

CHAPTER ONE: The Bible Study Method's Purposes

The purpose of this course or seminar is to help you as hungry lay students of the Word or as a Sunday School teacher learn about a study method that will lead directly to sharing the truths of God with a world that is lost and entering a Christ-less eternity unless they meet "The Master". It is hoped that this course will enrich each of you to enhance and increase understanding and increase the knowledge of the Savior. In addition you will become aware of the importance of the spiritual, intellectual, and analytical [that is step by step] preparation that biblical teaching requires. It is hoped that if God has chosen to place you into the teaching capacity, you will not only prepare yourself by being immersed in the Word but also be able then to prepare and deliver a lesson using the principles learned to lead others to drink at the well of Living Water.

The first and foremost reason for Bible Study Training is our model of Christ. He was and is our Master Teacher. HE was the Master "Story teller" and as so:

1. Met people on their level
2. Taught them not as a scribe but as one with authority, He did not ask questions to reward the student but to get them to penetrate their understanding of spiritual things and evaluate their own spiritual understanding.
3. Used OT scriptures to teach a NT principle
4. Used practical everyday experiences and examples to move from the OT to the NT spiritual understandings
5. Asked and used questioning as a way to dig deeper into the student to pull out that which determines actions and responses. He often, when asked a question, asked a relevant question back that gave Him a basis for whether the question was one of inquiry or one that already had been determined in the listener's mind. Today teachers and curriculum need to constantly move from basic yes/no questions to critical thinking thus bridging the gap into higher level critical thinking skills and avoiding the trap of judgmental responses.
6. Jesus used orality or story-telling as His mode of teaching. This is a method that we all need to learn and to utilize.

Should God have called you into the profession of teaching then training is imperative for you because:

1. New and seasoned teachers need structure and assistance to teach the Word with excellence;
2. New and seasoned teachers need a method of how to study the Word of God
3. New and seasoned teachers need to know that reading and studying develops and reinforces qualities that are to be used to teach, organize, witness; inspire.

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In addition, teacher training is a valuable resource because:

1. Each teacher then knows their role and what is expected of them from the church and the SS staff/superintendent.
2. It develops enthusiasm and leads others to come forward to serve.
3. It excites and inspires the class members to study on their own throughout the week.
4. It is being obedient to God's Word and His way to do all in decency and order.

A. Objectives:

This course, Learning Bible Study Methods and Techniques, is thus designed for anyone, whether a lay person desiring to learn how to study or a new/seasoned teacher who has a desire to enhance their study. In addition, it is hoped that one objective for teachers would be to satisfy the desire to develop lesson study guides as well as lesson plans. Herein, it is my desire that you will also develop learning objectives for passages of scripture, learn the difference between long range and short range objectives and how to articulate them into action oriented goals, learn simple homiletics or outlining of passages, develop appropriate learning activities, learn how to develop class structures in which each person is delegated to a position in which he/she takes ownership for their task(s), review of resources available both in written and technology. Thus with all of this being said we will first tackle the "how to's" of studying and then tackle the presentation of what you have learned with your audience whether they be students or a friend to friend context.

TWO BASIC PRINCIPLES:

Before you can begin to participate in this course there are some foundational principles that must be true in your life. These are found in scripture and apply here.

1. You must know the author of "The Book"

This is a foundational principle. "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (Col 2:3) We can be assured that we who know the author of the Book will be given those nuggets of His wisdom. We can also know that those who do not know the author treasures will be hidden from their sight. "But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing, among whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of those who do not believe so they would not see the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God." (2 Cor 4:3-4) Jesus explained the reason why as he answered the disciples question. Then the disciples came to him and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" (Mat 13:10) Jesus in answering quoted from the book of Isaiah:

"You will listen carefully yet will never understand; you will look closely yet will never comprehend. For the heart of this people has become dull; they are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, so that they would not see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them." (Is 6:9)

2. You must be filled with the Holy Spirit

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; (Eph 5:18). And we might add that the person without the Holy Spirit is like a lighthouse with a darkened light. Think of what that cannot do. It cannot lead a ship to safety amongst the shoals and rocks. So too a person without the light of the Holy Spirit cannot read and understand the Word nor can he/she lead anyone else to “the LIGHT” of Jesus.

