

**Bible Study
Methods
Introduction**

Content for Bible Study Methods

Lesson # 1-First Three Principles of Bible Study

Lesson #2- Four Further Principles of Bible Study

Lesson #3- Observe, Interpret and Apply Scripture

Lesson #4- Studying Parallel Passages and Parables

Lesson #5- How to Study Allegories, Types and figures of speech

Lesson #6-How to Study the New Testament

Lesson #7- How to Study the Old Testament

Lesson #8- How to study the Bible using a Concordance and a Commentary

Lesson #9- How to study the Bible using a Study Bible

Suggested Course Syllabus for Methods of Bible Study

Course Description: Introduces the principles of methodical, inductive study of selected Bible texts: Observation, interpretation, evaluation, application and correlation. The student learns how to let the Bible interpret itself rather than imposing preconceived notions on the scriptures. This course is designed to direct the student in a careful systematic examination of the word of God as to rightly interpret its meaning. Hermeneutical principles will be studied and applied.

Course Objectives:

1. The student will become familiar with the basic tools which will help them study the Bible so that they can better communicate it to their people. (eg NIV Study Bible, Thompson Chain Study Bible, Commentaries, different Bible translations & Concordances.)
2. The student will know how use the inductive method to actually study scripture. Most of the course will focus on learning and using this method.
3. The student will know how to take a passage from anywhere in the Bible and properly interpret it according to the basic principles of Bible Study.

Course Procedure:

1. Deductive Bible study
 - A. How to use a concordance
 - B. How to use a commentary
 - C. How to use a study Bible
 - D. How to use different translations

2. Inductive Bible Study

Basic principles:

- 1) Interpret a passage in light of its context
- 2) Interpret a passage according to the correct meaning of the words
- 3) Understand the grammar, present, past, future, continuous present, past with present results
- 4) Interpret according to the author's original intention.
- 5) Interpret in light of the historical, cultural background
- 6) Interpret scripture by Scripture.
- 7) Interpret the scripture literally unless it is obvious that it is not to understood literally.

How to make Observations:

- 1) Ask the Holy Spirit to help you as you begin.
- 2) Read the section of scripture that you are studying- 2-5 times.
- 3) Know the main themes of the book where your passage is found.
- 4) Interpret the passage in light of the whole Bible.
- 5) Concentrate on the essential truths
- 6) Ask yourself- why did the author write this scripture? What did it mean for the original readers?
- 7) Look for repetition of key words or phrases.
- 8) Ask the 5 W and the H questions:
Who? wrote it, spoke it, about whom, to whom is he speaking?
What? are the main events, the major ideas, the major doctrines, is he talking about, is his purpose in saying that?
When? was it written, did this event take place, will it happen, did he say it?
Where? was this done, was this said, will it happen?
Why? was this written, was this mentioned, was this not mentioned, was so much written about this?
How? can we do this, is this truth illustrated?

Use the above principles to interpret various passages from different parts of the Bible.

3. Keys to studying different parts of the Bible

- A. Pentateuch
- B. Historical Books
- C. Wisdom Literature
- D. Prophets
- E. Gospels
- F. Parables
- G. Epistles

H. Revelation

I. Parallel passages

Suggested Course Requirements: (What should a teacher expect a student to do?)

1. Take quizzes and final exam-

2. Read a How to study the Bible book???(This can only be done if books are available)

3. Write five 2 page papers from assigned scriptures making observations, interpretations and applications from the passages. Each passage should be from a different part of the Bible listed above, Pentateuch-Revelation- 3:A-H.

Suggested Grading:

1. Exam and Quizzes- 60%

2. Papers- 40%

Suggested Course Text(s): (as available)

Finzel-Observation, Interpretation and Application

Kay Arthur- How to Study the Bible

Rick Warren-12 Dynamic Bible Study Methods

**Bible Study
Methods
Lesson 1**

First Three Principles of Bible Study

Lesson Purpose:

- To introduce the 7 basic principles of Bible Study.
- To teach and practice the first three principles of Bible Study

Main Points:

- Introduce the 7 principles.
- Interpret a passage in light of its context
- Interpret a passage according to the correct meaning of the words.
- Understand the grammar, present, past, future, continuous present, past with present results.

Desired Outcome

- The student will know the 7 principles of Bible Study.
- The student will know how to interpret a passage according to its context
- The student will know how to look for the meaning of the key words in the passage.
- He/she will know to understand the grammar in a passage.

Suggestions for teaching

- Give the students Handout #1
- Teach each main point and then have the student practice with the PRACTICE verses. If they still don't understand use the extra practice verses.
- You can also divide into groups of two where each group is assigned one of the PRACTICE verses and then after 15 minutes come back together and have each group report their findings of context and correct meaning of words to the rest of the class. Discussion should follow led by the teacher.

PRINCIPLES OF BIBLE STUDY

There are seven basic, fundamental principles we should use in interpreting Scripture. Wherever you are studying the Bible these are the principles you should follow to correctly interpret the Bible.

The principles are: 1) Interpret a passage in light of its context, 2) Interpret a passage according to the correct meaning of the words. 3) Interpret the passage correctly according to the grammar, 4) Interpret the passage according to the author's original intention. 5) Interpret the passage in light of the historical and cultural background, 6) Interpret Scripture by Scripture, 7) Interpret the scripture literally unless it is obvious that it is to be understood symbolically.

