather, we look beyond the specific commands, examples, and promises of Scripture in order to seek the mind and heart of God. We want to grasp not only what God said (although that is extremely important) but also why he said it- Our passion is to develop a godly mindset, a worldview that is shaped by the broad scope of Scripture.

**STEP 3: APPLYING GENERAL PRINCIPLES TODAY**

**Common Errors in Application**
Many Christians simply don’t take the time to reflect on how a principle might apply to the situations they face. Others make the opposite mistake of applying a principle to situations for which they were never intended.
• **3 Options in Applying General Principles**

1. **Applying a principle to an Identical Situation**
   As we read the Bible, there will be times when the situation faced by the original reader is identical to our own.

2. **Applying a principle to a Comparable Situation**
   How can we know our situation is truly comparable to one in Scripture?
   - First we must identify the key elements which are common to both the original situation and the principle we wish to apply.
   - Then we must determine whether our situation contains each of the key elements.

3. **Applying a principle to a Different Situation**
   A contemporary situation must always be comparable to the original situation in one respect: both must share the same key elements found in the general principle. When we are looking for contemporary situations that are comparable to those in Scripture, we only need to be concerned about the key elements, not the superficial resemblance—or lack of resemblance—between our situation and the original one.

• **The Importance of Meditation**

Application begins on our knees. We must ask the Lord to reveal those areas of our lives that need to be transformed by His Word and His Spirit. This can happen through effective meditation which must be done both thoughtfully and prayerfully.

• **Asking the Broader Questions**

Unfortunately, many of us think only about our personal lives and in so doing blunt the full impact of Scripture. When you discover a biblical principle, be sure to ask the broader questions as well. How might the principle affect your church or community? Does it have any ethical or social implications? What about economic or political implications?

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**SPECIFIC TYPES OF APPLICATION**

**APPLYING BIBLICAL COMMANDS**

• **Old Testament Commands**

Rightly or wrongly, we often assume that some Old Testament commandments no longer apply to us while on the other hand, we feel certain that others are valid for today. To properly determine which are valid we need to understand some basic facts about the Old Testament:
   - We should first be aware of the fact that the Old Testament contains over 600 different commands. Most of these are found in the Pentateuch.
   - Second we need to realize that the Old Testament is the record of God’s covenant with Israel.

Some Guidelines for Applying Old Testament Commands:
   1. Is the command restated in the New Testament?
   2. Is the command revoked in the New Testament?
   3. What is the principle behind the Old Testament command?

Although we are no longer under the Old Covenant, we need to remember that the laws of the Old Covenant reflect God’s character. Therefore, the principles behind these laws should still be valid, even though some specific expressions of the laws may be obsolete.
• **New Testament Commands**
  Applying New Testament commands is simply a matter of following the guidelines already discussed. First we need to understand the original situation. Then we need to determine whether the situation is identical or comparable to today.

- **Getting to Specifics**
  For many New Testament commands we don't need to find general principles behind specific situations. Rather, we need to find specific situations to go with the general principles. When the commands are so general that they become abstract, we need to move down the levels of the pyramid to apply them to everyday situations we face. We need to think creatively about ways in which they might apply today.

→ **APPLYING BIBLICAL EXAMPLES**

Clearly there are many excellent examples in the Bible. The difficulty however, is knowing which examples we are to follow and which we should avoid. The method we use for applying a biblical example will depend on what kind of information the author gives you about the example.

  a. **Explicit Examples**
     The biblical author tells us explicit whether a person or group is a good or bad example.
  b. **Implicit Examples**
     The example does not include an explicit statement about whether the actions are right or wrong, but the author gives implicit approval or disapproval of what is done.
  c. **Other Types of Examples**
     Some biblical examples contain neither an explicit or implicit evaluation of a person’s actions. In such cases we need to rely on truths or principles taught elsewhere in Scripture. The biblical authors expect us to have at least a basic knowledge of God’s Word. In the Old Testament, it is assumed that the reader is familiar with the Law. In the New Testament, we are expected to know something about Christian theology and ethics. These assumptions on the part of the writers often explain why they don’t comment on a person’s actions. They expect us to know enough to draw our own conclusions.

