



Understanding the Bible

Understanding the Bible

METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

by Dorothy L. Johns

AN INDEPENDENT-STUDY TEXTBOOK

Developed in Cooperation with
the Global University Staff

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THE GU CHRISTIAN SERVICE PROGRAM



This independent study textbook is one of 18 courses (subjects) that make up the Christian Service Program. The symbol at the left is a guide for systematic study. The Christian Service Program is divided into four divisions. *Understanding the Bible* is Course 2 in Division 3.

The Divisions are structured to guide you in systematically going through the entire series. However, you may study this course by itself or study any course in the entire series in any sequence.

Study materials in the Christian Service Program are designed in a self-teaching format for Christian workers. This program will provide a student with the necessary Bible knowledge and skills for practical Christian service. These courses have been especially prepared for Christian workers in all nations and cultures.

ATTENTION

Please read the preliminary instructions for this course very carefully. By following the instructions you should be able to achieve your goals for the course, and you should not have difficulty preparing for your unit student reports.

COURSE INTRODUCTION

You are about to begin a very important activity: the careful, methodical study of the Bible. This course is divided into three parts, or units, of study. The first part will introduce you to principles, terminology, and relationships that are essential to all effective methods of Bible study. Then, a series of lessons will emphasize a thorough presentation of the synthetic or whole-book method of study. The last part of the course presents other important methods of Bible study. While much in the course is necessarily intellectual comment on how to study, constant emphasis is placed on the student's spiritual improvement as the main purpose of the course.

To understand the Bible, you must do more than merely read it. Reading it has value but often fails to make clear the relationship between different parts of the Bible. When you study the Bible with an organized plan in mind, you write down important findings that help you to see the unity that is present throughout the Scriptures. Furthermore, such study helps you to remember God's warnings and obey His commands. Obedience to God is the result of personal application of devotional Bible study. This application will build up your faith in Christ and strengthen your spiritual life.

You may find it difficult to do the kind of study that this course requires, but your reward for doing it will be great. The Holy Spirit is with you wherever you are. As you ask Him to help you, He will give you insight. May the Word of God dwell in you richly as you study this course!

Course Description

Understanding the Bible is a course of study that interacts with you on methods of carefully organized Bible study. You will learn effective techniques for general study, then you will apply them to the Bible by means of study questions. Many of the answers given in the textbook to these questions are offered only as suggestions to guide you to your own answers. This study emphasizes the value of skilled procedures of observation and interpretation as aids to understanding the Bible and accomplishing the main purpose of the course. This purpose is to help you apply Bible truth to your own life and share it with others.

Course Objectives

When you finish this course you should be able to:

1. Describe the basic principles of Bible interpretation.
2. Describe the four methods of Bible study that are taught in this course.
3. Use these basic principles of interpretation and the four methods of Bible study in your own study of the Word.
4. Interpret meaningful questions as you study the Bible and lead others in Bible study.
5. Value the Bible as authoritative for all Christian belief and all Christian living.
6. Be sensitive to your need of the Holy Spirit to help you study and share Scripture.
7. Feel more confident in sharing Scripture with others.

Textbooks

You will use *Understanding The Bible, An Independent-Study Textbook* by Dorothy Johns as both the textbook and study guide for the course. The Bible is the only other textbook required.

Study Time

How much time you actually need to study each lesson depends in part on your knowledge of the subject and the strength of your study skills before you begin the course. The time you spend also depends on the extent to which you follow directions and develop skills necessary for independent study. Plan your study schedule so that you spend enough time to reach the objectives stated by the author of the course and your personal objectives as well.

Lesson Organization and Study Pattern

Each lesson includes: 1) lesson title, 2) opening statement, 3) lesson outline, 4) lesson objectives, 5) learning activities, 6) key words, 7) lesson development including study questions, 8) self-test (at the end of the lesson development), 9) answers to the study questions. Answers to each self-test are at the back of your textbook before the unit student reports.

The lesson outline and objectives will give you an overview of the subject, help you to focus your attention on the most important points as you study, and tell you what you should learn.

Most of the study questions in the lesson development can be answered in spaces provided in this study guide. Longer answers should be written in a notebook. As you write the answers in your notebook, be sure to record the number and title of the lesson. This will help you in your review for the unit student report.

Do not look ahead at the answers until you have given your answer. If you give your own answers, you will remember what you study much better. After you have answered the study questions, check your answers with those given at the end of the lesson. Then correct those you did not answer correctly. The answers are not given in the usual numerical order so that you will not accidentally see the answer to the next question.

These study questions are very important. They will help

you to remember the main ideas presented in the lesson and to apply the principles you have learned.

How to Answer Questions

There are different kinds of study questions and self-test questions in this study guide. Below are samples of several types and how to answer them. Specific instructions will be given for other types of questions that may occur.

A *MULTIPLE-CHOICE* question or item asks you to choose an answer from the ones that are given.

- 1** The Bible has a total of
- a)** 100 books.
 - b)** 66 books.
 - c)** 27 books.

The correct answer is *b) 66 books*. In your study guide, make a circle around *b)* as shown here:

- 1** The Bible has a total of
- a)** 100 books.
 - (b)** 66 books.
 - c)** 27 books.
 - d)** 2 books.

(For some multiple-choice items, more than one answer will be correct. In that case, you would circle the letter in front of each correct answer.)

A *TRUE-FALSE* question or item asks you to choose which of several statements are TRUE.

Example

- 2** Which statements below are TRUE?
- a)** The Bible has a total of 120 books.
 - (b)** The Bible is a message for believers today.
 - c)** All of the Bible authors wrote in the Hebrew language.
 - (d)** The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible.

Statements **b** and **d** are true. You would make a circle around these two letters to show your choices, as you see above.

A *MATCHING* question or item asks you to match things that go together, such *as* names with descriptions, or Bible books with their authors.

Example

3 Write the number for the leader's name in front of each phrase that describes something he did.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| <u>1</u> a Received the Law at Mt. Sinai | 1) Moses |
| <u>2</u> b Led the Israelites across Jordan | 2) Joshua |
| <u>2</u> c Marched around Jericho | |
| <u>1</u> d Lived in Pharaoh's court | |

Phrases **a** and **d** refer to Moses, and phrases **b** and **c** refer to Joshua. You would write 1 beside **a** and **d**, and 2 beside **b** and **c**, as you see above.

Ways to Study This Course

If you study this GU course by yourself, all of your work can be completed by mail. Although GU has designed this course for you to study on your own, you may also study it in a group or class. If you do this, the instructor may give you added instructions besides those in the course. If so, be sure to follow his instructions.

Possibly you are interested in using the course in a home Bible study group, in a class at church, or in a Bible school. You will find both the subject content and study methods excellent for these purposes

Unit Student Reports

In the back of your study guide are located the unit student reports and answer sheets. These are to be completed according to the instructions included in the course and in the unit student

reports. You should complete and send each unit answer sheet to your instructor for his grading and suggestions regarding your work. Send one when you complete each unit.

Certificate

Upon the successful completion of the course and the final grading of the unit answer sheets by your GU instructor, you will receive your Certificate of Award.

About the Author

Dorothy Johns taught in elementary schools in New York and Missouri, USA. She also taught at Central Bible College in Springfield, Missouri.

Mrs. Johns received a Bachelor of Music Degree from Eastern School of Music in Rochester, New York. She received a Master of Science Degree in Education from the State University of New York at Brockport, New York. She did additional studies at Drury College, Central Bible College, and Missouri State University, all in Springfield, Missouri.

Your GU instructor

Your GU instructor will be happy to help you in any way possible. If you have any questions about the course or the unit student reports, please feel free to ask him. If several people want to study this course together, ask about special arrangements for group study.

God bless you as you study *Understanding the Bible*. May it enrich your life and Christian service and help you fulfill more effectively your part in the body of Christ.



UNIT ONE:

Approach To Understanding

Lessons

- 1 Opening the Bible
- 2 Approaches to Bible Study
- 3 Principles of Interpretation
- 4 Figurative Language in Interpretation

1 Opening the Bible

The Bible is a collection of 66 books divided into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Bible was written over a period of several hundred years. Two languages were used, Hebrew and Greek. It was written by many different authors. But these authors were not just writing their own words. They were writing what the Holy Spirit told them to write. They were *inspired* by the Holy Spirit.

Peter states, “For no prophetic message ever came just from the will of man, but men were under the control of the Holy Spirit as they spoke the message that came from God” (2 Peter 1:21). Every Christian believer should have a time of daily Bible reading and prayer to feed his spirit! But this kind of reading should not take the place of disciplined study of the Word of God. This course will teach you to study the Bible.

lesson outline

Need for Study of Scripture

Living

Faith

Service

Approach to a Revealed Book

Spiritual Qualification

Supernatural Qualification

Revelational Qualification

Foundational Guides to Understanding

Literal Meaning of Language

Progressive Revelation

Scripture Interprets Scripture

Basic Harmony of the Whole

Overview of This Course

Question and Answer Technique

Basic Principles of Interpretation

Bible Study Methods

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

1. Define disciplined study.
2. List three ways in which the study of the Bible changes people.
3. Explain the meaning of revelation.
4. List three qualifications which make the approach to the
5. Bible different from the approach to other books.
6. Define “literal meaning” with reference to language.
7. Explain the concept “Progressive Revelation.”
8. Define “context” with reference to interpretation of Scripture.
9. State the main theme that can be traced throughout the Bible.

10. List the three main topics of study that will be presented in this course.

learning activities

- 1. Carefully read the preliminary section in this independentstudy textbook.
- 2. Read this lesson’s introductory section, outline, and objectives.
- 3. Look over the key words. If they are not familiar to you, check their meanings in the glossary.
- 4. Study the lesson development. Look up and read all references to the Scripture, and answer in writing all of the numbered study questions. You will get more out of this course if you make it a practice to put something of your own in writing before you look ahead to the answers.
- 5. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson. Check your answers carefully. Review those items answered incorrectly.

key words

Understanding the key words we have listed at the beginning of each lesson will help you as you study. You will find key words listed in alphabetical order and defined in the glossary at the back of this independent-study textbook. If you are in doubt about the meaning of any of the words on the list, you may look them up now or when you come across them in your reading. Please take time to learn the definitions of any new words, since they add to a complete understanding of this course.

biographical	infinite	study
context	inspired	supernatural
devotional	literal	synthetic method
figurative	reincarnation	topical
finite	revelation	

lesson development

NEED FOR STUDY OF SCRIPTURE

Objective 1. *Define disciplined study.*

Objective 2. *List three ways in which the study of the Bible changes people.*

The ultimate intent of the Bible is to change lives. What you learn from it should make a difference in your attitude and actions. The Holy Spirit is not interested in imparting intellectual knowledge only. His goal is to prepare a man of God spiritually and intellectually for good works. Your goal in understanding Bible truth, then, is to apply it to your life. The classic verse declaring the *inspiration* of Scripture and the goal of Scripture is 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Read it in your own Bible. Note the goal, “That the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed.” The Word of God can only do this for you as you study its pages. Disciplined study is *defined as diligent application of the mind, careful examination of the facts, and deep thought about them.* In thinking about the facts, you will draw some conclusions and make some decisions. When these decisions become part of your life, it will become more based on scriptural principles, and you will be fulfilling 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Now let us discuss three ways in which the Bible changes our attitudes and actions.

Life

Only the Bible can answer your questions about life. Left to himself, man does not know how to live or how to die. His behavior is filled with selfishness and greed. His lot is bitterness and despair.

The entrance of the Word of God brings light. God’s rules for living lead to peace, joy, and satisfaction. The second and third chapters of Titus are beautiful chapters on Christian living.

For we ourselves were once foolish,
disobedient, and wrong. We were slaves to
passions and pleasures of all kinds. We spent

our lives in malice and envy; others hated us and we hated them. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior was revealed, he saved us . . . the Holy Spirit . . . gives us new birth and new life . . . (Titus 3:3-5).

Study of Scripture should change our ways of living.

Faith

“To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see. It was by their faith that people of ancient times won God’s approval” (Hebrews 11:1-2). Faith for forgiveness, for understanding God’s plan in the world, for the reality of eternal life in Christ Jesus, all must come from the words of the Bible. Jesus said, “The words I have spoken to you bring God’s life-giving Spirit” (John 6:63). Without the Bible to guide him, man puts his faith in wrong things such as idols, forces of nature, or material possessions. Studying the Bible will not only show you the living God who deserves and commands your faith, but the Holy Spirit will use that study to cause faith in God to develop and mature within your heart.

Service

Biblical knowledge of God and His ways brings us the responsibility of sharing that knowledge with others. The world is hungry for the truth of God. It is God’s plan that His kingdom grow because of this principle of sharing. Jesus shared in this way. He taught people, then He sent them to teach others. Luke 10:1 tells of His sending out 72 men ahead of Him into the towns where He was about to go. They could share with others what they had learned from Jesus. We too must share in this way.

Application

1 Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Use those verses to find the answers for the following questions:

- a** The Scriptures, inspired by God, are useful for what four purposes?

.....

- b** What are the two ultimate goals of the action of Scripture on the life of the believer?

.....

2 Circle the letter before each statement that is true:

- a)** Studying and reading are the same thing.
b) Studying takes more effort than mere reading because it means that you must examine the facts and think deeply about them.
c) The Bible should be studied to discover God's will for living, for faith, and for service to Him.



APPROACH TO A REVEALED BOOK

Objective 3. *Explain the meaning of revelation.*

Objective 4. *List three qualifications which make the approach to the Bible different from the approach to other books.*

Revelation is changing divine truth that was formerly unknown and unknowable to knowable and known truth. It is when God makes known His truths to the minds of men. When a Christian believer uses the word "Scripture," he refers *only to the Bible*. Christians believe that the Bible is God's only inspired message to man. Understanding this fact is the necessary starting point for any study of the Bible. Revelation makes the approach to the Bible unique (special, one-of-a-kind) in the three ways listed below.

Spiritual Qualification

By *spiritual qualification* we refer to a spiritual quality that anyone who wishes to correctly understand the Bible must have. Usually, a knowledge of the language is all that is necessary to understand a book. But the Bible is different. To understand Scripture, a certain spiritual understanding is also necessary. God Himself gives such understanding to each person who believes in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Read 1 Corinthians 2:13-15. Answer the two following questions on verse 14. Only one answer is correct for each question.

Application

3 Why is it impossible for the man who does not have the Spirit to understand God's gifts? Because

- a) he does not try hard enough to understand.
- b) he is not sincere in his desire to understand.
- c) their value can be judged only on a spiritual basis.

4 When the man who does not have the Spirit tries to understand the truth of God, how does it seem to him?

- a) As difficult but worth serious study.
- b) As nonsense.
- c) As brilliant new ideas.

Be sure to check your answers.



Supernatural Qualification

Supernatural means something which is outside of the natural realm. If something is said to be supernatural, it belongs to an order of things beyond our observable physical universe. Miracles, happenings that cannot be explained by normal means, are said to be supernatural. The Living God of the Bible is a God of miracles. As the Creator of all, He is Lord of all.

The miracles you will read about in the Bible are not imaginary events such as you might find in folk tales or Greek myths. Bible miracles are serious, historical facts. The cloud that led the Israelites (Exodus 40:36) was not an imaginary cloud. When Jesus fed the five thousand (Matthew 14) with five loaves and two fish, you can be sure that the people ate real food and were satisfied, just as it is recorded.

The miracles of the Bible have nothing in common with magic, sorcery, or witchcraft. They are not based on whim or fancy. They always have a logical purpose. They are never done to entertain or to flaunt power. Jesus is Lord. His acts are based on His perfect intelligence. His Lordship extends to everything. “For through him God created everything in heaven and earth, the seen and the unseen things, including spiritual powers, lords, rulers, and authorities. God created the whole universe through him and for him” (Colossians 1:16).

Application

- 5** (Circle the letter before each item that is true.) Why is the supernatural element in Scripture so important to understanding the Bible? Because
- a)** it is necessary to decide if the miracles are real or imaginary.
 - b)** miracles in the Bible are to be taken as sober, historical facts.
 - c)** God is the Creator of all things, and all things are subject to His power, even things outside the natural realm.
-

Revelational Qualification

We have to approach the Bible with the understanding that when God’s truth is revealed in ordinary words, these words become richer in meaning. These common words are enriched in meaning because the Spirit of God is using them to communicate spiritual truth.

For example, the New Testament word *love* has been given more than ordinary meaning in the light of the Cross. The love of God which caused Jesus to die for our sins is a far deeper kind of love than that which one ordinarily understands. Therefore, it is important to your Bible study that you allow the Holy Spirit to enlighten every word.

Application

- 6** The Bible is written in

 - a)** uncommon words.
 - b)** ordinary words with enriched meanings.
 - c)** words that are not literal.
- 7** Match each kind of approach with the sentence that refers most directly to it.

... a Only a believing Christian can properly understand Scripture.	1) Supernatural approach
... b The miracles you will read in the Bible are facts.	2) Spiritual approach
... c The Holy Spirit has enriched the meaning of many words in the Bible.	3) Revelational approach

FOUNDATIONAL GUIDES TO UNDERSTANDING

Literal Meaning of Language

Objective 5. Define “literal meaning” with reference to language.

The Bible Follows Normal Rules of Language

The *literal* meaning of language is the natural or normal way it is used. It follows the ordinary sense of the words. In Scripture, this means that the words have ordinary meanings. The Bible is not written in a secret code. You learned in the previous section that the Holy Spirit gives language enriched meaning, but this does not mean that the basic meaning of the words have been altered. When in Mark 8:27 we are told that

Jesus and His disciples went away to the villages near Caesarea Philippi, we know that there were villages in that area and that they did visit them. This is the literal meaning of Scripture. It means what it plainly says.

Language can also be used in a *figurative* way. Figurative means the expression of one thing in terms of another. It presents pictures to the mind that illustrate other ideas. This is a perfectly proper use of language and is illustrated in John 7:38. In this verse Jesus says, “Whoever believes in me, streams of life-giving water will pour out from his heart.” Figurative language is used to explain a thing by picturing something to which it can be compared. Jesus pictures a person with streams of water pouring from his heart. A reasonable person can see that this is using language in a somewhat different way than usual. John adds a note of explanation, so there will be no doubt about the meaning. “Jesus said this about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were going to receive” (John 7:39). Literal and figurative language will be discussed more fully in Lessons 3 and 4. But in general, the Bible can be taken at face value to mean what it says in the normal way that language is usually understood. God revealed it to man to be a source of information to him, not to conceal truth from him.

Human Language Has Limitations

Every coin has two sides. On one side, the Bible is understandable to ordinary people because it is written in ordinary language. But on the other side, how can an *infinite* (limitless) God explain infinite truth to *finite* (limited) man? Since man is finite, his language is finite also. We say that God has accommodated Himself to man. That is, He has put spiritual truth in as simple a form as possible so we can understand some of it. You cannot understand everything there is to understand about God. But, you can understand the things that are important for you to know.

Romans 1:20 reveals that God created nature with the intent that it would help man understand what God is like! And to help overcome the limitation of language and human

human understanding, the Bible uses figurative language to illustrate truth.

It is hard for us to understand what God is like! The Bible says that God is Spirit (John 4:24). Yet God has unlimited power to see, to act, to hear. Some translations of the Bible use the word eyes when they really mean God’s power to see everything. They use the words *right arm* when they mean God’s power to act. These expressions are intended to help our understanding, not to mislead us into thinking that God is physically limited as we are. The Holy Spirit knows our limitation. He has used language in ways that will help the human mind grasp His truth.

Application

8 Answer the following questions with words from this section of the lesson.

- a** What is the word used to describe language in its usual or normal use?
.....
- b** The words of Jesus which said that streams of water would pour out from a believer’s heart were being used in what way?
.....
- c** What word describes the truth of God as being beyond our understanding?
.....



PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

Objective 6. Explain the concept “Progressive Revelation.”

God not only accommodated Himself to the language of man, but to his sinful condition. The story of the Bible opens with Adam and Eve in the presence of God in the Garden of Eden. Their sin resulted in banishment from God’s presence.

That separation from God was, and is, very deep and far-reaching. Man was sealed in a prison of his five senses. Nothing seemed real to him unless he could see it, touch it, taste it, feel it, or hear it. Sin had cut him off from God. The infinite love and patience of the Holy Spirit worked slowly back into the consciousness of men. The Israelites had to be chosen as a living object lesson. The law had to be given. God's plan had to be worked out over long years of history. He had to find special men like Abraham and Moses who were sensitive to His voice. He sent prophets to preach His words. Finally, "when the time had fully come" (Galatians 4:4, RSV) God sent His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. By His death on the cross, Jesus made a bridge for man to come to God once again.

Through all of this, God was giving man more and more information about Himself. This had to be progressive information for two reasons: (1) the human mind could only take in so much truth at a time, and (2) sin had made man morally unable to contact God. Isaiah understood this when he said teaching had to be given, "line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little" (Isaiah 28:10, RSV). Because of progressive revelation the Redeemer God is seen more clearly in the New Testament than in the Old Testament.

Application

- 9** Circle the letter before each statement that is true.
- a)** Man can understand everything there is to know about God.
 - b)** The human mind has limited ability to understand divine truth.
 - c)** God has eyes just like ours.
 - d)** God has total, unlimited sight.
 - e)** Throughout Bible history God has revealed more and more of Himself to man.

10 Why is the Redeemer God easier to understand in the New Testament than in the Old Testament?

.....



SCRIPTURE INTERPRETS SCRIPTURE

Objective 7. Define “context” with reference to interpretation of Scripture.

One Bible teacher has said, “Scripture is its own best commentary.” He meant that when a passage of Scripture seems difficult, you should try to find other Scripture that sheds light on it. The first place to look is in its immediate context. You found in the glossary that *context* means “all the words around a passage.” Needless to say, this is where familiarity with the whole Bible comes in. We have stressed *study* in this lesson, because it is that serious application of concentration that is needed for digging into the Word. The more familiar you become with all Scripture, the easier it will be to find verses and passages that shed light on other passages.

Study is like a pebble dropped into still water. There are ever-widening circles that ripple from it: single words must be interpreted in the light of the sentence, the sentence in the light of the verse, the verse in the light of the section of the chapter to which it belongs, and so on. At the widest point, the whole Bible sheds light on its parts. The total body of Scripture is the total context and guide for understanding any specific portion of it. No strong doctrines can be based on single verses for which no other support can be found. This is not to say they are false, but simply that not enough information is available.

Application

11 Define *immediate* context and *total context* with reference to “Scripture Interprets Scripture.”

.....



Here is a word of caution. It has been said that any theory or doctrine can be proved from Scripture. People have tried to “prove” false notions by looking through the Bible until they found a verse that sounded like what they were thinking.

For example, a woman once told me that the Bible teaches reincarnation. Since I knew that the Bible does not teach such a thing, I asked her where she had found this. She replied by quoting some verses (and misquoting others) which had to do with life after death. She was bringing her own wrong meaning to these Scriptures instead of examining them to see exactly what they said. Careful reading and comparing of Scripture with Scripture would have made clear that Jesus has saved us as individuals (He knows all of His sheep by name). We will inherit eternal life with Him after death. This bears no resemblance to the false doctrine of reincarnation.

Basic Harmony of the Whole

Objective 8. *State the main theme that can be traced throughout the Bible.*

Harmony of All Bible Books

You can use context to help you understand the Bible. All the way from a single sentence to the whole collection of books, there is one single system of truth presented. In fact, you must use the whole system of truth to interpret any individual part of it. This is one of the convincing evidences of revelation. The writings of so many men, over such long stretches of history, are in harmony with each other. The key, of course, is that the Holy Spirit was the true author. Men were just the instruments.

Many themes can be traced throughout the Bible, but the main one is *Redemption through Christ*. The Old Testament pointed to Him in symbols and in prophecy. The New Testament is the record of His life, death, resurrection, and ascension. Jesus said the Old Testament Scriptures taught about Him. After His resurrection, He taught two disciples on the road to Emmaus: “And Jesus explained to them what was said about himself in all the Scriptures, beginning with the books of Moses and the writings of all the prophets” (Luke 24:27).

Unity in Meaning

Unity in meaning reminds us that Scripture does not contradict itself. We must be careful not to bring our own meanings to Scripture when trying to find proof for them. The correct approach is to let the words speak for themselves. As you take a Scripture and examine it thoroughly, its true meaning will emerge. It may or may not be what you expected to find. God has inspired the authors. God does not contradict Himself. Therefore, the Bible will not contradict itself. If there are passages that seem to be opposed to each other, it is because of the student's lack of understanding or lack of information. In such cases, always reserve judgment until further light can be shed on the problem.

Application

12 Circle the letter before each statement that is true.

- a)** There is one system of truth presented throughout Scripture.
 - b)** The theme of Redemption can be found only in the New Testament.
 - c)** Jesus taught that the Old Testament contained truth about Himself.
 - d)** You should get meaning from a passage of Scripture rather than bring your own meaning to it.
 - e)** The Bible teaches reincarnation.
 - f)** Scripture will never contradict itself.
-

OVERVIEW OF THIS COURSE

Objective 9. *List the three main topics of study that will be presented in this course.*

We have titled this section of the lesson an overview because its subsections present main topics of study in this course.

Question and Answer Technique

As you have worked your way through this lesson, you have already used a little of the question-answer manner of studying the Bible. (See Exercises 1, 3, and 4.) A very good way to get correct meaning from a passage of Scripture is to “ask it questions.” The Scripture then speaks for itself as the answers emerge. The secret is in knowing how to ask the right kinds of questions. Question-answer technique is a basic tool in all Bible study.

Basic Principles of Interpretation

Lesson 1 has already given you an elementary understanding of interpretation of the Bible; Lesson 3 will deal with some of the basic principles or rules of interpretation in more detail. These basic principles have been discovered and used by serious, dedicated Bible scholars over centuries of study. Their concern has been to *rightly divide* or correctly teach the message of God’s truth. It is important to thoroughly understand the basic principles of interpretation so you will be able to apply them in all of the Bible study methods.

Bible Study Methods

There are many Bible study methods, but this course will deal with only four. The focus of the course is on the *whole book method*, also known as the *synthetic method*. Because this method is basic to all Bible study, it will be treated in detail. You will study the book of Habakkuk using the synthetic or whole book method in Lessons 5, 6, and 7.

The last three lessons will each center on a different method of study. Lesson 8 will teach the *biographical method*, using the Book of Amos. Lesson 9 will use the *topical method* in Ephesians. Lesson 10 will apply the *devotional method* to Philippians.

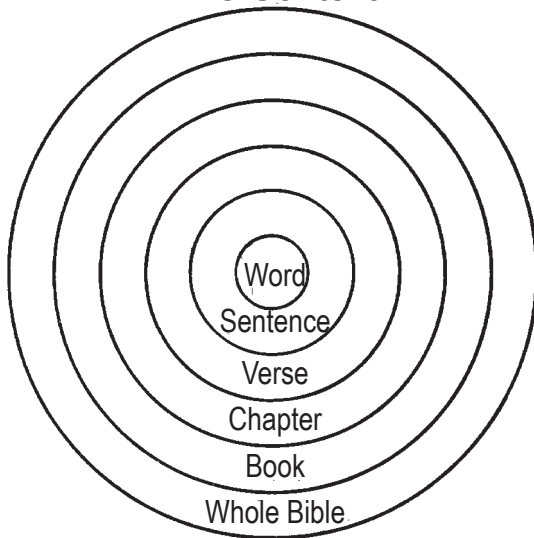
The study techniques and methods presented here should become your tools for a lifelong interest in studying the Scriptures.

Application

13 Match each description (left) to the topic (right) that it best describes.

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| ... a | Rules that help to understand the Bible. | 1) Question and Answer Technique |
| ... b | Synthetic, biographical, topical, and devotional. | 2) Basic Principles of Interpretation |
| ... c | Response of Scripture speaking for itself. | 3) Bible Study Methods |
-

The Context



self-test

After you have reviewed this lesson, take the self-test. Then check your answers with those given in your student report. Review any questions you answered incorrectly.

- 1** When in your reading you apply your mind diligently and you carefully examine the facts, you will be
 - a)** reading casually.
 - b)** studying in a disciplined way.
 - c)** working with very difficult books only.
- 2** Study of the Bible is important
 - a)** for living, faith, and service.
 - b)** only if you plan to be a minister.
 - c)** only when a person gets old.
 - d)** for intellectual betterment only.
- 3** What is the meaning of revelation as applied to Scripture?
 - a)** God's making known what was formerly unknowable.
 - b)** Man's discovery of God in nature.
 - c)** Man's understanding of God through his senses.
- 4** Which one of the following words does NOT describe a qualification that makes the approach to the Bible different from the approach to other books?
 - a)** Revelational
 - b)** Supernatural
 - c)** Natural
 - d)** Spiritual

5 Complete each sentence (left) by inserting the correct number of the term from the list (right).

- ... **a** Literal meaning of language refers to the meaning of its words.

1) commentary
2) progressive revelation
3) ordinary
- ... **b** The Bible can be understood because of the Holy Spirit’s work in the

4) believer
5) accommodated
6) harmony
- ... **c** Since human language has limited ability to transmit divine truth, God has Himself to man through illustrations in figurative language.
- ... **d** The Redeemer God is seen more clearly in the New Testament than in the Old Testament because of
- ... **e** Scripture is its own best
- ... **f** The whole Bible has a basic

6 List the three main topics of study that will be presented in this course.

.....

.....

answers to study questions

These answers have been mixed so that you will not accidentally see the answer to the next question before you write your own response. Please do not look ahead, but write your own answer to each question before comparing it with the one we have given. This will help you to remember what you have studied.

- 7** **a** 2) Spiritual approach.
 b 1) Supernatural approach.
 c 3) Revelational approach.
- 1** **a** Teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living.
 b To qualify a person to do good deeds, and to equip him to do them.
- 8** **a** Literal.
 b Figurative.
 c Infinite.
- 2** **b)** Studying takes more effort than mere reading because it means that you must examine the facts and think deeply about them.
 c) The Bible should be studied to discover God's will for living, for faith, and for service to Him.
- 9** **b)** The human mind has limited ability to understand divine truth.
 d) God has total, unlimited sight.
 e) Throughout Bible history God has revealed more and more of Himself to man.
 3 **c)** Their value can be judged only on a spiritual basis.
- 10** Because progressive revelation has made Him more clearly seen in the New Testament.
- 4** **b)** As nonsense.
- 11** Immediate context refers to all the words around a passage, and total context refers to the whole Bible.

- 5 b)** Miracles in the Bible are to be taken as sober, historical facts.
- c)** God is the Creator of all things, and all things are subject to His power, even things outside the natural realm.
- 12 a)** There is one system of truth presented throughout Scripture.
- c)** Jesus taught that the Old Testament contained truth about Himself.
- d)** You should get meaning from a passage of Scripture rather than bring your own meaning to it.
- f)** Scripture will never contradict itself.
- 6 b)** ordinary words with enriched meanings.
- 13 a)** 2) Basic Principles of Interpretation
- b)** 3) Bible Study Methods
- c)** 1) Question and Answer Technique

LESSON 2 Approaches to Bible Study

In the first lesson you were given an overview of many of the topics that will be discussed in this course. You learned that the Bible is a *revealed* book. As the Word of God, it must be studied with more than ordinary diligence. Your whole Christian life and faith depend upon a clear understanding of the Bible.

In this lesson you will deal more particularly with the process of learning and the basic technique of asking effective questions. This is a skill you will want to use when you have an opportunity to lead a group Bible study.