I. Interpret a passage in light of its context.

Context means where the scripture is found because the context will oftentimes reveal the

meaning. Context includes the following:

A. Is the Scripture found in the Old Testament or the New Testament? In the OT the people of God are the Jews or the Israelites. The message of the passage somehow had meaning first of all for the Jews- the people of God. In the NT the people of God are called Christians or the church. The message of the passage first of all was relevant to them.

B. What section of the OT or the NT is the passage in?

1. OT Categories

- a. The Pentateuch
- b. The Historical Books
- c. The Writings
- d. The Major prophets
- e. The Minor prophets

2. NT Categories

- a. The Synoptic Gospels or Gospels
- b. Acts- the History of the early church
- c. Paul's epistles
- d. The General Epistles
- e. Revelation

C. What is the Immediate Context?

1. What is the basic theme of the book in which your passage is found?
2. What is the theme, main idea of the chapter, verses just before your passage?
3. What is the theme, main idea of the chapter, verses just after your passage?

PRACTICE:

Find the 3 contexts of the following passages. (A,B,C above)

1. Exodus 32: 31-34
2. Psalm 51
3. Zechariah 4:6
4. Matthew 5:48
5. Philippians 4:13

II) Interpret a passage according to the correct meaning of the words.

To properly interpret a passage you need to know what the key words actually mean. Begin in English or the language of the translation. (Then study the Greek if you know it.- This is where commentaries can be helpful)

PRACTICE:

1. Exodus 32: 31-34
2. Psalm 51
3. Zechariah 4:6
4. Matthew 5:48
5. Philippians 4:13

Extra Practice:

John 1:1-5, 10-12,
Rev. 1:12, 16-20,

I Peter 3:3-4,
Hebrews 12:1.

III) Understand the grammar, present, past, future, continuous present, past with present results.

The tenses of the verbs can affect the meaning of the passage. Is the writer speaking of something that has already happened or something that will happen in the future? Is he saying this is something which should happen at one time or something which should happen continuously? Is he speaking in first person, second person, or third person? Who does the pronoun he refer to? Sometimes you may need a commentary or know Greek to get a correct understanding of the grammar. Using other translations of the Bible can also help you.

PRACTICE:

1. Psalm 23- Notice how the writer switches from talking about God in vs 1, 2,3, 6 to talking to God in verses 4 and 5.
2. Eph 5:18
3. Matt. 7:7
4. Mk 2:5- Their faith.

Extra Practice:

Joel 2:28-32

Romans 7:14-24- Who is the I in the passage?

**Bible Study
Methods
Lesson 2**

Four Further Principles of Bible Study

Lesson Purpose:

- **To teach and practice the last four principles of Bible Study**

Main Points:

- **Interpret according to the author's original intention.**
- **Interpret in light of the historical, cultural background**
- **Interpret Scripture by Scripture.**
- **Interpret the scripture literally unless it is obvious that it is to be interpreted symbolically.**

Desired Outcome

- **The student will how to Interpret scripture according to the author's original intention and in light of the historical, cultural background**
- **The student will know how to use other scripture to interpret a passage and the importance of interpreting it literally unless it is obviously symbolic.**

Suggestions for teaching

- **Continue with Handout #1**
- **Teach each main point and then have the student practice with the PRACTICE verses. If they still don't understand use the extra practice verses.**
- **You can also divide into groups of two where each group is assigned one of the PRACTICE verses and then after 15 minutes come back together and have each group report their findings according to each principle of interpretation.**

4) Interpret according to the author's original intention.

What was the author originally trying to say when he wrote to the people in Judah or to the Ephesians or?

PRACTICE:

1. Deuteronomy 28
2. Matthew 5:3-10
3. Rev. 7:1-4,
4. Rev. 13:18.

Extra Practice:

1. Genesis 3:1-19
2. I Thessalonians 3:10-13

5) Interpret in light of the historical, cultural background.

What did the people of the day of the prophet or apostle do? What was the historical situation? Who/what was the outside force affecting the people of Israel (Old Testament) or the church (NT). What were the cultural practices of that day? Sometimes a commentary can help a student in this principle.

PRACTICE:

1. Genesis 22. It is helpful to know that some of the gods of the people of Abraham's day demanded child sacrifice.
1. John 13:3-5, 14-15
3. Luke 9:59-60- know the cultural practice of staying with family until the parents die.
4. I Cor. 8:1-13- Food offered to idols.

Extra Practice:

1. Jeremiah 29:11- When was this promise given? What was happening to the nation of Judah?
2. I Cor. 14:34ff.

6) Interpret scripture by Scripture.

Interpret less clear scripture with clear scripture. Remember that Scripture will never contradict Scripture. If it seems to, then your interpretation is wrong. Some parts of scripture are paradoxical- they seem to contradict but yet they are two important truths. We can use clear scriptures to help us understand less clear scripture.

PRACTICE:

1. Acts 19:6, Acts 10:46- What are the tongues the Luke is speaking about? Use Acts 2 to help you understand and explain what tongues or languages, because the same Greek word translated tongues in Acts 19:6 And 10:46 is also found in Acts 2. In Acts 2 we can see that Peter is speaking of a known language, not an unknown prayer tongue.
2. What is the relationship between faith and works in Bible? Do Paul and James contradict each other? Ephesians 2:8-9 and James 2:14-18.