  - **Biblically Endorsed Examples**
    Some examples are endorsed by later biblical authors who wish to illustrate a principle they are teaching.
  - **Unendorsed Examples**
    Other examples lack biblical endorsement. The original author did not intend them to function as examples, and they are not used in that way by other biblical authors.

→ **APPLYING BIBLICAL PROMISES**

• **Old or New Covenant?**
  Because we are no longer under the Old Covenant, we cannot assume that promises of that covenant directly apply to us. In fact, most of them do not. Such promises are usually associated with the blessings God promised the people of Israel if they obeyed His Law.

• **Promises vs Principles**
  We must realize that a principle is not the same as a promise. A principle is usually based on who God is—and God never changes; he is the same in both Old and New Covenants. But a promise is based on what God has said he would do or not do, and both the conditions and the recipients of His promise have sometimes changed greatly from the Old to the New Covenant.

• **To whom is the promise given?**
Before applying a biblical promise, we must identify the person or group to whom the promise was originally given. Most prophetic books were written directly to Israel and Judah. We cannot ignore the original audience and historical context of these books without serious danger of misapplying what we read.

ид 3 Categories of Promises directly intended for us:
1. Promises that are universal in scope
2. Promises given to the Church
3. Promises given to other groups to which we belong.

• Conditional or Unconditional
Once we conclude that a promise applies to us, we must also ask whether its fulfillment is dependent in any way on our actions or attitudes.

• Is the Promise qualified by other parts of Scripture?

• Proverbs vs Promises
In spite of appearance, most proverbs are not promises. They are wise sayings, principles that are generally true of life. Those who follow the advice given in Proverbs will have wisdom for dealing with the practical areas of life.

THE LIMITS OF APPLICATION

• Going beyond what God has revealed
It is dangerous to be dogmatic about what Scripture has not revealed.

• Issues not addressed in Scripture
As we look at God’s response to issues that are covered in Scripture, we will develop spiritual sensitivity to those issues which are not covered. Because the Lord has given us His Word and His Spirit, this need not be idle speculation or groping in the dark.

• Applications the author never intended
If an application does not arise out the divine and human author’s intent, then it doesn’t carry the authority of God’s Word, even though it may be helpful and insightful.

• Applications based on a faulty interpretation or logic

Information taken from Taking the Guesswork out of applying the Bible by Jack Kuhatschek. IVP
PERSONAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS

We have listed below three application questions that are taken from Josh McDowell's book, "A Guide to Understanding Scripture." You may apply the questions to the overall truths of the whole book or to a specific passage. Please write out your answers and be specific. This will take some time and waiting on God. Ask yourself "Where is God specifically encouraging me? Where is He asking me to change?" Don't take this step lightly.

1. What are the basic, timeless truths in this book or passage?
2. In view of these truths, what changes should I make in my life? Be specific.
3. How do I plan to carry out these changes? Be specific.
4. Commit these changes to the Lord in prayer.

If it is a didactic (teaching) passage or book then ask these questions (these will help to answer question #2):
- What am I to believe?
- Are there attitudes, actions or thought patterns that I need to change?
- What do I learn about my relationship with God, with people?
- What is the Good News for me?

If the book or passage is a narrative, then consider some of the following questions to get you thinking:
- What character do I identify with?
- What can I learn from that character’s life?
- What were his responses to God?
- Or perhaps a certain event in the book coincides with where you are in your walk with God.

PITFALLS IN APPLICATION
According to Josh McDowell, there are some pitfalls in application that one needs to be aware of:
1. Mistaking interpretation for application.
2. Having an emotional response to a Biblical truth but not following through to put the truth into action.
3. Frustration may develop from not seeing quick results and changes in one’s life.
After you have observed the text, interpreted it and determined what the Timeless truths are, it is important to take these truths and apply them in a specific way. The Timeless truths can be specifically applied in our own, personal lives (see last page) but you also need to look at the broader context of the church and society. The following questions are examples of areas of application and will help you to be specific in your application.

