

# Basic Chapter Study Instructions

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Basic instructions to use with each chapter

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This document contains the simple steps used to complete an entire chapter study. These are the basic steps repeated for each chapter study, from laying the groundwork to the steps needed before completing interpretation. This document can be used alone as the only material for each chapter study if you desire to work through the chapter with no further assistance, or you can combine this document with more detailed study help which includes key word suggestions, word definitions, cross reference significance, help with Greek tense and voice, and questioning of the text. This additional assistance is available in the individual chapter study guides which will be handed out throughout the year.

# The Inductive Method

## Observation

What does the text say?

### Overview

Establish Context by determining Historical Background

Where does it fit in the Bible timeline?

**Ask: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How?**

Make simple lists of people, places, and events mentioned in the text

Make simple lists of key words that are used throughout large portions of the entire book

Determine Book and Chapter Themes

Mark questions to return to later for future study

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### Chapter Studies

**Ask: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?**

Make more thorough lists of people, places and events

Make more thorough lists of Key Words in chapter or section

Ignore chapter divisions when the theme is carried forward

Mark Contrasts, Comparisons, Expressions of Time, Terms of Conclusion

**Beginning of Interpretation:** Tie this all together by examining text verse by verse

Outline or complete Structural Analysis to break down difficult text

Examine meanings of Key Words as you study verse by verse

Meditate on text to determine paragraph themes

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## Interpretation

What does the text mean in correct context?

What principles do I see that tie to other sections of scripture?

Complete Cross References of those passages of scripture

Complete examination of Key Words: meaning, tense, voice

Notice and examine meaning of verbs & descriptive adjectives

Note commands and warnings

Consult commentaries after completing your own study

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## Application

Based on correct interpretation of the text:

What must I do?

How can I apply this truth to my life?

How does this affect me?

How does this better knowledge of God change me?

Meditate on scripture and Memorize important, applicable passages of scripture

## Step Two – Chapter Study

These instructions apply for each chapter or section, one chapter or section at a time, after completing the Overview (Step One). Repeat these steps for each chapter or section. The questions raised during this step become the focal point of the next stage of your study:

Interpretation

### First steps for each chapter to complete during the first week:

#### \_\_\_\_\_ Mark Key Words for this chapter

As you read through the book and completed the Overview you will have noted that there are key, significant words specific to each chapter or section. In the material handed out for each individual chapter study, suggestions of key words in that particular chapter will be given.

**Mark any of these words you see in the text with unique markings for each one:**

**God**

**Jesus**

**Holy Spirit**

**Author** (filling in the list done during the Overview with more detail)

**Recipients** (filling in the list done during the Overview with more detail, including instructions given to them)

**Other people** (filling in the list done during Overview with more detail, including instructions given to them)<sup>1</sup>

**Key/Significant Words observed and marked during Overview** (notice these since they're already marked)

**Other Key/Significant Words which are significant for understanding** this specific chapter or a specific paragraph

#### \_\_\_\_\_ Make lists of all you observe about each Key Word

In your notebook make a thorough list of everything you observe about each of these key words, along with the verse reference. This reveals content more clearly to you. Some lists can be noted by numbering right into the text, such as lists of qualities or attributes.

#### \_\_\_\_\_ Mark Grammatical Phrases

Note these with marks in the text, or lists in your notebook. Note the sections being contrasted, compared, concluded, or summarized with an arrow or notation connecting these texts to the marked term.

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<sup>1</sup> In history books such as Genesis and Acts every person, every geographic location, and every term that shows time is a key word. The actions of the Godhead regarding these people and locations and any words attributed to the Lord are significant as well. Segments of historical books which contain teaching or instruction are handled like epistles which contain doctrinal teaching. Significant words, such as are described in the above list, are marked within the teaching section, and all of the steps of investigation described in this handout are then used for that section.

- Mark **words of contrast** (but, however, nevertheless, or, neither, nor, not only, etc.) with a lightning bolt mark above the word (or any mark you choose). What things does the author say are the different? What is being contrasted? Write in the margin of your working copy what is being contrasted.
- Mark **words of comparison** (like, likewise, also, in addition, as, in the same way, furthermore, etc.) with an = sign (or any mark you choose). What things are similar? What is the same? Mark in the margin of your working copy what is being compared.
- Draw a little clock face (or another mark you choose) above words showing **expressions of time** (then, when, after, until, at that time, etc.). Why are these words or phrases important?
- Mark with an “x” words that show **conclusions or an end result** (therefore, so that, for this reason, in order that, because, since, consequently, etc.) and draw arrows to the ideas being concluded. Ask yourself, “What is the “therefore” there for?” What is the author trying to show or prove?
- Mark **commands** in a way which draws the eye, such as highlighting, in order to remember to ponder on these for application to your own life.
- As you moved through the chapter, verse by verse, what was revealed about the passage? **Write down anything you discover that you hadn’t seen in the text before.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Outline the text if you find outlining helps you understand.** Grammatical markings may be more easily understood if you outline the chapter or complete a discourse or structural analysis at this point. Getting the working copy from the church website gives you the text to complete a word-for-word outline on your own computer. Complete this step if it helps you.

