

SEARCHING FOR TREASURE

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SEARCHING FOR TREASURE



HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE FOR IT'S ALL IT'S WORTH
by Tim Parsons

PREFACE

The Bible is a book, rich with the nutrients necessary for us to *grow-up* in our Christian faith. Unfortunately, many people never tap into its resources. Most of us choose to simply live our lives without the needed sustenance to develop spiritually. This book is an attempt to teach you the beginning steps to spiritual *self-feeding*. It is designed to function with a discipleship mentor who will walk with you through the learning steps and allow you to complete the Bible studies for yourself. *Make sure you do each of them carefully!* When you have finished with this manual, you will be able to dissect a passage in the Bible and apply it to your own life. Be warned...this is life changing stuff!

NOTICE

Much of this material is taken from *The Navigator Bible Studies Handbook* copy written 1974 by Navpress. It is intended strictly for one-on-one discipleship and should be used in conjunction with the handbook.

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SEARCHING FOR TREASURE

An Introduction to Bible Study

My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Proverbs 2:1-6

What are the conditions for *understanding* and *finding* the *knowledge of God*?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Where does *wisdom* come from?

see James 1:5 for further study

THE JOY OF BIBLE STUDY

Read 1 Chronicles 16:27, Psalm 16:11, and Galatians 5:22.

Where does *joy* come from? _____

Read Psalm 119:111.

What are *statutes*? _____

There is incredible joy in getting to know our God, and the way that is done, is through study of His Word!

WHY STUDY THE BIBLE?

Read the following verses and list what they say that that the Word of God will do for you:

Psalm 119:105 _____

Psalm 119:11 _____

Luke 11:28 _____

Proverbs 3:5-6 _____

Psalm 1 _____

Not convinced? Read on:

1 Peter 2:2 _____

John 15:7 _____

John 16:33 _____

1 Peter 3:15 _____

Joshua 1:8 _____

What made Ezra successful? (see Ezra 7:10) _____

WHAT TO EXPECT

My understanding of God to change.

My love for God to deepen.

My values to be adjusted.

My daily life to be impacted.

My desire for God to explode!

LAYING A PROPER FOUNDATION

The Bible is the Literal Word of God

Read 2 Timothy 3:16

What does it say? _____

The Bible is Authoritative

The Bible is God's means of revealing His Truth to His People

Read John 8:31-32.

What does it say? _____

Your Study Must Be:

- Regular and Consistent
- An Investigation of the Bible Itself
- A Written Report of your Findings
- Personally Applied to your Life

Read Psalm 119:59-60

What does it say? _____

“Pass-on-able”

HOW DO I BEGIN?

1. Confess and Clear Up my Fellowship with God
Read 1 John 1:9
2. Pray for God Reveal Himself through His Word
3. Depend on the Holy Spirit – the Author of the Bible to Show Things to You
Read John 14:26
4. Be Willing to Obey

ARE YOU READY?

OBSERVATION INTERPRETATION APPLICATION

The first method we will try, although very simple, is one of my personal favorites. After carefully choosing a portion of scripture to be studied, we will examine it from three angles: **observation** – an overall look at the passage within its' context; **interpretation** – how we should understand it; and **application** – how we can make it work in our own lives.

OBSERVATION

When we observe a passage, we back up and take a careful look at everything about it. This takes time and a willingness to learn. We must not come at this with *predetermined ideas*, but with an open heart. You make accurate *observations* by careful study. There are six important questions you should ask while performing an *observation* of a passage.

- **Who** is involved?
- **What** is happening?
- **Where** does it take place? (What is the setting?)
- **When** did it occur?
- **Why** did it happen? What is the purpose?
- **How** were things accomplished?

INTERPRETATION

During this part of our study, we begin to determine what the author means and why it was put there by God. We will try and answer the question, "*What does it mean?*"

To properly *interpret* a passage, we must carefully read and understand what precedes and follows it. This is called the *context* of the passage. Sometimes it is necessary to read the whole book to fully understand a passage.

We must also remember that most of our Bibles divide scripture into chapters and verses, but that was not the way the original letter was written.

