

HOW TO DO INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

- INDUCTIVE STUDY
- = definition: reasoning proceeding from particular facts to a general conclusion
 - = the focus is first and foremost on the Scripture itself
 - = rather than study someone else's study, you study the Scripture for yourself
 - = you utilize tools, techniques and skills to study the Bible confidently on your own

GOD SPEAKS



THROUGH HIS WORD



DIRECTLY TO YOU



YOU ARE READY TO STUDY THE WORKS OF OTHERS

- = key benefit: research shows that you learn more and retain more the more you are personally and actively involved in the learning process
- = you discover truth for yourself
- = therefore be prepared to 1) slow down
2) discover what a passage is literally saying
unbiased by previous experience

THREE COMPONENTS

- 1) **OBSERVATION** → What does the text actually say?
 - taking notice, fixing the mind upon, beholding with attention
 - “the art of seeing things as they really are, impartially, intensely and fearlessly” – H T Kuist
 - “it supplies the raw materials upon which the mind may operate in the interpretative process” – Robert Traina
- 2) **INTERPRETATION** → What does the text mean?
 1. The search for meaning is based on thorough observation
 2. Remember that context rules
 3. Always seek the full counsel of the entire Word of God
 4. Remember that Scripture will never contradict Scripture
 5. Don't base your convictions on an obscure passage of Scripture
 6. Interpret Scripture literally (take its natural, normal sense)
 7. Look for the author's intended meaning
 8. Check your conclusions by using reliable commentaries

- 3) **APPLICATION** → How does the meaning of the text apply to me?
→ How does it work?
→ What truths can I put into practice?
→ What changes should I make in my life?
- correct application is based on accurate interpretation
 - once you understand what the Word teaches, you are obligated before God to accept the truth and to live by it
 - you have applied what you have learned when you have
 - adjusted any false teachings you may have believed
 - embraced the truth revealed in God's Word

INDUCTIVE
BIBLE
STUDY

- ✱ Inductive Bible study begins and continues with prayer and dependence on the Holy Spirit

Psalm 119:18

Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law.

Ephesians 1:17

... (*praying*) that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

1 Corinthians 2:12

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,

John 16:13

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

Luke 24:45

Then He (*Jesus*) opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

- ✱ The best way to study the Bible is the way that God gave it – **BOOK BY BOOK**

THE
INDUCTIVE
METHOD

STEP 1
OVERVIEW THE BOOK – get the big picture = discover the context

	Book Theme (what is talked about the most)				
Key Words	1	2	3	4	Historical Context Setting
	Occasion/Purpose				

1. Read and re-read the book looking for the OBVIOUS → F.O.T.O.
 - facts about people, places and events are always most obvious
 - read – mark the author’s name and pronouns
 - read again – mark the references to the recipients
 - read again for words or ideas that are obvious because they are repeated; these are key words = the topics
 - highlight all the commands in the book

2. As you read and re-read, things that were at first unclear will become obvious in turn – always keep focusing on what is obvious
 - do not be distracted by minute details, by difficult verses or your favourite passages
 - remember: the Word of God will minister to you personally as you handle it objectively and let it speak for itself

3. Read, read and re-read the book – always with a purpose
 - ask the 5 Ws & H questions: who, what, where, when, why, how, the building blocks of precise observation

4. Identify the main topic or theme of the book

5. Complete your “book chart” recording your findings
 - sum up each chapter – how does it contribute to the main subject?
 - note the book’s segments

THE
INDUCTIVE
METHOD

STEP 2 – CHAPTER STUDY

1. Remember to **begin with prayer**
2. Read and re-read **the chapter objectively noting obvious things – keeping the context in mind**
3. Continue to **interrogate the text using the “5 W’s & H” questions**
 - **to question formally and systematically**

“No verse of Scripture yields its meaning to lazy people”

“God feeds the birds, but He doesn’t throw the food into their nests.”

– A. W. Pink

“If we speak to the Lord about the Word, the Word will speak to us about the Lord!”

– Warren Wiersbe

“So meditating on the Word of God day and night means to speak to yourself the Word of God day and night and to speak to yourself about it – to mull it over, to ask questions about it and answer them from the Scripture itself, to ask yourself how this might apply to you and others, and to ponder its implication for life and church and culture and missions”

– John Piper

4. Mark **key words and phrases (they “unlock” the meaning of a passage)**
 - begin with **God, Jesus and Holy Spirit**
 - also mark **pronouns and synonyms**
 - mark **the key words in a distinctive way using symbols or colours**
 - this process **will guide you to the author’s main subjects**
 - it will help you **to see the author’s logic and flow of thought**
 - don’t **become frustrated – the process is vital in order to firmly grasp the context**
5. List **what you learn about each key word**
 - each **key word becomes the title of its own list – it is a topic dealt with in the chapter**

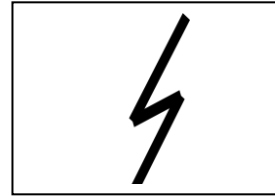
6. Identify and mark connectives

- they connect and relate sentences and paragraphs
- they assist in the logical flow of ideas
- they signal order, relationship and movement

