

Inductive Study Methodology

Inductive Bible Study involves using the Bible as the primary source of information and reading with a purpose by asking relevant questions so that through complete observation one can accurately interpret, determine eternal principles, and then apply Scripture to all circumstances of one’s life.

God has spoken in the past and continues to speak to reveal Himself to humanity

- Through the prophets as recorded in Scripture
- Through His Son Jesus, as the word who came to earth in the flesh
- Through the Holy Spirit, who gives to all believers the ability to understand God’s word

The Four Components of the Inductive Study Methodology

1. Observation: Seeing what the text says, to gain facts and information

The process of observation is foundational to inductive Bible study
 Asking the “5 Ws and an H” questions helps students focus on the obvious

Who?	What?	Where?	When?	Why?	How?
People	Events	Places	Time	Reason or purpose	Means or method

2. Interpretation: Determining what the text means to gain understanding

Looking for information and the correlation in the context of Scripture
 Looking at the context, by studying the surrounding words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, and the book in which something exists, occurs, or is placed. The author’s use of the repetition of ideas or thoughts will also help you discover meaning within the context.

3. Principlization: Determining what eternal truths are being taught to see relevance

Recognizing abiding, timeless truths within the author’s propositions, arguments, narration, and illustrations while looking for confirmation in other Scriptures

4. Application: Conviction as to how the truth applies personally, leading to transformation

Considering the spirit of the text because a “literal” understanding might have been specific to the historical setting of the audience

Component of the Methodology	Holy Spirit’s Ministry	Man’s Response	Product of Component
Observation -To focus on the obvious	Illumination	Reasoning	Facts & Information
Interpretation -Done in light of context	Teaching	Evaluation	Understanding
Principlization -To seek biblical relevancy	Conviction	Summarization	Eternal Principles
Application -Begins with the individual	Guidance	Accountability	Transformation

Step 1 - Book Overview: To Discover the Context or the Big Picture of the Book

Purpose: To identify the flow of thought that ties the book together and identifies the author's reason for writing

- A. Who is the author?
 - Who is writing and what does he say about himself?
 - What are his circumstances?
 - Where is he and why is he there?
 - When in his life is he writing?
 - Why is he writing?
- B. Who is or who are the recipient/s?
 - Who is it written to?
 - How is the recipient described?
 - What does it say about the recipient?
 - What is the relationship of the recipients to the author?
 - Where is the recipient?
 - Why is the author writing to the recipient?
- C. Other people mentioned: (either specifically or by generalization or implication)
 - Who are the other people mentioned and what does the text say about them?
 - What do you learn about their relationship to the author or recipient?
 - What is their relationship to the key message?
- D. Look for key words
 - Words generally repeated throughout the text
 - When removed the text is left without meaning
- E. Look for declarative statements
 - To teach doctrinal truth that would inform and equip those who follow after Christ
 - To share theology, historical events, or personal testimony
- F. Look for instructions or commands
 - A command or imperative statement, telling someone what they are to do
 - Usually written in the second person such as you, your, or yourself; or introduced with the phrase "let us"
- G. Look for exhortations
 - A personal message from the author to encourage the recipients regarding their own situation, personally and/or within their church
 - To show the uniqueness of the situation that led to the book being written
 - Sometimes introduced with the word "you," calling or urging obedience
- H. Look for admonitions
 - To confront the behavior of the recipient that has not honored God
 - To advise strongly, to reprove, or to call the recipients to repentance
- I. Look for warnings
 - To put on guard or to put on notice concerning possible danger, evil, or harm
 - To describe a just recompense or a possible consequence for behavior based on God's prophecy concerning judgment

Step 2 - Comprehensive Chapter Study Observation Chapter by Chapter

Purpose: To examine the details of the chapter, to see how the chapter details relate to the book

- A. Marking key words
 Mark so your eye can see on the page the occurrence of the word
 This is typically done with colored pencils
 God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and their pronouns are always keywords
 The key words become a basis for developing a list of facts
- B. Making lists of the key words by writing phrases and sentences
- C. Reasoning through the lists of information from the key words
- D. Contrasts to see differences in perspective
 Point out differences in words or phrases
 Most contrasts are identified by the following words: but, however, or never the less
- E. Comparisons to see similarities in concepts
 Dealing with ideas or bodies of truth that are similar
 Identified by the words like and as
- F. Terms of expression
 Time dimension and verb usage
 Look for words like now, then, or later
 Tells if something occurred in the past, will occur in the future, or is in the present
- G. Conclusion or results or purpose
 Look for words like: for, for this reason, so that, that, or because