APPLICATION

This is the stage of putting God's Word into practice in our lives – allow it to change us.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Look up the following verses and write a brief summary of what each is saying:

Psalm 119:9 _____

John 15:3 _____

James 1:22-25 _____

I must warn you, this is the difficult part! Most people do great with observation and interpretation, but never allow God's Word to do its *clean-up* work in their lives. Work hard at *application*, it's VERY important!

You can use the following steps to get you started:

S Is there a *sin* for me to confess and avoid?

P Is there a *promise* from God to claim?

E Is there an *example* for me to follow?

C Is there a *command* for me to obey?

K How can this passage increase my *knowledge* of God and His Word?

Now it's time for you to try it – but first let's look together at an example.

OBSERVATION INTERPRETATION APPLICATION (EXAMPLE)

PASSAGE:

“ Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. ¹¹Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. ¹²So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree...” Daniel 6:10-12a

OBSERVATION:

What do I see?

Daniel loved God. His obedience to God was not deterred by others around him. He prayed to God unashamedly (just as before) – even though he risked death. Others were watching and this brought great conviction into their lives.

Who?

Daniel – God – evil people out to get him.

What?

Daniel was being set up and he knew it. His jealous companions were trying to kill him or get him to stop worshiping God. Daniel prayed anyway. They caught him and turned him over to the king.

Where?

Ancient Babylon

When?

Old Testament B.C.

Why?

The purpose seems to be to illustrate Daniel’s commitment to God, God’s protection of His children, and the clear importance of daily prayer.

How?

Daniel was warned – he prayed anyway – he was turned over to the king to be thrown in the den of lions.

INTERPRETATION:

What does it mean?

Being obedient to the Lord isn't always fun – and it isn't always easy. Others are always upset when our righteous lifestyle convicts them of their own wicked one. Authorities are not always fair. But...obedience does not depend on these factors. I must obey what God told me PERIOD...no matter the consequences. God will always take care of His own. As I read of Daniel's life in the first 5 chapters and of what happens to follow this story, I see that God is clearly at work in Daniel's life as He is in mine.

APPLICATION:

How can this study change me?

I have come to once again appreciate the importance of daily time with God. It's worth risking my life for. I must spend time with God...no matter what. It's not always easy or convenient – but it's the right thing to do. God will honor it in my life.

Sin to avoid?

Failure to spend time daily with God. Fear of what others think and consequences.

Promises to claim?

God will protect me and honor me when I obey. He won't forsake me – even if others do.

Examples to follow?

Daniel's clear example of obedience to God and intense desire to spend time with God.

Commands to obey?

No commands in this passage.

Knowledge to add?

No new knowledge to add.

As a result of this study I will change: my attitude toward daily time with God. I will make it a priority no matter what others think, no matter whether it's convenient or not. I will trust God with the details. In short, nothing will block out my time in the Word and in prayer.

OBSERVATION INTERPRETATION APPLICATION

PASSAGE: Matthew 26:36-41

OBSERVATION:

What do I see?

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

How?

INTERPRETATION:

What does it mean?

APPLICATION:

How can this study change me?

Sin to avoid?

Promises to claim? _____

Examples to follow?

Commands to obey?

Knowledge to add?

As a result of this study I will change:

VERSE ANALYSIS

Well... How did you do? Did you like the *Observation Interpretation Application* method? The *Verse Analysis* method is also very easy, but a great method to use to study the Bible.

To use the **Verse Analysis** method, you begin by choosing a verse (or a few short connected verses) for study.

1. Write the verse and the reference (maybe several times using several translations if available) under **VERSE TO STUDY**. Then read the verse(s) slowly and carefully several times thinking about what each is saying.
2. Under **MESSAGE**, write a few sentences describing what you think the verse is saying.
3. Now read the verse before and after to understand it in context. Sometimes you must read several verses on either side to properly determine what the verse is saying. Under the heading **CONTEXT**, make some notes about the verses before and after it.
4. Now it's time to list questions you have while studying the verse under the heading **QUESTIONS**. Always think of at least a couple.
5. Lastly, write out what you will do as a result of this study. This should include things you will stop doing, begin doing, things to confess, or promises to claim. List these under the **APPLICATION** heading.

Let's look at an example and then give it a try!