1. What effect could this truth have on the world of business?
2. How would this truth affect the way my church should function?
3. What difference should this truth make to the way we approach education?
4. What difference should this truth make for family life?
5. How does this truth affect the Christian’s relationship with government?
6. What would this truth mean for the worship life of the church/base?
7. How should this truth affect the attitude we have for the lost or our approach to mission and other religions?
8. Does this understanding help me deal with any of the complex issues of medical ethics?
9. How does this insight affect the way we look at the future?
10. What can I learn from this about the Christian’s responsibility in the area of social justice, to the poor, the homeless, the handicapped, refugees etc?
11. What can I learn about the Christian’s perspective of entertainment?

[Taken from seminar booklet - SBS England]
The final application time is designed as a time to process the things that we have learned while studying and letting God use those things to change our lives. Please do not rush this step.

1. **What are the timeless truths in this book or passage?**
   - Give the overall timeless truth of the book (give verse reference)
   - List 2 other timeless truths. (give verse reference) You will find these from your observations & interpretations on your charts.

2. **In view of these truths, what changes should I make in my life?**
   - Pick one of the above timeless truths to apply to your life.
   - If the timeless truth is an aspect of God’s character, then show how knowing this changes your life.
   - If you have recently gone through a similar life change and do not see anything else that you can apply right now, then record this and then show how it is still affecting your life today.
   - Also, you can go through the process of these questions thinking about how you would preach the timeless truth or how they relate to society in general or a specific country that is on your heart. (See Application Options)

3. **How do I plan to carry out these changes? Be specific**
   - Make this specific and doable. EX: The timeless truth is to be a servant and God is asking you to be open to taking other students’ work duties when they are busy. Don’t have for the plan that you are going to do five people’s work duties every week. Don’t set yourself up to fail. Ask God what he would have you do because then you will be able to do it.
   - A suggestion: If what you are wanting to change is very difficult for you, make yourself accountable to a friend. You then will have prayer support as well.

4. **Commit these changes to the Lord in prayer? Your strength to change.**

---

**CREATIVE PROCESSING ASSIGNMENT**

Upon completing the written portion of the final application, you must choose a way to creatively process what you are personally applying for the book. Below is a list of ideas, of which you are not limited to:

- Write a poem
- Can write a preach or teach
- Draw a picture. Somehow needs to communicate all three parts.
- Write a song
- Go out & do what you have thought you need to change. Record what you actually did?
- Build or mold something that would represent what you want changed.
- Discuss with a friend what you have learned and desire to change. Record the general idea of the conversation, who you had it with and for how long.
BUILDING

♦ Building – Introduction .......................................................................................... 77
♦ Example – Philemon ................................................................................................. 78
♦ Example – Titus 1:5-9 ............................................................................................... 79
The three steps of the Inductive Method – observation, interpretation and application – need to be done in their consecutive order. You cannot skip some steps but have to build one upon the other.

Observation is the foundation of interpretation and application. The quality of your observation will determine the quality and depth of your interpretation and application. Therefore it is very important to take time to do thorough observation before moving on to interpretation. The motto for observation is: Look, look, look until looking becomes seeing!

There are two parts to observation:
1. Noticing
2. Examining

For example; reading through the text you notice that a word is repeated. After noticing this you want to continue with observing and examine the repeated word.

Ask questions like:
- How often is it repeated?
- How is the word used?
- In what context?
- What are the contrasting ideas?
- Who is involved and how?

After thorough observation you can move on to interpretation.
- Interpretation is based on the observations so make sure you ask interpretation questions that specifically relate to the observation you did (see examples below)
- Ask more than one interpretation question. Ask questions that build on what has already been interpreted.
- Look at your observation from different angles: from the author’s point of view and from original reader’s point of view, ask the Why question etc.
- Always keep in mind the Historical Background and Literary context of the book.