Step 3 - Word Studies

Purpose: To deepen and clarify understanding of the text
 To determine the meaning of unknown or confusing words or sections of texts

- A. Choose a word
 Look at the key words in the text
 Look at the words with unclear meanings
 Look at the verbs and nouns in the text
- B. Look up the definition in a word study tool
 Strong's Exhaustive Concordance contains three sections with alphabetical list of all words used in the text of Scripture that are then ordered in biblical occurrence
 Includes a dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words arranged numerically
 Expository Dictionaries (each of these is keyed to the *KJV*)
 Vine's, Dictionary of the New Testament
 Spiros Zodhiates, Complete Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament
 Spiros Zodhiates, Complete Word Study Dictionary of the Old Testament
- C. Read the definition back into the text

Step 4 - Cross Referencing of Scripture

Purpose: To establish the context within the broader context of Scripture (Context always rules in all interpretation)

- To amplify or clarify the understanding of the text
 - Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture
 - Scripture never contradicts Scripture
- A. How to determine cross references:
 - Look up the word in a concordance
 - Look up the word in a topical Bible
 - Look up verses identified by marginal references
 - B. Read the cross reference
 - C. Evaluate the message in the light of the cross reference

Step 5 Determining Paragraph and Chapter Theme and Book Title

- A. Paragraph analysis
 - Determine the paragraph theme. The editors of some translations of the Bible have each verse starting on a new line within each chapter. The *NASB* begins each new paragraph by printing the verse number in bold type. The *NIV* divided the chapters into paragraphs, as we know them, indenting at the beginning of each new paragraph. When you study the ancient languages of the Bible, there are differences in paragraph divisions from one manuscript to another. The words of Scripture were inspired, however it was in the 1300s that verse numbers, paragraph divisions, and the divisions made by chapter numbers were added.
- B. Developing each chapter theme and the book title
 - Determine a summary statement for each chapter and one for entire book, verified from key words, instructions, exhortations, admonitions, and warnings within the chapter
 - Use five words or less, with at least one actual word found in a chapter
 - Each chapter title should be descriptive of what is in the chapter and distinctive from the other chapter titles
 - Place these themes on the Theme and Title Chart

Inductive Study Methodology: Summary of the Process

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
What?	The Overview: Discovering the context or the big picture of the book	Comprehensive Chapter Studies	Word Studies	Cross Referencing Scripture	Paragraph and Chapter Theme and Book Title
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the author’s reason for writing Identify the flow of thoughts which ties it together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examine the details of the chapter Examine how the chapter details relate to the book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepen the understanding of the text Clarify the understanding of the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the context within the broader context of Scripture Amplify or clarify the text 	<p>To determine the paragraph and chapter themes</p> <p>To determine the book title</p>
How?	<p>A. Author</p> <p>B. Recipient(s)</p> <p>C. Other people</p> <p>D. Key words</p> <p>E. Declarative Statements</p> <p>F. Instructions</p> <p>G. Exhortations</p> <p>H. Admonitions</p> <p>I. Warnings</p>	<p>A. Marking key words</p> <p>B. Contrasts</p> <p>C. Comparisons</p> <p>D. Terms of expression of time, conclusion or results</p>	<p>A. Choose a word</p> <p>B. Look up the definition in an exhaustive concordance or an expository dictionary</p> <p>C. Read the definition of the word back into the text</p>	<p>A. Look up the word or phrase using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a concordance a topical Bible marginal references <p>B. Read the cross reference</p> <p>C. Evaluate the message in the light of the cross reference</p>	<p>A. Summary statements for each paragraph, chapter, and the book</p> <p>Based on the key words, declarative statements, instructions, exhortations, admonitions, and warnings</p> <p>Use five words or less</p> <p>Each chapter title should be distinctive from the other chapter titles</p> <p>Descriptive of what is in the chapter</p> <p>B. Place each theme on the Themes and Titles Chart</p>