Specifically this course is designed to accomplish the following objectives:

1. To know about God and to know God
2. To know how to take any passage of scripture and learn the Biblical principles being taught
3. To know how to ask questions of oneself as well as others
4. To discover how God uses His Word to change us from the inside out: “be formed in” and “be informed” about His Word
5. To be still and quiet before the Lord so He can speak as you ponder what He is teaching
6. To be convicted of sin and of righteousness
7. To be filled with the knowledge of God’s will for your life
8. To mature into the person God can use and bless for His kingdom
9. To apply what you have learned (as Rick Warren says...make it personal, practical possible, and provable¹)

B. Questions:

Before we embark on our Adventure or Journey we must consider some questions. Wisdom dictates that journeys have preparation by asking questions, making plans, and then executing those plans. There are four critical questions that need answering before our adventure begins.

Questions:

Why should I learn how to study “in this way”?

What is the Modified Inductive Study Technique

How is this different than a Deductive Bible Study Technique?

Once my journey or adventure is nearing the finish line, how shall I use what I learn for others and myself?

Why should I learn how to study “in this way”? A wise teacher begins with asking oneself and/or the student “why” before beginning to share

¹ Warren, Rick; Bible Study Methods; Zondervan, 2006. p 41.

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any new material. This establishes a foundation so that premises and considerations for the lesson planning can be formulated; even though we may have already had some ideas. Wisdom dictates that we have a foundation and our foundation is based upon this principle: the “fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” (Prov 9:10) In addition, we know that the Holy Spirit reveals wisdom if we ask. “But if anyone is deficient in wisdom, he should ask God, who gives to all generously and without reprimand, and it will be given to him.” (*Jam 1:5*)

What is wisdom?

Wisdom is defined as: knowledge of what is true or right coupled with just judgment as to action. We might think of it this way: we are able to understand and make a decision that is based upon the principles in God’s Word. The beginning step of wisdom is knowledge. Knowledge is just learning the facts. We use questions to gain knowledge such as “where, when, how, who, and what.” Based upon those insights we are able to judge “wisely” and answer the last question which is “why.” For now, we might say wisdom is that which assists us in evaluating where we find ourselves and/or our students’ level of knowledge and understandings. Jesus, as the wisest teacher, used this technique as his “lessons” drew to a close. Sometimes he left the question hanging and other times he challenged his listener to apply what they “thought” they knew, as well as to go and do further exploration and acquiring of more knowledge. Thus we see that the “why” becomes the foundational premise. Our desire is to be able to answer the “why.” As a participant you are probably asking: Why should I even be reading this? What is my purpose? *And* what will I learn as a participant? Here is a simple answer:

Someone once remarked: “**The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a lamp to be lit.**”²

Thinking about that quote, is your mind just being filled or is it pouring out the Light of Jesus to others? Here’s a simple way to determine that answer. Ask yourself; are you a passive (spectator) learner or an active learner? A passive learner is one who is satisfied to let others do the “fishing” while they relax in the boat. An active learner is the one fishing!

The Psalmist wrote that men did eat of the “angel’s food” come down from heaven, spread out before them in the wilderness (Ps 78:19-25). Through that they could see God’s providential care for them to feed them physically. Today we too have this heavenly food, “angel’s food”, called God’s Word. It is God’s gift, this “angel’s food” to fill our hungry souls. Jesus said “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied (Matt 5:6)³

² Anonymous

³ This would be a good stopping point in your reading to go and purchase “How to Read a Book” by Adler, Mortimer and Van Doren, Charles available from Amazon.com; also “The Priesthood of the Believer” by Dawson, David available from ETS Ministries, Greenville, TX

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CHAPTER ONE QUESTIONS. Please take your time and record the answers to these questions prayerfully.

1. Have you met the basic principles of this course? How do you know that you have? What is the measure you would use if asked to explain the answer to that question. If you have not, **stop now**, and please go to the Appendix where you will find how to fulfill both of those following the scripture.

2. Of the nine objectives listed, which one do you feel is the primary one that you wish to see accomplished through this course?

3. What do you hope to gain from this course at the outset? What do you hope to not only glean but use as a lay person, student, teacher, pastor, missionary? In other words, evaluate where you are today and where you would like to be at the end of this course.

4. How would you evaluate your level of study? Using the gradations of growing from infancy to adulthood, where do you see yourself? What makes you consider that placement?

5. Who or what has led you to seek help in studying?