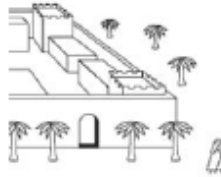




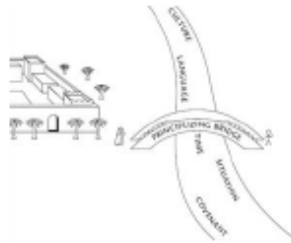
STUDYING THE BIBLE
THE INDUCTIVE APPROACH

Introduction of Observation, Interpretation, Application (OIA)

Where we are going...



#1 – Observation: What did the text mean for the original audience?



#2 – Interpretation: What is the theological principle in this text?



#3 – Application: How should Christians apply these principles to daily life?

Before you start your study...

1. Before you begin studying a book:

- A. Read through the book in its entirety
- B. Consult a Bible Dictionary or Study Bible to determine
 - Who is the author?
 - Who is the audience (1st reader)?
 - When was it written?
 - Why was it written?

2. Then determine the unit of thought - Rule of thumb:

- A. Epistles (Romans, Galatians, Philippians):

- B. Narrative (Genesis, Ruth, Matthew, Acts):

- C. Poetic (Psalms):

How far should I read? Chapter and Verse Divisions

Greek Manuscript
2 Tim. 3:16

Translated to English

ΚΑΙ ΟΜΟΛΟΓΟΥΜΕ
ΝΩΣ ΜΕΤΑΕΣΤΙΝ
ΤΟΤΗΣ ΕΥΣΕΒΕΙΑΣ
ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΟΣΕ
ΦΑΝΕΡΩΘΗΕΝ ΕΝ
ΚΙ·ΕΔΙΚΛΙΩΘΗΕΝ
ΠΝΙΩΦΘΗΑΤΕΛΕ
ΕΚΗΡΥΧΘΗΕΝ Ε
ΘΝΕΣΙΝ ΕΠΙΣΤΕΥ
ΘΗΕΝ ΚΟΣΜΩ·
ΑΝΕΛΗΜΦΘΗΕΝ
ΔΟΣΗ

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 competent, equipped for every good work. I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:

Verse divisions added in
NT – A.D. 1551 ; OT – A.D. 1559

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

Preach the Word

4 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:

Getting Started

Step #1: Observation

“What Does the Text Say?”

1. Begin with Prayer (1 Corinthians 2:9-16; John 16:13)
2. Continually ask yourself: “What does the text say?”
3. Things to look for...

Repetition of Words – Biblical writers used repetition to show emphasis because of the nature of the original language and because they were meant to be read orally. (1 John 2:15-17 “world”)

Contrasts – “But” – Then determine the nature of the contrast

Comparison – “Like” or “as” (Proverbs 25:26)

Cause and Effect (Romans 6:23, John 3:16)

Conjunctions – connecting thoughts

But, However – Shows contrast between two things. (John 15:16)

So, Therefore – Usually show some type of conclusion based on a previous argument. Thus it is important to read back into the text to determine what the earlier reason was. (Romans 12:1)

Because, Since – Shows the reason why, the basis for the action.

In order that – Can show reason why or purpose. (John 5:34)

If...then – Shows a condition that must occur before a certain action or conclusion can be reached. (Note: sometimes “then” is implied). (1 Corinthians 2:8)

For – Shows that more information is being given about what is being described; it shows explanation. (John 3:16)

Verbs – Shows the action in the sentence. Try to determine who the actor of the verb is; what the tense of the verb is (past, present, future); whether or not it is a command.

Key Words – Words that are important to the meaning of the text.

4. Ask Questions of the Text!
5. Marking up the Text

Observation Exercise

Instructions:

1. Read through the passage several times, marking your observations as you go.
2. On a separate sheet of paper, record at least 10 questions and/or observations you have as you read.