VERSE ANALYSIS

VERSE TO STUDY:

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15 KJV

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” 2 Tim 2:15 NIV

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15 NASB

Work hard so God can approve you. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15 NLT

☐ I read the verse(s) slowly and carefully several times thinking about each.

MESSAGE:

This verse emphasizes the importance of studying God’s Word. It describes the person who studies as a *workman*. It shows that careful study will allow me to correctly handle God’s Word.

CONTEXT:

Second Timothy 2:8-14 reminds me that I should remember the sacrifice that Jesus made for me. I should stay faithful to Him. If I do, this will affect my lifestyle and how I treat others. Second Timothy 2:16-18 shows us how easily that we can be led astray by false teaching. I am reminded that I must study in order to know and understand God’s Word so that this will not happen to me.

QUESTIONS:

How should I study?

Studying seems to make God like me more... is that true?

How can I correctly handle God’s Word?

How can avoid being ashamed?

APPLICATION:

I must remember the importance of Bible Study in my life. I cannot allow things, people, or busyness to keep me from it. If I want to learn how to handle God’s Word correctly, it will take time in study. I will begin a program of disciplined daily study. I will ask Rob to keep me accountable in my commitment.

VERSE ANALYSIS

VERSE TO STUDY:

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Matthew 6:33 NIV

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” Matthew 6:33 NKJV

"...and he will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern." Matthew 6:33 NLT

“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” Matthew 6:33 NASB

I read the verse(s) slowly and carefully several times thinking about each.

MESSAGE:

CONTEXT:

Matthew 6:25-32 _____

Matthew 6:34 _____

VERSE ANALYSIS

VERSE TO STUDY: (you choose)

I read the verse(s) slowly and carefully several times thinking about each.

MESSAGE:

CONTEXT:

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----- -

QUESTIONS:

APPLICATION:

VERSES FOR FURTHER STUDY:

THE ABC METHOD

Well, are you keeping up? Are you enjoying your new look into God's Word? It is rich in information to help you grow and live your life...and Bible Study is the means of harvest! We have learned the **Observation, Interpretation, Application** method and the **Verse Analysis** method to begin to dig into the Bible. Do you like these methods? Today we're going to begin a bit deeper study with the **ABC Method**. This will allow you to begin to see things from a more complete view.

So far we have been choosing a verse or a couple of verses. Now we up the ante. This time you need to carefully choose a chapter from a New Testament book! Now, before you go on, carefully and prayerfully read it at least two to three times. You should try reading it silently, then aloud. You may want to try reading it by pausing after each verse to think about what you have read.

As you read the chapter, begin to think of what it is saying. Decide on what the overall subject is. It is best to have a *scratch* piece of paper handy to write on. Now, while you read and think of what the chapter is saying, jot down some titles that might come to mind. A **Title** is a couple of words that describes the overall content of the passage. The best titles are between 2 – 10 words. Carefully select from your list what you believe to be the best **Title** for the chapter.

You should also write down a couple of verses that you think are the **Best Verse(s)** in the passage. They may or may not contain the main theme of the passage. Now study them until you can decide on the *Best Verse* or *Verses* (no more than 3 in a row) or one you think contains the central them of the chapter.

Through careful reading of the passage, did God **Challenge** you in any way? Was there something God told you to stop doing a habit to break? Or was there an issue He spoke to you about beginning in your life? List the verse or verses from where God spoke to you. Now write the lesson you have learned from that verse, in your own words. Then write how you will begin to change. Just like we learned for *application* you must make it personal. Something like...*I will begin to...or I will avoid _____ by _____* . It could be something like asking for forgiveness to a person you have hurt, memorizing a verse, or doing a service project.

While you are reading the chapter, jot down any questions you might have. Try to be as complete as possible in listing them. Then do your best to research an answer. You may want to ask someone for help, or look it up yourself in some Bible research materials (like a concordance, Bible dictionary, or commentary – we will discuss theses later). List these questions, and the verses they come from under the heading **Difficulties**.

After you have completed your reading, and listing of the **Title**, **Best Verse**, **Challenge**, and **Difficulties**, all you left to do is complete the **Essence** of the chapter. This is either a short summary of the passage or a simple outline of what it says. This sounds much harder than it really is. By now, you are very familiar with this chapter. Try to simply summarize what the chapter is saying. Remember not to get side-tracked on any one issue, but cover the entire passage.