Extra Practice:

1. Isaiah 53:4-6. Who is the person being spoken about? In the New Testament we learn clearly that Jesus the Messiah is being spoken about. Mt 8:14-17; Hebrews 9:28; I Peter 2:24.
2. Colossians 3:18-19. We can get a clearer understanding about the relationship between a husband and his wife in Ephesians 5:22-32.

7) Interpret the scripture literally unless it is obvious that it is not to be understood literally.

Sometimes the Bible uses symbols and the message is to be taken symbolically. However in most cases we should interpret it literally in its context.

PRACTICE:

1. Eph 5:22-24- interpret it following the above principles.

2. Rev 14:1-5

Extra Practice:

1. Daniel 8:1-12. This is obviously symbolic language and the interpretation can be difficult. Having a commentary can be helpful.

2. Matthew 25:1-13. Most parables have one main meaning and the meaning is given directly or indirectly in the context. Some parables like the parable of the 10 virgins are obviously symbolic. This parable teaches the need to be ready, to have the Holy Spirit in our lives when Jesus, the bridegroom, comes for His church.

**Bible Study
Methods
Lesson 3**

Observe, Interpret and Apply the Scripture

Lesson Purpose:

- To teach how to make observe, interpret and apply Scripture.

Main Points:

- Observe by trying to find what the passage actually says.
- Ask some key questions
- Decide what it means-interpretation
- Make application that relates to real life

Desired Outcome

- The student will know how to get further insight into the passage by learning how to observe, interpret and apply scripture.

Suggestions for teaching

- Give students Handout #2
- Teach the three main steps and then have the student practice with the PRACTICE verses.
- You can also divide into groups of two where each group is assigned one of the PRACTICE verses and then after some minutes come back together and have each group report their findings.
- You may need to take two sessions to teach this lesson because of the many items under observation.

Three powerful steps to studying the Bible

I. STEP ONE: OBSERVATION -- What is the passage actually saying?

- A. Pray asking the Holy Spirit to help you.
- B. Read the passage through 2-5 times.
- C. Try to understand the whole chapter or that part of the book first before you try to understand the passage you are studying.
- D. Focus on the essential truths, the core ideas in the passage. Don't get sidetracked on issues that take away from the main meaning of the passage.
- E. Ask key questions
 1. What is the scripture actually saying? Ephesians 2:1-2
 2. What does it not say? Ephesians 2:8-9
 3. What is the tone of the passage? Galatians 1:6-8
 4. Is there a command or rebuke or encouragement or simply stating what happened? Galatians 5:24-26
 5. Is there a flow of ideas in the passage? Does one thing lead to another? Romans 7:14-25
 6. Ask yourself- why did the writer compose this section of scripture? What was God's purpose

in inspiring the author to write like this? What did the original readers think the author was saying? Hebrews 11

7. Ask the 5 W and the H questions.

- a. Who? wrote it, spoke it, about whom, to whom is he speaking?
- b. What? are the main events, the major ideas, the major doctrines, is he talking about, is his purpose in saying that?
- c. When? was it written, did this event take place, will it happen, did he say it?
- d. Where? was this done, was this said, will it happen?
- e. Why? was this written, was this mentioned, was that not mentioned, was so much written about this?
- f. How? can we do this, is this truth illustrated?

F. Look for certain key words or phrases that are repeated, that is probably significant. I Corinthians 13.

G. Remember that sometimes prophecy has a double fulfillment, once when it was fulfilled shortly after it was spoken, and sometimes a further fulfillment at the end of time when Christ returns. Joel 2:28-32

PRACTICE: Exodus 3:1-15

II. STEP TWO: INTERPRETATION -- WHAT DOES IT MEAN? Interpretation comes out of your observations

A. Interpret according to the original situation in which it happened.

1. Who was the passage written to?
2. Who wrote the passage?
3. What was the original circumstance when the passage was written?

B. Interpret according to the context

C. Interpret the passage in light of the whole Bible.

Your interpretation will not contradict the clear meaning of the rest of the Bible.

D. Interpret according to the kind of language being used

1. According to the grammar
2. According to the words.
3. Literally or symbolically? Sometimes a passage can have a both a literal and a symbolic meaning. See the lesson on types.

PRACTICE: Exodus 3:1-15

III. STEP THREE: APPLICATION -- What are we supposed to do?

Information without application produces frustration.

Information with application produces transformation.

A. Look for principles we can apply.

B. Apply the truth of the passage in your own life first.

C. Then apply the truth in the life of those you are leading. Application answers the question how. The passage gives the principle, then you need to ask how that principle can be applied practically in your local culture and context.

PRACTICE- assign the following passages to individuals or small groups of 2-3 to make observations from the passage based on what they learned in this lesson. The following are suggested passages.