After doing thorough observation and good interpretation it is fairly easy to determine the Timeless Truth and look at how we can apply it today.
For more helps with application see separate section on Application.
EXAMPLE – LETTER TO PHILEMON

OBSERVATION

Notice: Repeated words “beloved” “brother”

Examine:

♦ How often is it repeated? 2x 4x (vs1,16) (vs1,7,16,20)

♦ How is the word used?
Vs 1: Paul calls Philemon his “beloved fellow worker”
Vs 16: Paul says that Onesimus is “beloved brother” to Philemon
Vs 7,20: Paul calls Philemon his brother

➡ Paul calls both Philemon and Onesimus beloved and brother
➡ Paul tells Philemon that he will have Onesimus back as a beloved brother

INTERPRETATION

♦ What does Paul imply by calling them both beloved and brother?
  In Christ there is equality, it doesn’t matter that Onesimus is a slave and has “a past”

♦ What does this mean to Philemon?
  The way Paul loves Philemon is the way Philemon should love Onesimus. Philemon needs to forgive and accept Onesimus as his equal.

APPLICATION

TIMELESS TRUTH
♦ Equality in Christ; no one is worth more or less based on their past, or social status.

SPECIFIC APPLICATION
♦ Personal application: Do I see my brothers and sisters as equal or do I look down on them?

♦ Church: Is my church willing to accept and embrace the “outcast” of society as brothers and sisters?

Without examining the initial observation (repeated word) it would have been something like this:

Observation: repeated word “beloved”
Interpretation: Philemon feels loved by Paul
Application: we have to love our brothers and sisters.

You can see that there is a big difference in quality and depth of interpretation and application. It takes time to examine but it is time well spent!
EXAMPLE – TITUS 1.5-9

OBSERVATION

Notice: List
Examine:
♦ What kind of list?
  List of characteristics of church leaders
♦ Categories within the list?
  Vs 6: Family life needs to be in order
  Vs 7-8: Godly character
  Vs 9: Hold on to truth, not being swayed
♦ What is not included in this list?
  Experience, age…

INTERPRETATION

♦ Why does the family life need to be in order?
  An elder is not only to "look good" in church, but also at home.
  According to 1Tim 3.4: if a person is not able to manage his own family, how will he be able to manage a much bigger "family" (church)
♦ Why does elder need to have godly character?
  An elder has to lead by example. Bad leadership will reflect in the church.
♦ Why does Paul point out these categories?
  2:1-10 the Cretans had problems with living a godly lifestyle, they need good examples
  1:10-16 There are false teachers…elders have to be able to stand firm against this and teach sound doctrine.
♦ Relevant Historical background?
  1:5: implies that the churches in Crete are young churches
  ➡ they need discipleship in the basics.
  ➡ not grounded in sound doctrine, so easy for them to be deceived by false teachers.
♦ What are Paul's concerns?
  Paul has heard about the false teachers coming in…Paul wants them to be dealt with before they do more damage. He also wants that the new believers will be discipled.
♦ Meaning to Titus?
  Titus will be leaving Crete (3:12): he needs to appoint leaders for the churches. This list will help Titus to select church leaders.
  ➡ This is not necessarily wrong interpretation and application but there is a lot more to see!!
HORIZONTAL CHART

- Structure & Composition .................................................................83
- How to Draw a Horizontal ..............................................................84
- Horizontal Lay Out .........................................................................85
- Horizontal Samples .........................................................................86
- Books of the Bible – Number of Verses .............................................87
EIGHT LEVELS OF STRUCTURE:
- Words in phrases
- Sentences
- Paragraphs
- Segments
- Sections
- Divisions
- Books
- Old and New Testament

EIGHT KINDS OF STRUCTURE:
Use this in thinking through your horizontal chart. The following are various ways that an author may use in organizing his material.

1. GEOGRAPHICAL - places (Acts, Joshua)
2. CHRONOLOGICAL - time and events (Genesis, Luke)
3. BIOGRAPHICAL - persons (Judges, Ruth)
4. TOPICAL - ideas (Jeremiah, Matthew)
5. LOGICAL - ideas, a progression of thoughts (Romans, Galatians)
6. EPISTOLARY - letter
7. ANTHOLOGY - collections (Proverbs)
8. DIALOGUE - discussion (Job, Habakkuk, Malachi)

LAW OF COMPOSITION:
These reflect an author's style; they are trademarks of how the author expresses himself or arranges his material. The Laws of Composition are to be discovered by the reader, not imposed upon the text.