Let's review... As you are reading list and then perfect the following items:

- A Title
- B est Verse
- C hallenge
- D ifficulties
- E ssence

Now look carefully at an **ABC Study** straight from my quiet time.

THE ABC METHOD

BOOK: John PASSAGE: 15:1-27

A. TITLE: Jesus... the Source of Power

B. BEST VERSE: John 15:5

C. CHALLENGE:

Verse of the Challenge: John 15:4

Lesson of the Challenge: I must *abide* in Jesus and allow Him to abide in me... it's the only way I can be impacting.

Application of the Challenge: It's easy to focus on myself, those around me, and things in my life. I am reminded from this passage, that I must focus on Jesus and abide in Him! I will concentrate on it this week... thinking about Him and fully allowing Him to abide in me! I know it is my source of power.

D. DIFFICULTIES:

Verse	Question
2	How does God prune me away?
7	If I don't abide in Him... will He not hear me?
16	I didn't choose Him? ... I thought I did!
26	Who is the Helper? (I studied and found it is the Holy Spirit)

E. ESSENCE:

Jesus... the Source of Power (John 15:1-27)

- I. I must Abide (1-8)
 - A. Jesus is the Vine (1-2)
 - B. Jesus keeps me clean (3)
 - C. Jesus is the Power (4-8)
 1. He helps me bear fruit (4-6)
 2. He helps me pray (7-8)

- II. I must Obey (9-17)

- A. It will help me to abide (9-10)
- B. It will give me joy (11)
- C. It will help me to love (12-14)
- D. It will make me a friend of God (15-17)

III. I must be Hated (18-25)

- A. The world will hate you (18-22)
 - 1. Because you are not of the world (19)
 - 2. It hated Jesus (19-20)
 - 3. You will convict them (21-22)
- B. Jesus is sending a Helper to get me through this (23-27)

Jesus, the Source of Power (John 15:1-27)

Jesus is the vine, I MUST be connected to Him. If I am, I will bear fruit...if I am not, I will not bear fruit. So...it is clear whether I am connected to Him or not. If I abide in Him, my prayers will have meaning and effectiveness. This will be a sign that I am a disciple.

To abide in Him, I must obey what He has commanded me. If I do, I will be full of joy and fruitfulness. Others will see God in me. I didn't choose God, but He chose me and chose me to remain.

When I abide, others in the world will not like me. This because I am convicting them of their sin. They didn't like Jesus, and I am no better than He of course! Jesus sent a Helper to get me through this and guide me.

THE ABC METHOD

Scratch Sheet

BOOK: _____

PASSAGE: _____

TITLE

BEST VERSE

CHALLENGES (include the verse)

DIFFICULTIES (include the verse)

ESSENCE

THE ABC METHOD

BOOK: Philippians

PASSAGE: 3:1-21

A. TITLE:

B. BEST VERSE:

C. CHALLENGE:

Verse of the Challenge: _____

Lesson of the Challenge: _____

Application of the Challenge: _____

D. DIFFICULTIES:

Verse

Question

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

What does it mean to *search* for something? Is it simply to *look*? Or to *casually investigate*? Or just to *read* something? How do you approach your Bible study? Are you *searching*?

Read Acts 17:11. How did the people of the church at Berea approach Bible Study?

Read Proverbs 2:1-6 (it's on page 4). What is God's promise to us if we will search His Word for ourselves?

As you can see, it is very important that we do not treat God's Word lightly – but that we study it and search for treasure in it. The *Search the Scripture* method of study helps become more complete in our study of a passage or book of the Bible.