1. Exodus 3:1-4:17

2. Psalm 1

3. Acts 9:1-19

4. I John 1:5-2:2

**Bible Study
Methods
Lesson 4**

Studying Parallel Passages and Parables

Lesson Purpose:

- **To learn how to find and study parallel passages and parables**

Main Points:

- **The Synoptic Gospels**
- **Colossians and Ephesians**
- **I, II Samuel, I, II Kings and I,II Chronicles**
- **Roman and Galatians**
- **Parables usually have one main meaning.**

Desired Outcome

- **The student will know which scriptures might have parallel passages and how to use those parallel passages to better interpret the passage they are studying.**
- **He/she will understand better how to interpret parables**

Suggestions for teaching

- **Give students Handout #3**
- **Teach the lesson, give them examples and then have the student practice with the PRACTICE verses.**
- **You can also divide into groups of two where each group is assigned one of the PRACTICE verses and then after 15 minutes come back together and have each group report their findings according to each principle of interpretation.**

Parallel passages

Whenever you are studying the Bible remember that there are many parallel passages. If you study the parallel passage you may gain more insight into the passage which you are studying. That should help you to better interpret the passage you are studying and give you more information about the passage you are studying.

1) Synoptic Gospels - Matthew is parallel to Mark which is parallel to Luke and sometimes to John (Remember that the Synoptic Gospels are different from John but they contain similar stories.) The Synoptics are very much parallel.

Practice:

- a. Matthew 7:7-11 and Luke 11:9-13. Notice the difference between the 2 passages and try to ask why they are different. Especially study the contexts. Matthew records it as part of the Sermon on the Mount and Luke records it after the Lord's Prayer and the parable of the friend at midnight. Does the context help us understand the meanings?
- b. Matthew 3:11-12, Mark 1:7-8, Luke 3:16-18; John 1:33-34. Notice that in this case even

John has a parallel passage to the synoptics- this is unusual but it happens at times.

c. Parable of the sower- Mark 4, Matthew 13 and Luke 8.

2) Ephesians to Colossians.

Practice:

a) Ephesians 5:21-32 and Colossians 3:18-21

b) Ephesians 4:20-5:7 and Colossians 3:1-14

3) Romans to Galatians

Practice:

a) Romans 4 and Galatians 3:1-14

b) Romans 8:1-16 and Galatians 5:16-25

4) I,II Samuel & I,II Kings are parallel to I,II Chronicles

Practice:

a) Manasseh- II Kings 21:1-18, II Chronicles 33:1-20

b) Death of King Saul- I Samuel 31 and I Chronicles 10

STUDYING PARABLES

A parable is a story told with the purpose of giving some moral or spiritual truth- it may not be an actual event- but it is true to life. "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Jesus often said the kingdom of heaven is like... Parables are found in the OT of in the Synoptic Gospels. 3 elements of a parable are setting, story and application. Study the context to best understand the parable. Parables usually have one main point. Don't try to find a spiritual lesson in every detail- look for the central message. Why did Jesus use parables? Matt 13:10ff,34-35

A parable had 2 purposes- to reveal truth to believers- to emphasize a point, and to hide truth from those who had rejected it.

There are almost 60 parables in the Synoptic Gospels- none in John. Some parables for study:

Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard- Matt 20:1-6

Parable of the Wheat and Weeds- Mt 13:24-30

Parable of the Net- Matt 13:47-51

Parable of 2 sons- Matt 21:28ff

Parable of the servants-Matt 21:33ff

Parable of the Mustard Seed- Mat 13:31-31

Parable of the 2 debtors- Luke 7:41-43

Parable of the friend at midnight Luke 11:5-8

Parable of the rich man and Lazarus- Luke 16:19-31

Parable of the Unjust Judge- Luke 18:1-8

Parable of the Hidden Treasure- Matt 13:44-45

Parable of the Sower- Mk 4:1-20

Parable of the lost sheep- Luke 15:3-7

Questions to ask:

1. What is the setting (context)?
2. What is the essence of the story?
3. What is the main point?
4. Keep in mind the theme of the book and what is happening in the chapter.

Guidelines for interpretation

1. Think first of the stories natural meaning. The spiritual lesson is based on the Natural Meaning. eg Matt 13:44-46. Don't make up a different meaning. eg Origen's interpretation of the Good Samaritan in Luke 15 was that Adam is the man who fell among thieves, Jerusalem is heaven, Jericho is the world. (That was NOT good interpretation.)
2. Note the setting or context of the parable. If the setting is clear then it is important. eg. Jesus shares the three parables of Luke 15 because of the objections of the Pharisees.
3. Find the main meaning or teaching, the central point. Identify the relevant and irrelevant details. Sometimes Jesus tells us what it is, eg the story of the 10 virgins, Matt 25. Sometimes there are a # of points, eg the parable of the sower and the wheat, but that is the exception, not the rule.
4. Check the meaning with the direct meaning of scripture. Your interpretation of the parable should agree with the direct teaching of scripture. Interpret less clear scripture with clear scripture. We don't use parables to develop doctrine. eg In Matt 13:36ff don't teach that we should not deal with sinners in the church, we should simply wait for the judgment.
5. If there are problems understanding the story, get what light you can from the cultural and historical setting. eg Matt 22:11-13. It was the custom of the host to give wedding garments to his guests.

PRACTICE: CHOOSE THREE OF THE ABOVE PARABLES AND ANSWER THE ABOVE QUESTIONS.

