

Bible Study Tips—SGC Ladies Retreat 2013

INTRO:

- Garden analogy (like gardening, BS requires effort to reap a fruitful harvest, but it's worth it!)
- We want to give a vision for Bible Study; we pray God gives a passion to study His Word
- Prayer
- What does it mean to study?
 - Definition:
 - v.i. to fix the mind closely upon a subject; to muse; to dwell upon in thought [meditate]
 - v.t. to apply the mind to; to read and examine for the purpose of learning and understanding; to consider attentively; to examine closely
 - Different from reading (but starts with reading, eg. Daniel's book, ESV.org, online reading plans): we read in order to understand and apply
 - Study implies understanding and application (James 1:22-25)—being doers of the Word

I. Purpose

- Why do we study the Bible? What is our motivation? (Ps. 1; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 4:12-13)
 - To **know God**—it's His self-revelation (our "delight")
 - To build a **solid foundation** that stands through storms—"fixed points" that hold fast; steady us (spiritual discipline)
 - To give us **perspective**—Bible study "redirects" our gaze from what we are and do, to who God is, what He's like, and what He is doing—learn to look for God
 - To recognize the **authority of God's Word** in our daily life.
 - To learn how to properly **understand** the Bible (**rightly handle truth and apply it**) 2 Tim. 2:15 "Study" to show yourself approved...) #4704: to exert one's self, endeavor, give diligence
 - To be **equipped** for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17)—growth in spiritual maturity

"Disciplined, thoughtful, prayerful study of God's Word, undertaken with the Spirit's help is what we need. It will change the way we think and consequently the way we live, and ultimately the way we feel." Sinclair Ferguson, *Deserted By God*, p. 14

Romans 12:1-2—The renewal of our mind produces the transformation of our lives and that leads to the discovery of the good and perfect will of God.

Renewed minds > transformed lives ⇒ spiritual maturity: **goal of Bible study**

"When we study and meditate on the Scriptures, they begin to make a significant impact on the whole of our lives....bring us to know God, shape our thinking, and give us clear direction."

Ferguson, p. 15

2 Tim 3:16-17: All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

God's Word:

- **Teaches** (it is truth) Ps. 119:160: The sum of your word is truth.
 - **Reproves** (exposes wrong thinking/actions that don't align with God's Word) Heb. 4:12-13: For the **word of God is living and active**, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.
 - **Corrects** (medical term: correcting a damaged limb/setting a broken bone): confession/repentance/redirection
 - **Trains** in righteousness (how God intends us to live)
- "Unless we hide God's Word in our minds and hearts in this way, and come to know the specific teaching of Scripture, we will be under-resourced in our Christian lives." Ferguson, p. 154
- Do we love God's Word? Is it our treasure? Ps. 19:7-14

II. Practice

- What it is that we're studying (structure of the Bible)

66 books

(39/27)

OT

Law (5)

History (12)

Poetry (6)

Prophets (4/12)

NT

Gospels (4)

History (1)

Prophecy (1)

Epistles (21)

40 authors

(2 Pet. 1:20-21)

--Thought is divine

--Revelation is divine

--Expression of communication

is human

[Paul to churches/individuals/HEBREWS/Other's letters (P/Jm/Jde/Jhn)]

1 story

Redemption of mankind

through the person and work of Jesus Christ

NT scripture (1 Cor. 6;11-13): OT serves as examples

List of how Christ is portrayed in each book (highlight 1 book from each section O/NT)

- Daniel's book, *Seeking God* (Journal)
- 3 Questions (Who is God/What is God Like/How should I respond toward God)
- "Formal" (BSF, Bible study guides, etc.)—provides accountability/direction in study
- Outlining/key ideas
- Word Study (can combine with other types of study)
- Topical (comprehensive/exhaustive study of what Bible says regarding a specific topic)
- Inductive/Reorganizing information/Mind mapping

1. We teach/model (10 min.)

2. They practice (10 min.)

3. They teach one another (sm. group discussion) (10 min.)

- 3 questions (Teresa)
- Inductive/mind mapping (Carla)

III. Power

- **Holy Spirit** [we make the effort (in study), He makes it effective (bears fruit/brings growth)]

John 14:16-17; 26: And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth...he dwells with you and will be in you...the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Jesus' prayer: John 17:17,19: Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth...And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

Sanctify: to purify internally by renewing of the soul

Phil 2:13: for it is God who works in you, **both to will and to work** for his good pleasure.

