High-Impact Bible Study

How to Gain Deeper Insight in Shorter Time for Greater Influence

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Inductive Bible Study Process
Step 1: Observation

Key Question: “What does the text say?"

What to Observe

- Who is involved?
- Where are they?
- When does this occur?
  (Within the literature and in the Bible)
- What is the issue at hand?
- Why does the writer include this?
Details to Examine

- Main Verbs (tense, voice, mood, number)
- Contrasting Conjunctions
- Repeated Words
- Unusual Words
- Cause-Effect Relationships
- Unusual Prepositions
Step 2: Interpretation

Key Question: "What does the text mean?"

Barriers to Interpretation (and Available Helps)

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Step 3: Correlation

Key Question: “How does the text compare?

Investigate

- Parallel passages, especially in the Gospels
- Quotations or allusions to other Scripture
- Passages related to the same topic
- Cross references suggested in study Bibles

Step 4: Application

Key Question: “How does the text function?

Eventually we want to derive from the Text one or more timeless truths. Each timeless truth can be expressed as a Theological Statement, such as (for Matt. 26:36–46):

“When tried by temptation, the spirit is willing but the body is weak; we need supernatural help to obey God during those difficult times.”

Based on this timeless truth, we now imagine specific ways we can alter our behavior accordingly. For example, taking Jesus’ response to temptation as a worthy example, I might say:

“When tried by temptation, the spirit is willing but the body is weak; therefore, prayer is our best response when tempted to disobey. I will pray no less than three times, submitting to the Father’s will and asking for deliverance from temptation.”