1. The first thing we must do is to choose a passage to study. This passage needs to be something you are interested in...you will be spending some committed time there throughout this study.
2. Next we move to the *Point of the Passage*. Here we answer the question... *What does this passage say?* Be careful not to try and *interpret* what the passage means... simply *observe* what the passage is saying and write it down. The easiest way to do this is to read the passage a couple of times carefully. Then begin to write a summary of what the passage is saying in your own words. If you prefer, you can do this in outline form.
3. Now let's try something new. Let's begin to look at *Parallel Passages*. With this part we ask the question... *What does it say about this in other parts of the Bible?* Here we begin to compare the Bible with itself to gain more understanding of the passage we are studying. This will broaden our perspective on this passage. The way we do this is to read each verse carefully and meditate on it. Try to remember a passage you have read or a verse you have memorized that talks about this subject. God the Holy Spirit will bring these to your mind. If you cannot think of any, you can use some resources such as: cross reference notes in your study Bible, a concordance (either written or computer driven), or a commentary. If you do not have these resources (they can be purchased inexpensively at your local Christian book store), consider asking your pastor or youth pastor for help, or simply go to a local library. I realize that most

people would never consider doing this much research while studying the Bible...but remember it is worth it! When you find a cross reference, list the reference and the key thought as well as the verse of study to which you are paralleling it.

4. As you complete your study, questions will arise. You will find things that you do not understand. List these questions under the heading *Problems of the Passage*. If possible, try and research the answer to your question.
5. Last we look at the *Profit of the Passage*. When doing this, we ask the question *What does this passage say to me?* This is the part of our study where we will apply the scripture to our lives. **This is the most important part!** Each application that you develop should be drawn from one verse or a group of verses. Make sure that you write out what the verse(s) is saying to you, how it applies directly to your life, and what you will do about it.

I think you will really like the *Search the Scriptures* study! If you want to dig even deeper, you can perform the study on an entire book. To do this you must do a Book Preview and Summary. See Appendix A for information on this.

Now, let's look at an example of *Search the Scriptures* together.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

PASSAGE TO BE STUDIED: 2 Peter 3:1-18

POINT OF THE PASSAGE:

We know from reading Scripture that Jesus is coming! We also learn that many people will doubt His return and scoff (vs. 3-7). But we are reminded that God is a God of promises and He keeps every one!

His return will be sudden and without advance warning. It will be a cataclysmic event. Everything will be destroyed by fire. (vs. 12)

Knowing that Jesus could return at any moment should cause us to live in a pure, righteous manner. We must guard against being carried away by those who would teach incorrect doctrine (vs. 17-18).

PARALLEL PASSAGES:

Verse	Reference	Key Thought
3	2 Timothy 3:1	The Last Days will be full of danger and destruction.
4	Isaiah 5:19	Prophecy of Christ's return.
7	2 Peter 2:9	Day of Judgment.
10	1 Thess. 5:2	Come like a thief.
14	Romans 12:18	Live at peace with God and others.

PROBLEMS OF THE PASSAGE:

Verse	Question
3	Are these the Last Days? How do we know? Didn't they think that they were living in the Last Days?
4-5	How can I act as though Christ isn't returning?
10	How can the heavens "disappear"?
14	How could I ever live spotless or blameless?

PROFIT OF THE PASSAGE:

As I read and fully understand that Jesus could come at any moment (like a thief), I must come to grips with the fact that I am not always living on ready. I know people scoff and say that He is not coming now...but He says He could. I must be prepared.

I thank God that I am ready to meet Him because of my salvation, but I must continue to allow Him to make me “blameless and spotless.” This is done through God’s Word (Psalm 119:9, 11). I will make a conscious effort to study God’s Word and allow it to change my heart!

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

PASSAGE TO BE STUDIED: James 1:1-27

POINT OF THE PASSAGE:

PARALLEL PASSAGES:

Verse	Reference	Key Thought
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

PROBLEMS OF THE PASSAGE:

Verse	Question
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PROFIT OF THE PASSAGE:

TOPICAL BIBLE STUDY

Many people approach Bible Study from a very dull, boring perspective. They are going to study the Bible whether it kills them or not, and they have already decided that it probably will! It is important to study the Bible thoroughly and completely – but it ought to be fun! God is a fun God...and His Word should be enjoyable to us as His children.

One great way to make the Word of God come alive is to study the things that interest you. That is where **Topical Bible Study** comes in. With the *Topical* method, *you* choose what you will study, research it, and draw some Biblical conclusions that will affect your life.

Read 2 Timothy 3:16. What are the four things that Bible Study should do in our lives?