**If you complete the basic chapter study work planned for the first week before the week is done, go ahead and begin the work planned for weeks 2 & 3 in order to give you more time for working on interpretation.**

### **Steps to complete during week 2 and 3 of this chapter:**

Work through the chapter **verse by verse** studying the text carefully and thoroughly, dividing your study time into two or three weeks, according to the study schedule. **Question the text:** ask **who, what, when, where, why,** and **how** of each passage in order to help you comprehend content. Examine key words, determine the meaning of each verse and paragraph, look up cross references, ponder and meditate on the passages as you study, then assign paragraph themes as you move through the entire chapter verse by verse.

The chapter study material which is specific to each chapter has guidance for how to study each individual chapter if you want help with word meanings, Greek tenses, cross reference significance, questioning the text, etc.

### **Basic steps for weeks 2 & 3:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Work through these steps of Interpretation for each chapter, but save final Interpretation until you have finished studying the entire book.**

**Word Studies:** The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew, some Aramaic. The New Testament was originally written in Koine Greek. Use an exhaustive concordance for a basic definition, or a lexicon or bible dictionary for expanded definitions. In sections of scripture with extensive quotations from other parts of scripture, in order to understand the quote in context, each passage should be examined carefully in its original context, so you will do more cross reference study when numerous passages are quoted.

**Look up significant words in the Concordance or Lexicon and complete Cross references as necessary as you go through the chapter verse by verse.**

**How to use a Concordance:**

Look up the word in the front section of the concordance

Look for the reference where that specific word was used

Look for the number on the right, each number corresponds to a Greek/Hebrew word

Turn to the appropriate dictionary in the back of the concordance (Hebrew for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament)

Look up the number for the definition

The words in italic are the definition. Write this definition down by your essential word

**How to Find a Cross References:** Using the concordance, compare references in the Bible which use any word(s), or quoted passages of scripture, that you determined needed further study.

To find these look in the concordance at the list of all the references given for the same word. Find the same Greek or Hebrew reference number that is given for the Greek or Hebrew word you are examining.

Choose to examine several verses or all the verses that use the same number.

Look up these other verses that use the same Greek or Hebrew word.

When the same word is studied in more than one account it is understood more fully. When a quoted passage is studied in context, it brings a fuller meaning to the text you are studying.

- ❖ When looking for cross references to Old Testament passages given in New Testament passages, consult the margins of your own bible, or use the study material for each individual chapter. This will save time if you do not want to use the above detailed method for finding the source of the quoted passages.

## \_\_\_\_\_ Identify themes within a chapter

As you work through verse by verse ponder on the meaning you have found from questioning the text, and completing the word studies and the cross reference examination. You should now be able to identify the theme of each paragraph or section.

## \_\_\_\_\_ Write the theme of each paragraph or section in the margin of your Bible or your working copy of the text.

If you like to outline make these themes your paragraph headings. Experiment with outlines to help you see what helps you understand content best.

**Don't consult a commentary until you are at this point in your study. Use the commentary to verify your own findings and to double-check what you have discovered. If you consult commentaries before beginning they will influence your own study.**

**Application:** As the Holy Spirit convicts, apply what you've learned to your life. Let God's Word change you.

**Memorization of key verses:** As you study through each chapter, choose two or three key verses and work on memorizing them each week.

**Meditate** on the truths you have learned in God's Word as you go throughout the day. Let God's Word become a part of your daily life by constantly meditating on it.

**Application ideas from Rick Warren, *Dynamic Bible Study Methods* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1981):** Application is where we apply what we learned to our own lives. If we only study God's word without applying it, then we will be no better off than the Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus' day. Write out your application so that you do not forget it. Do not make general statement, but be as specific as possible. The application must be something that you need to do. It may be helpful to establish a timeline, set a deadline, and/or ask a trusted friend or family member to hold you accountable.

### **Is there any . . .**

1. **Sin to confess?** Do I need to ask anyone for forgiveness, including God, and make any restitution?
2. **Promise to claim?** Is the promise universal? Do I meet the conditions to claim the promise for myself?
3. **Attitude to change?** What negative attitudes do I need to change?
4. **Command to obey?** Am I willing to obey no matter what?
5. **Example to follow?** Is the example a positive one that I need to follow or a negative one to avoid?
6. **Prayer to pray?** Is there anything I need to pray back to God?
7. **Error to avoid?** Is there any problem that I need to be aware of?
8. **Truth to believe?** Do I need to change my thinking in any areas, such as in biblical doctrine?
9. **Something to praise God for?** Do I lack thankfulness? What can I thank God for?