- **Prayer**

Paul's prayer for the Ephesians:

I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, **may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him**, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe.

Bible Study Templates

3 Questions/Journal

Purpose: To know God as He reveals Himself in scripture in order to respond rightly to Him in faith.

Resources: Your Bible and a journal or notebook

General Principles:

1. As you read scripture, ask yourself what this verse/passage says about:
 - Who is God? (*clearly stated and implied*)
 - What is God like?
 - How should I act towards God (in response to who He is)?
2. Make note of the passage you're considering in your journal/notebook
3. Reflect on the nature of God revealed, and write your responses to the first two questions
4. In light of God's self-revelation, consider how He calls you to respond:
 - Write it down
 - Evaluate your life, noting where you do this and where you don't (ask the Holy Spirit for help) (You may find it helpful to write this down, too)
 - Pray accordingly (consider writing out your prayer)
 - Thank God for who He is and for evidence of His grace at work in your life (be specific) (*teaching*)
 - Confess wrong thinking or areas of sin, if applicable (*reproof and correction*)
 - Ask for more faith to walk in obedience (*training in righteousness*)
 - Remember, it is God who works in you, **both to will and to work** for His good pleasure (Phil 2:13)

Word Study (adapted from *The New How to Study Your Bible*, Kay Arthur)

Purpose: To discover word meanings in order to put the definition back into the text to better understand what the author means.

Resources: Your Bible, a good concordance, Bible dictionary, online tools

General Principles:

1. Determine which concordance you will use.
 - Concordances are keyed to particular translations of the Bible
 - Websites with free online tools allow greater flexibility/ease
 - blueletterbible.org
 - biblestudytools.com
 - esvbible.org (some free resources)
2. Look up the word in the front of the concordance (works like a dictionary)
 - Find the book, chapter, and verse for the word you are searching for
 - Look for the reference number that corresponds to the *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* #
3. Turn to the dictionary in the back of the concordance and find the reference # for the word
 - OT words will be in the Hebrew section
 - NT words will be in the Greek section

- The listing will include: the Strong's number; Hebrew/Greek word; English transliteration; derivation of the word; definition; list of ways this word has been translated
4. Use a good expository dictionary for expanded meaning of word
 - *Vine's Expository Dictionary* (look up by KJV English word & then Greek word)
 - *Zodhiates' Complete Word Study Dictionary* (look up by Strong's reference #)
 - With multiple definitions, remember that context always determines the definition
 5. Take what you've learned back to the text and see if it helps your understanding

Outlining (adapted from *The New How to Study Your Bible*, Kay Arthur)

Purpose: To summarize and visually organize information to understand the major and supporting points and the logical flow of the passage.

Resources: Your Bible and a notebook/computer

General Principles:

1. Main topics are the central ideas. (Roman numerals: I, II, III, etc.)
 - Briefly and clearly stated
 - If outlining a book, look for chapter themes
 - If outlining a chapter, look for paragraph themes
2. Subtopics are points that support or explain the main topics (Capital letters: A, B, C, etc.)
3. Subpoints support or explain the subtopic (Arabic numerals: 1,2,3, etc.)
 - May have further subdivisions
 - Follow the progression, indenting each subdivision: 1. a. 1) a) etc.
4. Capture the logical flow of the author.

Subdivisions should (one or more of the following):

 - clarify, explain, or support
 - classify
 - define
 - serve as examples
 - list further details
 - illustrate

the main point of the previous larger subdivision
5. Each subdivision must have at least two points (can have more)
6. Use actual words of Scripture (especially for subpoints)
 - helps you remember what the text says.
 - makes the outlining easier!
 - also include chapter and/or verse references with each point.
7. The longer the passage the less detailed your outline, so you can see the author's most important points.

3 Questions Study Method Example

Eph 1:3-4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

Who Is God? *(Stated)*

- God is the Father of Jesus Christ
- Christ is Lord
- God blesses—God’s blessings are “in Christ”
- God blesses me—with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.
- God chooses—God has chosen me “in him” (Christ)

Who? *(Implied/Inferred)*

- “before the foundation...” > God is eternal
 - No beginning or end
 - Self-existing
 - Transcends time
 - Unchanging (who He was and is, He always will be)
- “...to be holy and blameless...” > God chooses with a purpose

What Is God Like?