As you move through these lessons you should keep in mind two main purposes for which you study God's Word: (1) for your own personal spiritual knowledge and growth, (2) to be able to share spiritual truths with others.

lesson outline

Personal Preparation

Need for Methodical Study

Basic Steps in Bible Study

Question and Answer Technique

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

1. Describe the spiritual and mental attitudes necessary for effective Bible study.
2. List basic tools needed for effective Bible study.
3. Identify the characteristics of methodical Bible study.
4. List the six basic steps in Bible study.
5. Recognize correct examples of activities associated with each step.
6. Identify four kinds of fact questions and relate them to the basic steps in Bible study.
7. Identify three kinds of thought questions and relate them to the basic steps in Bible study.

learning activities

1. Read the opening section, outline, and objectives.
2. Look over the key words. if any are not familiar to you, look up their meanings in the glossary.
3. Work through the lesson development, writing your responses to the study questions and checking your answers.
4. Get a notebook. You will need to start using it with the last section of this lesson. You may want to make other notations of your own in it from time to time.
5. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson.

key words

apply	implicational	rational
correlation	interpret	summarize
definitive	methodical	technique
evaluate	observe	
focus	qualification	

lesson development

PERSONAL PREPARATION

- Objective 1.** *Describe the spiritual and mental attitudes necessary for effective Bible study.*
- Objective 2.** *List basic tools needed for effective Bible study.*

The first qualification for Bible study is *spiritual understanding*. You discovered this in 1 Corinthians 2:14 when you examined it in Lesson 1. God’s Word is not a dead book but a living book. Our God is alive today! The same Holy Spirit who gave the message hundreds of years ago speaks through His Word *today*. Jesus Christ gives the Holy Spirit to each one who accepts Him as Savior and Lord.

The second qualification for Bible study is *spiritual character*. The spiritual person lives in obedience to God, in close fellowship with his living Lord. This kind of living is marked by deep reverence, sensitivity to the Spirit of God, meekness, humility, patience, and faith. Prompt confession of sin keeps you in fellowship with Jesus Christ. Disobedience to spiritual light will result in taking away the light and replacing it with darkness. Jesus said His friends are those who obey His Word (John 15:14).

Study of facts requires an *alert mind*, a willingness to concentrate. You must have a *zeal*, a passionate desire to study the Word of God. Study is time consuming. It is work. Unless you *set your mind* to think deeply about these things, the Holy Spirit will not be able to reveal His truth to you.

In Lesson 1 we discussed the importance of extracting truth from a passage of Scripture, rather than bringing preconceived notions to it. Study of the Bible requires *honesty*. It requires an *open mind*. You will want to let the Bible speak for itself.

Application

- 1** Read Mark 4:24-25. Especially note verse 25. What kind of a man will be given more (from God)? The man who has
 - a)** little.
 - b)** something.
 - c)** nothing.
- 2** Think of this Scripture (Mark 4:24-25) in connection with the Holy Spirit's enlightening His Word. The man who has something is the man who has
 - a)** knowledge.
 - b)** possessions.
 - c)** the Holy Spirit.
- 3** List at least five qualities discussed above that are found in a spiritual person.

-
- 4** Concerning preparation for Bible study, words such as *alertness, concentration, desire, and honesty* emphasize
 - a)** mental attitude more than spiritual attitude.
 - b)** spiritual attitude more than mental attitude.
 - c)** neither mental attitude nor spiritual attitude.
-

The basic tools for Bible study are very simple. Pencil, paper, your Bible, your eyes, and time are all that you need. It is important to have time that is free from distraction. If possible, you should be alone with the Holy Spirit and the Word when you study.

Application

5 For Bible study you will need

- a)** many books and charts.
 - b)** to be in church.
 - c)** very simple tools.
-

NEED FOR METHODOICAL STUDY

Objective 3. *Identify the characteristics of methodical Bible study.*

The average Christian approaches the Bible in a haphazard manner. The most common things that people believe and share about God's Word are things they have heard preached, things they have heard others say, or perhaps what they have read in books about the Bible. Study for most people—if they ever attempt it—is perhaps a little reading in the Word. Often the same passages are read over and over. People are timid about venturing away from familiar portions into new territory. Unfortunately, many Christians spend their whole life simply “locked in” to a small section of the Bible which they consider to be “easier” than the rest. They miss most of the treasures which the Holy Spirit would like to share with them. But things do not have to be this way. *Ordinary people can study the Bible methodically.*

A *method* is an orderly way of doing something. It is a procedure, followed step by step, that is calculated to lead to a conclusion. Method will not keep you from using your own ideas but will serve as a framework to guide your study. Studying methodically gives you a plan of action that focuses your efforts on your goal.

Can the Holy Spirit use methodical study? He certainly can and does. As you move into the synthetic method you will be learning terms and ideas that may seem new to you. You will be learning some steps to follow in your study. These are guides for extracting truth from the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit enlightens truth, not mistaken notions. The Holy Spirit's

illumination of truth may be likened to the action of sun and rain that produces the farmer's crops from living seed. But just as the farmer's methodical work (planting, hoeing, reaping) will help the action of sun and rain to produce crops, so our methodical study will help us to receive truth through the Holy Spirit.

Application

- 6** Circle letters before items that describe *methodical* study.
- a)** An orderly way of study.
 - b)** Study that focuses your efforts toward your goal.
 - c)** Study of familiar passages only.
 - d)** Study in a haphazard way.
 - e)** A procedure that leads toward a conclusion.
-

BASIC STEPS IN BIBLE STUDY

Objective 4. *List the six basic steps in Bible study.*

Objective 5. *Recognize correct examples of activities associated with each step.*

There are several basic steps in a Bible study that are basic to all learning. These steps will be useful in every method of study. They are: *observe, interpret, summarize, evaluate, apply, and correlate*. Read these steps over several times and then write them down to help you memorize them.

This section of the lesson will define these six basic steps for you. The next section, *Question and Answer Technique*, will explain them more in detail and show how they operate in actual study of Scripture. Of the six steps, the first two are crucial; that is, of greatest importance. If you get the first two steps (observing and interpreting) done well, the other steps will work themselves out very easily. For that reason, more emphasis will be placed on these two steps.

When you begin to apply these steps to Scripture, remember that there will be some overlapping. For example, *application* and *correlation* are closely related, and sometimes they are

combined into one step. But we will take them separately for the sake of clearer understanding.

Observation simply means asking yourself, “What does the Scripture say?” Rudyard Kipling wrote the following quatrain:

I have six faithful serving men
Who taught me all I know

Their names are What, and Where, and When,
And How, and Why, and Who.

Now if you will take these six questions to Scripture, you will get what you are looking for: facts! You need answers to what? where? when? how? why? who?

Miles Coverdale was a great Bible scholar and translator. He said of studying the Bible:

Not only will it greatly help you to understand scripture if thou mark [note] not only what is spoken or written, but also to whom, and with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, concerning what goes before and what follows.

Now that’s simple *observation*! You are not interpreting when you are making these observations; *interpretation* is the second step in learning. The first time through the passage of Scripture, you must *observe* to see what the Scripture says. You will be asking the Bible “fact” questions (which will be discussed in the last section of this lesson). This is the groundwork of Bible study. You will be finding out details. Sometimes it is tedious. It takes discipline to simply observe and reserve judgment on interpreting until *you have all the facts in hand*! It may seem a bit tedious because you want to get to the interpretation.

Application

7 List the six basic steps in learning (in the order that we have mentioned them).

.....

.....

8 From the list at the right, choose the word that best completes each sentence.

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| ... a | means asking | 1) Correlation |
| | yourself, "What does the Scripture | 2) Interpretation |
| | say?" | 3) Observation |
| ... b | What? Where? When? How? | 4) Facts |
| | Why? Who? are questions that will | 5) Application |
| | help you get the from | |
| | Scripture. | |
| ... c | must be done right | |
| | after the tedious work of observation | |
| | is completed. | |



Once you have observed carefully, you have a body of facts to work with. You have names, places, circumstances, reasons, and know *why* things are said or done. After you get through with your observing, you then ask: "Now what does this mean?" (And unless you learn to ask yourself this question, you are never going to answer it). *Interpretation* asks: "What does this mean?" It tries to discern what the author meant by what he said.

The next section, *Question and Answer Technique*, will deal more directly with asking interpretive questions. But "What does this mean?" is the basis for all these questions. The idea here is closely related to definition. I will just mention here that you should make every effort to understand the ordinary meanings of words in the Bible. If you have access

to a dictionary, it can be helpful. If you meet words you do not understand, make every effort to discover their meanings.

Application

- 9** Interpretation is concerned most with
- a)** getting the facts.
 - b)** finding out what the author meant.
 - c)** asking Where? When? and How?
-

To *summarize* means to “sum up.” In Bible study it is to present the main points and accompanying details in some brief concluding way. The value of the summary is that it focuses on the main principles of truth set forth in any given passage of Scripture. In the summary you see the whole set forth in condensed form. It is really the final step in the process of interpretation.

There are various ways of showing the summary. Sometimes charts or diagrams are used. Once the findings from your observations are written down, they can be organized in any convenient form. The arrangement should show the main points and details. This course is necessarily limited in length, so your summaries will be done in simple outline form. These summaries could at some time be shown as charts or diagrams.

Application

10 Circle letters before true statements concerning the summary.

- a)** It should always be put in a chart.
 - b)** It should always show main points and accompanying details.
 - c)** It may be shown in a chart or diagram.
 - d)** It is the *whole* set forth in condensed form.
-

Evaluation in the sense used here ISN'T saying whether you like something or not. When you are evaluating, you are trying to determine whether what you are reading is an *eternal principle* or a *local custom or rule* applicable only in the local Bible-time situation. You are saying to yourself, "Am I reading something that is an eternal principle, universally applicable to everybody? Or is this something that is just for this particular instance?"

Suppose you are in 1 Corinthians and you come to the part about the woman and her hair. Is it wrong for a woman to cut her hair? Everywhere? At all times? Or is this something that is culturally conditioned? That is, in the culture of Bible lands, in Bible days, was this a custom that does not necessarily apply universally? This is the kind of conclusion you must consider in your evaluation. Or, in another passage, if you come to the conclusion that idolatry is everywhere and always wrong, that is something that is universal and eternal. These conclusions are drawn on the basis of what you have found in your observation, interpretation, and summarization. If you have any other resources available to you, this would be the step where you could consult other sources such as books on Bible customs and Bible dictionaries or commentaries. If you do not have access to such materials, you will not be able to draw conclusions about marginal matters as firmly as you could with more information. Fortunately, you will be able to make basic judgments, all the necessary ones, on the basis of the Bible alone.

Even things which were meant for a specific local situation are likely to have an *eternal principle* behind them. For example, if in a study of 1 Corinthians 8 you conclude that *eating or not eating meat offered to idols* is a matter of cultural understanding and conscience in a given, local situation, it does not necessarily follow that you can eat anything you want. In 1 Corinthians 8, Paul's attitude toward others involved NOT eating meat offered to idols even though he said that as far as he was concerned it didn't matter. In this situation, the underlying eternal principle is consideration for others. In every culture, there are situations that involve *consideration for others*,

situations wherein doing something or refusing to do it is not an eternal principle but is a matter of offense in that cultural setting. So to obey the eternal principle of consideration for others, Christians modify their behavior to avoid offense to their believing brethren.

Application

11 In evaluation of Bible-time situations, local customs apply

- a)** less directly to our own lives than eternal principles.
 - b)** as directly to our own lives as eternal principles.
 - c)** more directly to our own lives than eternal principles.
-

Application is closely related to evaluation. After you have discovered an eternal principle in a given Scripture, you must consider its relationship to us by asking yourself the question, “How would we apply this principle to our own lives?” For an answer to your question you will have to rely on your best judgment and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit who most certainly will guide you as you seek the Lord for His will.

Correlation is simply asking, “How does this fit in with the total body of Scripture?” You learned in Lesson 1 that there is a basic harmony in the whole of Scripture. You must consider the whole system of truth to correctly interpret any part of it. The amazing evidence of revelation is that the writings of so many people, so widely separated from each other by time and space, are all in accord with one another. Correlation is the step in study where this basic fact must be used.

Faith says that everything in Scripture fits together. Now if everything else in Scripture says a certain thing, and an idea presents itself to you which seems to say *something else*, something must be wrong. You will have to rethink the matter, restudy it, and ask the Lord for more specific light on it. The step of *correlation* tries to fit everything into the complete biblical picture by asking such questions as, “How does Galatians correlate with Romans?” and “How do Galatians and Romans correlate with James?”

Application

12 Choose the correct answer for each question from the column at the right (You may use the answers more than once).

- | | | |
|--------------|---|------------------|
| ... a | What step is closely related to evaluation? | 1) Correlation |
| | | 2) Summarization |
| | | 3) Application |
| ... b | What step tries to fit everything into the complete biblical picture? | |
| ... c | What step insists that an idea which seems contrary to the body of Scripture must be restudied? | |
| ... d | What step considers the relationship of a given eternal principle to us today? | |

QUESTION AND ANSWER TECHNIQUE

Objective 6. *Identify four kinds of fact questions and relate them to the basic steps in Bible study.*

Objective 7. *Identify three kinds of thought questions and relate them to the basic steps in Bible study.*

Jesus used questions with masterful skill. You can find an example in Mark 3. Before Jesus healed the man with the paralyzed hand, He spoke to the people who were watching. He knew there were those there who were watching Him, waiting for a chance to accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath. "What does our Law allow us to do on the Sabbath?" He asked. "To help or to harm? To save a man's life or to destroy it?"

His questions did two things. First, they showed how the Jews had corrupted the original intent of the Law by forbidding help to be given on the Sabbath. Second, His questions pointed out an eternal principle: *It is always good to help rather than to harm, to save a man's life rather than to destroy it.* The people were too angry to answer Jesus. He had made His point through the use of questions.

Good questions call for particular answers. A question that can be answered with “yes” or “no” is not very effective for learning. “What does our Law allow us to do on the Sabbath?” was a question that brought to the people’s minds the hundreds of trifling rules they had made up over many years. The rules had been made to seem like God’s rules, but they were really the traditions of men and had nothing to do with God’s rules. One good question used by the Lord was as effective as a whole sermon.

You will be shown seven basic kinds of questions (four fact questions and three thought questions) which cover the basic steps in *Bible study*. Their names may be new to you, but you will see they are closely related to the principles you have learned earlier.

As we begin this section on questioning and apply it to Scripture, you will need to set up a notebook page with divisions as follows:

Question and Answer Techniques			
Kind of Question	Reference	Question	Answer

In each of the next seven exercises you will be given a definition of one of the seven kinds of questions, a sample reference for each question, a question (or questions) on this reference, and an answer for each question. You will fill in your notebook page using these samples as a guide. It is very important to write in your answers before looking up my suggested answers.

The *fact questions* are: (1) identifying, (2) modal, (3) temporal and (4) locale. They ask WHO or WHAT, HOW, WHEN, and WHERE.

(1) *Identifying questions* ask WHO and WHAT. These are questions of *observation*, you will remember, questions that get at the facts. There are variations on each of these questions that will be given according to the passage you are working

with. For example, WHO can be: “Who is speaking?” “Who is listening?” “Who is being spoken about?” “Who will be affected by what is said?” The same can be said for WHAT. It can be: “What is being said?” “What is being done?” “What is being accomplished?” “What terms are being used?”

WHO questions in Scripture are not always identical and, likewise, WHAT questions. Questions are tools for getting at the facts. When you work with tools you use the ones that are appropriate for the job. For example, if you have fruit to be sliced, you use a small knife. If you want to chop branches off a tree, you use something else. The *fact questions* are tools that are available to you, but you won’t necessarily be using every one in every instance. For example, if no place is named, you might not use the *locale question*. You will use what is appropriate. Our sample reference for the model notebook page is Philippians 1:12-14. This portion of Scripture is used because it has possibilities for at least one example of each type of question.

Application

13 Under KIND OF QUESTION on your notebook page, write *Identifying—Who? and What?* In the REFERENCE column write *Philippians 1:12*. In the QUESTION column write these two questions: *Who is being addressed? What does the writer want them to know?* Now, read Philippians 1:12 and place your answers in the ANSWER column.



(2) *Modal questions* ask HOW?: “How is this accomplished?” “What mode was used?”

Application

14 Under KIND OF QUESTION on your notebook page, write *Modal—How?* In the REFERENCE column you need not write *Philippians* each time after you have written it at the top of the unit. From now until another passage is being examined, use only the chapter and verse notation. So, write only 1:12-14. In the QUESTION column write these questions: *How (by what means) has the gospel progressed? How is this evident?* Now, examine Philippians 1:12-14, and place your answers in the ANSWER column.

(3) *Temporal questions* ask *WHEN?*: “When was this accomplished?” “When did this take place?” *WHEN* does not always have to be answered by a specific date. Sometimes it is helpful just to know whether it is past, recent past, future, near future, or if this event came before or after another event.

Application

15 Under KIND OF QUESTION on your notebook page, write *Temporal—When?* In the REFERENCE column write 1:12-14. In the QUESTION column write *When did this happen?* Read the verses indicated. You will notice that there is no date given, but there is a clue as to whether this has happened in the distant past or recent past. In the ANSWER column write which you think it is, and what clues indicate the answer.

(4) *Locale questions* ask *WHERE?* This is the question of *place*. Place can include the country, the community, someone’s home, a geographical location such as mountains, desert, etc.

Question and Answer Techniques			
Kind of Question	Reference	Question	Answer
Identifying - Who? What?	Philippians 1:12	Who is being addressed? What does the writer want them to know?	

Application

16 Under KIND OF QUESTION on your notebook page, write *Locale— Where?* In the REFERENCE column write 1:13-14. In the QUESTION column write *Where did this happen?* In the ANSWER column write where you think it may have happened and why you think so.

Thought Questions have to do with the interpretation of the facts, once you have raised the facts to your level of consciousness. There are three basic kinds of thought questions: (1) *definitive*, having to do with definition; (2) *rational*, having to do with the reason why; and (3) *implicational*, having to do with application to life today, with finding out what is suggested beyond what is stated and correlating it with the Bible as a whole. You see that these questions are really part of the basic steps of Bible study discussed earlier.

(1) *Definitive questions* ask, “What does this mean?” You have observed that something is said. The next question after you get through with your observing is, “Now I see what has been said, but what does it mean?” A *definitive question* calls for an explanatory answer. It can be applied to words or terms, to statements, to grammar, to literary forms, or to the tone or the general atmosphere of the writing.

Application

17 Under KIND OF QUESTION on your notebook page, write *Definitive—Meaning?* In the REFERENCE column write *1:13*. In the QUESTION column write *What is the meaning of the phrase, palace guard?* Now read verse 13 and think about what it probably means. Write your answer in the ANSWER column.

(2) *Rational questions* ask WHY?: “Why is this said?” Further, “Why is this said here?” You have defined the term and found its meaning, but why is it used here? What position does it occupy in the narrative? To answer this properly, you will usually have to read longer portions, such as the chapter or the book, to get a better perspective.

Application

18 Under KIND OF QUESTION on your notebook page, write *Rational—Reason why?* In the REFERENCE column write *1:12-14*. In the QUESTION column write *Why is Paul telling them this?* Read verses 12-14. Answer the question from these verses; write it in the ANSWER column.

Be sure to compare your answers with the suggested ones. Yours do not have to be exactly the same, but they should be similar.

(3) *Implicational questions* ask “What does this imply?” Is there a principle here to be discovered? Is there an application that can be made? Notice again that these questions are definitely related to basic steps in Bible study: evaluation, application, and correlation. Implications are things not directly stated in the text but which can be seen in addition to what has been directly stated.

Application

19 Under KIND OF QUESTION on your notebook page, write *Implicational—what does this imply?* In the REFERENCE column write *1:12-14*. In the QUESTION column write *What two implications might be drawn from this reference?* Think about this passage and about some conclusions or implications which you might draw from it. Write them in the ANSWER column.

20 Now match the question on the left with the kind of question it represents (on the right).

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| ... a | How was it done? | 1) Identifying |
| ... b | Why is it said? | 2) Modal |
| ... c | Is there a principle? | 3) Temporal |
| ... d | Who is involved? | 4) Locale |
| ... e | What is the meaning? | 5) Definitive |
| ... f | When did it happen? | 6) Rational |
| ... g | Where did it happen? | 7) Implicational |



self-test

- 1** What is the first qualification for effective Bible study?
- a)** Knowledge
 - b)** Spiritual understanding
 - c)** Great intelligence
- 2** What are the two kinds of personal preparation necessary for effective Bible study?
- a)** Spiritual and mental
 - b)** Physical and mental
 - c)** Social and spiritual
- 3** Which one of these items does NOT express a spiritual qualification that is necessary for effective Bible study?
- a)** Deep reverence for God
 - b)** Obedience to God’s Word
 - c)** Perfect freedom from sin
 - d)** Prompt confession of sin
- 4** Match each quality (left) with the attitude (right) which best describes it.
- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| ... a Meekness | 1) Mental |
| ... b Alertness | 2) Spiritual |
| ... c Faith | |
| ... d Concentration | |
| ... e Reverence | |
- 5** Your eyes and time are two of the five tools we mentioned in this lesson for effective Bible study. What are the other three?
-
- 6** Methodical Bible study consists of an orderly procedure that
- a)** eliminates all other methods.
 - b)** leads to an understanding of Scripture.
 - c)** cannot be used by ordinary people.

7 Which one of the following items contains some of the basic steps in Bible study?

- a)** Mental, spiritual, and physical
- b)** Procedure, method, focus, and goal
- c)** Observe, interpret, summarize, and evaluate

8 Observation asks:

- a)** “What does this say?”
- b)** “Is there an eternal principle here?”
- c)** “What does this mean?”

9 Interpretation asks:

- a)** “What does this say?”
- b)** “Is there an eternal principle here?”
- c)** “What does this mean?”

10 Match each class of questions (right) to its kinds of questions (left) by writing the correct number in each blank.

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| ... a | Definitive, rational,
implicational | 1) Fact questions
2) Thought questions |
| ... b | Identifying, modal, temporal,
locale | |

answers to the study questions

- 10 b)** It should always show main points and accompanying details.
c) It may be shown in a chart or diagram.
d) It is the *whole* set forth in condensed form.
- 1 b)** something.
- 11 a)** less directly to our own lives than eternal principles.
- 20 a** 2) Modal
b 6) Rational
c 7) Implicational
d 1) Identifying
c 5) Definitive
f 3) Temporal
g 4) Locale
- 2 c)** the Holy Spirit.
- 12 a** 3) Application
b 1) Correlation
c 1) Correlation
d 3) Application
- 3** Any five of the following: **reverence**, sensitivity to the Spirit, meekness, humility, patience, faith, confession of sin, obedience to God.
- 13** Paul's brothers; that the things which have happened to him have really helped the progress of the gospel. (Wording may differ.)
- 4 a)** mental attitude more than spiritual attitude.
- 14** Through Paul's being in prison; through the brothers' increased boldness to preach the gospel message.
- 5 c)** very simple tools.
- 15** Recent past; because one of the "things that have happened" of which Paul is speaking is evidently his being in prison, and he is still in prison.

- 6**
 - a)** An orderly way of study.
 - b)** Study that focuses your efforts toward your goal.
 - e)** A procedure that leads toward a conclusion.
- 16** In prison in Rome. Paul's being in prison is directly stated. At Rome is suggested here because of the mention of the palace guard (This conclusion is confirmed in 4:22).
- 7** Observe, interpret, summarize, evaluate, apply, correlate.
- 17** Paul states that he is in prison. A prison requires guards. These guards are evidently connected with the palace security force and, therefore, know of Paul's imprisonment at the palace.
- 8**
 - a** 3) Observation
 - b** 4) Facts
 - c** 2) Interpretation
- 18** So that they will be encouraged at the way the gospel is progressing. So they can rejoice over the fact that Paul's testimony in prison is encouraging the believers where he is.
- 9**
 - b)** finding out what the author meant.
- 19** Paul has been witnessing about Jesus Christ to his guards. Jesus Christ can be glorified in any situation. The gospel can be spread in difficult circumstances. Paul's ill fortune was actually the will of God at that moment. (Others may be found but these are significant.)

LESSON 3 Principles of Interpretation

You were introduced to some foundational guides for understanding Scripture in a section of Lesson 1. In Lesson 2 you discovered that *interpretation* is the second step of six basic steps in Bible study. After you have observed, you have a body of information; then, you interpret your information.

Lesson 3 will focus on some of the important aspects of interpretation. Much of the body of Christian belief and doctrine has been established through interpretation. What is doctrine? Why is it so important? Why is interpretation such a crucial step in learning? Let's look at detailed answers to these questions.

lesson outline

The Importance of Doctrine

Literal Interpretation

The Related Whole

 New Testament Reveals Old Testament

 Scripture in Context: Caution in Using “Proof” Texts

 Divine Disclosure Only in Scripture

Determining Doctrinal Truth

 Only From Passages That Proclaim God’s Will for All Men

 Only Scriptural Teaching Directly Binds Conscience

The Practical Nature of Scripture

Responsibility for Light

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

1. Define “doctrine” and “theology” according to our usage of these terms.
2. Explain the meaning and importance of literal interpretation.
3. Describe three principles involved in using the Bible as a related whole.
4. Explain two general principles: one for identifying doctrinal truth in Scripture and the other for guiding Christian behavior.
5. Recognize two aspects of the practical nature of Scripture.
6. Explain the importance of accurate sharing of the message of the Bible.

learning activities

1. Read the opening section, outline, and objectives.
2. Be sure you understand the meanings of the key words.
 Look up in the glossary those that you do not understand.
3. Answer in writing every question in the lesson development.
 Always remember to check your answers.

- 4. You will not be asked to use your notebook in this lesson. However, if you have time it would be valuable to try to use on a new passage of Scripture the question-answer technique which you studied in Lesson 2. The more you use the techniques and methods you are studying, the more they will become yours. Select a paragraph, a chapter, or a whole book for your study.
- 5. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson.

key words

assumption	encyclopedia	secondary
communication	mystical	theology
doctrine	primary	

lesson development

THE IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINE

Objective 1. *Define “doctrine” and “theology” according to our usage of these terms.*

In this lesson we use the word “doctrine” in reference to *Bible doctrine*. It is “the substance and content of the Christian faith.” *Theology* is closely related to it. For our purposes it will be defined as “the study of God and His relation to man and to the world.” Doctrine and theology include all the teachings of the Christian faith.

People spend lifetimes dealing with these subjects, so it is not the main purpose of this lesson to teach doctrine, but to tell you *what it is* and to give you an idea of the importance of it. Jesus affirmed that His doctrine came from God. “What I teach is not my own teaching,” He said, “but it comes from God, who sent me. Whoever is willing to do what God wants will know whether what I teach comes from God or whether I speak on my own authority” (John 7:16-17).

In writing to Timothy, Paul speaks of the uses of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The very first item on his list is that it is

useful for *teaching the truth*. And that, of course, is the key to the importance of doctrine. Truth is sound doctrine because truth is divine (John 14:6). You need to believe only “truth” and share only “truth.”

Application

1 Match each term (right) with a definition of it (left).

- | | | |
|--------------|--|-----------------------|
| ... a | The substance and content of the Christian faith. | 1) Theology |
| ... b | The study of God and His relation to man and to the world. | 2) A use of Scripture |
| ... c | Teaching the truth. | 3) Doctrine |

Doctrine and theology are important because what you come to believe about God and His program determines your behavior, your decisions, your relationships; in short, the whole of your life. Paul commended obedience to truth in the Roman Christians: “For though at one time you were slaves to sin, you have obeyed with all your heart the truths found in the teaching you received” (Romans 6:17).

When you come to the Bible, you bring *your assets*: your mind, your will, and your heart. God brings *His assets* to you. He has given you the Holy Spirit to help you understand the words He has already inspired.

Why then are there so many false doctrines in the world? There are many reasons. People are perverse when it comes to obeying God. They use the Bible in strange ways. I once knew a man who said, “I believe Jesus was a great teacher and I live by the Sermon on the Mount.” But this man was not a born-again Christian. He did not believe in Jesus as the Savior of the world. He evidently did not consider the fact that Jesus testified that He is the Savior, God’s beloved Son. If Jesus was not telling the truth about that, you could not trust the other things

He said. It is possible to live by the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) only if Jesus lives in your heart.

False doctrines arise from a deliberate twisting of Scripture. In the Old Testament book of Malachi, God denounces the priests who are deliberately teaching false doctrine to the people (Malachi 2:8). In the New Testament, Paul continually warns Timothy to guard his doctrine with great care.

Application

- 2** Read 1 Timothy 6:3-5 in your Bible. Find the answers to the following questions from examining this passage.
- a** What three things can be said about the person who teaches false doctrine and does not agree with the words of Jesus?
.....
 - b** What does this type of person think that religion is?
.....



The fact that false doctrine may also arise in the church itself is even more disturbing. The Holy Spirit is present to help our understanding, but many of God’s children are lazy, careless, and indifferent about Bible study. Those who don’t study are easy targets for false teachers who tell them what they like to hear rather than God’s truth. A lazy mind and careless attitude put a barrier in the way of the Holy Spirit. After all, He has to work with *your* intelligence. Communication is a two-way operation. God *cannot reveal* unless there is someone to reveal to, someone who is making an effort to receive the communication. Paul said to the Ephesian Christians, “Then we shall no longer be children, carried by the waves and blown about by every shifting wind of the teaching of deceitful men, who lead others into error by the tricks they invent” (Ephesians 4:14).

Christians who are honestly seeking the will of God in the understanding of divine truth must be very concerned about such things as *interpretation, theology, and doctrine*. The

principles presented in Lessons 3 and 4 are to help you do what Paul said to do in 1 Thessalonians 5:21. “Put all things to the test, keep what is good.” As you study, you will have to weigh the ideas which come to you. Are the ideas from God, or are they sometimes the workings of your own mind? Therefore you must test your ideas to see if they stand up. *Principles of interpretation are really just tests to confirm or verify truth and to weed out wrong ideas.* Belief must be tested by an alert, redeemed person who comes to the Word with his best judgment. His judgment is acted upon by the Holy Spirit who then brings understanding of truth (sound doctrine).

LITERAL INTERPRETATION

Objective 2. *Explain the meaning and importance of literal interpretation.*

Literal interpretation is meaning that is based on natural or normal usage of language, the ordinary sense of the words. *Figurative language* is the expression of one thing in terms of another. It presents pictures to the mind that illustrate other ideas.

Language is a complex and changing system. Over years of use, words acquire connotations and shades of meaning. To say that the Bible must be understood literally does not mean to put the student in a rigid frame and say, “You can only understand this word in one way.” But there has to be a starting point. This starting point is the *normal* way in which words are used in their natural and ordinary sense. Figurative language is used in the Bible and will be the subject of Lesson 4. But even figurative language depends for its meaning on the literal meaning of what it represents. Jesus often used figurative language in His teaching.

Application

- 3 Circle the letter before each TRUE sentence.
 - a *Literal* and *figurative* mean exactly the same thing.
 - b Figurative language needs the literal meaning of words to convey the idea it represents.
 - c Literal meaning is the natural, ordinary usage of language.
- 4 Read the parable of the weeds (Matthew 13:24-30) and Jesus’ explanation of it (Matthew 13:36-43). Then answer these questions based on it.
 - a What were the words Jesus used to picture Himself?
.....
 - b What word did Jesus use to picture the world?
.....
 - c What phrase pictures the people who belong to the Kingdom?
.....
 - d What word pictures the people who belong to the evil one?
.....



These questions give you a good example of how figurative language is used. (You may want to ask a few questions of your own on a figurative language passage and record your study in your notebook, just for practice.) Can you see that normal understanding of “seed,” for example, is absolutely necessary to your understanding of what Jesus was illustrating? We do this in all our reading. All communication is based on the assumption that the one who speaks will be understood by the one who listens or reads. This is what God intends. He is not trying to hide His message from you; He is trying to reveal it. Therefore you will not have to look for mystical or hidden meanings in Scripture. Were that true, all would be confusion. People’s imaginations would work overtime and nothing could be known for sure. *Belief must be tested by whether or not you are giving the words their ordinary meanings.*

Application

- 5** Complete these sentences with the word *literal* or *figurative*.
- a** The Bible must be interpreted in a sense, otherwise nothing could be known for sure about its meaning.
- b** language was often used by Jesus to illustrate His teaching.
- c** You do not have to look for mystical or hidden meanings in Scripture because God speaks in His Word in a normal or way.
-

THE RELATED WHOLE

Objective 3. *Describe three principles involved in using the Bible as a related whole.*

New Testament Reveals Old Testament

Belief must be tested by *New Testament revelation*. The teachings of the Old Testament laid a foundation in history for teachings in the New Testament. You remember from studying “progressive revelation” in Lesson 1 that because of man’s limited capacity to understand and his sinful, perverse nature, God can reveal truth only a little at a time.

