
Grasping God's Word: Lesson 8
Possible Implementations of
Bible Study Principles



Observation

What do I see?
What does it say?



Interpretation
What does it mean?



Application

How does it work?
What should I do?



Overview

- A variety of methods can help keep Bible study interesting and engaging.
- All methods include Observation, Interpretation, Application. Always incorporate application.
- All methods are guidelines to be customized as needed.
- Other methods are viable including unstructured reading.



Some Methods of Bible Study

- “A Method of Personal Bible Study”
- Devotional
- Biographical
- Chapter Summary
- Topical or Subject
- Short Thematic



A Method of Personal Bible Study



A Method of Personal Bible Study

- A. The Right Time
 - A Time Set Apart
- B. The Right Place
 - Away from distractions
- C. An Expectant Spirit
 - 1. Physically alert
 - 2. Moral Factors



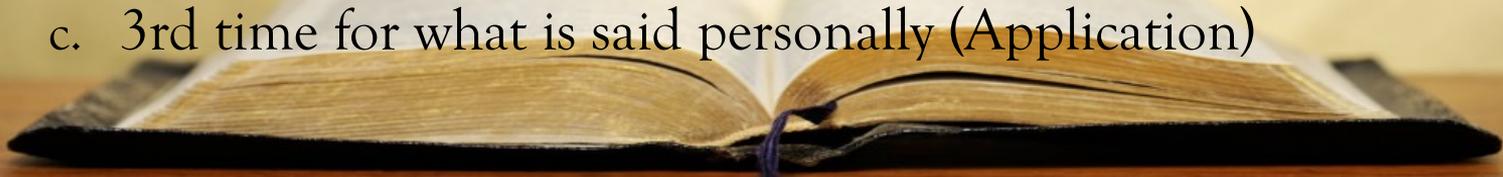
A Method of Personal Bible Study

D. What to Do

1. Get Bible and Notebook
2. Stop: Wait

Remind yourself that Jesus Christ is in the room and that Bible study is the most important time of the day

3. Reading: Look
 - i. Read a Paragraph
 - ii. Read through the passage three times
 - a. 1st time for general flow (Observation)
 - b. 2nd time for what is being taught (Interpretation)
 - c. 3rd time for what is said personally (Application)



A Method of Personal Bible Study

4. Meditate: Listen

- i. Actively think on the Word of God
- ii. Look at the passage and think of ramifications and applications.
Don't Rush.
- iii. Ask questions about the passage. Such as...
 - Is there a commandment to obey? A promise to claim?
 - A sin to avoid? A sin to confess?
 - An example to follow?
 - A timeless principle? A truth to believe?
 - What do I learn about God? Christ? the Holy Spirit? Me?



A Method of Personal Bible Study

5. Apply

Actively think through what you can do to make what you have learned a practical part of your life.

6. Pray

Tell God what you are really thinking, feeling, or needing.

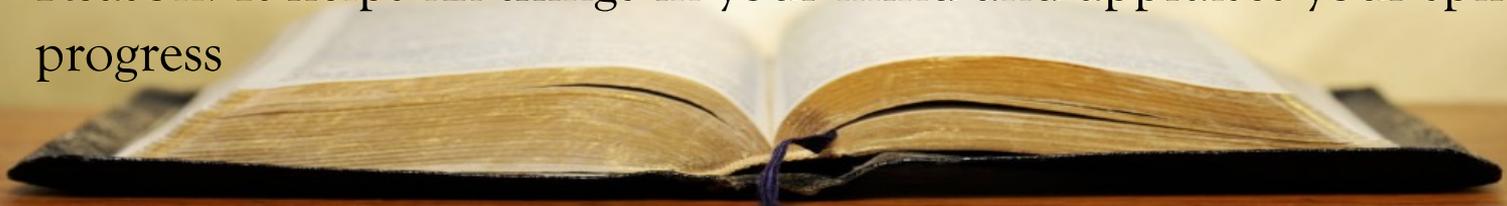
7. Record

1. Write date and passage you studied

2. Write what God showed you

3. Write personally about where you're at

Reason: It helps fix things in your mind and appraises your spiritual progress



A Method of Personal Bible Study

8. Share

Get with someone every day and tell them what you learned

9. Obey

1. Make an effort to obey what God has told you.
2. Ask God to help you.



A Method of Personal Bible Study

E. Special Notes

1. Don't evaluate the program on one morning's experience
2. Do it even if you don't feel like it. (Satan causes Bible study to be difficult)
3. Try not to let this become a ritual. Think about communication with God