1. COMPARISON - alike (Romans 7:1-6)
2. CONTRAST - unalike (Acts 4:36-5:1)
3. REPETITION - the word “holy” in Leviticus, Paul’s testimony in Acts.
4. PRINCIPALITY - emphasis and de-emphasis (Attention to what is stated and what isn’t. Note the amount of space the Gospels devote to the last week of Jesus’ life on earth)
5. CONTINUITY - progression (Similar to repetition but with some variation. Example: the three “lost” parables in Luke 15).
6. CLIMAX - everything builds to a high point (Job, Revelation, Ecclesiastes)
7. RADIATION - central point or theme and everything ties into it (Philemon v.10 and Phil.2:1-11).
8. INTERCHANGE - topic begins with Subject, goes on to Subject B, then back to Subject A again. (Example: Luke 1-3: A. John’s birth announced, B. Jesus’ birth announced, A. John born, B. Jesus born. Another example: opening chapters of 1 Samuel.)
9. CRUCIALITY - pivot or turning point (Mark 8:27-30, 2 Samuel 11-12).
10. HARMONY - unity, everything fits together (Hebrews; centers around the superiority of Christ.)
11. INTERROGATION - asking questions (Romans 6-7, Habakkuk, and Malachi).
12. GENERAL TO SPECIFIC - 1 Cor: the book begins by talking about wisdom in general terms and then moves into the specific lack of wisdom in the Corinthian church.
13. PROBLEMS & SOLUTION - author lists the problems and then gives the solution. Eg, Galatians
14. THEOLOGICAL TO APPLICATION - author presents the theological portion of his work before he goes into application (Galatians).
**HOW TO DRAW A HORIZONTAL CHART**

1. Determine the number of verses in the book - See handout.
2. Count the number of squares on your graph paper from top to bottom.
3. Minus five squares for the top and five squares for the bottom. This will give you the number of usable squares.
4. Divide the number of usable squares by the number of verses in the book. Round to the nearest decimal. For example:
   - 45 usable squares
   - 104 verses in Philippians
   - $\frac{45}{104} = 0.43$ rounds to 0.4
   - Scale $= 0.4$ squares/verse

   *This is why you brought your calculator!!!!*

5. Count the number of verses in each paragraph.
6. Multiply the number of verses in each paragraph by your scale.
   Example: $12 \times 0.4 = 4.8$ This can be rounded to 5 squares.
7. Leave 5 squares on the left hand side of your page. Leave room on the right side for your sections, divisions, title and key verse.
8. Section off your box, giving the proper proportion for each paragraph.
9. After you have done your paragraphs draw lines for sections and divisions.
10. Fill out your paragraph titles including references, section titles and division titles.
11. Record the name of the book, your title for the book and your key verse. See sample.
12. Record the scale on the bottom right hand corner.
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<thead>
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<th>VERSE REFERENCE: PARAGRAPH TITLE</th>
<th>SECTION TITLE</th>
<th>DIVISION TITLE</th>
<th>SECTION TITLE</th>
<th>SECTION TITLE</th>
<th>SECTION TITLE</th>
<th>SECTION TITLE</th>
<th>SECTION TITLE</th>
<th>BOOK: Title of the book</th>
<th>KEY VERSE:</th>
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HORIZONTAL SAMPLES

SEGMENTS
PARAGRAPH TITLES
DIVISIONS

SECTIONS

SMALL BOOK

DIVISIONS

PARAGRAPH TITLES

MEDIUM BOOK

SECTIONS

PARAGRAPH TITLES

BIG BOOK

SEGMENTS

SECTIONS

DIVISIONS
### Books of the Bible - Number of Verses

#### Old Testament

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Number of Verses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genesis</td>
<td>1533</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exodus</td>
<td>1213</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leviticus</td>
<td>859</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>1288</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy</td>
<td>959</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joshua</td>
<td>658</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judges</td>
<td>618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Samuel</td>
<td>1505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Kings</td>
<td>1535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Chronicles</td>
<td>1764</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ezra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nehemiah</td>
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<td>Esther</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job</td>
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#### New Testament