Jesus said, (Matthew 5:17) “Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true.” The revelation of God the Redeemer in the New Testament is the peak of God’s revelation to man. All the teachings of the Old Testament must be seen in the light of this final and highest revelation, the New Testament.

Application

6 Read from your Bible, Leviticus 11:1-23 and Mark 7:17-19. Explain in your notebook which of those teachings is correct for today and why.



Scripture in Context: Caution in Using “Proof” Texts

Belief must be tested by *the meaning of any given passage of Scripture in relation to all its context*: the paragraph, the chapter, the book, and the other books of the Bible.

A “proof” text is a verse that may be quoted to verify a point of view or a point of doctrinal belief. It is all right to do this provided that you have determined the accurate meaning of the verse you are quoting. For example, in Exercise 6, Mark 7:17-19 is cited as a “proof” text for the teaching that it is permissible now to eat all foods. Another text which is related to this principle is Acts 10:9-15. The text in Mark is Jesus’ teaching which is clarified in Mark’s comment that is added in verse 19 in parentheses. The passage in Acts, which tells about Peter’s vision of many unclean animals being let down in a sheet, teaches the same thing *but only as an illustration of its primary message*. If you read the chapter (context) carefully, you find that the main idea is that Peter is to accept the Gentiles and not be afraid to bring them the gospel. Food is the secondary consideration.

Remember the *rational* thought questions from the last lesson: “Why is this said?” and “Why is this said HERE?” When determining doctrine or an eternal principle to which all believers everywhere must conform, these questions become all important. Scripture must be understood in its immediate context and compared with other Scripture.

Application

7 Read 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22 carefully. This passage is a paragraph, which means it embodies a complete thought. Note verses 19 and 20.

a In 5:19-20 what main topic is being discussed?

.....

b In light of the main topic of the paragraph, what is the “kind of evil” being referred to in this passage (verse 22)?

.....

.....

First Thessalonians 5:22 is a verse often quoted to “prove” that something should or should not be done. Other verses in the New Testament speak directly to questions of specific wrongdoing which must be avoided, but I feel that this verse should be understood in the context of judging the ways in which gifts of the Spirit are used in the church. A better text to use for proof that the New Testament teaches a holy and separated life would be Colossians 3:5-6, where a direct and specific command is given.

Divine Disclosure Only in Scripture

This time, our phrase about belief is changed a little. Belief must *be formulated or extracted ONLY FROM SCRIPTURE*.

The recorded history of man dates back several thousands of years. During that time the intelligence of man has given rise to many noble thoughts. It has also given rise to many mistaken notions, as man has observed his surroundings and tried to make suitable explanations for them. Christian doctrine cannot be based on writings of human inspiration. All Christian doctrine and theology can have only one source, the Bible. You can find the truth of God only by seeking to correctly understand Scripture.

Doctrine cannot come from any source other than the Bible. Neither can it go beyond what the Bible specifically states. There are many questions that are not answered in the Bible. You may have questions, but God has given in Scripture all that He wants you to know. He has given the important things. He expects you to study and find out all that *is* there. But the walk of the believer is a walk of faith too. Romans 8:25 concludes a paragraph that has been talking about the future hope of the believers. It says that “if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.” God has reasons of His own for putting some information in Scripture and withholding some. Sound doctrine cannot be built on guesswork.

In all probability you will not be engaged in formulating doctrines for the church. Yet every student of the Scripture is, in a way, engaged in working out beliefs for himself and beliefs he will be sharing. Remember, doctrine can come from no other source but the Bible and can go only as far as the Bible goes.

Application

8 Match each Scripture passage with the principle it illustrates.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ... a New Testament reveals Old | 1) “If we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience” (Romans 8:25). |
| ... b Scripture in context | 2) “I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true” (Matthew 5:17). |
| ... c Divine disclosure only in Scripture | 3) “Nothing that goes into a person from the outside can really make him unclean” (Mark 7:18). |



DETERMINING DOCTRINAL TRUTH

Objective 4. *Explain two general principles: one for identifying doctrinal truth in Scripture and the other for guiding Christian behavior.*

Only From Passages That Proclaim God's Will for All Men

All of the Bible is the Word of God. All of it is truth. All of it is useful to us. But it is not all useful in the same ways. *Determining doctrine* does not imply that some of the Bible is true and some is not. However, doctrinal truth (the passages that declare God's will *for man now*) is useful to us in a more particular way because it demands something of us.

Application

9 Read 2 John 12, then answer these questions based on it.

a Does this verse express truth?

.....

b If so, is it truth that has anything personal to do with you or me?

.....

c Write in your own words what this verse seems to express.

.....

.....

10 Read 2 John 9.

a Does this verse express truth?

.....

b If so, is it truth that has anything personal to do with you or me?

.....

.....

c If this verse has truth for us, what indicates that it does?

.....

.....

Second John 9 is different from 2 John 12. Second John 9 proclaims an eternal principle that is as it was in the day John wrote this letter: *if you do not stay with the teachings of Christ, but go beyond them, you do not have God*. Second John 12 is true also, but it does not proclaim eternal truth that has personal implications for people today. So, doctrine is determined by passages that proclaim God’s will for man for all time.

Only Scriptural Teaching Directly Binds Conscience

At the beginning of this lesson we defined doctrine as the substance and content of the Christian faith. A specific part of that content is the group of commands that bear directly on daily Christian behavior. *You and your behavior* are not easy to separate. In Christian circles what you *can do* and *can not do* are usually subjects of interest and discussion. Sometimes the subject is also bound up with cultural practices that are not related to Scriptural commands.

Your personal Christian behavior should be determined on the basis of four guides: direct command, reasonable implication, eternal principle, and conscience.

Direct command is the most clear. What is directly condemned in Scripture, we have a right to condemn today. The following exercise presents an example.

Application

11 Read Ephesians 5:3-5. List the things that are directly condemned.

.....

.....

Reasonable implication is not quite as clear as direct command, but must be considered. For example, drunkenness is condemned in Scripture. (See 1 Corinthians 5:11; 6:10; Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:21.) It can be reasonably implied from these Scriptures that the misuse of drugs is to be condemned as well, because it interferes with the normal conscious function.

Eternal principle is important though often less clear than direct command. As an example, read Ephesians 5:1-2.

Application

12 State in your own words how two eternal principles in Ephesians 5:1-2 have a direct bearing on your personal behavior.

.....

In the discussion of the question of food offered to idols in 1 Corinthians 8, you can see an example of both *eternal principle* and *conscience*. The difference lies in the way you view it. From Paul's position you see an eternal principle: that of consideration for others. The eating of the meat in question was nothing, as far as he was concerned. But for the sake of those around him who *thought* it to be sin, he did not eat. His

motive was to keep from offending someone who truly thought it to be sinful (1 Corinthians 8:13).

In 1 Corinthians 8:10, conscience is seen operating in the *weak* person: “Suppose a person whose conscience is weak in this matter sees you, who have so-called ‘knowledge,’ eating in the temple of an idol; will not this encourage him to eat food offered to idols?” It is interesting to note that if you truly believe something to be a sin (whether it is or not by the standards we have discussed) and you go against your own conscience to do it, it really becomes sin for you. Not because of the act itself in such cases, but because the spirit of disobedience is its motivation.

Application

13 List four areas where Scripture directly binds conscience.

.....

.....

14 Match each type of Scripture (left) with the item that identifies it best (right).

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| ... a Passages that proclaim God’s will for all men. | 1) Determine personal behavior |
| ... b Teachings of Scripture that bind conscience. | 2) Determine doctrine |
| ... c Personal messages of local importance. | 3) Are truth with incidental value |

THE PRACTICAL NATURE OF SCRIPTURE

Objective 5. *Recognize two aspects of the practical nature of Scripture.*

The Bible is not intended to be an encyclopedia of interesting bits of information. It is not a science book. It has one main theme which we have already found to be *redemption*

by faith in Jesus Christ. The content of the Bible is highly selective; it has been specifically chosen to deliver and support this message of redemption. Even concerning the activities of Jesus, John wrote that if all were to be recorded, “the whole world could not hold the books that would be written” (John 21:25). So as you study Scripture, you should keep in mind its practical nature. It contains much incidental information, but its main thrust is very personal and practical: how to be saved, how to live as a Christian believer, how to share the Gospel.

Application

15 Circle the letters before the statements that are TRUE.

- a) The main theme of the Bible is informational.
 - b) The Bible contains only a record of what Jesus did.
 - c) The main theme of the Bible is redemption through Jesus Christ.
 - d) The practical nature of Scripture shows us how to live and how to serve.
-



RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIGHT

Objective 6. *Explain the importance of accurate sharing of the message of the Bible.*

The Bible is truly a book with a message that is a matter of life and death! *Sharing God's Word* is not a matter of tickling ears with interesting facts or showing how much you know. It must be motivated by a heart of love for God and for His growing church. The Bible contains information that is absolutely necessary for every person to know. It speaks of eternal joy or eternal punishment after this brief life is over. The Bible is the only place where accurate information about God and the eternal destiny of human beings can be found. You have it within your power to lead men to God with truth, or to mislead them with false or careless information. God's Word must be proclaimed in *truth*!

Application

16 Why is it so important that the message of the Bible be proclaimed with great accuracy?

.....

.....



self-test

1 Circle the letters before the correct answers. Which of the following statements about doctrine and theology are TRUE?

- a)** Doctrine and theology include all the teachings of the Christian faith.
- b)** Theology deals with the study of God and His relation to man and the world.
- c)** All doctrine is acceptable if it is sincere.

2 What is meant by *literal* interpretation of the Bible?

- a)** That every word can have only one meaning.
- b)** The natural, normal, ordinary use of language.
- c)** The expression of one thing in terms of another.

3 Circle the letters before the correct statements.

- a)** Belief must be tested by New Testament revelation.
- b)** Belief must be tested by Old Testament Law.
- c)** Belief must be tested by the meaning of the context surrounding the Scripture passage.
- d)** Belief must be tested by how reasonable it sounds to you.
- e)** Belief must be based only on the Bible.
- f)** Belief can be extracted from any moralistic book.

TRUE-FALSE. Write **T** or **F** in front of each statement to indicate whether it is true or false.

... **4** Only part of the Bible is true.

... **5** All of the Bible is true.

... **6** All of the Bible is for your personal direction.

... **7** Direct command, reasonable implication, eternal principle, and conscience have a bearing on Christian behavior.

... **8** Direct command is the only consideration for Christian conduct.

9 What are two things that the practical nature of the Bible teaches us to do?

.....

.....

10 Why is accuracy extremely important in sharing God’s Word with others? (Answer in your own words.)

.....

.....

answers to the study questions

- 8 a** 2) “I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true” (Matthew 5:17).
b 3) “Nothing that goes into a person from the outside can really make him unclean” (Mark 7:18).
c 1) “If we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience” (Romans 8:25).
- 1 a** 3) Doctrine
b 1) Theology
c 2) A use of Scripture
- 9 a** Yes
b No
c A final, personal message to the people to whom it was written.
- 2 a** He is swollen with pride, knows nothing, and desires to argue and quarrel about words.
b That it is a way to become rich.
- 10 a** Yes
b Yes
c Words of warning and words of comfort for us.
- 3 b** Figurative language needs the literal meaning of words to convey the idea it represents.
c Literal meaning is the natural, ordinary usage of language.
- 11** Sexual immorality, indecency; greed; obscene, profane, or vulgar language.
- 4 a** The man who sowed the good seed.
b Field
c Good seed
d Weeds
- 12 1)** I must find out what God is like, and try to be like Him in every possible way.
2) I must control my action by love in the same way as Christ showed His love. (Wording will vary.)

- 5 **a** Literal
- b** Figurative
- c** Literal

- 13 Direct command, reasonable implication, eternal principle, and conscience. (In any order.)

- 6 The teaching of Jesus in the New Testament, that all foods are fit to be eaten, is the one that applies to today. It is correct because the New Testament gives a fuller revelation of God's will for man than the Old Testament. (Answers will vary.)

- 14 **a** 2) Determine doctrine.
- b** 1) Determine personal behavior.
- c** 3) Are truth with incidental value.

- 7 **a)** Gifts of the Spirit.
- b)** Misuse of the gifts of the Spirit.

- 16 Because the eternal destiny in heaven or hell for all people depends on the words of Scripture.

- 15 **c)** The main theme of the Bible is redemption through Jesus Christ.
- d)** The practical nature of Scripture shows us how to live and how to serve.

Figurative Language in Interpretation

LESSON 4

This lesson is the second of two lessons on interpretation. You have learned that figurative language explains one thing in terms of another. This calls for some special skill in interpretation! Lesson 4 will help you understand some of the major ways figurative language is used in Scripture.

This lesson will give you an interesting overview of figurative language as it is used in *parables*, *prophecy*, *types* and *symbols*, and *poetry* in the Bible. These four categories represent a large part of biblical writings. It is too valuable a part to neglect. You need have no fear in your study of such parts of the Bible if you learn to understand the uniqueness of each category.

lesson outline

Parables

Definition

Purpose

Facts to Remember

Understanding Parables

Prophecy

Definition

Problems

Types and Symbols

Definition

Features of Types

Uses of Types

Symbols

Poetry

Where Found

Features of Hebrew Poetry

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

1. Identify four important things to consider in understanding parables.
2. Name the two kinds of prophecy.
3. Explain why prophecy that foretells future events is the hardest kind of prophecy to understand.
4. Explain the use of types and symbols in the Bible.
5. State three characteristic features of types.
6. Describe three kinds of parallelism in Hebrew poetry and identify examples in Scripture.

learning activities

1. Read the opening section, outline, and objectives.
2. Learn the meanings of key words that are new to you.

- 3. Study the lesson development and answer the study questions in the usual manner.
- 4. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson. Check your answers carefully. Review those items answered incorrectly.
- 5. Carefully review Unit 1 (Lessons 2-4), then complete the unit student report for Unit 1 and send it to your GU instructor.

key words

allegory	parallelism
analogy	prophecy
dogmatic	symbol
parable	type

lesson development

PARABLES

Objective 1. *Identify four important things to consider in understanding parables.*

Definition

A parable is a short story drawn from nature or common-life situations. It illustrates a moral or religious lesson. Parables were used by teachers in ancient times. Jesus used parables in much of His teaching. In the Master’s teaching the parable reached its highest level of perfection. Most of the parables of Scripture are to be found in the Gospels. There is no set length; they can be short or long.

Purpose

Jesus used parables for two reasons: (1) to teach His disciples and others who listened and were responsive to Him (for these people, the parable illuminated the truth), (2) to veil the truth from those who were not responsive to Him. The disciples asked Jesus about this. In Matthew 13:10 they asked Him, “Why do you use parables when you talk to the people?”

Application

1 Read Matthew 13:11-17. Find the answers to the following questions.

a To whom has the knowledge about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven been given?

.....

b In verse 13, what does Jesus give as the reason for His use of parables in talking to the people?

.....

.....

Facts to Remember

First, parables always illustrate by means of an *earthly process* or happening. Losing a coin, letting light shine in the dark, a farmer with his seed, rich men, poor men, building a house: all are themes familiar to most people. If they do *have ears to hear*, understanding is not far away! Second, the parable always contains a *spiritual lesson* that it is intended to teach. Third, there is always an *analogy* between the spiritual lesson and the earthly, or common, illustration. *Analogy* is “resemblance, in some particulars, between things otherwise unlike.” Fourth, both the illustration and the lesson must be *correctly interpreted*.

There will be just one central truth in each parable. Actors, elements, and actions will need identification, but they will be real-life presentations rather than the difficult, abstract presentations that are usually found in an allegory.

Application

2 From the list at the right, choose the word or phrase that completes each sentence.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| ... a Parables illustrate by means of | 1) truth |
| happening. | 2) an earthly |
| ... b Parables always have | 3) allegory |
| to teach. | 4) analogy |
| ... c Each parable will teach one | 5) a spiritual lesson |
| central | |
| ... d There is always an | |
| between the | |
| earthly and the spiritual. | |
-

Understanding Parables

Let us consider four things in our approach to the understanding of parables. First, *parables in the gospels relate to Christ and His Kingdom*. The first question you should ask yourself when studying them is, “How does this parable relate to Christ?” Remember the parable of the weeds in Matthew 13? When Jesus interpreted this parable He said that He, the Son of Man, was the man who sowed the good seed (v. 37). Ask yourself questions like the following: “Is there a character in the parable that represents Christ?” “Is there teaching in the parable about Christ or His mission in the world?” “How does the parable relate to the Kingdom?”

The kingdoms of this world rise and fall. About many of them, you can say they “have been,” meaning they have come and are already finished. The Kingdom of God *has already come* for those who are born again. It is continuing, for people continue to be born again. *It will come* in its fullest sense at the Coming of the Lord. When you study a parable then, the important questions to answer first are, “How does this relate to Christ?” and “How does this relate to the Kingdom?”

Application

3 Read Luke 15:1-7. This is the Parable of the Lost Sheep.

a How does this parable relate to Christ?

.....

b How does this relate to the Kingdom?

.....



Second, *parables must be considered in the light of the place and time from which they come*. The ideal way to do this, of course, is to study books about Bible customs and culture. It adds some understanding to the *Parable of the Lost Coin*, for example, to know that women of those days in that place had very limited resources. They wore their personal wealth on their persons in some form of jewelry. It represented security against troubles that might come in the future. A woman would be much more anxious and worried about losing such a coin than a modern woman who might have simply lost one of several coins that had no such crucial importance to her. So, learn all you can from books. Whether or not you have other books to consult, read as much and as often as you can in the Bible itself. For example, you will find a lot of information in the Old Testament books of Exodus and Leviticus that will help you understand the New Testament customs, feasts, Sabbaths, and other aspects of Bible life.

Third, *look for Jesus' own explanation of the parable*. Frequently, His explanation follows the parable, either immediately or within a few verses. For example, Jesus explains the *Parable of the Lost Sheep* in Luke 15:7. His explanation follows the words, "In the same way. . ." as does His explanation of the *Lost Coin* in 15:10. Jesus waited until He was alone with His disciples to explain the *Parable of the*

Sower (see Luke 8:4-9). In this case the verse before the parable (Luke 8:4) helps us to understand Jesus’ explanation of it.

Application

4 Read Luke 15:2-3 again. What circumstance led to the parables about lost things?

.....

.....

Fourth, *compare the teachings you seem to see in the parable with the full context of the Scripture*: the chapter in which the parable is found, the book, and any Old Testament association that would be helpful in understanding it. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called “Synoptic Gospels” because they deal with similar material in the Lord’s life on earth. But, they give their accounts from different viewpoints. Compare the accounts of a parable if more than one gospel writer mentions it. Sometimes you can find more detail in one account than in another. You will be able to find *doctrine* in parables, but you must compare it with other Scripture for confirmation.

PROPHECY

- Objective 2.** *Name the two kinds of prophecy.*
- Objective 3.** *Explain why prophecy that foretells future events is the hardest kind of prophecy to understand.*

Definition

Prophecy can be defined as the inspired declaration of divine will and purpose. Sometimes prophets of the Bible “foretold” events that were to happen in the future, and sometimes they “forth-told” or proclaimed God’s truth for the present. Somehow, people are often more curious about knowing the future than about knowing God’s will for their own time. But both types of declarations made by the prophets were important.

Problems

Can prophetic portions always be literally interpreted as are the great teaching passages of the Bible? Can you understand Isaiah in the same way you understand the *Sermon On The Mount* (Matthew 5–7)? No, Isaiah will be harder to interpret. You might expect the answer to be “Yes,” since the general rule for Bible interpretation is to use the *literal* or ordinary meaning of words. Passages which declare God’s truth as a “telling forth” of His will for man now can be interpreted through the basic principles you have learned. But prophecy that *foretells* future events is more difficult. More figurative language is used, so more study must be done to understand each symbolic word. (The next section of the lesson tells more about this.) More reading must be done to discover the time, the place, and the circumstances of the prophetic message.

Of course when a prophecy has been fulfilled and its interpretation is in the Bible itself, understanding is easy. One example of this is in Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:25-33). Peter quoted a prophetic psalm (Psalm 16:8-11) and showed, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, how it had found its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. You will find another example in the following.

Application

- 5** Read Acts 8:26-36. Read Isaiah 53:7-8 also. Answer the following questions.
- a** In Acts 8:27-28, who was reading in the book of Isaiah?
-
-
- b** In Acts 8:34, what did the Ethiopian want to know?
-
-
- c** In Acts 8:35, Philip explained this prophecy to him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Who did Philip identify as the subject of the prophecy?
-
-



But what of prophecies that are not interpreted for us in Scripture? There are many of them. They are the most difficult to interpret, and people have many different opinions about them. There may be several reasons for this, but we will explore only three:

(1) The prophets often saw visions which revealed future events to them. That is, they were given mental pictures of these events. They wrote down what they saw, but it is hard to explain what you have seen to another person. Think about how you would explain to a blind person what a dog looks like. You could give a true explanation, but his mental picture might turn out to be quite different from what you were seeing. So it is with prophetic visions. The book of Revelation is an example of this. The vision came to John. He wrote it down. But it is hard for us to imagine an accurate picture of the things he saw. We can get the general message: the Lord is working out an awesome program on the earth, the wicked will meet their doom, the righteous will inherit the Kingdom, Jesus will

be All in All (King of Kings and Lord of Lords). But there is much difference of opinion about the details of the book of Revelation.

(2) The sheer mass of prophetic material in Scripture would require years of specialized study to master. In addition to the last seventeen books of the Old Testament (which are prophetic books), there is prophecy in the Psalms, in Revelation, and scattered throughout most of the other books as well.

(3) The time element in prophecy is not usually clear. The sequence of events may be given, but the time of fulfillment and the time span between events are usually veiled. Some prophecies were for the near future; some were for the distant future. These two classes of prophecy were sometimes joined in a way that makes them seem the same when they are not. The following is an example of such a passage. We can be sure of its interpretation because Jesus interpreted it Himself.

When Jesus read the Scripture in the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-21), He read from Isaiah 61:1-2. When He had finished what He wanted to read, He folded up the scroll, handed it to the attendant, and sat down. His words to the people were, "This passage of Scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read" (v. 21). But Jesus had not read all of the passage. He had stopped in the middle of a sentence. The part He left out spoke of judgment, of the Lord defeating the enemies of His people. The first part was fulfilled as they listened. The last half of the last sentence has not yet been fulfilled. No human being reading Isaiah 61:2 would have been able to guess that the fulfillment of what it was prophesying would be divided by the time gap between Jesus' first and second comings! So it is wise not to be dogmatic about prophecy. There are too many things we do not know.

Application

- 6 Circle the letter before each of the correct completions. Prophecy that foretells future events is the hardest kind of prophecy to understand because
- a) it is usually an allegory.
 - b) it has more figurative language than other prophecy.
 - c) it often came to the prophet in a vision that is difficult to communicate.
 - d) there is not much prophecy in the Bible to compare with it.
 - e) the time element is usually veiled in foretelling future events.
- 7 Read 1 Peter 1:10-11. Note verse 11. Whose spirit was in the prophets, enlightening them?



This verse gives the correct perspective to prophecy. Jesus is the center of it all. In the very last chapter of the book of Revelation (22:6-10), Jesus is shown to be the person behind all prophecy. Therefore, all prophecy must be seen as the Spirit of Jesus giving us (His children) “hints” and “clues” along the way, helping us understand that we are in an on-going program that will have a conclusion and a glorious future beyond this life. In spite of the difficulties surrounding interpretation of prophecy, it remains a source of encouragement and faith to the believer. You are in the forward-moving program of Jesus Christ. All prophecy must be understood in that light.

TYPES AND SYMBOLS

- Objective 4. *Explain the use of types and symbols in the Bible.*
- Objective 5. *State three characteristic features of types.*

Definition

In the Bible a type is a person or thing in the Old Testament which is believed to foreshadow another person or thing in the New Testament. A symbol is something that simply stands

for something else and pictures it in some way, often without the consideration of time found in a type. But a symbol is sometimes connected with time, and a type is sometimes called a symbol.

Types are really God's "object lessons." He introduced them in the Old Testament as a form of prophecy of things that would be realized in actuality in the New Testament. Most of the Old Testament types are seen in the tabernacle and wilderness wanderings of the children of Israel. Some of the main types of the Old Testament are explained in the book of Hebrews. In Chapters 9 and 10 the writer of Hebrews explains many of the arrangements in the tabernacle and then says, "The Holy Spirit clearly teaches from all these arrangements that the way into the Most Holy Place has not yet been opened as long as the outer Tent still stands. This is a symbol which points to the present time" (Hebrews 9:8-9). He then continues to show that Christ is the *perfect sacrifice* of which the animal sacrifices were a type.

Features of Types

There are three features of a biblical type that are characteristic: (1) *It must really resemble the thing it foreshadows*. For example, the animal sacrifice foreshadowed the shedding of the blood of the Lord Jesus. That was a "type" of the atoning death of Jesus Christ. (2) *The type must be indicated in Scripture either directly or indirectly*. Hebrews 3:7-4:11 is an example of a direct explanation of a type. The *rest* promised the people of God under Moses and Joshua was a type of the rest we are promised in Christ. In fact there can be found a whole series of types of *rest*. Disobedient Israelites could not enter the land of *rest* (3: 10-11), just as a person cannot enter into God's rest if his heart is evil and unbelieving. In Hebrews Chapters 8 and 9 there are examples of types that are *indirectly* indicated. The tabernacle of the Old Testament is shown to have significance but the writer of Hebrews does not spell out every possible relationship. Because of what he says, we believe there are some types to be seen in the furnishings

and arrangements of the tabernacle. (3) *Types cannot be forced into correspondence in every detail with what they foreshadow.* For example, a number of Old Testament men are designated as types of Christ. Moses is one of them, but neither he nor anyone else was like Christ in every way.

Application

- 8** Read Hebrews 3:1-6. Answer the following questions.
- a** What quality did Moses have that made him a type of Christ (3:2)?
.....
- b** Explain two things in Hebrews 3:3-6 which show that Moses was not like Christ in every way.
.....
- 9** Complete each of the following sentences.
- a** A person or thing in the Old Testament which foreshadows another in the New Testament is usually called a
.....
- b** Something that often stands for something else without consideration of time is called a
.....
- c** were really a form of prophecy, used by God as “object lessons” to teach about coming events in His program.
- 10** List briefly in your notebook three characteristic features of *types*.
-



Uses of Types

God has used a wide variety of subjects as “object lessons” or *types*. If you study this subject further, you will find *people* used as types. Places, such as the *Promised Land*, are sometimes used as types. Many *events* from creation to feasts and celebrations of ancient Israel were used as types.

Duties were used as types. These included high priestly duties typifying Jesus Christ the Great High Priest and the Levites' manner of carrying the ark of the covenant with such care, for to touch it with the hands meant death. This taught respect for God's holiness (2 Samuel 6:6-7). *Material objects* such as the tabernacle and its furnishings were types.

The books that have been chosen for this course are short books which you can study and learn principles to apply to any book in the Bible. As you gain skill in Bible study, you will probably be interested in applying methods you have learned to longer books. Old Testament books which are rich in types and symbolism are the books of Moses: Genesis through Deuteronomy.

The Passover Meal is designated as a *type* with true significance by the Lord Himself (Luke 22:14-16). Because of this designation we can expect to find several interesting types in the event of the Passover.

Application

11 Read the following Scriptures to find the meaning of a type in the Passover.

a Exodus 12:15. what material substance is commanded to be removed from the house and the food?

.....

b Matthew 16:5-12. What does the material substance (above) typify in this passage?

.....

c Who is using a material substance as a type in Matthew 16:5-12?

.....

12 Read the following Scriptures to find the meaning of another type in the Passover.

- a** Exodus 12:22. what material substance is commanded to be placed on the posts and beam of the door?
.....
- b** Hebrews 11:28. What caused Moses to order that the material substance (above) be placed on the doors?
.....
- c** Hebrews 9:19-22. Compare this passage with Exodus 12:22. The sprinkled blood of the Passover seems to have been a type of what ceremony in the near future for the Israelites?
.....
- d** Compare Hebrews 9:12 with Exodus 12:22 and Hebrews 9:19-22. Both of these Old Testament uses of blood are types of what?
.....

Symbols

A symbol was defined for you at the beginning of this section as something that stands for something else and pictures it in some way. It is often different from a type in that it is not concerned with foreshadowing the thing it represents. It simply *stands for* it. You need to be careful both with symbols and types that the interpretation of them comes from Scripture itself. The danger is to let your imagination force comparisons that are not correct.

Symbols in Scripture sometimes have more than one meaning. For example, Jesus is called “The Lion from Judah’s tribe” (Revelation 5:5), but the symbol of a lion who goes about seeking to devour is used of the Devil (1 Peter 5:8). The aspect of the lion as a picture of the Lord Jesus is the strong, kingly nature of the animal. Jesus is pictured as the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world. The lamb is also a picture of

a new Christian. A fig tree and salt are symbols of the people of God. The harvest, a wedding, and wine were symbols of the end of the age. Symbols can be found in the New Testament as well as the Old.

Application

13 Read Matthew 26:26-29. The Lord's Supper uses symbolism familiar to every believer.

a What is the bread a symbol of?

b What is the cup a symbol of?

14 Read Matthew 9:35-38. Write in your notebook each symbol in this passage and what it stands for. (List them in the order that they are mentioned.)



POETRY

Objective 6. *Describe three kinds of parallelism in Hebrew poetry and identify examples in Scripture.*

Where Found

Poetry is scattered throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Exodus 15 gives us the beautiful songs of Moses and Miriam; Luke 1 gives us Mary's song of praise and Zechariah's prophecy which are in poetic form. As you study the Bible you will find a great deal of Hebrew poetry. In the book of Psalms, of course, you have the hymn book of Israel: lyric poetry meant to be sung.

Features of Hebrew Poetry

Hebrew poetry does not rhyme. The length of its lines is not important. The Hebrew poem is built around a *thought pattern*. The writer has great liberty in the structure of each line.

Hebrew poetry gets much of its style from parallelism. *Parallelism* gets its meaning from "parallel." In the sense used here, it refers to the relationship between every two lines or

verses in Hebrew poetry. There are three kinds of parallelism used in Hebrew poetry. I am going to give you the name and explanation of each kind. You are not expected to remember the technical names, but it would be well to note the kinds of parallelism used. When you come to them in Scripture you will, then, be aware that what is being said is not accidental but planned as part of the structure of the poem. The three kinds of parallelism are: synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic.

Synonymous parallelism means that the second line of the poem REPEATS the TRUTH of the first line, in similar words. You will find an example of this in Psalm 24:1.

The world and all that is in it belong to the Lord;

The earth and all who live on it are his.

Antithetic parallelism means CONTRAST. The second line is contrasted with the first. Psalm 1:6 is an example.

The righteous are guided and protected by the Lord,

But the evil are on the way to their doom.

Synthetic parallelism BUILDS. The second line adds something to the first. This can be seen in Psalm 19:7.

The law of the Lord is perfect;

It gives new strength.

Application

15 Match the kind of parallelism (right) with the description of it (left).

- | | | |
|--------------|--|--|
| ... a | Builds by adding in second line new truth to first line. | 1) Antithetic
2) Synonymous
3) Synthetic |
| ... b | Contrasts thought in second line with thought in first line. | |
| ... c | Repeats in second line the truth in first line. | |

16 See if you can recognize the kinds of parallelism in these verses in the Psalms by matching one of the words (right) with each verse (left).

... **a** Psalm 19:1

1) Builds

... **b** Psalm 19:6

2) Contrasts

... **c** Psalm 30:5

3) Repeats

17 Hebrew poetry is featured by

a) a pattern of rhyme.

b) lines of even length.

c) a pattern of thought.



In Hebrew poetry feelings, thoughts, and emotions are uppermost. It is usually written in the first person “I” and deals with personal experience. The Hebrew author coupled concrete facts and real experiences with figurative language that would bring vivid pictures to the reader’s mind.

self-test

1 Match each question on biblical parables (left) with the oneword answer to it (right).

- | | | |
|--------------|--|--------------|
| ... a | What kind of illustration does a parable always use? | 1) One |
| | | 2) Spiritual |
| ... b | How many major truths are found in each parable? | 3) Earthly |
| | | 4) Three |
| ... c | What kind of lesson is a parable intended to teach? | |

2 Declarations made by the prophets included

- a)** nothing but prediction of future events.
- b)** truth concerning future events and present needs.
- c)** truth concerning present needs only.
- d)** prediction of exact dates of many future events.