**Bible Study
Methods
Lesson 5**

How to Study Allegories, Types and figures of speech

Lesson Purpose:

- **To teach how to interpret allegories**
- **To teach how to interpret types**
- **To study figures of speech in the Bible**

Main Points:

- **An allegory is a story with an underlying meaning.**
- **A type is a divinely purposed, OT foreshadowing of a NT spiritual reality**
- **Some figures of speech are similes, hyperboles, metaphors, personifications and irony.**

Desired Outcome

- **The student will have a clearer understanding of allegories and types and how to interpret them.**
- **The student will be able to identify the figures of speech used in the Bible**

Suggestions for teaching

- **Give the students Handout #4**
- **Teach the lesson, give them examples and then have the student practice with the PRACTICE verses.**
- **You can also divide into groups of two where each group is assigned one of the PRACTICE verses and then after 15 minutes come back together and have each group report their findings according to each principle of interpretation.**
- **There needs to be much interaction and practice in this lesson**

How to Interpret Allegories

An allegory is a story with an underlying meaning different than the surface meaning.

It can have more than one central point or emphasis,

It can teach a number of truths.

The details may be many, but application is found within the allegory. John 15 is an example.

In Jn 15 there are 3 main ideas- the Vine dresser- the Father, the Vine- Jesus, the Branches- believers. Study that passage and explain the main ideas in context and application.

PRACTICE:

John 6:25-67- What are the allegories in this chapter? What is the main idea that Jesus was trying to teach?

Types

A type is a divinely purposed, OT foreshadowing of a NT spiritual reality. It could be a person, or an event, or a place mentioned in the OT that is pointing toward a deeper reality found in the NT.

1) A type is divinely purposed. We must see evidence in scripture that God has indicated the correspondence between the type and its fulfillment. If the NT speaks of it-we know it is a type, if it doesn't, then we must be careful.

2) The type in the OT is the fulfillment (anti-type) in the NT.

3) The type is a shadow compared with the coming reality. The high priest of the OT is a type of Christ. Some people believe that almost everything in the OT foreshadows something in the NT. But for the sake of this lesson only focus on those where the NT says it is the antitype or where a strong case can be built for it.

A. There are types of persons- like the first Adam- and the second Adam-Jesus- Romans 5:12-19; I Cor 15: 21-22.

Moses- Jesus the new law giver- Matthew's sermon on the mount-, Hebrews 3- One greater than Moses is here.

Elijah- John the Baptist- Malachi 4:5-6; Luke 1:13-17

Melchizedek- Jesus. Hebrews 5:6; 6:20-7:17; Genesis 14:18-20

(Explain how each of these are types)

B. There are types of things/events- like:

the altar of sacrifice-Genesis 22 and the altar in the Tabernacle/temple (Exodus 27:1ff; 38:1;40:6ff) -The cross where Jesus was crucified- NT

The lamb- this was used at the Passover in Exodus 12 and was part of the guilt offering- Lev 5:14-6:7; 7: 1-6. Jesus was crucified on Passover, he is called the Lamb of God-John 1:29; I Corinthians 5:7; I Peter 1:19; Rev. 5:12

Incense offering- Exodus 30:1; 40:5- Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4

brazen serpent-Numbers 21:5-9- John 3:14

C. There are types in institutions- the Passover.- Exodus 12; Deut 16:1-8- Mark 14:12ff, I Cor 11:17ff

Feast of Pentecost-- it took place 50 days after the Passover, it commemorated the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai, and it was a time of giving thanks to God for the harvest. Exodus23:16; Leviticus 23:15ff; Deut 16:9-12 -Acts 2

D. There are types in offices- the prophet- The ultimate prophet in the OT was Moses- but Jesus is greater than Moses.

The priest- Melchizedek is the greatest priest in the OT-He may have been Jesus on earth before Jesus because he is equated with Jesus. Hebrews 4:14

King- David was the greatest king in the Old Testament- Jesus is greater than David. Jesus personified all of these. Jesus is the King but His kingdom is not of this world.

E. A warning. Be careful that you do not try to make everything a type in the OT. Try to find NT correlations that specifically refer to the OT type. Some people have tried to find hidden meanings in many OT events and people and thereby misinterpreted the Bible.

F. As you study the Old Testament remember that the Types in the OT are a foreshadowing, a pointing toward something or someone in the New Testament. Sometimes in the New Testament the writer seems to either directly or indirectly show the reader that Jesus is greater than the type in the OT. Hebrews 3 and Matthew 5-7.

Remember that the OT is the story of how God chose a people- the Jews- through whom he would one day bring the Messiah. The OT points towards the coming of the Messiah and the time when God will reign forever. When you study the Bible remember that the events and stories of the OT point toward the person of Christ, when you read the stories in the NT remember that the OT events and persons pointed toward the person of Christ.

PRACTICE:

OT- Ezekiel 47:1-12. What is the OT pointing toward in the NT? Find specific NT references.
NT- Matthew 12:38-42; 16:4; Luke 11:29-32. What is the event in the OT that seems to foreshadow the NT text? What is the main meaning of the NT passage in light of the OT type?

UNDERSTANDING FIGURES OF SPEECH IN THE BIBLE

Kay Arthur

1. Metaphor- an implied comparison between two things which are different. John 11:25- I am the resurrection and the life. Psalm 22:20. Is Luke 22:19 to be taken as a metaphor or as literal truth?
2. Simile- an expressed comparison of two different thing or ideas that used the words- like, as ...so is, such as. Rev. 1:14b. His eyes were like a flame of fire.
3. Hyperboles- a deliberate exaggeration for effect or emphasis. Ps 119:20- My soul is crushed with longing.
4. Personification- a non-personal or non-living thing is spoken about as though it were a person. An object is given a characteristic or attribute that belongs to a person eg. When the trees clap their hands and the mountains sing for joy- Isaiah 55:12.
5. Irony- A statement which says the opposite of what is meant. It is used for effect- to wake a person up to the reality of the truth. I Cor 4:8. I Kings 22:15 (1-23)- The prophet tells the king a lie, but actually it is an irony stated in such a way to emphasize the truth.