SUGGESTED KEY:

Repetition of Words - Circle

Contrasts/Comparison → Note in margins

Cause and Effect → Note in margins

Conjunctions - Square

Verbs - Highlight

Key Words - Underline

Philippians 2:12-18

12Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

14Do everything without complaining or arguing, 15so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe 16as you hold out the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing. 17But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. 18So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

Step #2: Interpretation

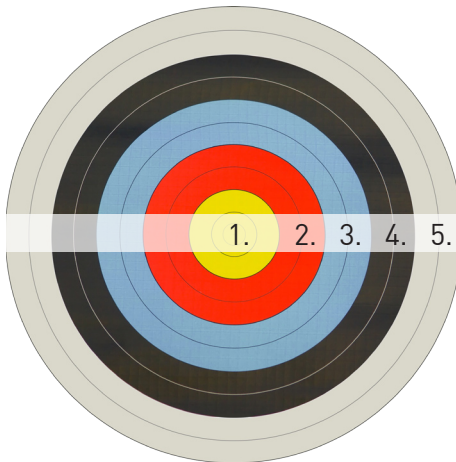
“What does the Text Mean?”

Interpretation Process – Follow this process (albeit flexible) as you work through Interpretation.

1. **Begin with Prayer and Meditation** – We cannot grasp God’s word without the Spirit (Heb. 4:12)

2. **Define: Answering our Questions from Observation Phase** - Here we determine the meaning of key words, ideas, or phrases. Determine meaning by CONTEXT!!

Sola Scriptura - We Interpret Scripture by Scripture



1. Verse
2. Paragraph
3. Section
4. Book
5. Bible

When looking at a word or phrase you don’t know, consider the context you find it in for clues to inform you what is meant. Start in the verse that the word or phrase occurs in then move outward to rest of the Bible to help determine the correct meaning. Tools that are helpful at this point are cross-references, concordances, and Bible dictionaries.

Example:

Philippians 2:12 – What does Paul mean by the phrase, “work out your salvation with fear and trembling”?

3. Compare Translations – Comparing translations can help us understand the text and help us know where we may need to do some extra, careful study. Consider comparing a more ‘formal’ translation (eg – NASB, ESV, NRSV) with a more ‘functional’ translation (eg – NIV, NLT).

*Suggested 1 Volume Commentary:

New Bible Commentary Edited by: Carson, France, Motyer, and Wenham. (Inter-Varsity Press).

*To see Park’s Recommended New Testament Commentary List for every book in the New Testament, visit the [BLOG](#).

4. Consult – Compare your results or findings with commentaries. This should be done only after you’ve finished your own work. Acts 17:10-11 – Be like the Bereans...

5. Form the Big Idea – The Subject and Complement

Why the “Big Idea”? At this stage, our goal in Bible study is to understand what the author meant. This is hard work, but it guards us against being ‘willy-nilly’ with the text and rightly understanding what was meant. Don’t hesitate to write down an idea even if it may be wrong – you can come back and correct it later. You may have to try a number of different ways until you are satisfied that it is faithful to what the author is saying in the text.

- i. Subject – The complete answer to the question, “What is the writer talking about?” (Not a one or two word answer like ‘forgiveness’...what about forgiveness? Is it about who should forgive? How to forgive? Why you should forgive? When you should forgive? Etc...)
- ii. Complement – The answer to the question, “What exactly is the writer saying about what he is talking about?”
- iii. Big Idea – Simply formed by combining the Subject and Complement into one sentence. When finished with forming the Big Idea, review it to make sure that it is one idea and not several. Remember that a paragraph has one idea to communicate.

Special Considerations

1. The key is typically in the big picture not the specific details. Never lose sight of the big picture.
2. One mistake we can make is claiming that a theological truth came out of a particular text when the text wasn't teaching that truth at all. The truth is theologically sound (fits within our theological box) but it didn't come from that text. This is isogesis (ex: out of; iso: into) or reading into the text rather than lifting the meaning out of a text. We need to regularly check our thoughts and conclusions with the text and ask ourselves if we are saying what the writer is saying (without twisting it out of context).
3. When forming the Big Idea for a unit of thought (section) that consists of more than one paragraph, it is often helpful to start by focusing in on each paragraph individually, asking, "What is main thing the author saying in *this* paragraph?" After doing this with each one, step back and consider how the paragraphs relate to each other (build on, explain, modify or illustrate) to come up with a single Big Idea for that section.