3 Which one of these statements is NOT true?

- a** A type is a person or thing in the Old Testament that foreshadows another person or thing in the New Testament.
- b** A type is always the same as a symbol.
- c** Often a symbol does not “foreshadow” anything but just “stands for” something else.
- d** Types were used by God as “object lessons” to illustrate truth about Jesus Christ and redemption through His blood.

4 Circle the letter before each TRUE statement.

- a** Hebrew poetry rhymes.
- b** Hebrew poetry has no set length to its lines.
- c** Hebrew poetry is structured around a thought pattern.
- d** Hebrew poets spoke especially to the feelings and emotions.

Before you continue your study with Lesson 5, be sure to complete your unit student report for Unit 1 and return the answer sheet to your GU instructor.

answers to the study questions

- 1** **a** To the disciples of Jesus.
 b That they look but do not see, and they listen but do not hear or understand.
- 10** Resemblance to what they foreshadow, indication in Scripture either directly or indirectly, and lack of correspondence in every detail with what they foreshadow.
- 2** **a** 2) an earthly
 b 5) a spiritual lesson
 c 1) truth
 d 4) analogy
- 11** **a** Yeast (leaven)
 b Teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees (which is understood to be false teaching).
 c Jesus
- 3** **a** The person who has a hundred sheep represents Christ.
 b Celebration over the lost sheep that was found represents joy in heaven over those who are added to the Kingdom.
- 12** **a** Blood
 b Faith
 c The sprinkling of blood on the covenant tent and the things used in worship.
 d The sacrifice and blood of Jesus who took His own blood into the Most Holy Place.
- 4** Grumbling of the Pharisees and Teachers of the Law about Jesus' association with outcasts. (Wording may vary.)
- 13** **a** The Lord's body.
 b The Lord's blood.
- 5** **a** An Ethiopian eunuch who was an important official.
 b If Isaiah was talking about himself or someone else.
 c Jesus.

- 14 a** Sheep without a shepherd: worried, helpless, people.
b Shepherd: leader.
c Harvest: people who need the gospel.
d Workers: people to proclaim the gospel.
e Owner of the harvest: God.
f Gather in harvest: work of bringing people to Jesus.
- 6 b)** it has more figurative language than other prophecy.
c) it often came to the prophet in a vision that is difficult to communicate.
e) the time element is usually veiled in foretelling future events.
- 15 a** 3) Synthetic
b 1) Antithetic
c 2) Synonymous
- 7** Christ's Spirit
- 16 a** 3) Repeats
b 1) Builds
c 2) Contrasts
- 8 a** Faithfulness to God.
b Moses is worthy of less honor than Christ, and he was only a servant while Christ is the Son.
- 17 c)** a pattern of thought.
- 9 a** type.
b symbol.
c Types.



UNIT TWO:

Study By Book— Habbakkuk

Lessons

- 5 Composition—Knowing the Parts
- 6 Synthesis—Putting the Parts Together
- 7 Application—Studying by the Book Method

LESSON 5 Composition— Knowing the Parts

The three lessons of this unit will deal with aspects of the *synthetic* or *whole book method* of Bible study. Habakkuk is the book to be examined. The word *synthetic* need not alarm you! It comes from two small Greek words that mean “together” and “to put.” Thus synthetic means “to put together.”

You will find some other unusual words in this lesson and in the next one. Don’t be discouraged if you can’t remember them. *The ideas behind them will be most important.* If you remember a few of the words too, so much the better. These lessons will be foundational to all your future Bible study, so be sure you understand each point before you go on to the next one.

lesson outline

Whole Book Method Defined

Principles of Composition

Groups of Literary Devices

Comparison and Contrast

Repetition, Interchange, Continuity, Continuation

Climax and Cruciality

Particularization and Generalization

Causation and Substantiation

Miscellaneous Literary Devices

Instrumentation

Explanation

Preparation

Summarization

Interrogation

Harmony

Principality

Radiation

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

1. Describe the synthetic or whole book method of study.
2. Name the main principles of composition and recognize them in Scripture.
3. State why communication is the most important task of composition.
4. Describe what comparison stresses and what contrast stresses.
5. Distinguish among the similar literary devices of repetition, interchange, continuity, and continuation.
6. Describe the relationship of climax to a story and of cruciality to a teaching passage.
7. Distinguish between the movements of thought in particularization and generalization.

8. Distinguish between the orders of procedure in causation and substantiation.
9. Define each of the literary devices in this section of the lesson.

learning activities

1. Read the opening section, outline, and objectives.
2. Learn the meanings of key words that are new to you.
3. Study the lesson development, responding in writing to each exercise as you come to it.
4. Have your notebook nearby as you move through the lessons. There will be items to write in your notebook in addition to personal notations you may wish to make.
5. Begin to do some personal reading in the book of Habakkuk. When you begin your study in Lesson 7, it will be necessary to read that book through in one sitting. If you are not in the habit of reading the Bible in this way, it would be helpful for you to begin reading shorter portions to become familiar with the words and style of writing.
6. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson. Check your answers carefully. Review those items answered incorrectly.

key words

analyze	clue	principle
archaeologist	composition	
association	literary device	

lesson development

WHOLE BOOK METHOD DEFINED

Objective 1. *Describe the synthetic or whole book method of study.*

When an archaeologist goes to an area to dig for remains of ancient civilizations, he works from a broad, general survey of

the area down to the smallest particulars where the very dust often is sifted for articles of interest. He goes into the plot of ground and makes a survey of the land. He then marks it off into sections. He and his team of workers never begin a “dig” without this careful survey first; then, they really dig for details. Every find is eventually examined thoroughly, photographed, and registered. But the archaeologist does not get to the fine details until he has measured and surveyed the entire hill or field where he plans to work.

The synthetic method of Bible study corresponds to the broad general survey first made by the archaeologist. The student of the Bible will be able to find the treasure of richer meaning in the details of Scripture when he first sees the book or major passage he is to study as a unified whole!

Remember that *synthetic* means “to put together.” The synthetic method (or whole book method) gives an overall picture of the book, a “bird’s-eye” view. This method can be used with a part of a book if the part is a unit (such as a Psalm or the Sermon on the Mount) that can stand alone.

The first step in the synthetic method is *whole book reading*. A short book has been chosen for this study so that you can read it through at one sitting. When you arrive at the point of applying the method, you will be looking for specific information as you reread the book. When you have gathered the information in some sort of written form, you will make a summary outline. You may wish to try a simple chart. Whatever you do to summarize, you will have a good grasp of the overall content and message of the book. Then, like the archaeologist and his treasures, you can examine every small section of the book you study. You will find that the treasure of God’s Holy Word cannot be exhausted! As long as you live, you can come to passages again and again and find fresh inspiration every time.

Application

1 Circle the letter before each of these terms that could apply to the synthetic method.

- a)** Whole book method
- b)** Overall picture
- c)** Study of particular detail
- d)** Bird's-eye view
- e)** Put together
- f)** Dig for details

2 Your plan of action when you apply the synthetic method will be to read

- a)** the whole book, write the chapter headings, and single out the best verse.
- b)** certain portions, analyze each detail, and chart your findings.
- c)** the book through at one sitting, look for specific information, and summarize it.



PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSITION

Objective 2. *Name the main principles of composition and recognize them in Scripture.*

Objective 3. *State why communication is the most important task of composition.*

A composition puts several parts together to make one thing out of them, to make a whole. A composition may be a painting, a musical work, poetry, or written language. Whatever the composition, it will express unity. It will have a beginning, middle, and end. If it is a piece of art, it will have several parts that all merge to form a unit.

A composition of words must communicate thoughts. God gave man language. With language comes the order, arrangement, and principles that make communication possible. Each language has order, though it may differ from other languages.

People usually do not consider that Bible authors had a plan in mind when they sat down to write what we know to be Scripture. Because we give so much attention to the inspiration given to these men by the Holy Spirit, we neglect to understand that the Holy Spirit used the writers' own abilities. *Scriptures are Holy Spirit-inspired in content and message, and the Holy Spirit used the writers, their language, their vocabulary, and the forms of literature of their day.* This had to be since the Holy Spirit was communicating truth. You communicate with people by using the language forms they know!

I am taking time to prepare you for learning the principles of composition because they are important. I am sure you will recognize many of the ideas that these principles represent.

Consider Paul. He knew he was writing letters. He used the normal form for letters in his day. The greetings in his letters are very much like greetings of letters archaeologists find from that period. David knew he was writing poetry. We have discussed some aspects of Hebrew poetry, and will discuss more in lesson 6. Moses wrote God's Law with the full intent that it would become Scripture that would be dear to the people as a blessing and a warning. Consider Deuteronomy 31:24-26:

Moses wrote God's Law in a book, taking care not to leave out anything. When he finished, he said to the levitical priests who were in charge of the Lord's Covenant Box, "Take this book of God's Law and place it beside the Covenant Box of the Lord your God, so that it will remain there as a witness against his people."

All the writers of both the Old Testament and the New Testament wrote with full consciousness of writing something that would *communicate*.

Now when you write something, you try to make yourself clear. There are simple *principles of arrangement* which are good to know because they make the whole more understandable. You use them yourself, but you may not have learned their names or realized that they were principles of

composition! You may *compare* something to something else. You may use an *illustration*. You may *repeat* ideas if you really want the person who reads to get the point you are making. You may *warn*. You may *say things another way* to help someone understand. You will use all these principles of writing if you really want to convince someone of the importance of your words.

Well, Bible writers did the same thing. They warned, illustrated, repeated, made comparisons, showed relationships, and reemphasized. If you can see some of these principles as *clues* to what the Bible writer was trying to communicate, you can get in back of the principles and begin to see his motivation. The eyes of your understanding begin to open as you observe the Holy Spirit’s powerful use of these principles.

Application

3 Name four principles of composition mentioned above.

.....

GROUPS OF LITERARY DEVICES

Comparison and Contrast

Objective 4. *Describe what comparison stresses and what contrast stresses.*

Comparison involves the association of two or more things which are alike or similar in some way. Sometimes the words “as,” “even as,” or “like” will give you a clue that two or more similar things are being compared. When you see this, you know that *similarity* is being stressed by the author. When you become aware that a comparison of two or more similar things is being made, you say to yourself, “This is a device of composition— comparison!” You may find comparison used for people, places, things, or ideas.

Comparison is the first of twenty devices of composition you will learn to recognize in this lesson. Each device will be explained and illustrated with a numbered example from Scripture. You are to write answers for these examples in your own notebook. At the end of this section on *Groups of Literary Devices*, there will be a matching exercise based on the definitions for each of the 12 devices in this section. Then there will be a similar matching exercise based on the remaining eight devices under the section on *Miscellaneous Literary Devices*.

Application

4 EXAMPLE: 1 Samuel 13:5. What is the comparison made in this verse? (Be sure to look for the key word “as.”)

Contrast involves differences between things. Sometimes things contrasted have only small differences, but at other times they are totally different. Contrast may be signaled by words such as “but,” “or,” “else,” and “however.” The essence of contrast is not in the word used to signal it, but in the fact that unlike qualities are being stressed. So, you look for contrast!

Application

5 EXAMPLE: Psalm 1. The whole structure of this psalm is based on contrast. The same two classes of people are contrasted in verses 1 and 2, 3 and 4, and 6. What are these classes? What words do you see in verses 2, 4, and 6 that signal contrast?

Repetition, Interchange, Continuity, Continuation

Objective 5. *Distinguish among the similar literary devices of repetition, interchange, continuity, and continuation.*

Repetition is reuse of identical words, phrases, or sentences for emphasis. For example, five times in the second chapter

of Habakkuk, the warning “You are doomed!” rings out. In the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, we find over and over these words: “How terrible for you, teachers of the Law and Pharisees! You hypocrites!” That’s forceful *repetition*. It brings unity of thought to the passage.

Application

6 EXAMPLE: Isaiah 9:12, 17, 21; 10:4. What repetition do you find in these verses?



In *interchange* you will see a special kind of repetition in which an alternating pattern repeats itself. There is a beautiful example of this in Luke chapters 1 and 2, where you will find *interchange* or *alternation* between the topics of John the Baptist and Jesus: the announcement of John’s soon birth and the announcement of Jesus’ soon birth, the birth of John and the birth of Jesus. The use of the device of interchange strengthens contrast or comparison. It is a very good literary device when used effectively, as Luke has used it.

Application

7 EXAMPLE: 1 John 2:12-14. Point out the alternating pattern and its repetition in this passage.



Continuity is apparent in passages where there is repeated use of terms that are “more or less” alike. Often is it seen in the repeated expression of an idea in similar terms. There may be movement toward a point in the passage. For example, in Amos 1:6–2:6 there is a repeated sentence: “The Lord says, The people of . . . have sinned again and again, and for this I will certainly punish them!” The same sentence is repeated for Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Judah, and finally Israel. The sins of each group are somewhat different, but the pattern is the same. The movement is that the condemnation gets closer and closer to Israel, the people God is intensely concerned

about. So *continuity* is reuse of similar words or phrases to express the same idea.

Application

8 EXAMPLE: Hebrews 4:1-11. What is the theme, restated in different ways, that brings continuity to this passage?

Now, *continuation* involves the extended treatment of a particular theme. You develop your theme after introducing it. The essence of continuation is progress through extension. You have studied *parallelism* in connection with Hebrew poetry. Continuation is closely related to “synthetic” parallelism where a thought in one line is built upon or extended in the second line. When you are studying a passage of Scripture, get in the habit of asking yourself, “What is being done here?” When you see that the author is taking an idea and moving it along, extending and developing it, he is using the principle of *continuation*. You will find this especially in narrative or story passages. The entire book of Jonah displays the device of continuation.

Application

9 EXAMPLE: Jonah 1:1-6. Briefly summarize the progression of separate actions of Jonah in verse 3.

Climax and Cruciality

Objective 6. *Describe the relationship of climax to a story and of cruciality to a teaching passage.*

Climax involves reaching the critical point in a narrative (story): the highest point of interest. The author builds from lesser to greater and then to the greatest point of interest and importance. Then, there is a little period toward the end where things are tied together and the tension is released and you see how everything comes out. But the climax is that critical point.

Exodus is arranged with a climax. Its highest point is in 40:34-35. After all the narrative of leaving Egypt, the giving of the Law, the instructions, the details of the tabernacle, finally the cloud and the dazzling light of the Lord's presence covers and fills the Tent. That is the climax of the book!

Application

10 EXAMPLE: Mark 1:14-45. Compose a *title* for each of the following parts of this passage: verse 14; verses 16-20; verse 26; verse 28; verses 38-39; verses 41-42; verse 45. Your titles should give you a picture of how this passage builds toward a climax. (Your titles may be worded differently from those in the answers, but they should have similar thought.)

Cruciality is related to climax, but it is found in teaching passages more than in narrative or story-like passages. In a teaching passage, it would be the pivotal point in the discussion, the “hub” around which the matter under discussion turns. In a book like Galatians there are a number of crucial points because there are “sub-discussions” within the main discussion. The crucial, pivotal point for the whole book is Galatians 5:1, “Freedom is what we have—Christ has set us free!” The first four chapters lead up to this crucial, pivotal point.

However, there are other crucial points throughout Paul's teaching in Galatians. One of these is found in 3:16. Paul has been showing that the Law of Israel, not sufficient for salvation, is indeed related to the death of Christ (3:13). Then he proceeds to show how the promises God made to Abraham really were directed toward Jesus Christ in whom all is fulfilled. The crucial, pivotal verse upon which all this hinges, and without which it would fall apart, is 3:16. The promises were made by God to Abraham's descendant (singular—not plural).

So, cruciality is the pivotal point or *hub* in teaching passages. It can be found in narrative or story passages also, not as *the* climax or high point but as *a* crucial point. In the book of

Ruth, for example, there is cruciality where Boaz sits at the gate and negotiates with the other kinsmen. If things don't go right at that point, the whole thing will fall apart. That is a crucial point.

Application

11 EXAMPLE: John 11:45-54. In which verse of this passage are you shown that the course of the ministry of the Lord shifted drastically because He was no longer doing all that He had done? (This verse is a pivotal point and demonstrates cruciality.)

Particularization and Generalization

Objective 7. *Distinguish between the movements of thought in particularization and generalization.*

Particularization is the movement of thought from the general to the particular, much like your synthetic study will move from a survey of the whole book to study of details. In particularization the movement is from the whole inward to its parts, from the general to the specific. In other words, you may have a generalization such as “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” But “John Doe has sinned,” or “I have sinned,” brings it down to the specific. That is particularization, sometimes called *deductive* thought.

Application

12 EXAMPLE: Matthew 6:1-18. In what ways does Jesus particularize His theme, the *performing of religious duties*?

Generalization is the *inductive* thought movement, going from the specific example to the general principle. It is the reverse of particularization.

Application

13 EXAMPLE: James 2. James starts chapter 2 with specific examples of right Christian conduct: treating people with love regardless of their clothing, honoring the poor, loving your neighbor, obeying the Commandments. He moves from those specifics to a general principle in the last verse of the chapter. Write that generalized principle in your notebook.

Causation and Substantiation

Objective 8. *Distinguish between the orders of procedure in causation and substantiation.*

The principle of *causation* proceeds from cause to effect; it deals first with the reason for something, then with the result of that thing. This is seen in Habakkuk 2:5. It says that “greedy men are proud and restless . . . that is why they conquer nation after nation for themselves.” Cause: greed! Effect: war!

Application

14 EXAMPLE: Habakkuk 2:17. In the first part of this verse, what two *cause-to-effect* patterns can you find?

Substantiation is the reverse of causation. Substantiation of cause moves from effect to cause. Something happens. The reason for it is explained later. “Because” is a key word in the use of this literary device. I say, “My finger hurts.” Someone asks, “Why?” I say, “Because it was burned.” That is a simple illustration but it shows the progression.

Application

15 EXAMPLE: Habakkuk 2:17. What example of substantiation do you see in the last part of this verse?

16 Review the first twelve devices of composition that you have learned. Match each device (right) with the phrase (left) that defines it or describes its action.

- | | | |
|--------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| ... a | Involves likeness between things | 1) Climax |
| ... b | Involves difference between things | 2) Interchange |
| ... c | Identical terms repeated | 3) Comparison |
| ... d | Repetition of similar terms | 4) Particularization |
| ... e | Extended treatment | 5) Continuity |
| ... f | Effect to cause | 6) Causation |
| ... g | Cause to effect | 7) Substantiation |
| ... h | High point in the story | 8) Contrast |
| ... i | Pivot-point in the discourse | 9) Generalization |
| ... j | An alternating pattern | 10) Continuation |
| ... k | General to specific movement | 11) Cruciality |
| ... l | Specific to general movement | 12) Repetition |
-



MISCELLANEOUS LITERARY DEVICES

Objective 9. *Define each of the literary devices in this section of the lesson.*

Instrumentation

Instrumentation involves the means, tools, or instruments that are used to make something happen. Key words are “through” or “by” as in the last sentence of James 3:5, “Just think how large a forest can be set on fire by a tiny flame!” In this verse, *by* indicates that instrumentation will follow.

Application

17 EXAMPLE: James 2:21. What was the instrumentation by which Abraham was put right with God?

Explanation

Explanation clarifies, analyzes, or explains. For example, in Luke 2:4 we are told about Joseph going from Nazareth to Galilee. His going is “because he was a descendant of David.”

Application

18 EXAMPLE: Matthew 13:58. This verse *explains* why Jesus did not perform many miracles in His hometown. Relate that explanation in your own words.

Preparation

Preparation is introductory material that is preliminary to the rest of the section or book. For example in Luke 1:1-4, Luke gives you that little preliminary introduction telling what his purposes are and what his methodology is. It’s not a part of the gospel narrative itself; it’s preliminary.

Application

19 EXAMPLE: Mark 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:1; and 1 John 1:1. Which one of these books starts with a *preparation* that best fits our description of the term?



Summarization

Summarization is condensing information into a short form. You summarize what you have already written or said. You are terse. You are concise. You single out the essence of the thing. For example, Genesis 45 is a summary chapter of the whole story of Joseph. It states in short form what has led up to this point.

Application

20 EXAMPLE: Joshua 24:1-14. State briefly in your own words what Joshua has summarized in this passage before he tells the people in verse 14 to “honor the Lord and serve Him.”



Interrogation

Interrogation is asking questions. Sometimes Bible writers ask a question and follow it with the answer. Paul does this often. An example is found in Romans 3:31. “Does this mean that by this faith we do away with the law?” He immediately follows it with the answer: “No, not at all; instead, we uphold the Law.” Other questions are rhetorical, meaning that the answer is so obvious that the question doesn’t need to be answered. Galatians 3:5 is an example: “Does God give you the Spirit and work miracles among you because you do what the Law requires or because you hear the gospel and believe it?”

Application

21 EXAMPLE: Malachi chapter 1. List the verses in this chapter which have instances of interrogation.



Harmony

Harmony involves *unity by agreement* or consistency. When a point is made, the other points farther along in the passage *must* agree with it! It is called a “law” of harmony, but actually it is “truth”; it makes sure that all parts tell the truth. The whole of Scripture illustrates harmony. And harmony is clearly seen in passages where there is a problem and an answering solution: disease and remedy, promise and fulfillment.

Application

22 EXAMPLE: Romans 3:21-31. This passage is part of an example of *harmony*. It is the answer or solution to the problem Paul describes in Romans 1:18-3:20. What is being described in 1:18-3:20?



Principality

Principality is not just a main idea standing alone, but it involves a main idea supported by subordinate ones. It is dominance and subordination. An outline is a good illustration of principality. A main heading stands apart from its sub-headings, but they contribute details. In Scripture, this literary device is illustrated in the parables of Jesus. You have already learned that each parable teaches one main or dominant lesson. The lesson that the parable intends to teach is set in a background of lesser details. All of it helps to make up the parable, but the one dominant lesson stands out. *In interpreting Scripture, it is important to train your eye and your mind to focus on what is a central or essential issue, and to be able to identify the things that are secondary or subordinate.*

Application

23 EXAMPLE: Matthew 13:47-50. What is the main point in the lesson that this parable teaches? What are at least two subordinate points?

Radiation

In *radiation* everything either moves or points toward a certain thing or away from it. Branches of a tree and spokes of a wheel are visual examples of radiation. In Scripture, Psalm 119 demonstrates this device in a beautiful way. Its 176 verses are divided into 22 stanzas. They all radiate from the same point or theme: the greatness and excellence of God's Law.

Application

24 EXAMPLE: John 15:5. In what way does this verse use the device of radiation?

25 Review the last eight devices of composition, starting with *instrumentation*. Match each device (right) with the phrase (left) that defines it or describes its action.

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| ... a Means by which something happens | 1) Explanation |
| ... b Clarifies and analyzes | 2) Interrogation |
| ... c Introductory material | 3) Preparation |
| ... d Condenses information | 4) Radiation |
| ... e Asking questions | 5) Harmony |
| ... f Points that agree | 6) Instrumentation |
| ... g Main idea | 7) Summarization |
| ... h Toward or from a point | 8) Principality |
-

A further word about these literary devices: you will find that they overlap. For instance, you may find the same question asked several times. This would be an overlapping of *interrogation* and *repetition*. Perhaps one or the other of them would be dominant. Begin to notice these devices as you read. Finally, individual aspects of composition are sometimes considered as principles of composition and at other times as literary devices, as in the cases of *comparison* and *repetition* in this lesson.

self-test

- 1** Which of these terms best applies to the synthetic method of study?
 - a)** Bird's-eye view
 - b)** Paragraph study
 - c)** Particularization
- 2** The first step in the synthetic method procedure is to
 - a)** read several portions of the book.
 - b)** make a chart.
 - c)** read the whole book through.
- 3** Illustration, repetition, and warning are main principles of composition that are clues to what the Bible writer was trying to
 - a)** say another way.
 - b)** compare.
 - c)** hide.
 - d)** communicate.
- 4** Which device of composition associates things that are alike in some way?
 - a)** Cruciality
 - b)** Comparison
 - c)** Causation
- 5** Which device of composition has to do with introductory material?
 - a)** Continuity
 - b)** Preparation
 - c)** Summarization
- 6** Which literary device is being used in the Scripture, "I am the vine, and you are the branches"?
 - a)** Substantiation
 - b)** Interrogation
 - c)** Radiation

7 What literary device is used when movement of thought is from general to specific, from the whole to its parts?

- a)** Particularization
- b)** Instrumentation
- c)** Harmony
- d)** Generalization

8 Which device of composition presents things that are unlike, as in “The righteous shall inherit the earth, but the ungodly shall perish.”?

- a)** Principality
- b)** Continuation
- c)** Contrast

9 Which device of composition was John using when he wrote to children, fathers, and young men (in that order) and then immediately repeated this same pattern?

- a)** Explanation
- b)** Generalization
- c)** Interchange
- d)** Climax
- e)** Repetition

answers to the study questions

- 13** As the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without actions is dead.
- 1** **a)** Whole book method
 b) Overall picture
 d) Bird's-eye view
 e) Put together
- 14** You cut down forests, now you will be cut down. You killed animals, now animals will terrify you.
- 2** **c)** the book through at one sitting, look for specific information, and summarize it.
- 15** The people will be cut down and terrified *because* of the murders and violence they have committed.
- 3** **c)** Your answer may include any four of the following: comparison, illustration, repetition, warning, showing relationships, saying things another way.
- 16** **a** 3) Comparison
 b 8) Contrast
 c 12) Repetition
 d 5) Continuity
 e 10) Continuation
 f 7) Substantiation
 g 6) Causation
 h 1) Climax
 i 11) Cruciality
 j 2) Interchange
 k 4) Particularization
 l 9) Generalization
- 4** The comparison being made is between the number of soldiers and the number of grains of sand on the seashore.

- 17** His action of offering his son Isaac on the altar.
- 5** Good people are being contrasted with bad people in each case. *Instead* and *but* signal contrast.
- 18** Jesus did not perform many miracles in His hometown because the people there did not have faith.
- 6** The Lord's "hand . . . stretched out to punish."
- 19** 1 Corinthians.
- 7** The alternating pattern from children to fathers, to young men in verses 12-13 is repeated in verse 14.
- 20** Joshua has summarized what God has done for His people since the time of Abraham.
- 8** The theme of rest.
- 21** Malachi 1:2, 6, 7, 8, 13.
- 9** Jonah set out to get away from the Lord; he went to Joppa; he found a ship about to go to Spain; he paid his fare and went aboard that ship.
- 22** Guilt and condemnation for sin.
- 10** Verses 14 Jesus Begins to Preach
 16-20 Jesus Calls Disciples
 26 Jesus Shows Authority
 28 News of Jesus Spreads
 38-39 Jesus Preaches in Villages
 41-42 Jesus Heals Disease
 45 People Come From Everywhere to
 Jesus (climax)
- 23** *Main point:* Separation of good people from bad people at the end of the age. *Subordinate points:* Information concerning the fishermen, the net, the fish, and the buckets. (Although these details illustrate what is taught in the parable, they are not the essential teaching of it.)
- 11** Verse 54 shows that the Lord's ministry shifted drastically because He no longer traveled openly in Judea.

- 24** By picturing Christ as the vine or main stem to which believers (pictured as branches of that vine) are fastened, this verse uses the literary device of radiation to teach that all believers must remain attached to Christ in order to bear spiritual fruit.
- 12** By application of it to the specific duties of charity, prayer, and fasting.
- 25 a** 6) Instrumentation
b 1) Explanation
c 3) Preparation
d 7) Summarization
e 2) Interrogation
f 5) Harmony
g 8) Principality
h 4) Radiation

LESSON 6 Synthesis—Putting the Parts Together

The Holy Spirit gave each Bible author a distinct purpose for writing. Your purpose for writing determines four things: (1) the *terms* of your writing (what you say with the words you use), (2) the *structure* of your material (how you arrange it), (3) what *literary form* is best (the style of writing you choose), and (4) the *atmosphere* or feeling your writing conveys.

Terms, structure, literary form, and atmosphere will be explained in detail in this lesson. These features will have to be separated to explain them clearly, but in actual practice there will be overlapping. For example, the devices of composition you learned in Lesson 5 will now be seen as “structure.”

lesson outline

Terms As Words

Structure of Literature

Literary Atmosphere

Literary Form

Progression in Literature

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

1. Define “terms” and explain their importance to the study of Scripture.
2. Define “structure” and explain its importance to the study of Scripture.
3. Define “literary atmosphere” and identify it in Scripture.
4. Identify main “literary forms” and explain how each of them is used.
5. Identify kinds of “literary progression” and state what is common to all of them.

learning activities

1. Take a little time before starting this lesson to review Lesson 5.
2. Read the opening section, outline, and objectives of this lesson.
3. Learn the meanings of key words that are new to you.
4. Study the lesson development and answer the study questions in the usual manner.
5. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson. Check your answers.

key words

category	exhaustive	vivid
chronological	keynote	
crucial	routine	

lesson development

TERMS AS WORDS

Objective 1. *Define “terms” and explain their importance to the study of Scripture.*

In literature, *terms* are simply words as they are used in a given context. All of the words in the Bible are important, but not all of them are significant for the same reason. Some words (such as “of,” “and,” “a,” etc.) are *routine* words with the obvious function of holding sentences together. Other words are important because knowing their meaning will make a difference in the correct interpretation of the Bible. This kind of word should act as a *flag* to you, signaling that it needs to be given special attention.

What words should act as flags? Well, *any word that you do not understand needs special study*. You should always study with your pencil and notebook. Any word you come to that you do not understand should be written down. Try to find out what it means from a dictionary or in some other way.

Crucial words, names of things, actions, descriptive words, these are all important to understanding the passage, so they need to be noted especially. Crucial words are not always the longest ones! As you will see shortly, sometimes important words are the short ones because they indicate a change of action or mood or a transition of thought.

Terms which express profound concepts need to be studied. For example, what kind of “change” seems to have come over Jesus in Mark 9:2? That needs to be explored further. You need to be discriminating. Not every word will need special investigation.

You need to notice also whether certain words are literal or figurative. Remember that *literal* refers to the normal, ordinary meaning of the word. *Figurative* refers to symbolic usage when a word stands for something else.

Application

1 Read Genesis 2:16 and Romans 11:24. Note the word “tree” in each passage. In which verse is the word “tree” figurative?

Even though you may not know grammar or parts of speech, you can learn to recognize key words. Christian doctrines are determined by how different kinds of words are used. *Names of persons, places, and things* are important nouns. *Actions* are important verbs. Descriptive terms that indicate “how fast,” “how large,” etc. are key words. The six faithful serving men (WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? HOW? WHY?) that you learned about in an earlier lesson can help you find the key words. Notice *commands, advice, warnings, reasons, purposes, proofs, and results*. Watch for words that express these things and write them down. They are often the key to understanding the passage.

There is a category of smaller words that is NOT routine. They are known as *connectives* because they show *relationship*. First, there are connectives that signal time; they tell when something happened. Here are some of them: *after, as, before, now, then, until, when, while*. You may think of others, but these ought to trigger your attention. For example, if you see “Then . . . but . . . now,” it should be obvious that some kind of transition has taken place and maybe you should be looking for progression. (You will learn about kinds of progression in this lesson.) Second, the locale or geographical connective is mainly the word “where” which signals place.

Application

2 Read the four Scripture references given here, then fill in the blanks for *b*, *c*, and *d* in the manner that *a* has been filled in as an example of a connective term.

	SCRIPTURE	CONNECTIVE SIGNALING	TERM
a	Mark 1:23	Time	“then”
b	Mark 1:9	Time
c	Mark 1:14	Time
d	Mark 1:28	Place

Third, you will learn to notice logical connectives: that is, those that have to do with the *reason* for what happens, the *results* of what happens, the *purpose* of what happens, *contrast* of unlike things, and *comparison* of one thing with another. Let’s take these one at a time.

Logical connectives that show the reason for what happens are *for*, *since*, and *because*. If you see the words “I say this for . . .” or “I say this since . . .” the author is giving a reason. Now relate this to the devices of composition that you have learned. Which literary device moves from effect to cause? *Substantiation*. These words are all signals of substantiation and this, then, becomes a clue to interpretation.