Write down what each of them mean: _____

The Word of God is very *profitable* in our lives, but we must apply it. Much like medicine will make you well – but you must take the right medicine at the right time. What do you need right now in your life? What are your questions – concerns – struggles? Let God minister to you through His Word.

As we study the Bible *Topically*, we must complete the following seven steps:

1. Choose the Topic

This may be very easy for you, especially if there are things that you've always wanted to study about. You may even want to begin to keep a list of topics to study in the back of your Bible, so that as the opportunity arises, you can study them. These can be simply things that you are interested in, questions you may have or that someone has asked you, or even part of another continuing study that you are doing. Be careful that you don't make your choice of subject too broad. For example **Faith** is way to compassing...you might consider a narrower topic such as **My Faith in God**, **God's Faithfulness to me**, or **The Faith of a Child**. Here are some topics that you might begin to draw from as you form your list: **Anger, Courage, Dating, Faith, Fear, Fruitfulness, Giving, Godliness, Grace, Holiness, The Holy Spirit, Humility, Integrity, The Lordship of Christ, Love, Obedience, Parents, Patience, Prayer, Priorities, Purity, My Quiet Time, Salvation, Scripture Memory, Self-Discipline, Sin,**

Stress, Thankfulness, Thought Life, Witnessing, The Word of God, or Worship.

2. Select Scripture Passages

Once you have the topic secured (and narrowed down) you now have the job of looking up what God has to say about it. Just like with the **Search the Scriptures** method, you now need to use some Bible reference tools. I would recommend using a *concordance*, *Topical Bible*, or *computer tools*. Make a list of all of the passages on your topic and look at each one. After carefully reading and studying each, **decide on the best 10 or so and record them.**

3. Summarize or Outline

Now you need to begin to put together what God is saying from His Word about your topic. The way in which to do this is to begin by summarizing (or outlining) each of your 10 selected passages. These summaries should be rather brief. After completing *in writing* the 10 summaries or outlines, you should then read over each. Now it's time to put them all together into one summary or outline covering all 10 passages. This should be somewhat conclusive of your study on the topic you have selected.

4. Find the Key Verse

As you study ask God to show you a **key verse** and then write it out. Then you may want to even memorize it to enhance your study.

5. Collect Illustrations

You now need to find some illustrations that will make your topical study personal and come alive. These can be other Bible stories, from nature, your own life, from books or poems, or even from the experiences of your family or friends. Attach them to your study and show what passage that they illustrate.

6. Record Problems

List the questions that puzzle you or the things that you would have trouble explaining to others. Try and find the answers if you can.

7. Write Your Application

Now you need to review everything you have done so far. Ask God to show you what He wants to do in your life through this study. Now you need to write a *statement of truth* found in the verse or verses that you have chosen for your application. This should also include a statement or two about the need or condition in your life that God is speaking to you about changing. Then you need to write out a *simple plan of action* to make the needed changes. This is a very important part of your study!

TOPICAL BIBLE STUDY

TOPIC: *Pride in My Life*

PASSAGES STUDIED:

Passage	The Thought Relative to my topic
2 Chronicles 26:16	Pride led to Uzziah's down fall.
Proverbs 8:13	God hates pride.
Proverbs 11:12	Pride brings disgrace.
Proverbs 13:10	Pride breeds quarrels.
Ezekiel 28:2	Pride was the original sin.
Amos 6:8	God detests pride.
James 1:9	Humble circumstances are a High Position.
1 Corinthians 10:12	Be careful or you will fall.

SUMMARY:

Pride is very distasteful. God hates it and so should I. It has led to many a person's downfall. It brings disgrace into our lives. Many of the family and church fights we have – even those among friends comes out of pride. Pride was the original sin of Lucifer and is the root of all sin. God detests it!

I should remember the consequences of pride and should be happy in humble circumstances. It is through those that God is glorified, then He can lift me up. When I am standing, I need to be mindful of pride or I will fall hard!

FAVORITE VERSE:

“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!” (1 Corinthians 10:12)

ILLUSTRATIONS:

“Pride is as safely the sign of destruction as the change of mercury in the weather-glass is the sign of rain; and far more infallibly so than that.” Spurgeon's Morning and Evening Devotion (1 Corinthians 10:12)

King David's great sin

PROBLEMS:

Passage	Question
Proverbs 11:2	Can I disgrace God by my pride?