Devotional Method

Definition: The devotional method of Bible study involves taking a passage of the Bible, large or small, and prayerfully meditating on it until the Holy Spirit shows you a way to apply its truth to your own life in a way that is personal, practical, possible, and measurable.



Devotional Method

1. Prayer.
2. Meditation.



Devotional Method

a) Probe it.

There are nine good questions to ask during meditation:

S: Is there a Sin to confess?

P: Is there a Promise to claim?

A: Is there an Attitude to change?

C: Is there a Command to obey?

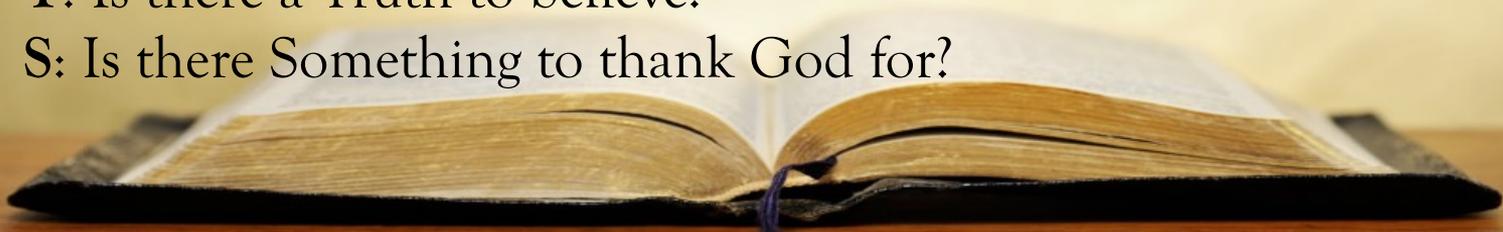
E: Is there an Example to follow?

P: Is there a Prayer to pray?

E: Is there an Error to avoid?

T: Is there a Truth to believe?

S: Is there Something to thank God for?



Devotional Method

- b) Picture it.
- c) Pronounce it.
- d) Paraphrase it.
- e) Personalize it.
- f) Pray it back to God.



Devotional Method

3. Application.

There are four keys to a good application.

- a) It should be personal.
- b) It should be practical.
- c) It should be possible.
- d) It should be provable.

4. Memorization.



Biographical Method

- 1) Make a list of scripture references dealing with the person.
Use study Bible, concordance, topical Bible, Bible dictionary or Bible encyclopedia.
- 3) Read all the verses in the Bible on this person. Write down your first impressions.
- 4) Read all verses again. Make a chronological outline of the person's life.
- 5) Read through all the verses again. Look for insights into the person's life. Ask questions about the person's life. (Some questions...)



Biographical Method

Some possible questions to ask...

What was his reputation? What did others say about him? What did God say about him? What was his character like? How did he respond to failure or success? How did he interact with God? What does his name mean? What was his temperament? What were his strengths? Did his character change? What were his greatest sins? What were his battles? Did he ever get success over failures? How big was his faith? What was his prayer life like? Where did he live? What was his occupation? Did he have a crisis in life? How did he handle crises? Did he have success in life? How did he get along with others? How did he treat others?