Logical connectives that have to do with results are *so*, *then*, *therefore*, *that is why*, and *thus*. Do you notice that these words go from cause to effect? Which literary device moves from cause to effect? *Causation*. When you see *so*, *then*, *therefore*, *that is why*, and *thus*, you will be looking for causation: one thing causing something else.

Application

3 Find and list (in the order that we have given the Scripture references) the connectives that signal *reason* in part *a* and those that signal *result* in part *b*.

a Romans 1:11, 1:26, 1:28, and 2:15.

.....

b Galatians 2:17, 1 Corinthians 8:11, 9:26.

.....

Logical connectives that have to do with purpose *are in order that, so that, and so* (or similar phrases).

Logical connectives that signal contrast are *although, but, much more, much greater, nevertheless, otherwise, yet, and still*. These lists are not exhaustive. You may find other terms as you study that serve the same purpose but are different from those listed here. These terms are suggestions to help you begin thinking along these lines.

Logical connectives that signal comparison are *also, as, as this, so as, so that, in the same way, so then, and so also*. There are many combinations of these connectives.

Application

4 Find and list (in the order that we have given the Scripture references) the connectives that signal *purpose* in part *a*, *contrast* in part *b*, and *comparison* in part *c*.

a Romans 4:16.

.....

b Romans 2:10, 5:15.

.....

c Romans 11:31, 1:27.

.....

We remind you that this study guide uses the Good News Bible (Today’s English Version). The translation of the Bible you are using will make a difference in the terms you will be able to find. Therefore, the IDEAS of *reason for*, *result of purpose*, *contrast*, and *comparison* will be more important than the exact words used to express these ideas. The terms that have been given should serve to help you know what to be looking for. There are three more categories of connectives in addition to the three you have had. So far, you have studied the “time” connectives, “place” connectives, and “logical” connectives. Now, the final three kinds of connectives signal *series of facts*, *condition*, and *emphasis*.

The connectives that signal series of facts are such terms as *and*, *first of all*, *last of all*, and *or*. The connective that signals condition is usually *if*: “If this . . . then that.” Connectives that signal emphasis are *indeed* and *only*. Sometimes a more forceful word is used: for example, *exclaims* might be used instead of the weaker *says*.

Application

5 Find and list (in the order that we have given the Scripture references) the connectives that signal *series of facts* in part *a*, *condition* in part *b*, and *emphasis* in part *c*.

- a** 1 Timothy 2:1, 1 Corinthians 15:8.
.....
- b** Romans 2:25.
.....
- c** 1 Corinthians 9:24, Romans 9:27 (two).
.....



If you will be alert to these particular *terms*, they will help you go beyond grammar and interpret the *meaning* of Scripture. These are significant terms that I, myself, always watch for when I study Scripture (or anything else) because they are clues to the organization of thought.

STRUCTURE OF LITERATURE

Objective 2. *Define “structure” and explain its importance to the study of Scripture.*

I am sure that you are coming to understand that books of the Bible are not just a disorderly collection of unrelated thoughts. You are seeing that they are structured *wholes*, with the parts fitted together in reasonable ways. The author has had to *select* and *arrange*. He has had to select the important things that need to be included, and arrange the material in the clearest way possible. John explains that in the writing of his gospel, he had to leave out much that Jesus had done (John 21:25).

You can get lost in the details of the Scripture verses, as important as they are, and never see the powerful message of the book as a whole. The individual truths, found verse by verse, are related to the whole. The whole is explained by the arrangement of the parts. They are all interrelated. *Structure* is the skeleton, framework, and underlying design that gives the book unity.

Words are the building blocks of language, the smallest units that transmit meaning. Words are joined to form phrases, or partial, incomplete units of thought. The sentence is the complete thought.

When sentences with related thoughts are joined together, they form paragraphs. (Some Bibles are divided into paragraphs; this makes studying easier.) In Bible study it is a good idea to “THINK PARAGRAPHS.” That is, look for the main idea in the paragraph and give it a brief, descriptive title. By listing the titles (main ideas) you have found for all the paragraphs in a chapter or book, you will have listed the main points for making an outline. Within the paragraphs you will find the details that will make up the subpoints for your outline. Now, you will practice finding main points in paragraphs in the following exercise.

Application

6 Read each paragraph in Romans chapter 12 then write your title for it in the blank space beside it. After composing your titles, compare them with those we have given. (Your titles may turn out to be as good or better than the ones given.)

Paragraph I. (12:1-2)
.....
Paragraph II. (12:3-8)
.....
Paragraph III. (12:9-13)
.....
Paragraph IV. (12:14-16)
.....
Paragraph V. (12:17-21)
.....



We have indicated that through *structure* parts of composition are related to one another. This relationship may be expressed through any of the literary devices that you have studied. Not all will be found in every passage. You should review these devices in Lesson 5 until they become very familiar to you. If you can begin to see how the whole is fitted together, how one passage of Scripture relates to another, you will gain new understanding of the whole. *Become structure conscious.*

Application

- 7** Circle the letter before the statement that is true.
- a)** Books of the Bible are a collection of unrelated thoughts.
 - b)** Literary devices such as contrast, radiation, etc., are not related to structure.
 - c)** The smallest units of language that transmit meaning are words.



LITERARY ATMOSPHERE

Objective 3. Define “literary atmosphere” and identify it in Scripture.

Literary atmosphere is the underlying tone or mood that is evident in the writing. What mood or moods does the author convey? The mood or atmosphere might be despair, thanksgiving, zeal, awe, urgency, joy, humility, tenderness, anger, persuasion, condemnation, questioning, concern, or encouragement. The entire range of human feelings can be found to make up the atmosphere of literary works.

Application

8 The book of James varies in its atmosphere or tone. Read the following passages and assign to each one a word that describes *atmosphere*.

- a** James 5:1
- b** James 4:10
- c** James 2:14



LITERARY FORM

Objective 4. Identify main “literary forms” and explain how each of them is used.

Literary form refers to the kind or type of writing the author uses to get his material across. All the main types of literature can be found in the Bible. If the author has needed

to express deep personal feelings of praise, sorrow, rejoicing, or repentance, he has used *poetry*. If he has needed to explain background information to people, he has used *prose*. If he has wanted to teach important eternal truths or give logical reasons for the argument he was presenting, he has used *discourse*. If he has wanted to illustrate truth for receptive people while veiling it from others, he has used *parables*. If he has wished to disclose a little about the future without giving away too many divine secrets, he has used *apocalypse*.

Discourse is a type of literature that is intended to set forth truth in a logical, reasoned way that will appeal to the intellect. Many of the epistles use this style. Jesus used it in His teaching, as did the prophets in some of their writings.

Prose-narrative is a biography or story. It can be found in Genesis, the Gospels, and wherever events and situations are described in *chronological order*. Stories appeal to the imagination and emotion. They usually include interesting details. In this kind of literature, you should not press every detail for a spiritual lesson. For example, the story of Peter's vision, in Acts 10, is valuable truth. But there are some details such as whose house Peter was in, and the time of day his vision occurred that help in understanding the story but are not important as far as doctrine is concerned.

Poetry is a form of literature found throughout the Bible. In some Bibles, all the poetry is printed in poetic form (with lines indented, and each new line beginning with an upper case letter). This makes it all as easy to identify as the Psalms.

You have learned a few things about Hebrew poetry already. You know it is deeply personal and emotional. It does not rhyme. Every two lines, or two stanzas, are related by some kind of parallelism. Either the second line repeats the thought from the first line, or it builds on the first line by adding something new, or it is in contrast with the first line.

Poetry uses a great deal of figurative language in order to say things in a more expressive way. Here are four kinds of

figurative language (or figures of speech) that are often found in Bible poetry:

1. *Simile*. A comparison of two things through use of the word *like* or *as*. “They are like trees” (Psalm 1:3).
2. *Metaphor*. A comparison of two things without use of *like* or *as*. “Ephraim is my helmet” (Psalm 108:8).
3. *Hyperbole*. Exaggeration for effect, exaggeration beyond reason. “I am like those who died long ago” (Psalm 143:3).
4. *Apostrophe*. Speaking to things that are not alive. “What happened, Sea, to make you run away?” (Psalm 114:5).

It is especially important for the Bible student to understand figurative language. In John 6:51-52, Jesus said, “I am the living bread.” The Jews interpreted His words literally and were offended. You may make similar mistakes unless you observe carefully and interpret fairly!

Application

9 Complete the following sentences using each of the words once: *discourse, poetry, prose-narrative*.

- a** Literature that appeals most strongly to the emotions is
.....
- b** ... is intended to set forth truth in a logical, reasoned way.
- c** A story about events or people is called

10 Match each figure of speech (right) with its Scripture quotation (left).

- | | | |
|--------------|--|---------------|
| ... a | “The Lord is my shepherd”
(Psalm 23:1). | 1) Simile |
| ... b | “God seizes me by my collar and
twists my clothes out of shape”
(Job 30:18). | 2) Metaphor |
| ... c | “We have escaped like a bird”
(Psalm 124:7). | 3) Hyperbole |
| ... d | “Praise him, sun and moon”
(Psalm 148:3). | 4) Apostrophe |



Parables are a distinct type of literature known as *parabolic*, or *parabolic prose*. You have already studied about them. If you need to review the section on parables in Lesson 4 in order to be sure you understand how they differ from ordinary prose, do it at this time.

Drama or *dramatic prose* is related to poetry in that it appeals to the emotions. It personalizes the story in a manner that the words of the characters in the story are usually spoken in the first person. People respond to each other in the same words they would use if they were actually living through the story. Quite often dramatic literature contains vivid descriptions that appeal to your imagination. Job is a book like this. It reads like a play. The Song of Songs is also in the style of drama. So, when you find portions of Scripture in which the people are speaking directly to one another in the first person, you will say, “this is drama,” or “dramatic prose.”

Apocalypse is the last of the literary forms. Apocalypse means “uncovering” or “revelation.” This kind of literature is perhaps the hardest to understand. You met some aspects of it when you studied about prophecy and symbolism in Lesson 4. Apocalyptic literature is made of prophecy and symbolism. It is rich in figures

of speech, symbols, types, and descriptions of visions. Revelation is the classic example of this type of writing.

Here is a simple chart which points out examples in Scripture of various literary forms you have studied in this section. There is some overlapping of these forms, but you will profit by reading these passages with the form in mind that we have listed for it.

CHART OF LITERARY FORMS	
<i>Form</i>	<i>Example</i>
Discourse	Matthew 5:17-48
Prose-narrative	Acts 16:16-38
Poetry	Jeremiah 9:21-22
Parable	Luke 14:16-24
Drama	Job 32:5-14
Apocalypse	Ezekiel 1

PROGRESSION IN LITERATURE

Objective 5. *Identify kinds of “literary progression” and state what is common to all of them.*

The idea behind *progression* is CHANGE. As you read a passage of Scripture for study, you are looking for change! What are some of the things that might change within a passage? Focus on a person’s life might move from one stage to another, or from his life to the lives of his descendants. That would be *biographical progression*. The story might move from event to event. That would be historical progression. If the story is presented in terms of when the events happened (first, second, third, etc.), you have *chronological progression*. In a teaching passage where truth is being set forth you might find *doctrinal progression*. If events are related in terms of places where they happened, it is *geographical progression*. Changing thoughts or ideas themselves may be the basis of a Scripture passage. That is called *ideological progression*. You can sometimes find a complete change of subject. This drastic change is called *subject progression*.

Progression is actually a pattern an author uses to extend a theme in a given passage of Scripture. The pattern may extend through one or more paragraphs or it may extend throughout the entire book. The progression may move toward a climax, but that isn't necessary. One help in identifying a progression, if identity is not obvious, is to compare the first and the last items in a series. If there is a relationship between them, you have progression. And of course the main means of identification is to look for some of these kinds of *changes*.

Application

11 What kind of progression is found in Genesis 12–50 where the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph are featured?

.....

12 What kind of progression is found in Exodus which centers on the events of the move of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan?

.....

13 What kind of progression do you find in the book of Romans where Paul is giving a logical argument for the case of Christianity?

.....



An understanding of *progression in literature* should help us to a better understanding of the *spiritual progression* that is necessary to spiritual growth. *Change* is the keynote of spiritual progression too: “We all . . . are changed . . . from glory to glory . . . by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:18, KJV). Let us yield to the Holy Spirit so that He may change us into the likeness of Christ.

self-test

1 List the routine words or terms from the following sentence:
 “And every day the Lord added to their group those who were
 being saved” (Acts 2:47).

.....

2 Connectives are small but important words that signal
 relationships. Which of these words signals time?

- a) If
- b) After
- c) Where
- d) Indeed

3 Which of these logical connectives signals reason for what
 happens?

- a) That is why
- b) So that
- c) Much greater
- d) Because

4 Which of these logical connectives signals contrast?

- a) But
- b) In the same way
- c) For

5 The framework or underlying design that gives a book unity
 is

- a) terms.
- b) structure.
- c) atmosphere.

6 Which of these words best describes atmosphere?

- a) Radiation
- b) Contrast
- c) Mood

7 Which of these kinds of writing teaches in a logical, reasoned way?

- a)** Discourse
- b)** Prose-narrative
- c)** Poetry

8 Which of these kinds of writing describes the book of Revelation?

- a)** Parables
- b)** Drama
- c)** Apocalypse

9 “The tongue is like a fire” (James 3:6). This is an example of:

- a)** Simile
- b)** Metaphor
- c)** Hyperbole
- d)** Apostrophe

10 Which of these words best describes progression?

- a)** Atmosphere
- b)** Change
- c)** Drama

11 What kind of progression is shown in the Genesis account of the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph?

- a)** Biographical
- b)** Historical
- c)** Ideological

answers to the study questions

- 7 c)** The smallest units of language that transmit meaning are words.
- 1** Romans 11:24
- 8 a** Despair
b Humility
c Concern
- 2 b** Afterward
c After
d Everywhere
- 9 a** poetry.
b Discourse.
c prose-narrative.
- 3 a** For, because, because since,
b Then, so, that is why.
- 10 a** 2) Metaphor
b 3) Hyperbole
c 1) Simile
d 4) Apostrophe
- 4 a** In order that.
b But, much greater.
c In the same way, in the same way.
- 11** Biographical
- 5 a** First of all, last of all.
b If.
c Only; exclaims, only.
- 12** Historical

- 6** I. “Offer Yourself”
- II. “Use Gifts With Modesty”
- III. “Live With Christian Attitudes”
- IV. “Live With Concern for Others”
- V. “Live at Peace With All”

13 Ideological

Application— LESSON 7 Studying by the Book Method

You are now ready to begin the actual application of synthetic study to Habakkuk. Once you have done a synthetic study, you can then go into as much detail in each verse as you have time for (intensive study), and you can relate and compare the book with other books in the Bible (extensive study). So, the synthetic method is not an *end* of Bible study, but a *beginning*. Our purpose is to teach you to do independent synthetic Bible study. This lesson will be a pattern to follow, and I hope you will choose another book of the Bible when it is completed and make the same application of your skills to that book.

Perhaps you should plan to do this lesson in more than one sitting. It involves repeated readings, note taking, and summarizing of material. The directions may look short, but they will take time to do. Just follow step by step and take as much time as you need to finish each step before going on to the next. Be sure to try to answer the study questions before looking up the answers we have given. There is more than one correct answer to some of them. Do not change your answers to conform to ours unless yours really need revising.

lesson outline

Steps in Observation

Step 1: Discovering the Main Theme

Step 2: Development of the Main Theme

Step 3: Terms, Atmosphere, and Literary Form

Step 4: Literary Devices and Progression

Outlining Habakkuk

Application

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

1. Follow the appropriate steps in observation for a synthetic study of Habakkuk.
2. Identify the main theme of Habakkuk by reading the entire book at one time.
3. Trace the development of the main theme of Habakkuk by reading the entire book at one time.
4. Point out terms (that need further study), atmosphere, and literary form in Habakkuk by reading the entire book at one time.
5. Use your knowledge of literary devices and literary progression to increase your understanding of the message of Habakkuk.
6. Make a preliminary outline of Habakkuk, and then develop it into an integrated outline.
7. Practice obedience to divine truth that you have discovered in order to gain a fuller understanding of God's Word.

learning activities

1. Read the opening section, outline, and objectives.
2. Learn the meanings of the key words that are new to you.

3. Follow each direction carefully as you study the lesson development and answer the study questions. There is no short cut to Bible study. The Bible has to be read to be studied.
4. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson. Check your answers.
5. Carefully review Unit 2 (Lessons 5-7), then complete the unit student report for Unit 2 and send it to your ICI instructor.

key words

arrogant
complaint

emerge
integrate

thematic
transition

lesson development

STEPS IN OBSERVATION

Objective 1. *Follow the appropriate steps in observation for a synthetic study of Habakkuk.*

The steps of the synthetic method are a repetition of the pattern: *read, observe, make notes as you go; read, observe, make notes as you go*. This continues until you have found all the information you set out to find, regardless of how many readings it takes. The whole idea is to gain familiarity with the book you are studying. Reading it through at one sitting each time you come to a reading step is the way to gain that familiarity.

Our instructions may tell you to read the book once to find certain information. If you do not find that information the first time, you may need to read it another time. The opposite is also true; you may be reading to find certain information, and at the same time see some other facts that are important to the study. You can note what you see at that time and perhaps omit one of the readings. You are going to be reading the book a number of times, anyway, so that you begin to *live* in the book. The end

result of your study should be that the book becomes a part of you—both in your Christian living and in your sharing of the Word with others.

Now if you read slowly, just plan to take more time than might otherwise be necessary. Actually, if you are a slow reader, it is a good idea to read the book *more*, not *less*. In that case, you may want to read Habakkuk through a time or two before you really start hunting for information, just to become familiar with the words and style of the book.

You are now ready to prepare a notebook page on which to write your observations as you read Habakkuk. Divide a sheet of notebook paper into four vertical columns, as you see in the drawing that follows. List the following items along the left side of the page, leaving about four lines of space between items: 1) Main Theme of Book; 2) Development (where the main theme appears); 3) Announcements Concerning Content (where the author says ahead of time what is coming next); 4) Terms; 5) Structure; 6) Atmosphere; 7) Literary Form; 8) Literary Devices; 9) Progression.

These items are the things you will be looking for as you read Habakkuk. As you find them, you will write them on this notebook page. Anything you find in chapter 1 will be placed in the chapter 1 column. Anything you find in chapter 2 will be placed in the chapter 2 column. Anything you find in chapter 3 will be placed in the chapter 3 column.

Step 1: Discovering the Main Theme

Objective 2. *Identify the main theme of Habakkuk by reading the entire book at one time.*

Prayerfully read the book of Habakkuk through at a single sitting to discover the main theme. This theme can be found as a thread running through all the chapters. You may need to read the book more than once before this theme becomes apparent to you. It is very important that you read it at a single sitting because *it is in the single sitting that the theme begins to emerge in your consciousness*. Sometimes if you break up your reading, you won't get the full impact of the book. So it

is a good procedure to read the book through at a single sitting to discover the main theme. *Now, lay aside this study book and read Habakkuk through.* When you are finished, continue in this study book.

If after reading Habakkuk you are not sure of the main theme, answer these questions: What topic or theme do the following verses all have in common: 1:2, 6, 8, 9, 12; 2:4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19; 3:1-15? What key verse in 2:1-4 supports the theme?

Application

2 Before you look ahead to the answer that is given, write the main theme of Habakkuk and reference for its key verse in your notebook.



Step 2: Development of the Main Theme

Objective 3. *Trace the development of the main theme in Habakkuk by reading the entire book at one time.*

Application

3 Trace the development of the main theme in Habakkuk as you look for references to judgment and punishment. Make notes of these references in your notebook. Condense what you find to a few words for each verse you list.



Announcements concerning content help to trace the main theme. Such announcements are statements that the author makes ahead of time, telling what is coming next. For example, the Gospel of Matthew begins with such an announcement: “This is the list of the ancestors of Jesus Christ, a descendant of . . . Abraham” (1:1). Here is an *announcement concerning content* and you are not surprised to find genealogy following it.

In 1 Corinthians 7:25 Paul says: “Now, concerning what you wrote about unmarried people.” That’s an announcement concerning content. It helps you to prepare for what’s coming, and gives you a clue as to the thematic development of the book. *Now, read Habakkuk through again at one sitting, looking for announcements concerning content.* Then do the following exercise.

Application

4 Write, in the proper rows of the columns on your notebook page, four brief *announcements concerning content* with their chapter and verse indications; then, compare your answers with ours. (If you did not find these announcements concerning content as you read Habakkuk again, check verses 1:1; 2:1; 2:4; 3:1 before doing this exercise.)

These announcements will help you (later in the lesson) to divide the book into meaningful sections for the outline.

Step 3: Terms, Atmosphere, and Literary Form

Objective 4. *Point out terms (that need further study), atmosphere, and literary form in Habakkuk by reading the entire book at one time.*

Answering the questions in this section may help you to focus on terms, atmosphere, and literary form. Read these questions *before* you read Habakkuk. *Then, read Habakkuk through again at one sitting, looking for terms* (that need further study), *atmosphere, and literary form.* Next, write out (in the proper rows and columns on your notebook page) answers to questions 5, 6, 7, and 8 and compare your answers with those suggested.

Application

5 *Terms.* Have you found any terms you do not understand? Have you found any terms that need special attention? Have you found any profound concepts that require further study? List them with their references in your notebook.

6 *Atmosphere.* Have you noticed any difference between the atmosphere of the first two chapters and the last chapter? *If you have not, read Habakkuk again and look specifically for the difference.* Choose a word that describes for you, the atmosphere or feeling you get from chapters 1 and 2, and then another word for chapter 3.

7 What is the *literary form* at the beginning of the book?

8 Where does the *literary form* change? To what does it change?

Step 4: Literary Devices and Progression

Objective 5. *Use your knowledge of literary devices and literary progression to increase your understanding of the message of Habakkuk.*

You are going to be looking for literary devices that we discussed in Lesson 5. You will have some questions to guide your observation. You're not going to be expecting to see every one of those devices, but you will find some that might help you understand Habakkuk as a whole. For example, if there is a pattern that you begin to notice throughout the book, it's obvious that to see its relationship to the whole book is important.

Consider the book of Colossians for a moment. In that epistle you have, in a very marked way, the pattern of *interchange or alternation*. Notice this pattern in these four passages from Colossians 2:20–3:10 which I have labeled A, B, A, B:

- A. “You have died with Christ” (2:20).
- B. “You have been raised to life with Christ” (3:1).
- A. “You must put to death . . . earthly desires” (3:5).
- B. “You . . . have put on the new self” (3:9-10).

These passages show implications of death with Christ and being alive with Christ. You can’t understand the book of Colossians unless you see the device of *interchange* in it. This device is vital! You have to see that A relates back to a former A, and that B relates back to a former B.

When looking for progression in literature, remember to look for *change*. You have learned about historical progression through the events of Israel’s journey from Egypt into the wilderness of Sinai. There are examples of ideological progressions from death to life. Habakkuk will have several ideological progressions. You will be looking for broad, overall changes from the beginning to the end. Now that you have read the book a number of times, you are beginning to become a little bit familiar with it!

The questions that follow will help you focus on literary devices and progression. Write the answer to each question in the correct row and column on your notebook. (If you need more space, continue on another page.) Read the questions *before* or *while* you read Habakkuk. Look at the answers *after* you have arrived at your own conclusions.

Application

- 9 What literary device is prominent in the first part of paragraph 1:2-4 and in the last part of paragraph 1:12-13?
- 10 Who is asking the questions in 1:2-4 and 1:12-13?
- 11 Who answers these questions and where (give references)?
- 12 What literary device is prominent throughout the question-answer- question-answer sequence that is found in 1:2-4; 1:5- 11; 1:12-17; and 2:2-20?

13 The book of Habakkuk begins with a questioning complaint (1:2-4). Try to compose one brief question in your own words that sums up this complaint.

14 Compose a brief statement in your own words that sums up the answer in 1:5-11 to this questioning complaint.

15 A second questioning complaint is found in 1:12-17. Remembering that evil was present even among the Israelites, compose a brief question in your own words that sums up this second complaint.

16 Compose a brief statement in your own words that sums up the answer in 2:2-20 to this second questioning complaint.

17 State the literary device and the words that express it in 2:6, 9, 15, and 19. Then state the words that express the same literary device in 3:17.

18 Name a literary device in 2:5 and another literary device in 2:8, explaining how the movements of these devices are opposite to each other.

19 What literary device does “but” suggest in 2:7?

20 Throughout chapter 3 there is an example of the literary device of *continuation*, with reference to the prophet’s personal outlook. 3:1-15 has a certain feeling or tone. 3:16 is a transition verse with a different tone, and 3:17-19 also changes. Read chapter 3 with these three divisions in mind. See if you can think of three words which describe the desirable development in this *continuation*.

21 Try to state a practical, spiritual lesson we can learn from the development of the device of *continuation* in chapter 3.

22 From the first part of the book to the last, there are at least four ideological progressions that can be seen. From your readings in Habakkuk thus far, can you complete the progressions that are found in the following passages?

- a** 2:4, 3:8, 3:18 From sin to
- b** 2:2, 3:16 From questioning to
- c** 2:4, 2:15-17 From wrong judgment to
- d** 2:2-4, 2:17, 3:2 From a call for wrath to

OUTLINING HABAKKUK

Objective 6. *Make a preliminary outline of Habakkuk, and then develop it into an integrated outline.*

Outlining Habakkuk will involve another reading of the book. Now, your goal is to develop a preliminary outline. *The structure of a book can be most easily found by writing a brief title for each paragraph of the book and noticing the relationship among those titles.* For the purpose of our outlining, I have divided Habakkuk into 19 paragraphs and have listed the chapter and verse designations for these paragraphs in the following exercise.

Application

23 List each of the following paragraph references on a separate line in your notebook. Read each paragraph carefully and think of a brief title that contains the “kernel” of meaning for that paragraph. Write the title next to the reference. (Write your title for each paragraph before looking at our title for it.)

1:1	1:12-17	2:9-11	3:1
1:2-4	2:1	2:12-14	3:2-15
1:5-7	2:2-4	2:15-17	3:16
1:8	2:5-6	2:18-19	3:17-19
1:9-11	2:7-8	2:20	

Notice how the *life of the righteous* (2:4), the *knowledge of God's glory* (2:14), and *His presence on earth* (2:20) provide a bright thread of faith that is woven into this tapestry of doom: faith that gives blessed hope for every believer.

In order to put your preliminary outline of paragraph titles into integrated outline form, look over these titles to see which ones will serve as main topics, which ones can be combined under a main topic as subtopics, and which ones can be combined as details under a subtopic (write combined topics in sequence—not on same line). Here is our pattern of designations and indentations for your finished outline:

I. Main Topic

A. Subtopic

1. Detail.

Note: There should be at least two designations at each level of indentation. If you can't find a B. to go with your A., then try to combine A. with the main topic; if you can't find a 2. to go with your 1., try to combine 1. with the subtopic.

Just in case you have access to other sources of Bible information, such as Bible dictionary or commentary, this would be an appropriate time to consult them and compare your outline with theirs. If you do consult another book, you are not wanting to find a reason to throw your outline away! You do not want to substitute someone else's outline, you want your own! If you compare your outline with another, you simply want to modify yours in places where it can be strengthened. The same applies to comparing the outline you make with the one in the textbook. Do not think yours has to be exactly like our example in the answer section.

Prepare a notebook page for your integrated outline. You will need about 18 lines. Usually, each of your paragraph titles will fit into one line of the outline; some will be main topics, some will be subtopics, and some will be details. Answering the questions in the next exercise should help you distinguish between main points and sub points. Reread each passage in Habakkuk and the paragraph title you have composed for it as

you answer the question concerning it (write your answers in your notebook).

Application

24 Consider 1:1; 2:1, and 3:1.

- a** What did you find in Exercise 4 that these verses contain?
- b** Since each of these three verses begins one of the three main sections of content in the book, what would be the obvious place in your integrated outline of the paragraph titles for them?
- c** What relationship do you think 1:8 and 1:9-11 have to 1:5-7?

25 Looking at your paragraph titles for chapter 1 and keeping your answers to *b* and *c* of the preceding exercise in mind, write your outline for chapter 1 in your notebook. Then compare it with ours.

26 Consider your paragraph titles for chapter 2.

- a** What are the verse references for the two paragraphs in this chapter that concern the greedy?
- b** Counting both paragraphs in chapter 2 on the greedy as one line in your outline, how many detail items will you have under the subtopic “Evil Destroyed but Righteous Saved” and what are they?

27 Looking at your paragraph titles for chapter 2 and keeping your answers to *a* and *b* of the preceding exercise in mind, write your outline for chapter 2 in your notebook. Then compare it with ours.

28 Keeping your paragraph titles for chapter 3 in mind, write your outline for chapter 3 in your notebook. Then compare it with ours.



The outline on your notebook page is now completed. If you want to extend this basic outline later, you have a good start. Details can be added as you come across them in your study.

APPLICATION

Objective 7. *Practice obedience to divine truth that you have discovered in order to gain a fuller understanding of God's Word.*

In Lesson 2 you learned that the basic steps in Bible study are: observe, interpret, summarize, evaluate, apply, and correlate. The lessons you have completed have centered on developing the skills you need for the early steps in study. Application is a little different from the other steps in that it involves more than skills you use. It involves attitude, will, relation to the Lord, and motive.

You have also learned that you should come to the Word of God with a reverent, prayerful attitude. It is God's message to man in general, but it is also God's message to you personally and to me personally. The Bible is different in that respect from all other books. Your intelligence and skill must be coupled with the help of the Holy Spirit to correctly interpret and apply the Scriptures. You must be born again through faith in Jesus Christ to be able to understand the Bible correctly. God's message is made clear through the enlightening of your heart by God's Spirit.

Application

29 Circle the letter of the correct ending. To correctly understand Scripture you must

- a) know Greek.
- b) be born again by faith in Jesus Christ.
- c) always rely on what other people say about it.

30 How are the following words related: observe, interpret, summarize, evaluate, apply, correlate?

- a) They are random words taken from Lesson 1.
- b) They are six steps in Bible study.
- c) They are interchangeable terms for leaning.



If you are born again, and you have given these lessons thorough treatment, you have probably seen many ways in which the Scriptures apply to your life and circumstances. This application is a large part of the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit to you and for you. Jesus said: “The Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and make you remember all that I have told you” (John 14:26). “When, however, the Spirit comes, who reveals the truth about God, he will lead you into all the truth. . . he will take what I say and tell it to you” (John 16:13-14).

Because God speaks to you personally as you read and study Scripture, no course you might take could lay before you all the situations and circumstances in which a given Scripture would apply to your life. God has something fresh to give you every time you open His Word!

There are ways in which you can cooperate with the Holy Spirit to understand the personal application of the Scriptures. It is that personal application of the Word that must be the end result of your study.

Application

31 Circle the letter in front of each true statement.

- a)** By studying a Bible course such as this one, you can learn the answers to all your questions about life.
- b)** Any good Bible study course will reveal the solutions to all your problems.
- c)** A Bible study course should show you how to get into the Word of God so that the Holy Spirit can speak to you personally through the Scripture.

Let's consider some ways in which you can cooperate with God in receiving His personal message to you. There are positive things you can and should do to *increase the flow* of God's enlightenment for your personal need, both recognized need and unrecognized need. This should be the end result of Bible study. *Ask yourself questions. Ask the Lord questions.*

Ask yourself questions that will purify your life, motives, and attitudes.

Am I living up to the light (understanding) I already have? You should be able to say “yes” to this question. If the Holy spirit reveals His will in your life and you refuse to obey His will, you will darken your heart. But, if you will live in obedience to the Word of truth you discover, you will always find more truth quickened to your heart. You will begin to understand deeper truth. The reason God reveals truth is because He is looking for obedience to it.

Application

32 Read the following Scriptures: James 1:23, 25; John 15:14; Matthew 5:19; 23 :3. What common theme do each of these show?

.....



So, it is in obedience to the understanding of Scripture that more understanding is obtained. This obedience includes a frequent confession of sins to the Lord. Yes, even believers must continually come to Christ for cleansing. First John 1:9 assures us that when we come, Jesus cleanses us. This cleansing removes barriers that would hinder us from understanding God’s truth.