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Matthew</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luke</td>
<td>1151</td>
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<tr>
<td>John</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acts</td>
<td>1007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romans</td>
<td>433</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Corinthians</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Philippians</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Timothy</td>
<td>113</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Timothy</td>
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<td>Titus</td>
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<td>Philemon</td>
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<td>James</td>
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<td>1 Peter</td>
<td>105</td>
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<td>2 Peter</td>
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<td>1 John</td>
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<td>3 John</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jude</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation</td>
<td>404</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
VERTICAL CHART

- How to draw a Vertical Chart ................................................................. 91
- Filling in Vertical Charts ................................................................. 92
- Vertical Chart Lay Out ................................................................. 93
1. Look at your horizontal.

2. Determine the largest section (for a bigger horizontal this would be your segments).

3. Count the number of squares on your graph paper from top to bottom.

4. Minus five squares for the top and five squares for the bottom. This will give you the number of usable squares.

5. Divide the number of usable squares by the number of verses in your largest section. Round to the closest half.
   
   For example: 45 usable squares
   22 verses (largest section in Philippians)
   45/22 = 2.045 rounds to 2
   Scale = 2sq/vs

   This will be your scale for all your verticals now so that you have a visual of how sections vary in size.

6. Count the number of verses in each paragraph.

7. Multiply the number of verses in each paragraph by your scale.
   Example: 12 vs x 2 = 24 This shows that this paragraph will have 24 squares.

8. On your graph paper count how many squares you have across and divide into 3 columns. You will use the middle column to draw up your box. See example on the wall.

9. Section off your box, giving the proper proportion for each paragraph. (This will be modeled in class)

9. On the top of your vertical write down your section number, title and verses in that section.
   Example: Segment 1 - Paul’s Prayer of Thanksgiving - 1:1-11

10. In the bottom right hand corner write your scale. You will only have to do this on the first vertical.

12. Write your paragraph titles at the top of each paragraph box in a way it will stand out.
   Include the reference where the paragraph starts.
A. Paragraph Points/Insides
   • 4 phrases or less.
   • Exact words of the text.
   • Should add to the main idea of the paragraph as shown in your paragraph title.
   • Include key observations that you will want to observe, interpret and possibly apply on the outside of your box.
   • Well spaced/lay out - not too much or too little.
   • Use color code to show observations

B. Outsides
   • Pull out an observation. Show both parts of observation: Noticing and examining.
   • Interpret your observation. It is possible to ask more than one interpretation question from one observation.
   • Use a variety of examining and interpretation questions.
   • Choose at least two of your observations/interpretations to arrive at a Timeless Truth and explain how it can specifically apply to the 21st century.
   • Give a summary of your findings. This summary is based on both observations and interpretations.
**SUMMARY:** Summarize your findings, showing the main idea of the vertical (this should reflect the title) This can include observation and interpretation.

**SCALE:** __ squares or inches/verse
### Segment number + Chart Title + Verse references

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHERE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obs. (noticing+examining)</td>
<td>Obs. (noticing+examining)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int.</td>
<td>Int.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>App?</td>
<td>App?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>REPEATED WORDS/ PHRASES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obs. (noticing+examining)</td>
<td>Obs. (noticing+examining)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int.</td>
<td>Int.</td>
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<tr>
<td>App?</td>
<td>App?</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTRAST</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obs. (noticing+examining)</td>
<td><em>Observations</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int.</td>
<td>- noticing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>App?</td>
<td>- examining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Interpretations</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Application</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(min. 2 per chart)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMOTION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obs. (noticing+examining)</td>
<td>Make sure you look at a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int.</td>
<td>variety of observations and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>App?</td>
<td>use the different interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>questions. See Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Booklet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUMMARY:** Summarize your findings, showing the main idea of the vertical

(This should reflect the title)

This can include observation and interpretation.