Biographical Method

- 6) Read it again. Identify character qualities. What character qualities do you see in that person's life?
- 7) Show how other Bible truths are illustrated in this person's life. Summarize the person's life.
- 8) Write out an application.
 - Did I see any of myself in this character?
 - What impressed me the most about this person?
 - What do I intend to do about it?
- 10) (Optional) Make your study transferable. Condense your study into just a few sentences



Chapter Summary

Definition: The chapter summary method involves gaining a general understanding of the contents of a chapter of the Bible by reading it through three to five times or more, asking a series of content questions, and summarizing the central thoughts of the passage.

○ How to read a chapter:

1. Read it at least three to five times
2. Read it without stopping
3. Read it in several different translations
4. Read it aloud



Chapter Summary

11 things to look for and do while studying the chapter:

1. Look for a short caption
2. Write the contents of the chapter
 - a) Describe it
 - b) Outline it
 - c) Summarize it
 - d) Paraphrase it
3. Who are the main characters in the chapter
4. Look for a choice verse (a summary verse or meaningful verse)



Chapter Summary

5. Write down a crucial word or words
6. Write down challenges or difficulties in understanding
7. Use cross references to answer questions
8. How does this chapter fit into the big picture of God's nature and his dealing with humans?
9. Record the central lesson, theme or central truth
10. Draw a conclusion about the message of the chapter
11. Determine an application based on the central message of the chapter
12. Optional: Fit the chapter theme into an outline of the entire book



Some Ways to Outline Chapters in a Whole Book.

© From Walk Through The Bible Press: The Book of Ezra

Starts the Same

Decree of Cyrus: Return
Departure of Zerubbabel, Exiles
Delight in Temple Foundation
Disturbance from Samaritan
Enemies
Devoted Prophets Encourage
People
Dedication of Finished Temple
Declaration of Artaxerses Return
Divine Protection Sought; Journey
Distress of Ezra; Prayer
Divorcing of Heathen Wives

Sounds the Same

Proclamation of Cyrus: Return
Registration of First Returnees
Foundation of the Temple Laid
Opposition of Samaritans' Letter
Supplication of Exiles to King
Darius
Dedication of God's Temple
Declaration of Araxerses: Return
Preparation of Ezra, People
Intercession of Grieved Ezra
Renunciation of Foreign Wives

Spells Something

Temple Proclamation of Cyrus
Exiles Return under Zerubbabel
Masons Lay Temple Foundation
Postponement by Samaritan
Opposition
Letter to King Darius
Exiles Finish, Dedicate Temple
Work of Ezra's Return
Offerings of Exiles
Rebellion of People
Keeping of Foreign Wives



Study on a Specific Topic or Subject

Tools to Use:

- a) Concordance
- b) Topical Bible (Thompson Chain Reference Bible, Knave's Topical Bible)
- c) Bible Dictionary

Motivation for Topical Bible Study:

- A) It will help you know what God thinks about major issues
- B) It will help you know God in a personal way
- C) It will help you love God.
- D) It will give you a complete grasp of all God wants you to know on a subject.



Study on a Specific Topic or Subject

- 1) Compile a list of words that relate to topic.
- 2) Collect references for all the verses that relate to that topic. Use a concordance and a topical Bible to collect the references.
- 3) Consider each reference.
 - a) Look up each reference and write what it says about the topic.
 - b) Read through the passages several times.
 - c) Categorize references that have similar themes.
 - d) Answer questions about the topic.
 - e) Summarize teachings on topic.
 - f) Optional: Compare what you have learned with a good Bible dictionary
- 4) Conclude with application.



Short Thematic Bible Study

- 1) Chose a theme you're interested in.
- 2) Write down questions about that theme before you look at the Bible. (For thematic study, write a maximum of five questions.)
- 3) Look in a concordance and write down all verses using words that relate to your theme.
- 4) Read each verse a few times and write the answers to the questions. (Questions may be revised).
- 5) Conclude with application.



Other Ideas

- Read, Interpret, and Apply
 - Read a paragraph a few times
 - Ask Questions (similar to the Devotional Method's SPACEPETS)
 - Apply
- Others?
 - James Tour's Method: Professor at Rice University



A Place to Start

- Start with “A Method of Bible Study” and Study Philippians.



Questions/Discussion