The next questions you need to ask yourself are these: When I come to the Scriptures, do I have a believing attitude? Do I have a seeking attitude? Do I have an accepting attitude? Is my motive pure in seeking truth for my own life, rather than just being able to tell others what to do? These are important questions. Some people who study God’s Word like to pick and choose what they will believe. They foolishly refuse those truths that would make some changes in their way of living. Do not be like them. Accept all of God’s truth, even when it means you must conform your life to it in new ways.

Application

33 Fuller understanding of spiritual truth always comes through

- a) obedience to truth already known.
 - b) concentrated study of obscure Scriptures.
 - c) acceptance of selected parts of spiritual truth.
-

Ask the Lord questions and ask the Bible questions that will help you find the practical applications you need.

God's Laws and attitudes about things do not change. Since in the Old Testament God declared Himself to hate divorce (Malachi 2:16), you can be sure that He hates it just as much on the very date that you are reading this as He did when He spoke through Malachi. So, as you study Scripture, ask the Lord to show you the eternal truths that have been revealed in the passage. Ask the Lord these specific questions: "Is this something I should *believe*? Is this something I should *believe and act upon*? Is this something I should *apply in any way to my living*?" One well-known Bible teacher uses the phrase "comparable equivalents." By this he means, "What is there in my life situation today that corresponds to the biblical situation?" When studying the Bible, continually ask yourself, "HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO ME?"

Work through the following exercises to see some ways in which this search for practical application can be applied to Habakkuk. Answer in your notebook.

Application

34 Write a brief descriptive paragraph of life today in which you show comparable equivalents (as explained above) between situations we face and those described in Habakkuk 1:2-4 and 2:5.

35 Read Habakkuk 1:6; 2:2-4; 2:20; 3:19. What assurances can the child of God of our time receive from these verses?

36 Read Habakkuk 1:12; 3:16; 3:18; and 3:19. In order to be comforted by God as Habakkuk was, what heartfelt affirmations made by him in these verses must you make in your own heart? (Express your answer in your own words.)



self-test

MULTIPLE CHOICE. Circle the letter in front of the item in each question which is the best answer.

- 1** Steps in observation for a synthetic study of a book include
 - a)** reading but not writing.
 - b)** writing but not reading.
 - c)** reading and writing.
 - d)** neither reading nor writing.
- 2** The main theme of Habakkuk is
 - a)** limited to the first chapter.
 - b)** found in the second chapter only.
 - c)** limited to the third chapter.
 - d)** found in all of the chapters.
- 3** The thematic development of a book is anticipated through the author's announcements concerning
 - a)** atmosphere.
 - b)** content.
 - c)** progression.
 - d)** form.
- 4** Routine terms need
 - a)** less attention than other terms.
 - b)** more attention than other terms.
 - c)** as much attention as other terms.
 - d)** no attention at all.
- 5** Literary form in Habakkuk changes from
 - a)** poetry to drama.
 - b)** drama to poetry.
 - c)** parable to poetry.
 - d)** poetry to parable.
- 6** Atmosphere in Habakkuk is
 - a)** more positive at the end than at the beginning.
 - b)** less positive at the end than at the beginning.
 - c)** as positive at the beginning as at the end.
 - d)** not positive in any part of the book.

7 From questioning to confidence is a literary progression that is described as

- a)** doctrinal.
- b)** biographical.
- c)** ideological.
- d)** historical.

8 A preliminary outline of a book consists of titles for

- a)** each chapter.
- b)** the first and last chapters.
- c)** the first paragraph in each chapter.
- d)** all of the paragraphs.

9 The basic step in Bible study which deals most with personal relation to the Lord is

- a)** observation.
- b)** evaluation.
- c)** application.
- d)** summarization.

Before you continue your study with Lesson 8, be sure to complete your unit student report for Unit 2 and return the answer sheet to your GU instructor.

answers to the study questions

- 1** Your answer. (Instructions for making your answer are in the study textbook.)
- 36** Lord, you are not only God but you are My God, Holy and eternal. I will quietly wait. I will be joyful and glad—not because things are right as yet but because God is my Savior. The Lord gives me strength and keeps me safe.
- 2** Answers may vary. Suggested main theme: *Judgment*, key verse: 2:4
- 35** The assurances that God is in control, will eventually make wrong situations right, and will give you strength to endure just as He gave it to Habakkuk.
- 3** Suggest answer (your answer may be different but just as good as this example):

1:2	“Save us.”
1:6	“Marching . . . to conquer.”
1:8-9	“Attacking . . . advance in . . . conquest.”
1:12	“So . . . they can punish.”
2:4	“Evil will not survive.”
2:6	“Conquerors . . . are doomed.”
2:9, 12, 15	“You are doomed.”
2:16	“Shame . . . drink . . . stagger.”
2:17	“You will be cut down.”
3:7	“People of Cushan afraid.”
- 34** In life today there is violence and trouble, just as then. There is quarreling and fighting. Laws often do not seem to be effective. Justice is often not done. Evil men seem to prosper. Greedy men are still proud and restless and wealth is still deceitful.
- 4**

1:1	“The message that the Lord revealed.”
2:1	“Answer . . . to my complaint”
2:4	“This is the message.”
3:1	“This is a prayer.”
- 33 a)** obedience to truth already known.

- 5** Suggested terms for further study. (You will undoubtedly think of others.):
- 1:4 “Justice . . . perverted.”
 - 1:6 “I am bringing the Babylonians.”
 - 2:1 “Watchtower.”
 - 2:2 “Tablets.”
 - 2:6, 9, 12, 19 “Doomed.”
- 32** It is important to do what God’s Word says to do. (Answers may vary in wording but the idea should be similar.)
- 6** Atmosphere for chapters 1 and 2: *concern, fear, or questioning*. Atmosphere for chapter 3: *faith or positive attitude*.
- 31 c)** A Bible study course should show you how to get into the Word of God so that the Holy Spirit can speak to you personally through the Scripture.
- 7** Literary form at the beginning of the book: *drama*.
- 30 b)** They are six steps in Bible study.
- 8** In 3:1 the literary form changes to poetry (poetry that expresses prayer).
- 29 b)** be born again by faith in Jesus Christ.
- 28 III.** Introduction to Habakkuk’s Prayer (3:1)
- A.** Fear Expressed (3:2-15)
 - B.** Fortitude Replaces Fear (3:16)
 - C.** Faith Emerges (3:17-19)
- 9** Interrogation
- 27 II.** Waiting for God’s Answer (2:1)
- A.** Evil Destroyed but Righteous Saved (2:2-4)
 - 1.** The Greedy (2:5-8)
 - 2.** Arrogant Schemers (2:9-11)
 - 3.** Murderous Crime (2:12-14)
 - 4.** Punishment of Criminals (2:15-17)
 - 5.** Uselessness of Idolatry (2:18-19)
 - B.** God’s Presence (2:20)

10 Habakkuk or “man” is asking these questions.

26 a 5-6 and 7-8.

b Five: the greedy, arrogant schemers, murderous crime, punishment of criminals, and uselessness of idolatry.

11 God answers in 1:5-11 and 2:2-20

25 I. Introduction to God’s Message (1:1)

A. Complaint Against Evil men (1:2-4)

B. The Conquering Babylonians (1:5-7)

1. Babylonian Horses (1:8)

2. Babylonian Armies (1:9-11)

C. Greater Evil of Babylonians (1:12-17)

12 Interchange

24 a Announcements concerning content.

b Paragraph titles for 1:1; 2:1; and 3:1 will serve as the main topics of the outline.

c 1:8 and 1:9-11 seem to be details of the subtopic in 1:5-7, The Conquering Babylonians.

13 Suggested answer: Why are the wicked not punished?

23 1:1 Introduction to God’s Message

1:2-4 Complaint Against Evil Men

1:5-7 The Conquering Babylonians

1:8 Babylonian Horses

1:9-11 Babylonian Armies

1:12-17 Greater Evil of Babylonians

2:1 Waiting for God’s Answer

2:2-4 Evil Destroyed but Righteous Saved

2:5-6 Greedy Men

2:7-8 Greedy Men Plundered

2:9-11 Arrogant Schemers

2:12-14 Murderous Crime

2:15-17 Punishment of Criminals

2:18-19 Uselessness of Idolatry

2:20 God’s Presence

3:1 Introduction to Habakkuk’s Prayer

3:2-15 Fear Expressed

3:16 Fortitude Replaces Fear

3:17-19 Faith Emerges

14 The wicked will be punished.

22 a salvation.

b confidence.

c right judgment.

d a plea for mercy.

15 Why is it that the “more” wicked are used to punish the “less” wicked?

21 What is feared must be endured through faith in God!

16 The “more” wicked will also be punished.

20 3:1-15 fear, 3:16 fortitude, 3:17-19 faith.

17 In 2:6, 9, 12, 14, and 19, *repetition* is seen in “you are doomed”; in 3:17 *repetition* is seen in “even though”.

19 Contrast

18 *Causation* in 2:5 moves from cause to effect while *substantiation* in 2:8 moves from effect to cause.



UNIT THREE

Other Methods Of Study

Lessons

8 Biographical Method of Study

9 Topical Method of Study

10 Devotional Method of Study

LESSON 8 Biographical Method of Study

Characters of the Bible were real people. Yet somehow they often seem less real than the people you see every day. You have never seen them. You meet them only in the pages of a book. Your life is probably very different from theirs. Archaeologists dig up bones of those who lived long ago; they find artifacts (tools and utensils used by people) which help us imagine what life was like hundreds (or thousands) of years ago. But this is still the dim past and is difficult to accept as real.

How can you get to know people of the Bible better? How can you really learn from the mistakes they made? How can you profit from their godly lives so that you inherit the promises they have inherited? How can you come to appreciate them as real though imperfect human beings like yourself? *Studying Bible people* will be the subject of this lesson.

lesson outline

Introduction to Bible Biography

Kinds of Biography

Simple Narrative

Narrative Exposition

Character Exposition

Argument

Summary of Biography

Procedure for Biographical Study

Collection of Data

Interpretation of Data

Organization of Data

Biographical Study of Amos

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

1. Use New Testament accounts to describe the present life of Old Testament people.
2. List four basic kinds of biography in the Bible and explain the author's reason for using each kind.
3. Define three basic steps in the procedure for biographical study and point out the sequence of them.
4. Make a textual biographical outline of the known life of Amos.

learning activities

1. Read the opening section, outline, and objectives.
2. Learn the meanings of key words that are new to you.
3. Read the lesson development and answer the study questions as you come to them.
4. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson, and check your answers.

key words

capsule	exposition
conspiracy	incidental
contemporaries	paradox
environmental	pertinent

lesson development

INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE BIOGRAPHY

Objective 1. *Use New Testament accounts to describe the present life of Old Testament people.*

Listen to the words of Jesus as He spoke to the crowd one day. “I assure you that many will come from the east and the west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the feast in the Kingdom of Heaven” (Matthew 8:11). On another occasion, Jesus told the unbelieving Sadducees that God said, “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (Matthew 22:32). He is the God of the living, not of the dead.

Since this lesson is about the *biographical* method of Bible study, you are going to be studying about the lives of Bible people as they lived long ago. One way to help you think of Bible people as *real* people is to consider some Bible facts. The godly people you will meet in the pages of Scripture *are still living today*. This is the exciting message of Jesus Christ! Because He lives, He gives eternal life to all who come to Him (see John 5:24-26). Old Testament saints (godly people) as well as all those who put their faith in Jesus Christ are given eternal life by Him (read Romans 4). I often think it is not quite fair to study the lives of Bible people as they lived long ago (in all their imperfection, just like you and me) without understanding that they are *not* fixed in the state in which we read about them in the Bible. They have had centuries of eternal life, as earth time is figured, in which to learn, develop, and grow to perfection with the Lord Himself.

How do we know this? Well, the words of Jesus quoted above give us some clues. And there are other clues sprinkled throughout the New Testament. On one occasion, Jesus, speaking to the unbelieving Pharisees, was telling them some facts about Himself. He told them He was the *light of the world*. He told them that He *came from above*. He told them many things they did not want to hear. You can read about all this in John 8. In the next few paragraphs, we will emphasize some things in that chapter.

The Pharisees boasted to Jesus that they belonged to the family descended from Abraham. Jesus showed them that while they were Abraham's physical descendants, they were not really Abraham's children (vv. 33-39). Finally He said to them, "I am telling you the truth: whoever obeys my teaching will never die" (v. 51).

At this, they accused Him of having a demon! They insisted that their father Abraham had died (v. 53). Everyone knew that! But Jesus continued to speak of Abraham, showing that his life did not end with his physical death: "Your father Abraham," He told them, "rejoiced that he was to see the time of my coming; he saw it and was glad" (v. 56).

The Pharisees asked, "You are not even fifty years old—and you have seen Abraham?" Jesus replied: "I am telling you the truth . . . before Abraham was born, 'I am'" (vv. 57-58). These facts so infuriated those who did not believe that they tried to stone Jesus (v. 59).

Another time, Jesus revealed a little more about the activities of Abraham after his physical death. Luke 16:19-31 records a story Jesus told which is not like the parables because Jesus actually named the people involved. In this account, Jesus told of a conversation between Abraham and an unbelieving rich man who saw the beggar Lazarus being entertained by Abraham at a feast. So, as you study about Abraham from the Bible, keep in mind there is more to the story!

Moses and Elijah are living people. Hundreds of years after they left the earth, they were seen talking with Jesus on a hill.

They talked with Him on that occasion about His coming death. “Suddenly two men were there talking with him. They were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in heavenly glory and talked with Jesus about the way in which He would soon fulfill God’s purpose by dying in Jerusalem” (Luke 9:28-31). As you study about Moses and Elijah from the Bible, remember that there is more to the story!

Hebrews 11 gives many “capsule” life stories of Old Testament believers who lived and died in faith. The statement “it was in faith that all these persons died” (v. 13) indicates that these persons are still living.

No book could contain the accounts of all the life stories that started on earth and are continuing in heaven. But we find in Hebrews 12:22-24 a summary of life in heaven:

“You have come to Mount Zion . . . the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem with its thousands of angels . . . the joyful gathering of God’s first-born sons, whose names are written in heaven . . . to God, who is the judge of all mankind . . . to the spirits of good people made perfect . . . to Jesus, who arranged the new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood.”

As a believer, you are already a citizen of that great community! With these facts in mind, learn how to study about the people of the Bible. Learn faith from their faith. Learn from their earthly experiences as God intends for you to do. Follow in their footsteps to inherit eternal life as they have!

Application

- 1 Which of these statements is true?
 - a) Jesus spoke of life after physical death as being in the future only.
 - b) Jesus spoke of Abraham as a presently living person.
 - c) Jesus never referred to life after physical death.

- 2** Which of these statements is true?
- a)** Moses and Elijah were not conscious persons after leaving the earth.
 - b)** Bible characters were storybook figures only.
 - c)** Hebrews 11 emphasizes faith above all else.
-

KINDS OF BIOGRAPHY

Objective 2. *List four basic kinds of biography in the Bible and explain the author's reason for using each kind.*

Simple Narrative

Biographical information is in Scripture because of specific purposes the authors had in mind. Second Timothy 3:16 teaches that all Scripture is useful. God has inspired the writers to include information that He intends should be included. There appear to be four basic reasons why biblical authors included biographical information in Scripture.

The first reason is *simply to list the facts as a matter of record*. This is called *simple narrative*. It is simply telling the facts in story form. This is a common kind of biographical information found in Scripture, and it can be readily studied with reference to many different Bible characters. As you proceed, you will notice that the four aims an individual may have for making a study of the life of a Bible character are directly related to the same four aims the author had for including the information in the first place.

Narrative Exposition

The second reason for the author's inclusion of biographical information is to use the narrative (the story of a person's life) as *a means of teaching a historical lesson*. In this case, the facts are more than a simple record. They are there to teach. The entire span of the person's life is studied, with special attention given to the way God's dealings in his life affect his nation. When teaching a historical lesson is the purpose of the

biographical information, the story of the person being studied becomes incidental to the main theme of God's interest and care for His own people. There are fewer examples of this kind of biography to study because the number of people with crucial roles in history is limited. However, people like Daniel, Paul, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph and others can be included in this group.

Character Exposition

The third reason for the author's inclusion of biographical information may be to *teach character*. This is closely related to narrative exposition, but with a different slant. In this case the author is primarily interested in presenting the facts as they relate to the spiritual progress and character of the person being studied.

The kings of Israel and Judah lend themselves to this kind of study. The details of their lives are given in a very thorough manner along with God's pronouncements about them. These pronouncements are praise in some cases and stern condemnation in others. Many Bible people can be used for this type of study: disciples, prophets, and godly people from many walks of life whose stories are included in Scripture.

Argument

The fourth (and least common) reason for the author's inclusion of biographical information in Scripture is to *prove a point*. The facts of the individual's life are used to convince someone of something. Occasionally you will see this aim in evidence in the gospels concerning the life of Jesus, or in Paul's writings.

Application

3 Scripture contains facts about the lives of individuals (biographical information) because of

- a)** the element of chance.
- b)** specific aims the author had in mind.
- c)** their interest for readers.

4 Match each kind of biographical information (right) with the author's reason for using it (left).

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| ... a Simply to record facts | 1) Character exposition |
| ... b To teach historical lessons | 2) Simple narrative |
| ... c To teach character | 3) Argument |
| ... d To prove a point | 4) Narrative exposition |
-

Summary of Biography

The basic steps for any kind of biographical study you do will be the same. The difference will be in *how much* material you can find, and *what kind* of material you can find. The author's purpose, which dictated what he saw fit to include, will strongly influence your purpose for study.

For any of the four types of biographical study you must read, observe, and make notes. Then, you should outline your notes to help you interpret the information you have collected. What you find, and how it lends itself to organization, will determine the main points in your outline.

If you were doing a *simple narrative*, just to cite the facts as a matter of record, the main points of your outline might be:

- I. Birth and Early Life
- II. Conversion and Ministry
- III. Relationships with Others
- IV. Character Evaluation
- V. End of Life Experiences and Death
- VI. Author's Purpose for Writing

Subtopics and details would be organized around this framework. You might not find facts for each of these categories available, but you would use whatever you could find.

The outline for the other types of biographical study will follow the same pattern. The emphasis will be different. In an *argument*, you will seek to understand what point the author was trying to prove. What was he trying to convince someone of? Who was he trying to convince? In a *character exposition*, the person's spiritual life and influence on others will be the main focus, and the rest of the information will be incidental.

Sometimes the same person is mentioned in more than one Bible book. In that case you almost need to have access to a Bible *concordance* to find all the information. A Bible concordance lists words of the Bible in alphabetical order, along with places in Scripture where each word listed is used. If you do not have a concordance, you will have to use the book method. That is, get all the information that is given in one book and build your study around that.

Application

5 Write **T** in the blank space before the following statements if the statement is true. Write **F** if the statement is false.

- ... **a** There appear to be four main purposes Bible authors had for including biographical information in the Bible record.
- ... **b** There are four completely different methods for studying about the life of a Bible character.
- ... **c** The basic steps in study are about the same for each kind of biographical study of a Bible character.
- ... **d** A Bible concordance is absolutely necessary for biographical study.
- ... **e** The basis for any study of a Bible character is very careful reading of the text, observing, and writing notations of what you find.



PROCEDURE FOR BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

Objective 3. *Define three basic steps in the procedure for biographical study and point out the sequence of them.*

Collection of Data

The first part of the first step in a biographical study is careful reading. If you have access to a computer Bible program, you can simply run a search on the name of the person you want to study. The program will locate all places in the Bible where the name is found. If you do not have access to a computer Bible program, you can use a Bible concordance or simply read to collect information. Your skill in observation will be important also at this step. The information you find must be written down.

One author has suggested writing all the bits of information you find on small pieces of note paper. When it is time to organize the material in some form or other, the pieces can be shifted to suit the outline. The outline can be refined from the grouping of the papers. Whether you use that method or simply write in your notebook, the items discussed in the next two paragraphs are those you will look for.

Note every mention of names. Not just the name of the person you are studying, but the names of people and places with which he is associated. Write down all the actions (verbs) associated with the individual or those connected with his story. You will need to note the nature of the person's friendships and the period in which he and his contemporaries lived.

You should note any information about your subject's parents and other relatives. Write the circumstances of his birth, early training, home life, and the significance of his name or names. Your subject's later life is important too. Consider journeys, teachings, successes, failures, influence on his own or later generations. Find out all you can about the individual's personality traits, character, crises of life, and effectiveness in work. Observe, also, details about the lives of his children.

As you can see, the list of possibilities is long. You will not find complete information about every individual. In some cases, the information is so abundant that several kinds of study can be done. Other Bible characters are only mentioned, so no real study can be made of their lives. Some have well documented periods in their lives, but the rest of the information is missing from the record.

Application

6 To do a biographical study of a Bible personality, you need to read the book and make notes about

- a)** all that has a bearing on his life or influence.
- b)** all nouns and verbs whether related to him or not.
- c)** what is said concerning him in nonbiblical books.

7 What is the first part of the first step in a biographical study?

.....



Interpretation of Data

The data that you have collected in the first step of your biographical study must be interpreted in the second step. The kind of material you have been able to find will determine what kind of study you can complete.

You may have a list of facts that are in the Bible just for the record. In that case, you will make your biographical study a simple story with the facts presented in an informative way. That kind of study is called *simple narrative*.

If the details of your subject's life are bound in some way to larger historical events, you will plan a *narrative exposition*. This would be a study where the narrative or story part of a person's life is used to teach a historical lesson.

If you find that the author has included a lot of information about the person's character, whether good or bad, his purpose will influence the purpose of your study. His purpose to teach

something about character will guide you in learning (and perhaps teaching) something about character. This kind of study is called *character exposition*.

In a few places, you may find that the author has included biographical information to prove a point. Remember that we have called this kind of information *argument*.

Organization of Data

Organization of data is the third step in the procedure for biographical study. For a *simple narrative*, you will classify the facts by categories. You were given the main points for a sample outline in an earlier section of this lesson. The subtopics and details will be organized around those main points.

Application

8 Look back to the section on Kinds of Biography; find the sample “main-point” outline suggested and copy it in your notebook. (If you wish to expand it or revise it in some future study, feel free to do so. Any outline is only a suggestion.)

For a *narrative exposition*, organize the material in terms of categories within each of the major periods of time in the person’s life. Each period would have a main heading. Anything that happened to him during a given time period would come under that period’s heading. For instance, in the life of Joseph (Genesis 37–50), a possibility would be to divide his life into three main sections: his early life with his family, his life as a servant in Egypt, and his life as a ruler in Egypt. The end point for each period would be the crisis that ushered in the next period. For Joseph, the section on his early life with his family would end with the crisis event of his being sold as a slave to the caravan heading for Egypt. The servant period would end with the crisis of his being able to interpret the dream for the king of Egypt.

Application

- 9** *Narrative exposition* is the kind of biographical study where the information is organized according to
- a)** major periods in the person's life.
 - b)** the person's friends and relationships.
 - c)** birth and early training of the person.
-

Character exposition is written for the purpose of exploring a person's character and spiritual development. Therefore, it should be organized around categories related to character. The main topics might be centered on decisions made by the individual which were clues to his character. Subtopics under those major decisions might be personal influences or environmental influences that had a bearing on the decisions. Other headings might be his dominant personal traits, his major accomplishments, his religious experiences, and clues that might be found in his relationships with other people.

Application

- 10** A *character study* is primarily concerned with the
- a)** major phases of a person's life.
 - b)** individual's moral and ethical traits.
 - c)** birth and early training of the person.
-

If you make a study of a person's life and you suspect that the author's biographical aim was argument, you will first want to try to find the answer to these questions: "What is the conclusion to which the author is trying to lead the reader?" "What is he trying to prove?" Then, you should try to answer these questions: "Are the biographical facts used to *illustrate* the argument? Are they used to *accent* the argument? Are they used to *prove* the argument?" Finally consider whether the *sequence* (order of events) *of the narrative*, the *moral of the narrative*, and the *character of the person*, in any way strengthens the argument.

Application

11 Read Acts 22. In this chapter Paul defends himself by giving his life story. When you have read it, answer the following questions in your notebook.

- a** What is the conclusion to which Luke the author is trying to lead the reader? Does this differ from Paul's aim in making the speech?
 - b** At the time of this incident, who were the people Paul was definitely trying to convince?
 - c** Are the biographical facts Paul sets forth used to illustrate, accent, or prove the argument?
 - d** Does the order of events have anything to do with the argument?
 - e** Does the moral of the narrative have anything to do with the argument?
 - f** Does the character of the person have anything to do with the argument?
-

BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF AMOS

Objective 4. *Make a textual biographical outline of the known life of Amos.*

This section emphasizes application of biographical study. The outline which you will make for the book of Amos is different from the sample outline you were given in the section on *Kinds of Biography*. This will be a *textual* outline which will follow the Scripture references in sequence as they occur. The steps will be the same as for any of the biographical studies.

Step 1: Read the book of Amos to collect the information (data) that was discussed in the *procedure* section. Be sure to record the reference for every item of pertinent information you find, along with the item itself.

Step 2: Using your notes made in Step 1, try to decide what the purpose of Amos might have been for including

biographical statements in his book which is primarily prophecy.

Application

12 Write *purpose* in your notebook. After *purpose*, write what you think caused Amos to tell a little about his life in this book.



Step 3: Organize your textual outline. Divide a page of your notebook into four columns as you see here.

Biographical Outline of Amos			
References	Facts	Questions	Answers

The column headings really explain themselves. As you work through the following exercises, place your answers in the appropriate place on your notebook page.

Application

13 Write Amos 1:1 in the references column of your textual outline. Write six factual observations from this Scripture in the *facts* column.

14 What questions can you think of from these observations that are unanswered and you would like to find out more about? Write them in the *questions* column.



For *answers* to your questions, you go to whatever sources are available to you. You may find some answers in a week. Some may take you years to find, especially if you do not have books or maps to study from. Does this mean you should not ask the questions? No, if you wish to become a serious Bible student you must learn to ask questions. This may mean frustration if you don't have places to find the answers, but some day you may be able to locate more source material to use. The greatest scholar still has unanswered questions. So

write your questions even if the answers are not available to you at the time. For questions in the following exercises you will find answers in the textbook. Write your answers for these questions in the *answers* column, next to the questions. Then compare your answers with those we have suggested.

Application

15 Write Amos 3:8 in the *references* column.

a Write in the *facts* column an observation based on Amos 3:8.

b Read Joel 3:16 and Amos 1:2 then write this *question* in the questions column: What effects upon nature did Joel and Amos associate with God's speaking to man? Now, in the *answers* column write your answer to this question then compare it with ours.

16 Write Amos 5:1 in the references column.

a Write in the facts column an observation based on Amos 5:1.

b With reference to the observation we have made in this exercise, write this question in the questions column: Why? Now, read Amos 5:3; then in the answers column write your answer to this question.

17 In Amos 7:1, 3, 7; and 8:1 there is mentioned four times something which gives us personal information about this prophet. Write this information in the *fact* column.

18 Write Amos 7:10 in the *references* column. Now write in the facts column an observation based on this verse.

19 Read Amos 7:14 carefully. Find three facts from your observation of this verse and list them in the *facts* column.



What kind of biography does Amos 7:14 seem to be? Is it *simple narrative*, *narrative exposition*, *character exposition*, or *argument*? Primarily, it seems to be argument.

Application

20 In the *questions* column next to the facts you listed for Amos 7:14, write this question: What is Amos trying to prove in his argument? Now, in the *answers* column write your answer to this question.



self-test

Circle the letter in front of the item in each question which is the best answer.

- 1** Which of the following statements accurately describes characters of the Bible?
 - a)** They never did live in reality.
 - b)** They are not living now.
 - c)** They are still alive today.
- 2** Which of the following items is NOT one of the basic kinds of biography in the Bible?
 - a)** Collection of data.
 - b)** Character exposition.
 - c)** Argument.
 - d)** Simple narrative.
- 3** The primary emphasis of narrative exposition is to
 - a)** prove a point.
 - b)** teach historical lessons.
 - c)** teach character.
- 4** In the procedure for biographical study, you begin to read the material when you begin to
 - a)** organize your data.
 - b)** collect your data.
 - c)** make your textual outline.
- 5** The chronological order in which you will work with your information in a biographical study is
 - a)** collection, organization, interpretation.
 - b)** organization, interpretation, collection.
 - c)** interpretation, collection, organization.
 - d)** collection, interpretation, organization.
- 6** Our study of the book of Amos in this lesson has emphasized most the
 - a)** application of biographical study.
 - b)** introduction to biographical study.
 - c)** kinds of biography.
 - d)** sequence of steps in biographical study.

7 The outline that you have begun to make of the book of Amos is called a

- a)** reference outline.
- b)** factual outline.
- c)** textual outline.

answers to the study questions

- 10 b)** individual's moral and ethical traits.
- 1 b)** Jesus spoke of Abraham as a presently living person.
- 11 a)** Both Paul's speech and Luke's recording of it purposed to show by Paul's life and experience that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment and completion of the religion of the Jews.
- b)** The Jews, "brothers and fathers" (verse 1).
- c)** In Paul's case, all three seem to be factors. He uses facts from his life to illustrate his zeal as a Jew by birth and education. He uses his personal testimony to prove that he knows what he is talking about.
- d)** Yes, Paul's early life as a devout Jew led up to his later experiences.
- e)** Yes, the moral points out that Paul assented to the stoning of Stephen and persecuted Christians out of a mistaken sense of moral responsibility.
- f)** Yes, Paul was hoping his reputation as an educated, trained Jew with ethical standards would help him win his case.
- 2 c)** Hebrews 11 emphasizes faith above all else.
- 12** A possible purpose Amos may have had for including facts about his life in his book is as follows: Perhaps Amos wanted to show his integrity, his trustworthiness as a prophet. By telling something of his former life and how he came to be a prophet, Amos made it known that he had not asked for the job of being a prophet (7:15). The fact that God ordered Amos to prophesy indicated that he was prophesying the truth.
- 3 b)** specific aims the author had in mind.
- 13**
1. Amos was a shepherd.
 2. Amos was from the town of Tekoa.
 3. God revealed things to Amos.
 4. This revelation was about Israel.
 5. An earthquake happened two years after this revelation.

- 6.** Uzziah was king of Judah and Jereboam was king of Israel.
- 4** **a** 2) Simple narrative
 b 4) Narrative exposition
 c 1) Character exposition
 d 3) Argument
- 14** Suggested questions for more study: 1) Where was Tekoa? 2) When were these men kings? 3) What was the date of this earthquake? Is it mentioned anywhere else?
- 5** **a** T
 b F
 c T
 d F
 e T
- 15 a** The Sovereign Lord speaks to man. (This is not the only correct answer.)
 b Trembling of earth and sky, and drying up of pastures and grass
- 6** **a)** all that has a bearing on his life or influence.
- 16 a** The Lord sings a funeral song over Israel.
 b Because nearly all of Israel's soldiers are dying in battle.
- 7** Careful reading.
- 17** Amos was given visions from the Lord.
- 8** I. Birth and Early Life
 II. Conversion and Ministry
 III. Relationships With Others
 IV. Character Evaluation
 V. End of Life Experiences and Death
 VI. Author's Purpose for Writing
- 18** Amos is accused by Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, of conspiracy.
- 20** That he is not a religious professional who does prophesying for a living.

- 19** 1. Amos does not prophesy for pay.
2. Amos is a herdsman.
3. Amos takes care of fig trees.
- 9 a)** major periods in the person's life.

LESSON 9 Topical Method of Study

A topical Bible study is a study that deals with a specific subject in the Bible. The main topic or subject of the Bible is *redemption through the blood of Christ!* The Old Testament explains how God related Himself to our fallen human race through Israel. Israel's sacrifices, feasts, and offerings all pictured, in one way or another, Christ the Savior to come. He came when the time was right. The New Testament is the record of His coming. It tells of the events that followed His coming and those which will follow as time moves on. Other Bible topics support and explain the main topic.