- “blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places”
 - God is lavish
 - His blessings are complete/no lack/no withholding
- “in Christ” > God acts not based on what I do
- “chosen before the foundation” > Sovereign
 - In purpose and in time
 - In control
 - Orders events
- “holy and blameless before Him”
 - He is holy
 - He is blameless
 - Those who are before Him must be holy and blameless
 - Therefore, He makes me holy and blameless in Christ (“in him”)

How Should I Respond to God? *(because of who He is and what He’s like)*

- Jesus’ Father > I’m “in Christ” > my Father
 - Respond in trust
 - Assured of His love

- Christ is Lord/Master (G2962 *kyrios*: having power & authority—root *kuros*: supremacy)
 - Humble submission
 - Reverence/respect
 - Obedience

- Blessings are “in Christ”/not based on what I do
 - Respond in faith to receive His blessings
 - Don’t fear “losing” His blessings
- Blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places
 - Gratitude (posture of heart)
 - Thanksgiving (praise of lips)
 - Confidence in God that I have everything I need (2 Pet. 1:3-4)
*His divine power has **granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness**, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has **granted to us his precious and very great promises**, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.*
 - Discover what blessings I have “in Christ”(further study e.g. Michelle Alston SGC blog post)
- God has chosen me in Christ
 - Grateful for His mercy & grace
 - Rest secure
 - ✓ Nothing can separate me from His love in Christ (Rom. 8:35-38)
 - ✓ Nothing can take me out of His hand (John 10:28-29)
- God is eternal
 - Faith & trust (He never changes!)
 - Praise Him! (Because He’s eternal, only He can give eternal life)
 - Live now (in the present) with eternity in my heart (Eccl. 3:11)
 - Assured I will be with Him forever
- God chooses with a purpose
 - Be hopeful in His promise
 - Trust His plans (Jer. 29:11)
 - Live towards His end purpose (Gal. 5:16-25: live by the Spirit/keep in step with the Spirit)
- God is Sovereign (He has the right, wisdom, and power to do all He pleases>display His glory)
 - Trust Him!
 - Don’t fear trials/tribulations (James 1)
 - ✓ Testing of faith
 - ✓ Produces steadfastness
 - ✓ Leads to spiritual maturity
 - Know and believe God’s ways/thoughts are not my ways/thoughts (Is. 55: 8-9)
 - Know and believe nothing can thwart God’s plans and purposes (Is. 55:10-11)
 - Learn His plans & purposes (further study)

- Obey all the way, right away, and in a happy way
- Holy and blameless
 - Be a good steward with what God has given me (His holiness)
 - Live my life in obedience to His ways
 - Trust He is doing a progressive, sanctifying work (Rom. 8:29: conformed to the image of Christ)
 - Live in hope: one day I will stand before Him, blameless (Jude 1:24)
 - Be grateful: I am blameless because Christ took my blame!

“The important thing in the study of the Bible is to find how Jesus Christ is portrayed in each book.”

What the Bible Is All About, Henrietta Mears

THE BIBLE PORTRAYS Jesus Christ as the Savior of the World.

GENESIS portrays Jesus Christ as our Creator-God.

EXODUS...as our Passover Lamb

LEVITICUS...as our Sacrifice for Sin

NUMBERS...as our “Lifted-Up One”

DEUTERONOMY... as our true Prophet

JOSHUA...as Captain of our salvation

JUDGES...as our Deliverer-Judge

RUTH...as our Kinsman-Redeemer

1ST & 2ND SAMUEL...as our King

KINGS & CHRONICLES...as our King

EZRA & NEHEMIAH...as our Restorer

ESTHER...as our Advocate

JOB...as our Redeemer

PSALMS...as our All in all

PROVERBS...as our Wisdom

ECCLESIASTES...as the End of all living

SONG OF SOLOMON...of the Lover of our souls

ISAIAH...as the Messiah

JEREMIAH...as the Righteous Branch

LAMENTATIONS...as the Righteous Branch

EZEKIAL...as the Son of man

DANIEL...as the Smiting Stone

HOSEA...as the Healer of the backslider

JOEL...as the Restorer

AMOS...as the Heavenly Husbandman (Shepherd)

OBADIAH...as our Savior

JONAH...as our Resurrection and Life

MICAH...as a Witness against rebellious nations

NAHUM...as a Stronghold in the day of trouble

HABAKKUK...as the God of our salvation

ZEPHANIAH...as a Jealous Lord

HAGGAI...as the Desire of all nations

ZECHARIAH...as the Righteous Branch

MALACHI...as the Sun of Righteousness

MATTHEW portrays Jesus Christ as the Promised Messiah.