So for Philippians 2:12-18:

- Paragraph 1: 2:12-13
- Paragraph 2: 2:14-18

Practice With The Big Idea

1. Toyota Corollas are the best car on the market because they get good gas mileage.

Subject: _____

Complement: _____

Big Idea: _____

2. Some people think that Park Community Church meets in Indiana. They don't. They meet in Chicago, IL.

Subject: _____

Complement: _____

Big Idea: _____

3. Psalm 117 (ESV)

1 Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! 2 For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord!

Subject: _____

Complement: _____

Big Idea: _____

Interpretation Exercise

1. **Pray** – Ask God to teach, guide, and transform (Psalm 119:33-40)
2. **Define** – Look up words and phrases that don't make sense, but use context to define or determine the meaning.
3. **Compare** – Read through another translation. Are there any significant differences? Is there anything that you see needs to be pursued further to gain a proper understanding of the text?

4. **Consult** – After doing your own study, now consult a commentary. What does the commentary help you understand better? Is there anything that you agree or disagree with?

5. Form the Big Idea

Read Philippians 2:12-18 and determine

a. *Subject (In the form of a question):*

b. *Complement (Answers the question):*

c. *Now put the two together to form the Big Idea:*

Step #3: Application

“How do I respond?”

Why Application?

James 1:22-25

James 2:14-17

“Unless we apply what we have learned, our study has not accomplished its primary purpose, even though we may have gained much intellectual knowledge. In fact it is very dangerous to study the Bible and not be open to its message. The Word of God is power. It either penetrates hearts or it hardens hearts. The person who is not open to the Holy Spirit as He speaks through the Word can consciously or unconsciously be rejecting the truths and in the process harden his heart. “Today, when you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” Hebrews 3:7-8. –The Joy of Discovery (pg 89)

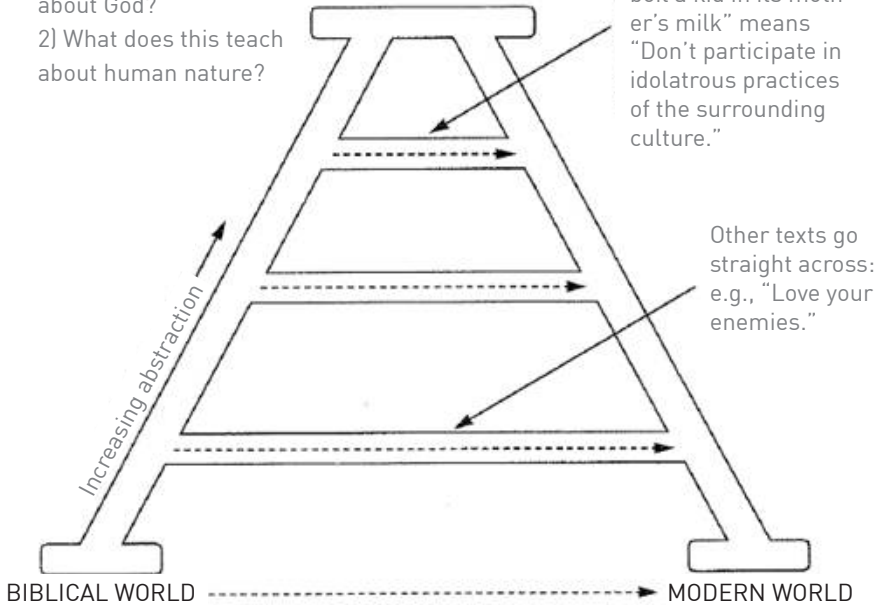
Example:

Deuteronomy 14:21 – “Do not eat anything you find already dead. You may give it to an alien living in any of your towns, and he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner. But you are a people holy to the LORD your God. Do not cook a young goat in its mother’s milk.”