You learned in Lesson 8 that people are topics in biographical study. But there are other topics besides people in the Bible. In Scripture you can read about music, occupations, customs, plants, animals, politics, geography, right rules for living, and many, many other topics that are both interesting and valuable to study. Learning the procedure for a topical Bible study will help you gain a better understanding of the Bible.

lesson outline

Introduction to Topical Study

Examples of Topical Studies

 Nature Topic: the Sparrow

 Theological Topic: God's Nature

 Ideas for Further Study

Procedure for the Topical Method

 Step 1: List Occurrences

 Step 2: Classify into Categories

 Step 3: Examine Context

 Step 4: Summarize Each Category

 Step 5: Compare Summary Statements

 Step 6: Summarize Entire Outline

Topical Study of Ephesians

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

1. Describe the relationship between visible things and invisible qualities in topical Bible study.
2. Describe “things” and “qualities” as topics for Bible study and give examples of each of the two categories.
3. List and explain the six steps in making a topical study.
4. Make a topical outline from Ephesians 4, 5, and 6, using the topic: “Acceptable Words.”

learning activities

1. Read the opening section, outlines, and objectives.
2. Learn the meanings of key words that are new to you.
3. Read the lesson development and respond by following the instructions in each question as you come to it.
4. Many of the answers will require more space than can be allowed in your textbook; you will need your own notebook for all except the very short answers.

5. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers.

key words

accountable
erroneous

occurrences
preconceived

random

lesson development

TOPICAL METHOD OF STUDY

Objective 1. *Describe the relationship between visible things and invisible qualities in topical Bible study.*

Our list of Bible topics in the first part of this lesson included both the *visible* and the *invisible*. We find in Romans 1:20 a relationship between them which is valuable to topical Bible study: “Ever since God created the world, his invisible qualities, both his eternal power and his divine nature, have been clearly seen; they are perceived in the things that God has made. So those people have no excuse at all!” This Scripture explains that God created the very nature that surrounds us, with the intent that we could learn about Him through our observation of it. God planned Israel’s location in Palestine (Deuteronomy 1:8). He planned its building materials (stones that would last for centuries to witness to the truth of His word). He planned its natural resources, the lay of its land, and even its climate. All these things have been used by God to illustrate truth in His power and nature.

The early and latter rains which water the crops of Palestine are the autumn rains (early) and spring rains (latter). These rains are used as significant illustrations in Scripture. (See Proverbs 16:15, Zechariah 10:1, James 5:7.) Any topic that is treated or mentioned in the Bible is a possible topic for you to study. This would include not only such things as *clothing*, *housing*, *foods*, etc. but also *words*; that is, how certain key words are used in Scripture. Your study would include themes such as *faith*, *prayer*, *the second coming of Christ*, and topics

concerning Christian living. The study you will be making in the last section of this lesson, in the book of Ephesians, is of the last type. It is a study on an important aspect of Christian living: *acceptable words*.

Application

1 Write **T** in the blank space before the statements that are true and **F** before false statements.

- ... **a** God has created nature in a haphazard or unplanned way.
- ... **b** There is no relationship between God's eternal truth and what can be seen in nature.
- ... **c** God purposely created nature in such a way that it would illustrate both His power and His divine nature.
- ... **d** The homeland for the people of Israel was chosen in a random way.
- ... **e** God particularly planned and selected Palestine as the homeland for His people Israel.
- ... **f** James 5:7 uses the autumn and spring rain of Palestine to illustrate the value of patience.



There will be great differences in the amount of information available about various topics in the Bible. For some, there may be a wealth of information in just a chapter or a passage. For others, it may be necessary to glean information from many books in both Testaments to get the fullest possible meaning from the study. The more comprehensive your study, the longer it will take. I have heard of a man who is doing his own study of the Holy Spirit, using all of the Bible. This kind of study would be done using steps similar to those you will learn to use in this lesson. The study will probably take the man several years or a lifetime to do, depending on how detailed he makes it. So, the length of a topical study will depend on the amount

of information to be found and the amount of time you wish to spend on it.

Application

- 2** Circle the letters before the correct completions to this sentence: The length of a topical study will depend on
- a)** the length of the book where the topic is mentioned.
 - b)** the amount of information to be found on the topic.
 - c)** the amount of time the student spends studying the topic.
-

A long, complete study is made much easier if you have access to a Bible concordance or a Bible dictionary. Bible software is also available to speed up searches. In these concordances and dictionaries, words and topics mentioned in the Bible are listed in alphabetical order along with their Scripture references. These helps allow you to save time in finding all the places where a topic is mentioned. If such books are ever available to you, you will want to make use of them. However, topical studies can be done without such helps.

In fact, it is better in shorter topical studies to do your own reading and searching for occurrences of the topic you wish to investigate. This is true because in doing your own reading, you will not only find DIRECT references to the topics, but INDIRECT references as well. *Direct references* are those which actually contain the specific word or phrase you are looking for. *Indirect references* are those which refer to the theme or general idea of your topic. These indirect references are important for a more complete understanding of your topic.

Application

3 Write *direct* after the definition of a direct reference, and *indirect* after the definition of an indirect reference.

a A reference which alludes to the theme or general idea of the topic

.....

b A reference which contains the specific word or phrase you are looking for

.....

4 Circle the letters before the correct statements.

a) You have to have other reference books to do a topical Bible study.

b) Reference books such as a Bible concordance or a Bible dictionary can be helpful when doing a topical Bible study but are not necessary.

c) In a topical Bible study, you will look only for the places where the topic is mentioned directly.

d) In a topical Bible study, you will look for all the places where the topic is mentioned directly or indirectly.



EXAMPLES OF TOPICAL STUDIES

Objective 2. *Describe “things” and “qualities” as topics for Bible study and give examples of each of the two categories.*

Nature Topic: the Sparrow

You saw, in your reading of Romans 1:20, that God uses nature to teach lessons to the human family. The lowly sparrow, or sparrow-like bird, which is so common around houses and gardens in many places of the world, is used a number of times in Scripture to illustrate truth.

Scholars tell us that the word sparrow is a translation of the Hebrew *tzipor*, which seems to have been a general term for all small birds or sparrow-like species. If you had time to

investigate, you would find this word used more than forty times in the Old Testament—not always translated *sparrow*. Sometimes it appears as *bird* or *fowl*. A corresponding Greek word occurs twice in the New Testament. These small birds are used in Scripture to illustrate how very much God cares for His children. Consider Matthew 10:29-31:

For only a penny you can buy two sparrows,
yet not one sparrow falls to the ground without
your Father's consent. As for you, even the
hairs of your head have all been counted. So do
not be afraid; you are worth much more than
many sparrows!

God *is* interested in sparrows. They are part of His creation. How vitally important it is for every child of God to have complete confidence and trust in the care of the Heavenly Father!

The Psalmist uses the little bird as an illustration of sorrow and loneliness. He writes, "I am like a lonely bird on a housetop" (Psalm 102:7). These small birds are known for their congregating in groups, noisy and chattering. To illustrate the intensity of his grief, the writer has contrasted the normal surrounding of these birds to that of the one alone on the housetop.

Theological Topic: God's Nature

The following is an outline of a topical study, similar to the kind of outline you will be making in your notebook for the study in Ephesians. *At this point, just read the outline and look up the verses that are mentioned as you read.* Notice the observations that are made for each reference. Notice the summary statement at the end. (All the references are from the book of Habakkuk.)

*Topic: The Nature of God***REFERENCE OBSERVATION**

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 1:2 | Habakkuk cries to the Lord, but the Lord does not answer. Since God is righteous, what does failure to answer imply? <i>That God answers when ready and only then.</i> |
| 1:5-6 | God is working; God is raising up Babylonians. What does this imply with regard to Habakkuk's complaint? <i>That God has been in the process of answering even before Habakkuk's cry.</i> |
| 1:12 | God is from the Beginning. God is holy, eternal. He is Habakkuk's protector. |
| 1:13 | God's eyes are too holy to look at evil. God cannot stand the sight of people doing wrong. |
| 2:1 | Habakkuk expects an answer from the Lord. What does this imply? <i>That God is accountable.</i> |
| 2:13-14 | The Lord must be the ultimate end of all effort. Knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth. |
| 2:20 | The Lord is in His holy temple. He is worthy of reverence. |
| 3:3 | God is holy and full of splendor. |
| 3:5-6 | The Lord is powerful. |
| 3:13, 18 | The Lord is concerned about salvation of people. |
| 3:19 | The Lord is strong. |

Summary: By nature God is personal, eternal, holy, and righteous. He is supreme in power, fair in judgment, and patient in His administration of justice, and He is the Savior.

Ideas for Further Study

In the two subsections of the lesson that you have just read, you have examples of two kinds of topical study. As you can see they are quite different, yet both deal with a specific

topic. The first example, the short study on the *sparrow*, is representative of the many topics of interest that can be found in the area of nature. Plants, animals and minerals are sometimes used in the Bible as *illustrations* and sometimes as *symbols*. These terms can sometimes be used interchangeably, but we will point out differences of usage between them that will help you to better understand the Bible.

An *illustration* of a truth pictures that truth in a way which makes it easier to understand. The *mustard plant* is an example of such an illustration. Because the mustard plant is known for growing an unusually large plant from a very small seed, Jesus used it to illustrate truth about the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 13:31-32) and faith (Matthew 17:20). A *symbol* is something that stands for something else. A symbol has one or more qualities that remind you of the object it stands for. For example, in Daniel 2 the “head of gold” was revealed to be a symbol of King Nebuchadnezzar himself (v. 38). In Daniel 8:1-8, a ram and a goat were used as symbols of kingdoms and kings who were to come.

When studying topics of this type, you will use the same steps that are outlined in the next section of the lesson. In addition, you will especially note the qualities of the topic which made it appropriate to use as either an *illustration* of truth, a *symbol*, or something else.

Application

- 5** Consider the following topics. Read the reference given for each one. Write either *illustration* or *symbol* in the blank following each example.
- a** The ant (Proverbs 6:6-8)
 - b** The Lamb (Revelation 6:1, 3, 5, 7)
 - c** Locusts (Nahum 3:15)
 - d** The bear (Daniel 7:5, 17)



In addition to those already mentioned in this lesson, some possible topics from nature might include light, water, grain, herbs (such as cumin, Matthew 23:23) and many others.

The second example of a topical study that you have read, *The Nature of God*, deals with a topic that is a *quality* rather than a *thing*. Additional qualities that can be investigated are hope, love, faith, forgiveness, repentance, and eternal life.

Application

- 6** Circle the letters before the correct statements.
- a)** Topics taken from nature are often used in the Bible as illustrations or symbols.
- b)** Topics that are *qualities* rather than *things* are often used in the Bible as illustrations or symbols.
- c)** Bible topics for possible study are quite limited.
- d)** Bible topics for possible study are many and varied.
- 7** List four or five possible topics that you can think of for study that have not been mentioned so far in this lesson.

.....

.....



PROCEDURE FOR THE TOPICAL METHOD

Objective 3. *List and explain the six steps in making a topical study.*

Step 1: List Occurrences

In this step you will make a textual outline similar to the one you made in the preceding lesson for biographical study. It will have to be made every time you do a topical study. You must choose a topic. You then select a book or passage of Scripture (or several passages) in which you have found some material related to the topic you have chosen. You read the Scripture with a pencil and paper at hand. Your paper should be divided into two sections, as you noted in the outline on *The Nature of*

God. On the left is the section for the *reference*, and on the right is the section for your *observation*.

Each time you come in your reading to some information about your topic, you will list the reference along with the information you have found. (Leave space between items on this list for addition of later observations.) You may have found a direct reference to your topic (where the word or phrase you have chosen is actually used), or you may have found an indirect reference to your topic (where just the theme or general idea is given). Direct or indirect, you will *list in order of appearance all occurrences of the topic*.

Application

8 Copy in your notebook the italicized part of the last sentence of the preceding paragraph. (This is Step 1.)

If the information you find is a direct reference to your topic, you will simply write it opposite the Scripture reference. If what you find is an indirect reference, you will write it, followed by the question: “What does this imply concerning my topic?” Always remember that in Bible study, the Holy Spirit is ever present with you to reveal His truth to your mind. No matter what the *method* of Bible study, Scripture must always be approached with a prayerful attitude and an open, receptive mind. You never study God’s Word alone! *He* is with you.

Note: If you are not sure about information that you have read thus far, go back and work through this study textbook again.

Step 2. Classify into Categories

In Step 1, you were directed to list all the appearances of your topic *in the order of their occurrence*. That means that in your first list, the Scriptures are in order as they come in the text. Now your task will be to examine all the information you have discovered about your topic, noticing how the information can be fit together in a logical or reasonable way. The information itself will suggest *categories* to you as you

look at it. For example, if your topic were *Furniture In the Temple*, your information might be grouped according to areas within the temple; these areas would serve as *categories*. If your topic were from nature, your categories might be the different ways the topic is used in the Bible. What kinds of information are given about the topic? Is it used to illustrate some truth? Is it used as a symbol of something else? Historical topics would suggest categories of *time*: a beginning, a middle, and an end period of time. Each topic will probably have two or more *categories* which can be used to *organize* the information you find.

So, Step 2 can be stated this way: Classify each occurrence of the topic according to the way it is used. Use categories that grow naturally out of the material you have found. When you get into Ephesians in the application section, you will be looking for instances of the topic that concern words that are acceptable to God. You will discover that Paul often gives opposites in the same sentence: “Don’t say this . . . but do say that . . .” When you have noted several of these references, your mind will begin to think in terms of two main categories for that particular topic. Your categories might be: “Wrong Words” and “Right Words,” or “Words to Shun” and “Words That Please God”. The finished outline will break down into four or five categories, but they will be related to the two that immediately come to mind.

Application

9 Copy in your notebook the two sentences from the paragraph above which summarize Step 2.

10 The purpose of Step 2 of the procedure for the topical method of Bible study is to always

- a)** list each occurrence of your topic as you find it.
 - b)** organize your information into logical categories.
 - c)** organize your information into categories of time.
-



Step 3: Examine Context

Back in Lesson 1 you learned that *context* means “all the words that surround a particular word you are considering.” In this course you have also learned the importance of careful *observation* when studying God’s Word. Step 3 will put your powers of observation to the test. You will have listed all the occurrences of your topic (Step 1). You will have organized them into several categories, according to the ways they are used (Step 2). And now you will not only read the verse or sentence where your topic is mentioned, but you will read the verses which surround it in order to be sure to have the correct meaning intended by the Holy Spirit.

As you read the context (surrounding sentences) you may need to adjust, or add to, your original observations. *Step 3, then, is to examine carefully (analyze) the various usages of your topic, taking the context into account.* If you see changes or additions that should be made in your original observations, write them down on your *Step 1 outline*.

Application

11 What is the meaning of context?

.....

12 Write *Step 1, Step 2, or Step 3* after each of the following sentences:

a Where your topic is mentioned, read the verses that surround it, to arrive at the correct meaning

.....

b Make a list of all the occurrences of your topic

.....

c Organize your list by grouping related items together

.....



Step 4: Summarize Each Category

To *summarize* means to reduce information to a shorter, more concise way of saying it. It means to use fewer words while keeping the essence of the meaning.

In Step 4, you will read all the observations you have made for each grouping (or category) and summarize each one in as brief a way as possible. For example, let's suppose your topic was *sheep*. Your list of references would be long, for sheep are very prominent in Scripture. After making this list in your first step, your second step would have been to group the items you had found into categories according to *usage*. In other words, references that are related in some way would be grouped together. Some of the headings you might have chosen for references to sheep probably would have simply described them as animals. "Livestock" and "Habits and Characteristics of Sheep" are examples of such headings. You would also probably have found references where sheep are used as *sacrifices*, *symbols*, and *illustrations of God's people*. Jesus called Himself "the good Shepherd" (John 10:11). Your third step would have been to examine the context of each reference to get its complete, true meaning.

Your fourth step is summarizing each category. If your topic is *sheep*, you will state in condensed form all of your observations concerning sheep as animals. You will do the same for the references that discuss sheep as *sacrifices*. You will summarize all the information about sheep as they are used *symbolically*, and then summarize the ways sheep are used as *illustrations* of Bible truth. Step 4 is to *make for each category of your outline a summarized restatement of the observations you have made in previous steps*.

Application

- 13** To summarize means to
- a)** list according to time.
 - b)** explain meaning.
 - c)** state in condensed form.

14 In Step 4 of the topical method of study, you will

- a)** list all occurrences of the topic.
 - b)** examine usage, taking context into account.
 - c)** summarize each category of the topical outline.
-

Step 5: Compare Summary Statements

Step 5 is not primarily a *writing* step, but a *looking* and *thinking* step. It is a time for considering what has emerged from your study. It is a time for meditating upon the truth you have seen in the Scriptures. It is a time when you prayerfully consider all the information you have gathered, allowing the Holy Spirit to help you to see all of the details and their relationship to the total impact of the verses.

In the *looking* and *thinking* you do in Step 5, you will decide on the best order in your topical study outline for your categories. In Step 1, you listed all the occurrences of the topic in the order in which they came in the passage you studied. Now when each category has been summarized, it may seem better to have one certain category come before or after another for reasons of time sequence, or because of relative importance. You may want to put the most important category at the end.

Application

15 Write **T** in the blanks before true statements and **F** before false statements.

- ... **a** In Step 1 you list the occurrences of your topic as you come to them.
- ... **b** In Step 4 you look and think, but do not write.
- ... **c** Step 5 is not primarily a writing step, but a prayerful looking and thinking step.
- ... **d** Step 2 involves a listing of occurrences in the order that they appear in the text.
- ... **e** In Step 2 all the references that are closely related are grouped together under a heading known as a category.
- ... **f** Step 3 is a step in which you study each category carefully by considering the context of each category.
- ... **g** In Step 4 you summarize each category.

16 In your notebook, list very briefly the first five steps used in making a topical study.



Step 6: Summarize Entire Outline

In Step 6 all findings are tied together. You draw conclusions in a master statement that includes the summaries you have made of each category. It is a master summary that is the outgrowth of your thinking and meditation in Step 5. In this final step you will synthesize, or put together, a master statement from your summary definitions.

There are two cautions to keep in mind, however. First, avoid overgeneralizations. A *generalization* is a broad, overall conclusion, rule, or statement that is not detailed but is made to apply generally. When summarizing Scripture, it is easy to be “carried away” by the wonderful insights that come, and make statements that go too far. Draw your conclusions only as broad

as Scripture permits. Try not to make them say more or less than Scripture says.

Second (and this is related to the first caution), keep in mind the limitations of Scripture. There are two kinds of limitations: *implicit* (something that is implied or understood, but not directly expressed), and *explicit* (something directly stated). Scripture limits us both ways. The Bible directly states many things. Direct statements limit us because we cannot change those things to suit ourselves. The Bible limits our conclusions by its implicit teaching also, ideas that are implied but not directly stated. When something is implied in Scripture, you can say that it is implied. But you must limit yourself to that, unless other references give direct teaching on the subject.

Application

- 17** Write very briefly in your notebook what is to be done in Step 6.
- 18** Write *implicit* or *explicit* in the blank after each item here.
 - a** Ideas that are implied but not directly stated
 - b** Ideas that are directly stated
- 19** What are the two cautions which must be observed when putting together your final summary statement? Write them in your notebook.



TOPICAL STUDY OF EPHESIANS

Objective 4. *Make a topical outline from Ephesians 4, 5, and 6, using the topic: "Acceptable Words."*

You will need your notebook and Bible for this section of the lesson. The learning activities presented here will help you to apply the six steps in the procedure for a topical study. You will be working in Ephesians 4-6.

Note: It is very important that you do the exercises independently before you look at the answers! Your findings

do not have to be exactly like the ones in the textbook to be correct. When you do finally compare your answers with the ones given, feel free to add to your information or adjust it in whatever way you desire, but try to retain your own words and your own insights as much as possible. Our aim is to help you have confidence in your own study of God's Word. God speaks to us as individuals. He will speak to you just as surely as He has spoken to others. The more you study, the more insight you will receive. The key is to give time to methodical study.

The topic for this study is *Acceptable Words*. The theme is taken from Psalm 19:14, "May my words and my thoughts be acceptable to you, O Lord, my refuge and my redeemer!" In the book of Ephesians, the Holy Spirit has used the apostle Paul to give us much detail about the kinds of words that *are* acceptable to God. (It also reveals some kinds that are *not* acceptable to Him.) If you wonder just how important this topic is to spiritual life, think about what James says: "The tongue is like a fire . . . spreading evil through our whole being. . . . it is . . . uncontrollable" (3:6, 8). For more about the tongue, read James' entire passage (James 3:1- 12) on the subject. Of course in this passage, the tongue is used symbolically of the words we speak. It is evident that only when we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus (and follow Him in obedience) can the tongue begin to be pleasing to God.

Reference	Observation

Your first preparation for *Step 1* is to divide about three sheets of notebook paper into two columns each, the wider column on the right. Write REFERENCE at the top of the left column and OBSERVATION at the top of the right column. Now read Ephesians 4, 5 and 6 with pencil in hand. As you come to any reference to the topic *words*, you will write the *reference* in the left column and your *observation* about it in the right column. If the reference is a *direct* reference, just write your observation down and go on. If the reference is an *indirect* one, write your observation down, followed by the question,

“What does this imply concerning *words*?” Then try to answer your own question briefly. Some of the later steps will give you opportunity for reflection and meditation; so don’t spend too much time at this point, trying to extract every bit of meaning from the text. You can do that later.

Be sure to include instances of unacceptable words as well as acceptable words. They can teach what is acceptable through the literary device of *contrast*. If a verse has both positive and negative ideas in it, use “a” then “b” with the verse to distinguish between these ideas.

Application

20 Step 1. List all occurrences of your topic in Ephesians 4, 5, and 6 (as we have just explained).



When you have finished the reading and outlining necessary to complete the preceding exercise, compare your outline for Step 1 with the one that is given for this exercise in the answer section.

Now in *Step 2* you will arrange the items you have discovered into some meaningful organization based on “usage.” You will group related items together to form categories. In almost any body of information, there will be more than one logical way of grouping ideas together into categories so that the whole can be understood more clearly. You will be shown one suggested way to organize this material. Other ways might be different but are not necessarily wrong. If you like your heading better, use it! (Use a separate sheet of paper in your notebook for answers to the next six exercises of Step 2. Leave about 5 lines of blank space between answers.)

Application

21 Read Ephesians 4:14 and 5:6 carefully. What idea do these verses have in common? Write your answer.

22 Think of a short heading you could give these two references. Write it.

23 Read Ephesians 4:11-12. This passage is in a special category, because it speaks of people who speak words that are used by God to build up the body of Christ. Think of a short heading you could give these two verses. Write the heading.

24 Read and compare the following references in Ephesians 4:25a; 4:26; 4:29a; 4:30; 4:31; 5:3; 5:4a; 6:4a; 6:9. Decide how these verses seem to be related and write a heading that would be suitable for them.

25 Read Ephesians 4:2; 4:15; 4:25b; 4:29b; 4:32; 5:3; first part of 5:19; 5:33; 6:2; 6:4b; 6:7. Decide on and write a heading that would show how these verses are related to each other.

26 Read Ephesians 5:4b; last part of 5:19; 5:20; 6:18. Notice what kind of words these verses explain and toward whom these words are to be directed. Then write a suitable heading for them.



Upon completion of the preceding exercise, you should have a notebook page containing five headings or categories that are similar to these and in this order:

UNACCEPTABLE WORDS: DO NOT LISTEN

WORDS TO LISTEN TO

UNACCEPTABLE WORDS: DO NOT SPEAK

ACCEPTABLE WORDS TOWARD ONE ANOTHER

ACCEPTABLE WORDS TOWARD GOD

Now in *Step 3*, you will go back to your textual outline made in *Step 1*. Read each reference you have listed as well as its context (verses before and after it). Write down in the *observation section* of this outline any additional insights that come to you from the contexts of these references.

As you begin to work with the texts you have selected, it is very important to adhere (stick closely) to what the Scripture

actually says about the topic. If you go beyond what the text really says, you are being unfair. Furthermore, you must correctly interpret what it really does say! We have heard others voice opinions which are not really based on the Word of God. As you begin to interpret Scripture, it is vitally important never to bring preconceived ideas into your statements. If you find that the Bible does not agree with some of your previous ideas, you will have to search the Scriptures and find out where you are in error. Your task is to find out what the Bible says, and stick to that.

Application

27 Now read Ephesians 4:17-24, part of the context for 4:14. Do as you have learned to do in earlier lessons, *ask the Bible questions!* Here are some suggested questions. Write the answers to them in your notebook, or on your Step 1 outline if you have room.

- a) What are these *deceitful* men like?
- b) Why are their words like shifting winds and full of error?
- c) Why are they so dangerous to the child of God?
- d) What power will help you speak that which pleases the Lord?



Continue in this manner, examining each reference and extracting from the Word of God as much detail and meaning as you can. The more time you have to spend, the more complete your study will be.

Now in *Step 4*, you will prepare a *summary statement* for each the five categories you formed in Step 2. Keep in mind that a summary attempts to include all the important points, stating them in as brief a way as possible. Write your own summaries before looking at those listed in the answer section.

Application

28 Write the summary for each category, on the notebook page where you listed that category in answer to an exercise on Step 2. (Remember to work with your outline of Step 1 in order to refer to the *references* and *observations* for each category.)

Now in *Step 5*, you will compare your five summary statements. Remember that this is not primarily a writing step, although you may add to your notes if necessary. It is mainly a step of prayerful, careful meditation as you consider what has emerged from your study. Reread your original outline and each observation you have made. Note the categories you have chosen and the summary statements you have made. Notice how Paul's material builds toward his concluding remarks. Notice how he has used the contrast of *bad words* with *good words* to strengthen his teaching.

Application

29 Decide on the best order in your completed outline for your five categories, and write them accordingly in your notebook.

Now in *Step 6*, you are ready to synthesize a master statement from the five summaries you have written. Avoid overgeneralizations. Keep in mind the limitations, implicit or explicit, imposed by the context and by the text itself. Write your own master summary statement about *acceptable words*, as taught in Ephesians 4, 5, and 6. Keep in mind that yours does not have to be exactly like ours in order to be correct.

Application

30 Write a master summary statement based on the five summaries of categories you have made, arranging this statement according to the rearranged order of your summaries.

Then compare your master summary with the one given in the answer section.



self-test

Circle the letter in front of the item in each question which is the best answer.

- 1** God created visible things in such a way that
 - a)** His divine nature illustrates them.
 - b)** they illustrate His divine nature.
 - c)** they are unrelated to His divine nature.
- 2** Which one of the following items will NOT help to determine the length of a topical study?
 - a)** The amount of information to be found on the topic.
 - b)** The length of the book where the topic is mentioned.
 - c)** The amount of time the student studies the topic.
- 3** Topics that are *qualities* rather than *visible things* are
 - a)** not used in the Bible as illustrations or symbols.
 - b)** used in the Bible as illustrations rather than symbols.
 - c)** used in the Bible as symbols rather than illustrations.
- 4** In the procedure for topical Bible study, *examination of context* is done in
 - a)** Step 2.
 - b)** Step 5.
 - c)** Step 3.
- 5** The best order for the headings or categories in the completed outline of a topical Bible study is determined by
 - a)** classification of observations into categories.
 - b)** comparison of summary statements of categories.
 - c)** listing occurrences of the topic in a textual outline.
- 6** In later steps of your topical study, *observations* that you make in your outline of Step 1 will be
 - a)** increased but not rearranged.
 - b)** rearranged but not increased.
 - c)** both increased and rearranged.

answers to the study questions

- 1** **a** F
 b F
 c T
 d F
 e T
 f T
- 2** **b)** the amount of information to be found on the topic.
 c) the amount of time the student spends studying the topic.
- 16** 1. List occurrences
 2. Classify into categories
 3. Examine context
 4. Summarize each category
 5. Compare summary statements
- 3** **a** Indirect
 b Direct
- 17** Draw conclusions in a master summary statement.
(Wording may vary, but the answer should be essentially same as this one.)
- 4** **b)** Reference books such as a Bible concordance or a Bible dictionary can be helpful when doing a topical Bible study but are not necessary.
 d) In a topical Bible study, you will look for all the places where the topic is mentioned directly or indirectly.
- 18** **a** Implicit
 b Explicit
- 5** **a** Illustration.
 b Symbol.
 c Illustration.
 d Symbol.
- 19** First, avoid overgeneralization; second, keep in mind the implicit and explicit limitations of Scripture.

6 a) Topics taken from nature are often used in the Bible as illustrations or symbols.

d) Bible topics for possible study are many and varied.

20 ACCEPTABLE WORDS

REFERENCE OBSERVATION

4:2	Be humble, gentle, patient, tolerant. What does this imply <i>concerning words</i> ? That my words should be humble, gentle, patient, tolerant.
4:11-12	He gave gifts to mankind (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers) to prepare God's people for Christian service and to build up the body of Christ. What does this imply <i>concerning words</i> ? That words which teach the truth of Scriptures are God's gift to His people.
4:14	Do not be blown about by every shifting wind of the teaching of deceitful men who lead others into error. What does this imply <i>concerning words</i> ? That we should not allow the words of false teaching to lead us into error.
4:15	Speak the truth in a spirit of love.
4:25a	No more lying!
4:25b	Tell the truth!
4:26	If you become angry, do not let your anger lead you into sin. What does this imply <i>concerning words</i> ? To avoid angry words.
4:29a	Do not use harmful words.
4:29b	Use only helpful words that build up, that provide what is needed, that do good to those who hear you.
4:30	Do not make God's Holy Spirit sad. What does this imply <i>concerning words</i> ? That harmful words sadden God's Holy Spirit.

REFERENCE OBSERVATION

- 4:31 No more shouting or insults.
- 4:32 Instead, be kind and tenderhearted to one another and speak forgiveness to one another.
- 5:2 Your life must be controlled by love just as Christ loved us and gave His life for us as a sweet smelling offering. What does this imply *concerning words*? That our words must be controlled by love just as Christ loved us.
- 5:3 The following should not be mentioned among you: sexual immorality, indecency, or greed.
- 5:4a It is not fitting for you to use language which is obscene, profane, or vulgar.
- 5:4b You should give thanks to God.
- 5:6 Do not let anyone deceive you with foolish words.
- 5:19 Speak to one another with the words of psalms, hymns, and sacred songs (words to one another). Sing hymns and psalms to the Lord with praise in your heart (words to the Lord).
- 5:20 Always give thanks for everything to God the Father.
- 5:33 Every husband must love his wife. Every wife must respect her husband. What does this imply *concerning words*? That words between husbands and wives must be those of love and respect.
- 6:2 Children must respect father and mother. What does this imply *concerning words*? That words of children to parents must be those of respect.

REFERENCE OBSERVATION

- 6:4a Parents do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. What does this imply *concerning words*? That parents must not speak to their children in a way that will make them angry.
- 6:4b Raise children with Christian discipline and instruction. What does this imply *concerning words*? That parents must speak words of Christian discipline and instruction to their children.
- 6:7 Slaves, do your work cheerfully as though you served the Lord. What does this imply concerning words? Cheerful words in your work.
- 6:9 Stop using threats.
- 6:18 Do all this in prayer, asking for God's help. Pray on every occasion as the Spirit leads. Pray always for all God's people.

7 Your answer. (Suggestions: tents, flowers, idolatry, sheep, coins.)

21 Both of them indicate that we should not listen to unacceptable words.

8 List in order of appearance all occurrences of the topic.

22 Suggested heading: UNACCEPTABLE WORDS: DO NOT LISTEN

9 Classify each occurrence of the topic according to the way it is used. Use categories that grow naturally out of the material you have found.

23 Suggested heading: WORDS TO LISTEN TO

10 b) organize your information into logical categories.

24 Suggested heading: UNACCEPTABLE WORDS: DO NOT SPEAK

11 All the words that surround a particular word you are considering. (Answers may vary but should be similar to this one.)

25 Suggested heading: ACCEPTABLE WORDS TOWARD ONE ANOTHER

12 a Step 3.

b Step 1.

c Step 2.

26 Suggested heading: ACCEPTABLE WORDS TOWARD GOD

13 c) state in condensed form.

27 a) They are heathen (v. 17), completely ignorant and stubborn (v. 18), and have lost all feeling of shame (v. 19).

b) Because their thoughts are worthless and their minds are dark (vv. 17-18).

c) Because they have no part in the life that God gives (v. 18), give themselves over to vice, and do all sorts of indecent things without restraint (v. 19).

d) The power of your new life in God (vv. 23-24).