PRACTICE:

Find some other examples of each of the above.

**Bible Study
Methods
Lesson 6**

How to Study the New Testament

Lesson Purpose:

- **To teach basic principles about studying the New Testament.**
-

Main Points:

- **In the Gospels always study the context for insight in meaning**
- **Look for parallel passages when studying the Gospels**
- **In Acts look for the principles we can find for the church today.**
- **In the epistles look for the doctrinal truths we can apply today.**
- **In Revelation remember that it is very symbolic and the student will learn how to interpret the symbols.**

Desired Outcome

- **The student will know that a parable usually has one key idea.**
- **The student will understand the importance of context**
- **He/she will know how to find the many principles and doctrinal truths in the passages they study in the NT.**
- **He/she will understand the basic understanding of how to interpret the symbols of Revelation.**

Suggestions for teaching

- **Give the students Handout #5**
- **Teach the lesson, give them examples and then have the student practice with the PRACTICE verses.**
- **You can also divide into groups of two where each group is assigned one of the PRACTICE verses and then after 15 minutes come back together and have each group report their findings according to each principle of interpretation.**

STUDYING THE GOSPELS

1. Remember that they are the story of Christ and His life here in earth.
2. The Synoptic Gospels are very similar.
3. The Gospel of John stands on its own.
4. Always look for parallel passages to see if they add anything to the passage.
5. Look for the principles that Christ taught and what the authors are trying to emphasize.
6. Study the context of the story you are studying to get better insight into the passage.

Practice:

Mt. 3:11-17- check parallel scriptures and note the differences.

Mt 8:23-27.- Jesus calms the sea,
John 15: 1-17

HOW TO STUDY ACTS-

1. This is the history of the church, of the works of the Holy Spirit in the church and the apostles as they went out to tell the story of Christ.
2. The theme is the Acts of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church. Study how the Holy Spirit worked in the early church.
3. Look for the principles that we can find for the church today.

PRACTICE:

Acts 12: 1-19

Acts 19:1-6

HOW TO STUDY THE EPISTLES

1. These are letters that the early apostles, including Paul wrote to the early church.
2. These letters teach us how to run the church.
3. They teach us important doctrinal truths about Christianity.

PRACTICE:

I Timothy 3:1-7

I John 2:18-27

HOW TO STUDY REVELATION

1. Find out what it meant for the people of John's day.
2. Try to find meaning in the word pictures from the OT.-Rev. 18.
3. Keep the theme of the book in mind- Jesus, the King, is on the throne.
4. Find the principle which is applicable for today.

PRACTICE:

Revelation 7

Revelation 22:1-6

**Bible Study
Methods
Lesson 7**

How to Study the Old Testament

Lesson Purpose:

- **To teach some principles for studying the Old Testament**

Main Points:

- **How to study the law, the historical books, the Proverbs and the prophets**

Desired Outcome

- **The student will know what to look for in each of the categories of the OT.**

Suggestions for teaching

- **Give the students Handout #6**
- **Teach the lesson, give them examples and then have the student practice with the PRACTICE verses.**
- **You can also divide into groups of two where each group is assigned one of the PRACTICE verses and then after 15 minutes come back together and have each group report their findings according to each principle of interpretation.**
- **There needs to be much interaction and practice in this lesson**

HOW TO STUDY THE OT

STUDYING THE BOOKS OF THE LAW

The Pentateuch- Genesis- Deut, esp Lev. and Deut.

- 1) Know the difference between the ceremonial law and the moral law. Exodus 20 - moral law, Lev. 11, 12,13- ceremonial law. (Lev 14:10ff)
- 2) Keep in mind the heart of the law- Deut 6:4. Love.
- 3) There is a difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant- what is the difference? The OT is built around the sacrificial system, the law and the nation of Israel- the NT is built around Christ our sacrificial lamb, grace and the church.
- 4) Look for the overall purpose of the chapter you are studying- eg Lev. 4- don't get bogged down with the details. Why was God asking them to do that?
- 5) Is there a foreshadowing of something to come? Lev 4- offerings for those who sin unintentionally, they are to lay their hand on the animal, sprinkling of blood-vs 6-7. vs. 32- w/o defect, 31- he will be forgiven. Lev 6:12- keep the fire burning.
- 6) Some of the laws given were simply medical advice- the priests were the Doctors- Lev 14.

PRACTICE:

Deuteronomy 28

STUDYING THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, I,II Samuel, I,II Kings, I,II Chronicles.

The Historical Books tell the History of the Nation of Israel in the Promised Land.