---

**SCALE:** __ squares or inches/verse
ESBS

REQUIREMENTS

♦ Required Readings .................................................................97
♦ Step by Step through Charting ..................................................98
♦ Guideline for Grading Charts ....................................................100
REQUIRED READINGS

IN THE EMMAUS SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

Five readings are required of each book. You may do them in the following variations.

The first step is to begin all readings or study with prayer.

❖ FIRST READING:
  • Read the entire book in one sitting without interruptions.
  • Read it aloud!
  • During this reading you are getting the big picture or overview of the book.
  • Some things to look for, ask and write out:
    ➡ What is the big picture/main idea?
    ➡ What are the main themes?
    ➡ What do you see that you never saw before?

❖ SECOND READING:
  • Read the whole book through again, doing your paragraph titles during this reading. As you are doing your paragraph titles you may want to think about where there might be some minor breaks and major divisions for your horizontal.

❖ THIRD READING:
  • Read through the whole book again, color-coding your list of observations from the manual, looking for potential observations that you would want to pull out on your charts. You may be wanting to look out for historical background that would be helpful for your B.R.I. as well.

  • Do your rough Horizontal Chart and get it checked & approved by your checker.
  • Do the B.R.I. because you will need this information to do good interpretation.

❖ FOURTH AND FIFTH READINGS:
  • You will do your fourth and fifth readings as you do your builds on your Vertical Charts.

We realize that there are times when you will read the book an additional time while working on the Horizontal Chart and that some passages will be read additional times in doing paragraph titles or Vertical Charts but this is a guideline.
STEP BY STEP THROUGH CHARTING

This can be used every time you chart through a book.

1. **1st reading - Read the book out loud.** Think about the main idea of the book.

2. **2nd reading - Do your paragraph titles** on a separate piece of paper. This will be your worksheet for the rough horizontal. We suggest you only write on one side of the paper and in one column; that way you have a good overview of the paragraph titles.

3. **3rd reading - Do your observation reading** in your own Bible using your color code to pick out major observations – repeated words, themes, important who’s, where’s, contrasts. Rethink your first impression of the main idea and ask why the book was written. Look for a key verse. As you identify information that will be helpful for your BRI, make a note of it in your Bible to come back to when you are doing your BRI.

4. **Work on your rough horizontal.** Use your paragraph titles for your worksheet. Get out your structure and composition handout for helps in breaking up the book. This is meant to be your own work, please do not use Bible dictionaries or commentaries. Think about your title, this should give you the main idea of the book, and write this on the rough horizontal. Also record some of your suggestions for the key verse.

5. **Take your rough horizontal to your checker.** They will be looking to see if you have breaks that are reasonable, if your title reflects the main idea of the book and also if you have the correct key verse. **On the back of your rough horizontal write your thoughts about the main idea and the major reason the book was written so you can discuss this with your checker.** They are also available to help you look at the breaks if you have tried and are not able to see how the author is breaking the book up. Your checker will not do the horizontal for you but will help by giving some key points to be looking for.

6. You could **draw up your final horizontal** now or do it at the end.

7. **Do your BRI.** Answer the questions from the Basic Required Information handout on a separate piece of paper that will be turned in with your assignment. Use the information for internal evidence that you found during your 3rd reading along with other evidence you find that you need as you work through the questions. After you have done this, then look for external evidence. **DO YOUR BRI BEFORE YOU START YOUR VERTICALS.**

8. **4th & 5th reading - Work on your verticals.** Everyone will have his or her own style and so it may take you a while to find yours. Do not be discouraged by this. Look at other people’s charts for ideas but try not to compare your work. We all have different styles. You want your verticals to be as big as possible. Other key points will be on your grade sheets and gone over in class. See separate handout on vertical charts.

9. **Work on your final application.** Make sure you leave time for this so that you do not miss out on anything that God would want to speak to you and do in your life. The Holy Spirit will be showing you things as you go through each book and the final application is for you to set time
aside to reflect on those things. Remember that a changed life is the goal of Bible study not knowledge.