1 Corinthians 10:12
Ezekiel 28:2

How can I avoid falling because of pride?
What areas is pride sin in my life?

APPLICATION:

STATEMENT OF BIBLICAL TRUTH: God hates pride and so should I...it leads to destruction in my life.

PLAN OF ACTION: I must analyze what areas that pride has a strong hold on in my life. I must deal with each one. I will ask my accountability partner for help in dealing with this in my life.

TOPICAL BIBLE STUDY

TOPIC: _____ (make sure it is narrow enough)

PASSAGES STUDIED:

Passage	The Thought Relative to my Topic
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SUMMARY:

FAVORITE VERSE: (write it out) _____

ILLUSTRATIONS: (show what verse they tie to) _____

PROBLEMS:

Passage

Question

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

APPLICATION:

STATEMENT OF BIBLICAL TRUTH: _____

PLAN OF ACTION:

BIBLE CHARACTER STUDY

So far we have examined Bible Study from many different angles. We have talked about how to observe, interpret, and apply, we have looked at an in-depth verse analysis, we have studied the *ABC Method*, the *Search the Scriptures* and most recently the *Topical* approach. Now we are going to look at the last method: *Bible Character Study*.

The Bible is full of very interesting accounts of the lives of many different people. Many of their stories are colorful and intriguing. There is much to be learned from their experiences – both the victories and the mistakes.

Read Romans 15:4. Why do you think the Bible records the stories of so many people's lives? _____

Read James 5:17. How does the Bible refer to Elijah the prophet?

1. First you must carefully select a Bible Character to study. Be careful not to choose one that is too remote. If you do, information may be so scarce that you will not be able to complete your study. The person you select should be someone that you look up to, admire, and wish to learn from.

2. Now you must begin to do your research. Look the person up in a *Bible Concordance*, *Bible Dictionary* or *Encyclopedia*, or a *Topical Bible*. Many great Bible characters even have books written describing their life. On a piece of scratch paper, list and then perfect the best references to amplify your study.

3. After you have narrowed down the references that you will use, you should read each again carefully. From the scripture that you have selected, write a brief biography (1-3 paragraphs) of the person. This should include facts about the person's life without a lot of interpretation. You should include things like:

- The meaning of their name
- When and where they lived
- Family background
- Occupation

- Details about how life was like when and where they lived
- Who was alive during that time
- Major events in the person's life
- Their growth and relationship with God (including their salvation experience if the information is available)
- What was their most significant contribution
- Who did they influence

4. From the list of verses that you have studied choose a key verse or small group of verses. They should summarize the person's life if possible. Write it out...maybe you will want to memorize it.

5. What is the *Leading Lesson* that you have learned from your study of this Bible Character? This should be the thing in their life that has most spoken to you about your own life.

6. Record any questions or problems you may encounter.

7. Last (but by no means least!) write out your application. This is what God has taught you through your study about your own life and what steps you will take to change it.

BIBLE CHARACTER STUDY

(taken from The Bible Studies Handbook page 102-103)

PERSON STUDIED: Nehemiah

SCRIPTURES USED:

Verse	Key Thought
Nehemiah 1:4	Intense feeling for the distress of his people
1:9	Claimed God's promise
2:5-9	Trusted God, yet planned in detail
2:20	Gave God credit for success
4:14	Taught fearful people to remember God and family
5:15	Set an unselfish example out of reverence for God
6:13	Enemies devised a plot to ruin him
8:10	Encouraged the people to rejoice in God
13:14	Expressed desire for God's recognition
13:25	Harsh in dealing with sin among the people

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:

Nehemiah, whose name means "comfort of God," lived during the reign of the Persian King Artaxerxes. The events recorded in the Book of Nehemiah occurred around 445 to 433 B.C. Nehemiah was a cupbearer to king Artaxerxes a job which required him to test the king's food for poisoning.

The city of Jerusalem had been destroyed to the point that the protective walls of the city needed reconstruction. Nehemiah was granted permission and all necessary provisions by Artaxerxes to rebuild the city. Under his direction, the wall was completed.