- 1) Remember that there are many lessons that we can learn from our forefathers, both good and bad- I Kings 11:1-11.
- 2) These stories can be used as illustrations of what to do and what not to do. Joshua 7- Achan.
- 3) These stories can be the base for powerful sermons and powerful expository messages I Kings 18- Elijah, Joshua 1:1-9
- 4) Interpret passages that are less clear with passages that are very clear.- Judges 11:29-39.
- 5) Look for the overall meaning of a passage, remember that the author had a reason for telling us the story. 2 Sam. 15- Absalom's conspiracy.
- 6) These stories record Israel's history- some of it was good some evil, and sometimes we are left to decide whether it is good or bad. Judges 21.

PRACTICE:

Look at II Chronicles 7 and then 10. What are the lessons that we can learn from each chapter?

STUDYING THE PSALMS

- 1) Each Psalm stands alone
- 2) The Psalms were written as prayers or songs to be sung in worship
- 3) They are written in poetic form. Their distinctive feature is parallelism where the second line or phrase repeats the first in different language, contrasts the first, or somehow completes the first.
- 4) The kinds of Psalms a) Prayers of individuals- eg Ps 3, b) Praise to God by the individual for God's help eg Psalm 34, c) Prayers of the community eg Ps 44, d) Praise for God's help from the community eg ps 66, e)Psalms celebrating God's reign eg Ps 93-99, e) Confessional Psalms eg Ps 51.

PRACTICE: Psalm 34, Psalm 51

STUDYING THE PROVERBS

- 1) Some verses stand alone- they are unrelated to others- eg Prov. 10:1, 2, 3, 4, etc. Notice the contrast in the verse.
- 2) Where you find an idea that stands by itself in a verse try to find other verses in the book of Proverbs that give more light on that idea. eg Prov. 22:6, 13:24; 19:18; 23:13
- 3) Some chapters are related to one idea or theme- eg. Prov. 7.
- 4) Use the book of Proverbs as illustrations for sermons.

Some principles of studying Hebrew Poetry

It's main feature is parallelism, ie, two lines or more are related to each other in some way. Ps 27:1-there are 4 lines but usually there are only 2 lines. This parallelism is shown through:

1. repetition-there is identical or synonymous repetition. Is 1:3, Ps 33:2. Oftentimes one line throws light on another. Ps. 29:1ff, Ps 35:1, 38:2, 39:3
2. Sometimes there is a contrast- called antithetical parallelism. esp in Proverbs. Prov 15:1, 10:1-10.
3. Expansion- climactic parallelism. Ps. 34:4- The second part expands the first part, sometimes building to a climax.
4. Symbolic Parallelism-Ps. 22:16, 42:1. It uses symbols to express an idea.

Knowing that the lines of poetry are related can help you to better interpret the passage of scripture.

PRACTICE:

Proverbs 16:1-9 What are the key ideas in the passage and where else can we find parallel ideas to each idea?

STUDYING THE MAJOR AND MINOR PROPHETS

- 1) Know the theme of the book
- 2) Know the state of the nation of Israel- what was happening in the nation of Israel at the time of the writing of this book.
- 3) Study the context well- to whom was the book written- to which kingdom was the prophet ministering.
- 4) While you may choose 3-7 verses to preach from, use the whole chapter, and other relevant chapters in the books to illustrate from. Zech 4:6 and Malachi 3:6-12.

PRACTICE:

Isaiah 53:1-6

Habakkuk 3:17-19

**Bible Study
Methods
Lesson 8**

**How to Study the Bible using a Concordance and
Commentary**

a

Lesson Purpose:

- **To teach how to use a concordance and commentary to study the Bible.**

Main Points:

- **A concordance has the main words used in the Bible in certain translations.**
- **A commentary is an explanation of the verses in the Bible which can help you to better understand the Bible.**

Desired Outcome

- **The student will know how to use a concordance to study the Bible to illustrate, to teach and to preach from.**
- **The student will know how to use a commentary and which commentaries are most helpful to them.**

Suggestions for teaching

- **Give the students Handout #7**
- **Teach the lesson with a concordance showing the students how to use a concordance and then giving them assignments to work individually with a concordance.**
- **Give the students practice using different commentaries to study passages**

STUDYING THE BIBLE USING A CONCORDANCE

Introduction- A Concordance lists the major words in the Bible. If you don't know where a verse is found but you remember a word in that verse you can use a concordance to find where that verse is found. If you want to find scriptures that speak about a certain subject which you are studying, such as faith, you can also use a concordance. A concordance is a book that has listed key words of the Bible and where they are found in the Bible.

I. The kinds of concordances. There are different kinds of concordances. NIV Concordance, KJV- Strongs. An exhaustive concordance tells you where every word is in the Bible. The Strong's concordance also has a numbered system which tells you which Greek or Hebrew word is found in the scripture you are studying. Sometimes you will find a concordance in the back of a Bible, including chain reference Bibles.

II. Why use a concordance? The reason you might want to use a concordance is to study where a particular word is found in the Bible so that you can better understand that word, what that word means and how it is used.

III. Be careful of the word you are studying. But you must be careful because you might find the same word someplace else but the Greek or Hebrew word is different and yet it is translated with the same word. That's why a Strong's Concordance is so valuable, it also lets you know which

Greek or Hebrew word is used. Sometimes in English we have one word which means a certain thing but in Greek there are 2 or 3 words which are translated with the same English word. But the Greek words are a bit different. e.g.. The English Word translated love has three Greek words in the Greek-eros, phileo, and agape. Two of those are found in John 21:15ff. (illustrate with a Strong's concordance.)