Abstraction Ladder

Climb by asking:

- 1) What does this teach about God?
- 2) What does this teach about human nature?



Leadership Journal (Fall, '97)

We need to move from the biblical world to the modern world.

With some texts we can move straight across; some we need to move up the ladder of abstraction before we can cross.

When we move up the ladder, we're trying taking what the text says; then finding what is analogous, the bridge between the two worlds.

Application Exercise

Instructions:

1. Review your Observations and Interpretation work for Philippians 2:12-18, taking note of what the principle of the text is.
2. Complete steps 1-5

Crossing the Ladder of Abstraction

1. What does this teach me about God? (Such as Creator, Sustainer, Provider, etc.)

2. The Problem: What does humanity say in opposition to God's character? *To do this, it is sometimes helpful to refer back to Genesis 3:1-7, which can reflect the nature of our sin patterns.*

3. The Solution: How is the gospel of Jesus the solution? How is He the hero to the problem?

Forming the Application:

4. Review how the principle from the text addressed the original situation (From Interpretation).

5. Determine a parallel situation, and then state an application for our contemporary context.

1. Make it specific, not general
2. Make it measurable, not vague
3. Set a time – when will you do it?
4. Share your plan with your Small Group for accountability and prayer.

Application:

Observation, Interpretation and Application

The section you plan on reading for the week [eg. Phil 2:12-18, 2:19-30]

Complete the following:

- a. Write down 30 Questions and/or Observations of the passage.
- b. Mark the text from page 6 instructions: "Things to look for..."

Insert your Biblical text here:

Questions / Observations from the passage

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
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21. _____
22. _____
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24. _____
25. _____
26. _____
27. _____
28. _____
29. _____
30. _____

Interpretation:

1. Pray – Ask God to teach, guide, and transform (Psalm 119:33-40)

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3. Compare – Read through another translation. Are there any significant differences? Is there anything that you see needs to be pursued further to gain a proper understanding of the text?

4. Consult – After doing your own study, now consult a commentary. What does the commentary help you understand better? Is there anything that you agree or disagree with?

5. Form the Big Idea

Read your passage again and determine

a. Subject (In the form of a question):

b. Complement (Answers the question):

c. Now put the two together to form the Big Idea:

Application Exercise

Crossing the Ladder of Abstraction

1. What does this teach me about God? (Such as Creator, Sustainer, Provider, etc.)

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Application:

How to Study Your Bible – Cheat Sheet

Questions to answer before beginning any study (see Bible Dictionary or Study Bible):

1. Who is the author and why did he write?
2. Who was the audience and what were their circumstances?
3. When was it written? How does that affect the way we read?

Observation – “What does the text say?”

1. Observe the Whole – Read through the entire book in one sitting.
2. Observe the Parts – Record your results in a notebook as you go.
 - a. Repetition of Words
 - b. Contrasts and/or Comparison
 - c. Cause and Effect
 - d. Conjunctions – Connecting Ideas in the Sentence
 - e. Verbs – Showing Action in Sentence
 - f. Key Words – Words/Phrases Important to the text’s meaning
3. Observing the Details
 - a. Who? (Characters)
 - b. What? (Key truths/events)
 - c. Where? (Geography)
 - d. When? (Time of writing, events, etc.)

Interpretation – “What does the text mean?”

1. Prayer and Meditation
2. Define terms and phrases using Context
3. Compare with other translations
4. Consult a commentary
5. Form the Big Idea of the text
 - a. Subject – What is the writer talking about?
 - b. Complement – What is the writer saying about the subject?

Application – “How should I respond?”

1. What does this teach me about God? (Such as Creator, Sustainer, Provider, etc.)
2. The Problem: What does humanity say in opposition to what is being said?
3. The Solution: How is the gospel of Jesus the solution to the problem? How is He the hero?
4. Review how the principle from the text addressed the original situation.
5. Determine a parallel situation, and state an application.