During the time that Nehemiah served as governor in Jerusalem, he also challenged the Jews on such issues as unjust business practices and marrying foreign wives.

KEY VERSE: Nehemiah 2:17

"Then I said to them, 'You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates are burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem that we may no longer be a reproach.'"

LEADING LESSON: (include the passage it is from)

James 2:17 – “Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.”

Nehemiah is an example of a man who demonstrated his faith by his works. He believed God could overcome all obstacles in his way of rebuilding Jerusalem, and was willing to step out and act in light of that belief.

PROBLEMS:

Verse	Question
Nehemiah 4:5	Jesus taught us to pray for our enemies, not against them. Nehemiah prayed against his enemies. Was this right?
Nehemiah 13:25	How often is such harshness needed in dealing with sin?

APPLICATION:

Nehemiah was a man of action. He saw a need and even though it was costly and dangerous he took the opportunity to help meet the need.

I felt as I read the account of his life that willingness and availability make the difference. Though Nehemiah was a cup bearer and not a construction foreman, he was available to help build the wall at Jerusalem.

As an application, I am going to evaluate my attitude and schedule in light of being available to needs. I realize I am not responsive to needs if they appear too big or difficult. But to trust God is to rely on His sufficiency and ability to overcome obstacles.

I now have some opportunities to help others, yet I haven't been very available. This week I will prayerfully evaluate my schedule and make whatever changes are necessary to be free to help.

The opportunities I will consider helping with include:

1. Joining the evangelism program at church.
2. Spending more time with Harry and Jim.
3. More involvement with the people in my Sunday School class.
4. Becoming a student leader (I added that one!).

BIBLE CHARACTER STUDY

PERSON STUDIED: _____

SCRIPTURES USED:

Verse	Key Thought
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:

KEY VERSE: _____

LEADING LESSON: (include the passage it is from)

PROBLEMS:

Verse

Question

Verse	Question
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

APPLICATION:

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

In this book we have examined many different methods of Bible Study. You have probably figured this out by now, but it is not the method that is important, it is simply that you are doing Bible Study!

What have been your favorite three methods (in order of preference)?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I want you to spend some time this week and plan out your *Bible Study for a Lifetime*, what methods will you do when? How will you rotate them? How will you cover all the bases? _____

Now if you are up to it, I want you to tackle *The Big Daddy Bible Study*, I want you to pick any three methods and do each of them on the book of Colossians compiling a mini-commentary of your own (for example you might choose the *ABC*, *Search the Scriptures*, and *Topical* [on the key topic]). Use your own paper or journal and meet with your discipler in two weeks to show them the finished project! Have fun!

APPENDIXES

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES Book Preview and Summary

If you decide to use the *Search the Scriptures* method to study an entire book of the Bible you should consider completing the *Book Preview* the first week or few days of study, and the *Book Summary* the last week or at the end of your study.

THE BOOK PREVIEW:

1. Read the entire book through slowly and carefully without stopping.
2. Study background information about the book using notes and maps in the back of your Study Bible or a Bible Handbook, Dictionary, or Commentary (you may also consider using the Internet).

Things like...

- *Who wrote the book? (What can you find out about the author?)*
 - *When was it written and where?*
 - *Who was it written to? (and where did they live)*
 - *Why do you think it was written? (purpose)*
 - *Is the story written anywhere else in the Bible as a cross reference?*
3. Read the book one more time and try and find the main theme or themes in it. Write those down.
 4. Write some applications that God reveals to you about your own life through reading (before you even begin your study).

NOW, PERFORM THE *SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES* METHOD ON EACH CHAPTER IN ORDER.

BOOK SUMMARY:

1. Read your Book Preview over carefully.
2. Read the entire book again at least one time. Try and read it quickly to gain an overview once again of the entire book.
3. Outline or Summarize the entire book (refer to your *Point of the Passage* notes from each chapter).
4. Read the book again and refer to your summary or outline as you do. Are you confident of its accuracy? Make the needed changes.

5. Come up with a Title for the book. It should identify the contents and theme of the book if possible.
6. Make a list of the main lessons and challenges you received while studying the book. Review each of them and pray about them. Ask God to continue this work in your life. Write out any further application that God brings to you.