A. GOD.

Let's suppose that you want to know the Hebrew word which is translated God in Gen 1:1--look up God under Gen 1:1 and you will see Elohim-(430) which is sometimes translated the Creator God. Remember that when you look up the numbers in the back of the Strongs Concordance that there is a Greek and a Hebrew dictionary. The problem with the Strongs Concordance is that it is tied to the KJV of the Bible. That means that if you use it then you need to compare the way the KJV translates a word with the way the NIV translates it.

B. PRAYER.

Let's look at the word prayer in I Tim. 1:8 in the NIV. If you were studying that verse you might want to know what other postures you should use in prayer besides lifting up you hands. Look in a concordance to find other references on your posture in prayer by looking in your concordance under prayer, then pray and prayed. Col 4:12 Isaiah 1:15, Ex 9:29, Acts 20:36, 9:40, 6:6, Luke 22:41, 18:11, 5:16, Mk 14:39, 1:35, Matt. 26:39, Deut 6:10, 2 Chron. 6:26.

C. FAST

Assignment- Look up the word fast in a concordance and write out 5 verses that might help you to preach/teach on that idea. Neh. 1:4 says that Nehemiah fasted and if you want to find out when or how we should fast then look up fast in the concordance, but remember fast can be used in at least two different ways in English and you must know the difference, usually you can know the difference by looking at the context. In Strong's concordance- 6684- the actual root word in Hebrew means to cover over the mouth i.e. to fast. In the Greek the word is 3522- nacetyoo- to abstain from food. Some verses that might help you if you were teaching from this passage- Mt. 6:16- When you fast...Acts 14:23- With prayer and fasting- committed them to the Lord, it was a time of appointing elders and then consecrating them to God. It included fasting. Acts 13:2- While they were praying and fasting God said- it can be a way to help you hear God's voice.

D. PRAY

I Sam 12:23- we sin if we don't pray for those we are supposed to be leading.

Mt. 6:5- Don't pray like hypocrites do.

Rom. 8:26- The Spirit helps us when we don't know how to pray.

I Thess 5:17- Pray continually

James 5:16- The power of prayer

Deut 4:7- The Lord is near to those who pray to him.

pray-hebrew 6419- pawlal, to intercede, pray, make supplication

6739- tselaw-bowing in prayer- Ezra 6:10

Greek- proseuchumai- 4336- pray earnestly, James 5:13-14.

yookhomahee-2172- to pray to God, to wish.

IV. The problem of a concordance. Some preachers who are a bit lazy use a concordance to develop a sermon, especially a topical sermon. That is the lazy man's way to prepare a sermon, the problem is that if you pick a verse without studying the context you may interpret it according to what you want it to say instead of what it actually says.

V. Concordance and illustrations. Use a concordance as a reference tool, as a way of finding illustrations. Let's suppose you are preaching on faith from Hebrews 11 and as you prepare your outline you think, Jesus said something about faith that you want to use in your sermon, but you can't remember what He said or where it is. Take your concordance and look up the word faith, then look under the Gospels- Mt-John to see if you can find a relevant illustration on faith from the words of Jesus.

PRACTICE:

1) Look up the word faith and write out 5 references that teach something different about faith.

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE USING A COMMENTARY.

One of the most effective ways to study the Bible is by using a commentary. A commentary is an explanation of the meaning of the text in the Bible. Some commentaries are very detailed and give the Hebrew or Greek words. Other commentaries give the general meaning of the text looking at the key words and helping you to understand the meaning of the Greek/Hebrew words that are translated into English. Some study Bibles such as the NIV Study Bible have a commentary on each page. There are whole Bible Commentaries, Commentaries on various parts of the Bible such as the Minor prophets and there are individual book commentaries which look at each chapter and verse in detail. The best commentaries which would help a person study the meaning of the Bible would include the following: 1) William Barclays NT Commentaries, 2) New International Commentaries, Wesleyan Bible Commentaries, Tyndale Commentaries. Practice using different commentaries to see which ones you like the best. Some commentaries are so detailed or use old English can be more of a problem than a help. Commentaries can help us understand difficult passages.

PRACTICE:

Use three commentaries to study the following passages. Write down which ideas you learned from different commentaries. Which commentary was most helpful to you?

1) Study I Corinthians 14:33-35

2) Revelation 12.

Final Exam for Bible Study Methods

1. Name three things that you should look for when studying a parable? (6)
2. Name the seven basic principles of Bible Study or Bible interpretation. (14)
3. Beyond the above principles, what are five other things we can do to make observations from a passage of scripture? (10)
4. Explain what the context of a passage is. Include five different kinds of contexts in your answer. (10)
5. What is a type and an antitype? Give four Biblical examples of a type and its' antitype in the New Testament. (10)

6. Name 3 different kinds of resource books that will help us understand the Bible and explain how they can help us. (6)

7. Which books of the Bible are parallel books? (Write 4 groupings of them) (8)

8. Define the following figures of speech in the Bible: (10)

a. Metaphor

b. Simile

c. Hyperbole

d. Personification

e. Irony

9. Explain three things to do when interpreting the OT Minor or Major Prophets. (3)

10. Explain three things to do when interpreting the Gospels. (3)

11. From the following passage, II Corinthians 6: 14-18 make observations, interpretations and application. (This is an essay question and should be answered showing what you learned from the class.) (20)