

The Bible

The Case for Spending Time with God

But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds. Psalm 73:28

Read the following passages about Jesus. For each one, write down or tell what He did.

Matthew 14:22-23 (Jesus had just miraculously fed 5000 people.)

Mark 1:35 (Jesus had been healing many people.)

Luke 5:15-16

What pattern of behavior do you see in Jesus?

Read John 5:19. What does this verse reveal about what was happening when Jesus spent time with the Father?

What do you think was His purpose or goal in spending time with His Father?

Why did He make it a priority? What do you think was His need?

“What are You doing today, Father, and how can I participate with You in it?”

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the inductive Bible Study

Some Scriptures to study

All of the following passages speak about the rich benefits found in the Scriptures. Choose one of them and study it using each of the different approaches to an inductive Bible study.

Psalm 19:7-11

Psalm 27:4-11

Psalm 119:9-16

Psalm 119:25-40

Psalm 119:57-60

Psalm 119:97-106

Proverbs 1:1-7

Luke 6:46-49

What is an Inductive Study of the Bible?

The inductive method is an effective and straightforward method of studying the Bible. An inductive Bible study takes a portion of Scripture and asks specific questions of the passage. The questions are of three basic types:

Observation – What is this passage about? What does it say?

Interpretation – What does it mean? What principle does it show?

Application – How can I apply it to my life?

Refer to Inductive Bible Study Questions in this section for several questions grouped into the three types: observation, interpretation, and application.

Write down what you have learned. It makes a great resource in the future. Some find it helpful to have a notebook just for Bible study notes.

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Here are some examples of inductive study methods. Choose one passage of Scripture from the preceding list and use each method to study it.

2PROAPT

(Adapted from Discipling Ministries Seminar, Barnabus, Inc. See *Discipleship by Design* by Harvey Herman Appendix 11.1 Used with permission.)

Pray thanksgiving for God's Word and ask for revelation.

Preview the Scripture you are going to study - see how it fits with the rest of the book.

Read the passage.

Observe what the passage says –

What does it mean?

Who wrote it?

Why was it written?

To whom was it written?

Is there a principle that should be followed?

Sometimes it is helpful to paraphrase the passage in your own words, or outline the passage.

Apply the Word to your life –

What will I do? When? With whom?

Pray

Thanking God for his Word, His grace in revealing it, and ask for His help in applying it.

Tell someone what you learned – your roommate, small group leader, friend, or write in your journal.

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Loralie's Bible Study Method

(Loralie (Dodd) Ahola. From Oletta Wald, *Joy of Discovery in the Bible*, Augsburg Publishing House, 426 South 5th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415, 1975, p.14.)

Observe exactly what the author is saying.

Interpret objectively what the author has written. Determine the meaning.

Summarize concisely the key ideas in the passage.

Evaluate fairly what the author has written. Try to gain a clear concept of what the author has written and what he meant.

Apply personally the message revealed. Application is the goal of the previous steps.

Actualize your convictions. Do what the Lord has revealed to you.

Twelve Questions to Ask about a Passage of Scripture

(Dick Schroeder, University Christian Fellowship Chi Alpha at Montana State University, Bozeman. Used with permission)

1. What is the main truth of this passage of Scripture?
2. What other Scripture can I find that pertains to this?
(Check your concordance or the cross references in your Bible.)
3. Is there any part of the verse that I don't understand?
4. Is there a command or word of advice to be obeyed?
5. Is there a good example to follow?
6. Is there a sin or mistake to avoid?
7. Is there a warning to listen to?
8. Is there a promise God is making for me to claim?
9. Is there a prayer prayed here for me to repeat?
10. What past experience have I had that makes this Scripture real to me?
11. How can I apply this verse to my daily life?
What strengths and weaknesses does this passage reveal in my life?
How should my actions change today because of what I have read?
12. After this applicational study, what prayer do I wish to pray?

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Inductive Bible Study Questions

(Adapted from Kevin M. Thompson, *Equipping the Saints: a Manual for Small Group Ministry*, Christians in Action Campus Ministry, 525 Ontario Street SE, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55414, 1980.)

The following inductive Bible study questions can assist you as you read the Bible. Use them to create Bible studies for your small group, as well.

Your two goals are:

- to have a good understanding of what the text is saying,
- to have the Holy Spirit show you how to align your life with what it says.

Choose a few questions from each of the following three types.

Observation Questions: What does it say?

What is this section all about?

How would you outline this passage?

What are the key phrases?

What is the central thought expressed?

What words keep recurring throughout the passage?

What is the main theme of this passage?

How would you title this section?

What principal characters are mentioned?

How does this section relate to the context (the surrounding text)?

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Interpretation Questions: What does it mean? What is the principle involved?

What did it mean when it was written? Describe the historical setting.
What does it mean today?
What was the author's intent or purpose in writing?
What circumstances were present at that time -- social, cultural, and the church situation?
Why does the author say what he says? Why does he say it this way?
What did it mean to the original people to whom it was addressed?
What is noticeable, special, or unusual about how the words, phrases, and sentences are put together? What words are not clear as to their meaning?
What is the significance of quotations? Illustrations?
What does this passage teach about Christ? God's nature? People?
What does this tell you about life? The contemporary world situation?
What eternal truths are expressed by the passage?
What principles for living can you gather from this Scripture?

Application Questions: How does this apply to your life?

How does this relate to what is happening in your life today?

What is the significance, or importance, of this in your life?

Is there some need in your life to which this passage is pertinent?

How will this Scripture be a solution to a need, situation, or problem in your life or in the lives of those you love?

What is a specific course of action for you to take based on this Scripture? What will you do? When will you do it? With (for) whom will you do it?

What can you ask God to help you do based on your study of this section?

What prayer can you pray as a response to this section? Is there a verse you can make into a prayer?

Is there a specific action your small group can take together to live out what you've learned from this Bible study?

some guidelines for UNDERSTANDING SCRIPTURE

1. Usually, the simple and obvious meaning is the intended one.
2. Consider the verse in the context of the surrounding verses and in the context of the chapter. Consider the chapter in the context of the book.
3. Fit the passage or verse into what the Bible as a whole says about the subject. Use other passages that refer to the same subject to get a more complete understanding.
4. Consider verses in light of what the Bible reveals about God's character – what He is like. *Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin." Exodus 34:5-7a*
5. Use your common sense as to the meaning. For example, sometimes Jesus used hyperbola - exaggerating something to make a point. In Matthew 5:29-30, He said, *If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.* Common sense says that Jesus did not intend for us to actually do this. He is stressing the point that we should be ruthless in dealing with sin no matter how precious the wrong attitude is to us.
6. Promises are conditional on our response to God's conditions. Fulfill the conditions attached to the promise and you can believe that God will give you the promise. Check to see that you are in the same circumstance as the person receiving the promise in the Bible. If not, look for the principle implied by the promise and apply that.

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Sources

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