MARK...as the Servant of God

LUKE...as the Son of Man

JOHN...as the Son of God

ACTS...as the Living Lord

ROMANS...as our Righteousness

1ST CORINTHIANS...as our Lord

2ND CORINTHIANS...as our Sufficiency

GALATIANS...as our Liberty

EPHESIANS...as our All in All

PHILIPPIANS...as our Joy

COLOSSIANS...as our Life

1ST THESSALONIANS...as the Coming One

2ND THESSALONIANS...as our Returning Lord

1ST TIMOTHY...as our Teacher

2ND TIMOTHY...as our Example

TITUS...as our Pattern

PHILEMON...as our Lord and Master

HEBREWS...as our Intercessor at the throne

JAMES...as our Pattern

1ST PETER...as the Precious Cornerstone of our faith

2ND PETER... as our Strength

1ST JOHN...as our Life

2ND JOHN...as the Truth

3RD JOHN...as the Way

JUDE...as our Keeper

REVELATION...as our Triumphant King

Inductive. How to.

Inductive Bible Study begins with the Bible. Read the passage every day for a week, then mark and reorganize what it says. Pray, do the stuff, and trust He will teach you about Himself.

Print Text to Paper

Copy Bible passage text from <http://www.biblestudytools.com> using Control-C, Control-V (other sites fine, too). Save doc

- Edit > Select all. *Line spacing* 2.0; Text color *Black*
- Separate linked words
- File > Page setup... *Right 3* (for questions and answers. skipped here due to space)
- Keep paragraph breaks. Delete heading text. Leave space or line for your section/paragraph titles. Print

Mark Observations

- every reference to God: LORD, Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit, all pronouns
- every reference to man: common and proper and pronouns
- ideas: righteousness, judgement, law, sin, repentance, forgiveness, redemption, salvation, blessing, *more*
- repeated words
- ask questions of the text. Write questions and answers in the margin
- make key of symbols/colors in the top right corner of the page

Psalms 1

1 Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. **2** But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. **3** He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. **4** Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. **5** Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. **6** For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Inductive. Reorganize Information.

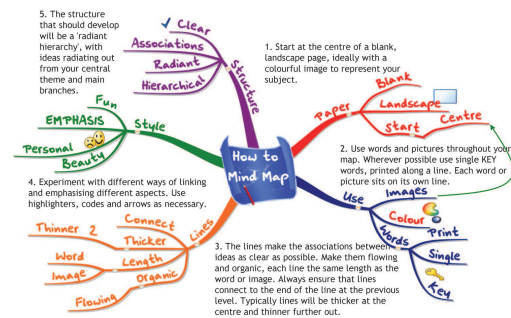
You will be surprised by new insight when you rearrange information. The second half of inductive Bible study is to reorganize the information you've observed.

Mind Mapping

A mind map is a diagram used to represent words, ideas, tasks, or other items linked to and arranged around a central key word or idea.

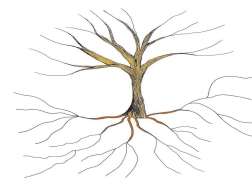
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mind_Mapping

For samples, search Google Images.



Graphic Image

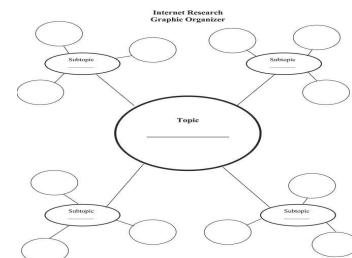
Some of us think more in pictures. Some Bible passages lend themselves to graphic images. An example includes two contrasting trees showing how roots (choices of the heart) grow into fruits (character and actions).



© Paul Foreman <http://www.mindmapping.com>

Main Idea and Supporting Details

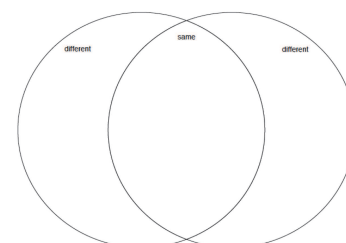
This is the familiar core plan of a standard essay.



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Venn Diagram

Venn Diagrams show comparison of like items and contrast of dissimilar items. For example, Proverbs has a lot to say about anger. Use a Venn to show the consequences of the person who gives full vent to their anger versus the person who chooses to control himself and pursue God.



Simple Lists

- Summarizing
- Cause and Effect
- Compare/Contrast Lists
- Who, What, When, Where, Why, How