“He does not believe that does not live according to his belief.”

“Action is the proper fruit of knowledge”  Thomas Fuller

11. **Turn in all your work** to your checker’s tray in the classroom. All assignments must be turned in by **6:00pm** on the due day unless otherwise stated. Late charts will not be accepted.

**Turn in:**
- Paragraph titles & rough horizontal
- Final horizontal
- BRI
- Vertical charts
- Final application
- Key for your Color code (include the number of completed readings)
GUIDELINE FOR GRADING CHARTS

A. **Horizontal Chart: 20 points**
   
   - Good grouping of paragraphs into segment sections  3 pts
   - Good grouping of segments into sections  3 pts
   - Good grouping of sections into divisions  3 pts
   - Good titles for divisions, sections, and segments  3 pts
   - Good paragraph titles that follow the rules  6 pts
   - Title of the book  1 pt
   - Key Verse  1 pt

B. **Vertical Charts: 59 points**

   Points Earned _____ x % Completed _____ x % Adequately Covered _____ = ____________

4 points: **TECHNICAL ASPECTS**
   
   - Clear, easy to read  1 pt
   - Drawn to scale  1 pt
   - Spelling  1 pt
   - Show what text you are observing  1 pt

23 points: **OBSERVATION**

   Observation would include what you notice and examine in the text. Of course you can’t record everything that you have observed; you will have to be selective and record what will help unlock the passage. Include that which is significant and helpful.

   **Insides:**
   
   - Main points of the paragraph  3 pts
   - Words in sequence  1 pt
   - Well spaced lay-out. Wrote too much? Too little?  2 pts
   - Observations noticed and/or color coded  2 pts

   **Outsides:**
   
   - Relevant observations/relate to the main idea of segment/key observations  6 pts
   - Quality of Examining  5 pts
   - Themes traced and examined  4 pts

23 points: **INTERPRETATION**

   Interpretation is based on the observations. It is important to ask specific questions that relate to what you have observed. Try to get into the worldview and understand the influences on the original reader, author, and/or hearers, and interpret in light of their historical setting. Select the observations that will unlock the passage and interpret those.

   - Was the Original Reader and/or Hearer considered?  4 pts
   - Were the author’s concerns considered?  3 pts
   - Was important cultural/historical background used in interpretations?  2 pts
   - Was the literary context considered?  2 pts
__ Do the interpretations build on/connect with the observations? 2 pts
__ Was there depth to interpretations? Did interpretation lead to more interpretation? Was there quality interpretation? 4 pts
__ Was there a variety of interpretation questions? 1 pt
__ Are they answering the interpretation questions they asked? 1 pt
__ Did they site their sources? 2 pts
__ Does the chart summary capture the main idea of the vertical and include interpretation? 2 pts

9 points:  APPLICATION
Application is the final step and you are required to do at least two Timeless Truths and Specific Apps on every vertical. This does not have to be you personally, although it can be, but how the interpretation would apply in the 21st century.
__ At least 2 per segment, 3 pts
__ Is there quality/depth to the applications? 2 pts
__ Did they build from their observations and interpretations? 2 pts
__ Was there a variety with personal, church, society? 2 pts

C. Miscellaneous: 21 points
Use the application questions in the Inductive Bible Study Booklet. Record this information, using one of the various options, on a separate sheet of paper and turn it in with your charts.

Final Application: 7 points
__ Timeless Truths (give verse references) 2 pts
__ Creative processing 3 pts
__ Did they answer questions 2 and 3? 2 pts
__ 1 Bonus point for the "WOW!" factor.

Basic Required Information: 12 points:
__ Critical Method  4 pts (Internal and external evidence)
__ Historical Method  4 pts (Internal and external evidence)
__ Literary Method  1 pt
__ Survey Method  1 pt
__ Quality of conclusions  2 pts

Blog Entry: 2 points
__ Was it completed? 1 pt
__ Was there quality and depth? 1 pt

Charts are due on due day even if you are not finished. We do not accept late charts.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
We want to give credit to the excellent resource materials from which we have borrowed information, which shaped our thinking.

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