

A Brief Guide to Inductive Bible Study

In a journal, fill in the following information for the Bible passage you're reading. Use print and online resources like Bible dictionaries, concordances, maps, etc., to help you discover more about the culture, geography, and history of the passage you're studying.

PRAY: Ask God to guide your study

OBSERVATION: What does the text say?

1. Ask **investigative questions**:

- **Who** is speaking? Who are the main people? Who is being spoken to?
- **What** is happening? What is the scene? What is the cultural context of the passage?
- **Where** is the passage taking place?
- **When** did or will the events take place?
- **How** did people respond? How did Jesus react?

2. Look for **grammatical connections**: repeated words, comparisons, contrast, cause and effect.

3. Identify **key words** and phrases.

4. Note **verb tenses**.

5. Look for **conjunctions** such as *since* and *therefore*. Why are those words in the sentence?

INTERPRETATION: What does the passage mean?

1. Develop some **questions** based on the text. Ask what the significance of your main observations are and why they happened.

2. Imagine the **perspective** of the people in the scene. If Jesus spoke, why did he say what he said?

3. **Answer** the questions based on the text and the context.

4. Try to **summarize** the passage in one sentence. What is the **main point** the author is communicating to the audience?

APPLICATION: What does the passage mean for me?

1. How do you **respond** to what this passage is saying? Does it challenge how you see the world?

2. Is there a central truth that you need to **put into practice**?

3. What are the **implications** of the passage for the **community** of which you are a part?

4. **Pray** that God will help you believe and obey.

Lectio Divina

Slowly read the passage aloud to yourself three times following the guidelines below.

1. During the first reading, note what jumps out at you from the text. It could be a word, phrase, or image.

2. The second time, focus on that word, phrase, or image. Notice what the passage seems to be saying about it.

3. The third time, reflect on what God might be trying to communicate to you through that word, phrase, or image.