– www.grammarbank.com

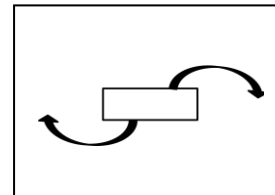
a) contrasts

- indicate a change of direction in a passage
- depict two things or ideas that are unlike, different or opposite
 - but
 - but rather
 - however
 - in spite of
 - instead of
 - nevertheless
 - on the other hand
 - yet



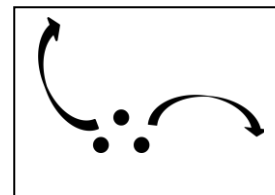
b) comparisons

- depict two things or ideas that are the same or similar
 - like
 - as, just as
 - likewise
 - also, so also
 - too, as well



c) terms of conclusion or explanation

- are reasoning terms that are used to identify a summary, a conclusion or a result
 - therefore
 - for this reason
 - because
 - so that
 - so then
 - for



7. Identify and mark **expressions of time**

- words or phrases that **answer the question “when?”**
 - sometimes they **reveal an order or sequence of events**
 - sometimes they **indicate a specific time of the year**
 - sometimes they **indicate a particular time in history**
 - **after, before**
 - **soon**
 - **at that time**
 - **now, then**
 - **until**
 - **first, second ...**
 - **in the days of ...**
 - **Passover**



8. Identify and note **locations and changes in location**

9. Marking **the text has numerous benefits**

- **it helps make the Scripture our own since it enhances the remembering of the text**
- **it serves to slow us down and engage us in “conversation” with the Author**
- **it allows us to quickly scan a passage and see what is emphasized in that particular section**

“Color, because of its omnipresent characteristics and increasing application in graphic displays, continues to be of interest to researchers. The authors, utilizing professionally designed and produced stimulus materials, found color coding to be an important instructional variable in improving student information acquisition under specific conditions.”

Lamberski, R.J. & Dwyer, F.M. ECTJ (1983)
31: 9. doi:10.1007/BF02765207

10. Identify the theme of the chapter (what the chapter is mainly about)
11. Summarize the paragraphs
12. Evaluate lessons for life → application

THE
INDUCTIVE
METHOD

STEP 3 – WORD STUDIES

1. Use an Exhaustive Concordance to determine the Strong's number of the English word you want to study
2. Look up the definition of the word (by number) in the Hebrew or Greek dictionary found at the back of the Concordance
3. Broaden your understanding of the word by consulting an Expository Dictionary (e.g. Vine's Expository Dictionary)
4. Take your findings back to the verse in which the word is found and evaluate in context what you have found

THE
INDUCTIVE
METHOD

STEP 4 – CROSS REFERENCES

1. In an Exhaustive Concordance or a Topical Bible find the other places in the Bible where your word or topic is mentioned
2. List every cross-reference for your word or topic and study each cross-reference in its context
3. Note the references that illuminate or expand your understanding of the topic or word you are studying

When you know what God says, what He means, and how to put His truths into practice, you will be equipped for every circumstance of life. Ultimately, the goal of personal Bible study is a transformed life and a deep and abiding relationship with Jesus Christ.

Figurative Language

(check out: Basic Bible Interpretation: Figurative Language – in the resources)

1. Definition: **any words that are used with a meaning other than their common, literal sense**
2. The biblical languages **and cultures, which are generally unfamiliar to us, are especially rich in figures of speech**
3. Therefore, it takes **intentional effort to understand the authors' context and to overcome the hurdle of correct interpretation of the figures of speech**
4. Remember that **although figures of speech are symbolic or "figurative", their intention is always to convey a literal truth. It is the literal truth intended by the figurative language that is the meaning we seek**
5. There are **numerous advantages to using figurative language:**
 - (1) Figures of speech **add colour or vividness**

Psalm 18:2

The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,
My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge;
My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

- (2) Figures of speech **attract attention. When two things that are not usually considered alike are compared, there is an element of surprise or unexpectedness**

Philippians 3:2

Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision;

James 3:6

And the tongue is a fire, the *very* world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of *our* life, and is set on fire by hell.

Galatians 5:15

But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

(3) Figures of speech **help to make abstract ideas more concrete**

Deuteronomy 32:9-11

9. “For the LORD’S portion is His people; Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance.
10. “He found him in a desert and, And in the howling waste of a wilderness; He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye.
11. “Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions.

(4) Figures of speech **help us to memorize and retain what we have read**

Matthew 23:27

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.

Matthew 23:33

“You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?”

(5) Figures of speech **can abbreviate or “shorten” a concept or idea. They say a lot in a few words**

Psalms 23:1ff

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

(6) Figures of speech **encourage us to pause and think, to reflect and meditate**

(7) Figures of speech, **as in the case of parables, can be used to clarify as well as to conceal truth**

Matthew 13:10-11

10. And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”
11. Jesus answered them, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.