14 c) summarize each category of the topical outline.

28 Suggested summary statements for each category:

Unacceptable Words: Do Not Listen: Refuse to listen to the error of false teachers. The Christian no longer has any part of their darkened minds and worthless thoughts. Refuse to listen to foolish words. They are not acceptable to God.

Words to Listen To: Listen to those who faithfully teach the Scriptures. God uses those words to build up the body of Christ, and to prepare His people for Christian service.

Unacceptable Words: Do Not Speak: Do not use lying words, angry words, harmful words, words that sadden God's Holy Spirit, shouting insults, or hateful words of any sort; do not mention sexual immorality, indecency, or greed; use no obscene, profane, or vulgar words; make no threats.

Acceptable Words Toward One Another: Use words that are humble, gentle, patient, tolerant, truthful, and helpful; use words that build up and do good, that are forgiving and loving; use psalms, hymns, spiritual songs; use words of love and respect to spouse, respect to parents, discipline and instruction to children; express cheerful words to all.

Acceptable Words Toward God: Sing hymns and psalms to God with praise in your hearts, give thanks to God for everything, ask for God's help, and pray always for all God's people.

- 15 a** T
- b** F
- c** T
- d** F
- e** T
- f** T
- g** T

30 Christians must not listen to the erroneous, foolish words that are produced by the darkened minds of false teachers and are not acceptable to God. Furthermore, the Christian must not use any words that are harmful and degrading to other people because such words sadden the Holy Spirit and are unacceptable to God. Christians must listen to words that present the truth of Scripture because such words will prepare them for Christian service and are acceptable to God. Also, Christians of all categories—husbands, wives, parents, children, and all others—must speak helpful words to each other that will build up the body of Christ. These words must be inspirational as well as loving and forgiving. Finally, Christians must constantly speak to God words of praise to Him and prayer for His people.

- 29** Suggested order:
- Unacceptable Words: Do Not Listen
 - Unacceptable Words: Do Not Speak
 - Words to Listen To
 - Acceptable Words toward One Another
 - Acceptable Words toward God

10 Devotional Method of Study

A tired, hungry traveler in a desolate place finds a beautiful tree, laden with delicious fruit. His one desire is to eat a piece of the fruit, to be nourished and refreshed by it. After he has eaten, he may consider the tree. He may note where it is growing, the shape of its leaves and branches, its color and fragrance. No matter how much he satisfies his curiosity about the lovely tree itself, however, it is his eating of the fruit that satisfies his hunger and nourishes his body. *The part of the tree that you eat is the part that gives you life.*

So it is with God's Holy Word, the Bible. Every aspect of it is intriguing. No human mind ever can reach the depths or the heights of it because, like its Author, it is eternal and infinite. New aspects of familiar verses will continue to unfold as long as you study Scripture. Like the beautiful tree and its fruit, the part of the Scripture that you *eat*, is the part that gives you life.

How can I *eat* Scripture? I must begin by reading it, but I must do more than that. I must internalize it through *devotional study*. I must make its teachings my own. When I do this, Scripture becomes my spiritual food and gives me spiritual life. Jesus said, "The words I have spoken to you bring God's lifegiving Spirit" (John 6:63).

lesson outline

Introduction to Devotional Bible Study

Devotional Study of a Verse

Devotional Study of a Paragraph

Devotional Study of a Longer Segment

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

1. Describe the spirit and textual composition of devotional Bible study.
2. Apply observation and interpretation to a devotional study of Philippians 2:1.
3. Apply observation and interpretation to a devotional study of Philippians 2:1-5.
4. Apply observation and interpretation to a devotional study of Philippians 2:1-11.

learning activities

1. Read the opening section, outline, and objectives.
2. Learn the meanings of key words that are new to you.
3. Read the lesson development, answering each study question as you come to it.
4. Use your notebook for all except the very short answers.
5. Open your heart to the Holy Spirit as you study, so that the Word of God can truly become the *Bread of Life* to you.
6. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers.

key words

amplified
internalize

intriguing
procedure

segment
vice versa

lesson development

INTRODUCTION TO DEVOTIONAL BIBLE STUDY

Objective 1. *Describe the spirit and textual composition of devotional Bible study.*

One author has said of devotional Bible study,

“[It] is not so much a technique as a spirit. It is the spirit of eagerness which seeks the mind of God; it is the spirit of humility which listens readily to the voice of God, it is the spirit of adoration which rests in the presence of God” (H. F. Vos, *Effective Bible Study*, Zondervan, 1956, p. 172).

Throughout this course, you have been urged to make your studies more than intellectual exercises. You have become aware of the *devotional attitude* each time you have entered into the study of Scripture with an open heart and found it speaking to you personally. There really are no new techniques to present in this lesson. Devotional study is accomplished by combining all the tools and skills you have been learning. What is important to learn here, however, is purpose.

The main purpose of devotional Bible study is to personally feed upon God’s Word, allowing it to become life to you! It is seeking the mind of God. It is listening to the voice of God. It is pursuing the will of God. It is resting in His holy presence in praise and worship. This is accomplished by using every possible means to understanding what the Scriptures are saying, and then responding to the Lord in loving obedience.

Devotional study should be a part of every Christian’s daily activity. It is intensely personal. While there may be times when a devotional study is prepared to be shared with others, its main purpose remains personal. What is the Holy Spirit saying to me? Devotional study will help me find the answer.

Because Christians have an enemy who tries to keep them from knowing and doing God’s will, you may find more

hindrances to your study when you are studying in this manner. Peter warns us:

Be alert, be on watch! Your enemy, the Devil, roams around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Be firm in your faith and resist him, because you know that your fellow believers in all the world are going through the same kind of sufferings (1 Peter 5:8-9).

Application

1 Write **T** in the blank space preceding these statements if the statement is true. Write **F** if the statement is false.

- ... **a** A devotional Bible study should be prepared only when you have to speak to a group.
- ... **b** Devotional study should be done every day by every believer in Jesus.
- ... **c** Devotional study should primarily interest the intellect.
- ... **d** Devotional study should primarily feed the spirit.

2 Review the first paragraph of the lesson development. Use it to complete the following sentences concerning *devotional Bible study*.

- a** It is the spirit of
- b** It is the spirit of
- c** It is the spirit of

The text for devotional Bible study can be a *word*, a *verse*, a *paragraph*, or a *longer segment* of Scripture. In this lesson you will not make a devotional study based on just one word because such a study would require access to reference materials which could give you further insight into the ways specific words are used in the original Greek and Hebrew texts. This sort of study cannot be covered in this course. Your studies will be based on a verse, a paragraph, and a longer segment—all from Philippians.

Verse and chapter division. Verse and chapter divisions are not found in the original Greek and Hebrew texts of the Bible. Scripture has traditionally been divided that way by translators to break up the text into smaller portions for better understanding. Once in a while you may find that the first verse of one chapter would fit better if it were the last verse of the previous chapter, or vice versa. The choice of just where to begin and end the chapters was made several centuries ago. The great convenience of having Scripture divided into easy-to-handle sections far outweighs any problem about which verse should end the chapter! You always are free to start or stop your study at any logical place. Just be sure that your starting or stopping does not alter the meaning of the passage. Include all the words that make the thought complete.

Paragraphs. Usually, modern translators include not only chapter and verse division but also divide the Scripture into paragraphs. A *paragraph* is grouping together of sentences that relate to the same main topic. The first line of that group of sentences is *indented* to show transition from one thought to another. A paragraph is a convenient unit to study.

These small “bites” of Scripture will be important to devotional study. When Jesus was tempted by Satan, He quoted the Scripture which says, “Man cannot live on bread alone, but needs every word that God speaks” (Matthew 4:4). Jesus was quoting from Deuteronomy 8:3. You will be studying small portions of Scripture intensely as though you were looking at them under a microscope. You will try to understand each phrase as thoroughly as possible. You will be asking the Bible questions as you learned to do in Lesson 2 and Lesson 5.

Longer segments. Sometimes you may want to use longer segments such as several paragraphs or more than one chapter. The length of the text is not as important as the “listening heart.”

Application

- 3** The most likely text for a devotional study would be
- a)** a book of the Bible.
 - b)** a paragraph of Scripture.
 - c)** a group of books such as the four Gospels.
- 4** (Circle the letters before *all* the correct endings.) Verse and chapter divisions of the Scripture
- a)** are a convenience for reading and understanding.
 - b)** are of no value to a student.
 - c)** were found in the original Greek and Hebrew texts.
 - d)** were decided upon by translators, centuries ago.
 - e)** have recently been added by modern translators.
 - f)** always mark where a study should begin or end.
-

DEVOTIONAL STUDY OF A VERSE

Objective 2. *Apply observation and interpretation to a devotional study of Philippians 2:1.*

It is true that in devotional study, heart attitude is more important than intellectual technique. It is true also that methodical study is more valuable than random or haphazard study. A good Bible scholar will combine right attitude of heart with best method of study. You will be responding to God's Word to feed your spirit, and you will bring to bear all you have learned about Bible study.

In this section of the lesson, you will consider three convenient steps in making a devotional study. Then you will be asked to apply the last two of them to Philippians 2:1. The steps are: Choose the Text, Observe the Facts, Interpret the Facts.

Choose the Text. The first step is to decide on the verse to be studied. You will rely heavily on the Holy Spirit to direct your attention to His Word for *you* at that particular time. This reliance is difficult to explain to anyone because it is so

personal. But if you are a Christian and you spend time with the Word of God, you probably are aware of the way the Holy Spirit quickens your mind to certain Scriptures. I have heard Christians say such things as “the letters just seemed to jump off the page,” or “it seemed like that verse was printed in letters of gold.” Each of you who seeks God for guidance in the study of the Word knows that the Holy Spirit has His own special way of attracting your attention!

So, one way to choose a verse is to pay close attention to a given passage of Scripture. You may be especially drawn to a verse as you read. Any time you read the Bible, make a note of verses that are interesting to you. The verses that lend themselves to devotional study are those which contain *directions to follow* or *warnings to heed*.

What if you receive no “special” guidance? Does that mean you should not study the Word? By no means! “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living” (2 Timothy 3:16). So, if you are not drawn especially to any verse, just choose one that contains directions to follow or warnings to heed.

Observe the Facts. The second step is to read the verse thoughtfully many times. As you read, think this question to yourself: “*If I had to give this verse a three or four word title, what would it be?*”

By thinking of a title for the verse, you will grasp the main idea in it. When you have the main idea of the verse, read it through and *list all the facts you can find in it*. Look for facts that are either *directly stated* or *implied* by this verse. Look for answers to the questions you learned to ask in Lesson 2: WHO? WHAT? HOW? WHEN? WHERE? (You will not be able to find answers to all five of these questions in every verse you study.) Make a note of the names of things, the action words, *the words that describe things*. All of these observations should be written in your notebook.

Interpret the Facts. The third step is to interpret the verse by writing the meaning of it in your own words. By doing this, you will be answering the question that is the key to interpretation: “What does this mean?” For your devotional study you will ask a second question: “What does this mean to *me*?”

In preparing a devotional study you will be more interested in finding truth to feed your spirit than in technical matters. However, all the skills you have learned should be brought to bear on the text whenever you study the Bible. Let me illustrate what I mean.

You learned in Lesson 5 that *repetition* is a principle of composition. You learned to notice repetition as you study Scripture because it is a forceful literary device in the hands of a skillful writer. Repetition brings unity to a passage of Scripture. It indicates *emphasis*.

The *reason* for repetition is what makes it important! When you learn to recognize *repetition*, it is not just so you can say, “That *truth* must be *important* because the Holy Spirit has stressed it by repetition!” Your technical knowledge should help you handle truth more accurately. The skills you have learned all through this course will become *tools* to help you recognize and understand truth for your personal benefit!


Application

- 5** Circle the letter in front of each correct statement.
- a)** Verses of the Bible that lend themselves to devotional study are those which contain directions to follow or warnings to heed.
 - b)** You should study only verses you feel especially attracted to.
 - c)** All Scripture is useful for teaching the truth and giving instruction for right living.
 - d)** The second step in preparing a devotional study is *interpretation*.
 - e)** The key question in interpretation of Scripture is: “What does this mean?”
-

Review Lesson 2 in this Study Guide. Especially note what you learned about the *observing* and *interpreting* steps in the study of Scripture.

Application

- 6** *Repetition* is important primarily because it
- a)** is a principle of composition.
 - b)** is “technical” knowledge.
 - c)** indicates emphasis.
- 7** Which one of these statements concerning preparation of a devotional study is true?
- a)** Since you are seeking spiritual food, you can ignore the study skills you have learned.
 - b)** You discover and understand truth by using in a prayerful, thoughtful way all the skills you have learned.
 - c)** It is of primary importance to be able to say you can recognize the principles of composition.
-



Now you are ready to apply a devotional study to one verse: Philippians 2:1. Throughout the following exercises, it is extremely important that you follow each direction on your own, writing down all your findings in your notebook *before* you look at the answers in the study textbook. Expect your answers to be somewhat different from those given. Do not feel that you must change yours unless they are obviously wrong. Step one, *choosing the text*, has already been done for you. Write the reference, PHILIPPIANS 2:1, at the top of a page in your notebook.

Application

- 8** Read Philippians 2:1 many times. You should memorize it. Write a three or four word title for this verse.
- 9** Observe the facts as you read Philippians 2:1 over again. Write brief answers to the questions: WHO? WHAT? HOW? and WHEN?

10 Interpretation of facts. In your own words, write an amplified statement on this verse, using the pronoun “I” instead of “you.” Write thoughtfully and prayerfully, keeping in mind the two key questions: “What does this mean?” and “What does this mean to me?”

DEVOTIONAL STUDY OF A PARAGRAPH

Objective 3. *Apply observation and interpretation to a devotional study of Philippians 2:1-5.*

Devotional study of a paragraph is very similar to devotional study of a verse. The paragraph you will study in this section is Philippians 2:1-5. First, you will read each verse carefully and assign a short three or four word title to it as you did for Philippians 2:1.

Second, you will observe the facts. That is, reread as many times as necessary to find answers to the five *fact* questions: WHO? WHAT? HOW? WHEN? WHERE? Note the verbs or actions, the statements of truth, the commands and warnings. When you begin to clearly understand the message of the paragraph, you will write a three or four word title for the paragraph.

The third step will be interpretation. It will include the writing in your own words of a statement of meaning on this paragraph. This statement will bring all your observations and interpretations together in a unified whole.

The following questions will guide you through a study of Philippians 2:1-5. Write your answers to them in your notebook *before* you look at the ones in the study textbook. The answers may vary, so do not think you have to change your answers unless they seem to need correction.

Application

11 Read each individual verse of Philippians 2:1-5 several times. Give each verse a two or three word title that briefly summarizes the main thought of the verse. Write these titles on your notebook page as though they were the main headings of an outline. Leave several spaces between them so that factual observations can be placed under each verse title, as you develop this outline. (Review the outlining procedure in the section of Lesson 7 titled “Outlining Habakkuk.”) At the top of this page, write a short title for your outline that summarizes the ideas in the paragraph.

12 Reread each verse of Philippians 2:1-5 with the five fact questions in mind: WHO? WHAT? HOW? WHEN? WHERE? (You will not find answers to all of them in every verse, of course.) You will be looking also for statements of truth, commands, warnings, and principles of composition that are clues to what the Holy Spirit intended to emphasize. With all this in mind, write subtopics under each of the five verse titles and details under your subtopics for verse 3 only.

Note: Space did not permit a complete outline of every observation in our answer to the preceding exercise, but please note in verse 2 of the following phrases: “same thoughts . . . same love . . . being one in soul and mind.” What literary devices do you see in use here? *Repetition*? *Continuity*? Yes. There also is *continuation*, which is the extension of an idea. When a passage is built up in this way, it becomes very forceful. It lets us know that the idea being presented is one which is very important to God. The suggested outline in the answer section to the study textbook will not contain all of these kinds of observations, but be sure that your own notes are complete with all the observations you can make.



Application

13 Now you are ready for the third step which is *interpretation*. Remember the key questions, “*What does this mean?*” and “*What does this mean to me?*” In your own words, write an amplified statement of meaning on Philippians 2:1-5 using “I” and “my” instead of “you” and “your.” (After all, this devotional study is for personal benefit and it helps to put it in the first person.) Your statement should include all the highlights of the passage that you have found. As you write it prayerfully, the Lord’s Holy Spirit will make it life to you!

DEVOTIONAL STUDY OF A LONGER SEGMENT

Objective 4. *Apply observation and interpretation to a devotional study of Philippians 2:1-11.*

The procedure you have used for studying verses and paragraphs can be extended to longer passages. For devotional study you will want to choose passages in which all the verses are related in some way. This could be several paragraphs or a whole chapter, but for this kind of study you should be able to see continuation of a topic throughout the passage. Here, the passage for study has been chosen for you.

Philippians 2:1-11 has been chosen so you can see how the study of a single verse and paragraph can relate to the study of the longer passage of which they are a part. We can save time and space by building on the study you have just completed, making it part of the study of the longer passage. In this section, you will examine verses 6-11. Write your findings in your notebook immediately following your study of verses 1-5. The steps will be the same as before, except in a longer passage you may want to find a key verse. Remember the following steps.

First, read each verse carefully, assigning a brief title to it.

Second, observe the *facts*. Reread as many times as necessary to find answers to the five *fact* questions: WHO?

WHAT? HOW? WHEN? WHERE? Note the verbs, or actions, the statements of truth, the commands and warnings. Be sure to find out the meaning of any words you do not know. In a longer passage it is likely that you will see more principles of composition and literary devices you have learned to look for. Write all your observations. Use an outline form as you did for Philippians 2:1- 5. Choose a short new title for the entire passage.

Third, interpret and write your findings, answering the important questions *What does this mean?* and *What does this mean to me?*

Write the answers to the following exercises in your notebook in such a way that they will be a continuation of your study of verses 1-5.

Application

14 Read the entire passage (Philippines 2:1-11) several times. By now you are becoming familiar with the first part of the passage, but you will need to read it again to see how it relates to verses 6-11. When you see the entire passage as a whole, choose *a key verse* for it and write the reference to this verse. This verse should be one that seems to sum up the main idea of all the verses, or one that is basic to all the ideas.

15 Examine again the title you chose for Philippians 2:1-5. Keep the same title, or modify it if necessary, for use with the whole section, 1-11. Now, write the title you have decided on for the whole section.

16 Since you have already completed a study of the first five verses, start with verse 6. For verses 6-11, read each verse carefully. Write down a three or four word title that briefly summarizes each one. *When you have finished*, compare your titles with those in the study guide. (Answers may vary.)

17 Now, choose and write a title (based on our key verse, 2:5) for verses 6-11.

18 You are ready to *observe the facts* in Philippians 2:6-11. Use your verse titles as main points in an outline of this section, as you did for verses 1-5. Review the directions in Exercise 12. Because the study of verses 6-11 is to be a continuation of the passage, continue numbering your main points where you left off at verse five. Your next main point will be VI. Now write subtopics under each of the six verse titles for verses 6-11.

The study textbook contains only a basic outline. Your own outline should contain every detail of observation that comes to you as you carefully and prayerfully look for what the words actually are saying. Now you are ready to write your interpretation for 2:6-11. This section is one of the most profound, meaningful passages in all of Scripture. We will never be able to understand the full significance of what Jesus Christ did for us when He entered our world as a man, went to His death on the cross, and then received the highest name and the greatest honor from the hand of God the Father. Yet we are to have “the attitude . . . that Christ Jesus had” (verse 5).

Application

19 Review the directions for Exercise 13. Prayerfully consider verses 6-11. Write your answer for them to these questions: What does this mean? What does this mean to me? Answer these questions to the best of your ability as the Holy Spirit helps you.

20 Finally, write a master statement of meaning for the entire passage, Philippians 2:1-11. (This statement will explain how Philippians 2:6-11 relates to 2:1-5.)

self-test

- 1** The main difference between devotional Bible study and other kinds of Bible study, is in
 - a)** skills used.
 - b)** technique.
 - c)** purpose.
- 2** The primary purpose of devotional Bible study should be
 - a)** intellectual discovery and understanding.
 - b)** to get personal strength from God's Word.
 - c)** to apply study techniques to Scripture.
- 3** Devotional Bible study can be accomplished best by using
 - a)** verses, paragraphs, or chapters.
 - b)** a whole book.
 - c)** several related books.
- 4** Devotional study should be
 - a)** part of every Christian's daily activity.
 - b)** done only when preparing to speak to a group.
 - c)** reserved for special seasons of the year.
- 5** When studying just a single verse of Scripture
 - a)** a simple reading is sufficient.
 - b)** methodical study is better than haphazard study.
 - c)** Bible study skills are not important or used.
- 6** When studying just a single verse of Scripture,
 - a)** any Bible verse is as good as another.
 - b)** choose an especially long verse.
 - c)** decide on a verse that has directions to follow or warnings to heed.
- 7** What is the key question in interpretation of Scripture?
 - a)** Who is the main person?
 - b)** What does this mean?
 - c)** Where did this take place?

- 8** What is the final step in devotional Bible study?
- a)** Interpretation.
 - b)** Assigning a title.
 - c)** Observation.
- 9** Skills in Bible study should
- a)** become tools to help you handle truth accurately.
 - b)** make you a better Bible teacher than most people.
 - c)** be ignored when you do devotional study.
- 10** The purpose of writing a short title for each verse in a paragraph is to
- a)** keep the study brief.
 - b)** keep you from being concerned with details.
 - c)** help you grasp the main idea in each verse.
- 11** You write your interpretation in a statement of meaning to
- a)** shorten the passage.
 - b)** unify all your observations and interpretations.
 - c)** tell the most important thing in the passage.
- 12** Whether a devotional study is based on a verse, or a paragraph, or several paragraphs will
- a)** completely change the steps for the study.
 - b)** change very little the steps for the study.
 - c)** greatly change the steps for the study.
- 13** In devotional study of a longer passage,
- a)** only the general, overall thought is important.
 - b)** each verse is important for what it contributes to the whole passage.
 - c)** one reading can usually reveal all there is to see.
- 14** When you are choosing a longer passage for devotional study,
- a)** it helps to have many topics introduced in it.
 - b)** choose a passage in which all verses are related to one another in some way.
 - c)** the passage must start or stop with the chapter divisions.

Be sure to complete your unit student report for Unit 3 and return the answer sheet to your GU instructor.

answers to study questions

- I** **a** F
 b T
 c F
 d T

10 In Jesus Christ I have all that I need to keep me steadfast and secure as a person, and make me more than a conqueror as a believer! The fact that my life is in Christ is my source of strength! He never fails! When I need comfort, I find it in His love. I have fellowship with the Spirit so I am never alone! Fellowship implies communication and sharing of interests. The more I conform my life to Jesus Christ, the closer this fellowship can become. Kindness and compassion should describe my attitudes and actions toward fellow believers and theirs toward me.

- 2** **a** eagerness which seeks the mind of God.
 b humility which listens readily to the voice of God.
 c adoration which rests in the presence of God.

11 CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS

- | | | |
|-------------|---------|--------------------|
| I. | Verse 1 | GOD, SELF, OTHERS |
| II. | Verse 2 | CHRISTIAN UNITY |
| III. | Verse 3 | CHRISTIAN MOTIVE |
| IV. | Verse 4 | CHRISTIAN CONCERN |
| V. | Verse 5 | CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE |

- 3** **b)** a paragraph of Scripture.

12 CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS

- I.** GOD, SELF, OTHERS
 A. Strength from Life in Christ
 B. Comfort from Christ
 C. Fellowship with Holy Spirit
 D. Kindness and Compassion for One Another

II. CHRISTIAN UNITY

- A.** Have Same Thoughts
- B.** Share Same Love
- C.** Be One in Soul and Mind

III. CHRISTIAN MOTIVE

- A.** Wrong Motives
 - 1.** Selfish Ambition
 - 2.** Cheap Desire to Boast
- B.** Right Motives
 - 1.** Humility Toward One Another
 - 2.** Always Consider Others Better than Yourself

IV. CHRISTIAN CONCERN

- A.** Not Just For Your Own Interests
- B.** Concern for One Another's Interests

V. CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE

- A.** Attitude that Christ Jesus Had
- B.** The Believer Needs It

- 4** **a)** are a convenience for reading and understanding.
 d) were decided upon by translators, centuries ago.

- 13** Philippians 2:1-5 shows that the foundation for all right personal relationships is my life in Jesus Christ. Only when I am strong in the Lord can I relate rightly to others. As the completeness of Christ's life flows through me, I have inner strength, comfort, and fellowship. Then His love shining through me can show kindness and compassion to others. The goal for me and other Christian believers is more than kindness and compassion, it is that we all will be one in thought, mind, soul, and love toward each other and toward the Lord. (See the prayer of Jesus, John 17:21-23.) This may seem difficult, but verses 3-5 help me see what I can do to bring about this desire of God for His family. I must guard my spirit against selfish ambition or a cheap desire to boast. If I notice this weakness in myself, I must immediately recognize it as displeasing to the Lord. Instead of boasting, I will cultivate humility toward other believers. Each one is better than I am in some way. I must

think about that and be concerned for the interests of other believers as well as my own interests. My attitude must be the same as the attitude Jesus Christ had. I will remember that this is my goal, and I will discipline my spirit to be this kind of person. I can succeed only because it is that life of Jesus Christ and my union and fellowship with Him (verse 1) that make it possible!

- 5 a)** Verses of the Bible that lend themselves to devotional study are those which contain directions to follow or warnings to heed.
- c)** All Scripture is useful for teaching the truth and giving instruction for right living.
- e)** The key question in interpretation of Scripture is: What does this mean?"

14 Key verse: Philippians 2:5.

6 c) indicates emphasis.

15 (Answers will vary.) Our suggested new title for Philippians 2:1-11: THE MIND OF CHRIST IN ME.

7 b) You discover and understand truth by using in a prayerful, thoughtful way all the skills you have learned.

16 Verse 6: NATURE, FORCE, AND EQUALITY
 Verse 7: WILLINGLY TOOK SERVANT'S NATURE
 Verse 8: HUMBLE OBEDIENCE UNTO DEATH
 Verse 9: GIVEN THE HIGHEST NAME
 Verse 10: EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW
 Verse 11: JESUS CHRIST IS LORD

8 All I Need, or Completeness In Christ. (Answers will vary.)

17 THE ATTITUDE OF JESUS

9 WHO? You, Christ, the Spirit, and other believers.
 WHAT? Strength, love, fellowship, kindness, and compassion.
 HOW? Strength in Christ, His love comforts you, fellowship with the Spirit, kindness and compassion for other believers.

WHEN? Now (all action verbs are present tense).
(Answers will vary.)

18**VI. NATURE, FORCE, AND EQUALITY**

- A.** Always Had God's Nature
- B.** Forced Equality Unacceptable

VII. WILLINGLY TOOK SERVANT'S NATURE

- A.** Of His Own Free Will
- B.** Gave Up All
- C.** Became Like Man
- D.** Appeared in Human Likeness

VIII. HUMBLE OBEDIENCE UNTO DEATH

- A.** Walked Path of Obedience
- B.** Path Led to Crucifixion

IX. GIVEN THE HIGHEST NAME

- A.** God Raised Him to Highest Place
- B.** God Gave Him the Highest Name

X. EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW

- A.** All Beings in Heaven
- B.** All Beings on Earth
- C.** All Beings in World Below
- D.** To Honor the Name of Jesus

XI. JESUS CHRIST IS LORD

- A.** All Will Openly Proclaim It
- B.** To the Glory of God the Father

20 The Holy Spirit clearly shows how the attitude of Jesus Christ (vv. 6-11) corresponds to the attitude I must have in this world (vv. 1-5). Because Paul urges certain kinds of actions and attitudes in verses 2-4, I understand that my will is involved. I must choose to be like Jesus. My decisions in day to day living must be made by my own will, and that will must be obedient to Jesus. Jesus is my example in that He willingly, "of His own free will" (v. 7), became completely obedient to God. To be like Jesus, I must renounce selfish ambition (v. 3). Those who

allow it to rule them become crazed with lust for power, wealth, and fame. They become insensitive to the welfare of others. I must never become that kind of person. Jesus showed me the way when He refused the idea of achieving personal gain by force (v. 6). I learn from verse 3 that I must shun the “cheap desire to boast,” and deal humbly with other people. Verse 8 tells me that Jesus Himself was humble. Verses 3 and 4 urge me to be considerate of others and their interests, to consider others better than myself. Jesus showed me how to do this also. He took on Himself the nature of a servant (v. 7). Jesus walked the path of obedience all the way to death. I must obey the command of verse 5 to have the same attitude that He had. It is evident that the attitude Jesus had was pleasing to God. Verses 9-11 show me the great power and glory that Jesus has received from the Father for a certain reason (v. 9). For what reason? For His humble obedience of His own free will to the will of the Father (vv. 6-8). When I consider the true nature of Jesus Christ, how ashamed I am of my failures! But that shame must not defeat me. Jesus wants to strengthen me so I can be the kind of person He wants me to be. My strength for living like Jesus comes from the union of my life with Him (v. 1). Obedience to Him can only result in future glory!

- 19** (Suggested answer; answers will vary.) Philippians 2:6-11 gives me a little insight into the nature of Jesus Christ and the true meaning of His coming to the earth. There was never a time when Jesus did not have the nature of God. This nature was against the use of force for personal gain. Jesus freely gave up all, took the nature of a servant, became like a man, and took human form. Jesus Christ’s giving up all He had as God and coming to live on earth as a human being is beyond understanding, but there is more still. Becoming a man in humble obedience to the Father’s will led Jesus to His death on the cross. He knew where giving up all would lead, yet He did it “of His own free will” (v. 7). The magnitude of His act caused the Father to raise Him to the highest place above and give

Him the name that is greater than any other name. In honor to the name of Jesus, all beings whether in heaven, on earth, or in the world below will fall on their knees and openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. The meaning of verse 10 is clear. All will bow one day to Jesus Christ. Either we will bow to Him while living and receive His pardon and eternal life, or we will be compelled to bow and acknowledge His lordship in the future when it is too late for salvation. Every knee eventually will bow to Him. The great significance of this passage for me is to be sure that now, while I am living, I make Jesus Christ LORD of my life. Jesus freely chose to walk in humble obedience to the Father's will. Even so, I choose to walk in humble obedience to Jesus, no matter what happens to me personally. My life is His to command, just as His life was the Father's to command.

Glossary

The right-hand column lists the lesson in the study guide in which the word is first used.

		<i>Lesson</i>
accountable	— responsible, trustworthy	9
allegory	— symbolic representation that is often difficult and abstract	4
amplified	— made longer by closer analysis	10
analogy	— resemblance in some but not all ways between things	4
analyze	— to determine the nature and relationship of the parts of something	5
apply	— put into practice	2
archaeologist	— one who scientifically studies material remains of the ancient past	5
arrogant	— very proud	7
association	— process of bringing things together	5
assumption	— considering something to be true	3
biographical	— pertaining to written story of a person's life	1
capsule	— very brief	8
category	— class, sort, kind	6
chronological	— having to do with past events in their order of time	6
clue	— something that guides through difficulties	5

communication	—	exchange of information	3
complaint	—	act of expressing dislike	7
composition	—	act of putting together in written form	5
connotations	—	suggested meanings in addition to main or direct meaning	3
conspiracy	—	secret plan to do an unlawful act	8
contemporaries	—	people who lived at the same time in history	8
context	—	all the words around a passage	1
correlation	—	pertaining to how things fit together or depend on each other	2
crucial	—	very important	6
definitive	—	serving to define precisely	2
devotional	—	pertaining to giving wholly to God or other good work	1
doctrine	—	what is taught	3
dogmatic	—	pertaining to fixed teaching that is accepted without reasoning or questioning	4
emerge	—	to come out or appear	7
encyclopedia	—	book or set of books in which all branches of knowledge are dealt with	3
environmental	—	pertaining to conditions that affect growth and character	8
erroneous	—	mistaken, not correct	9
evaluate	—	to examine and judge a matter	2
exhaustive	—	complete	6
exposition	—	explaining of a thing	8

figurative	— expression of one thing in terms of another	1
finite	— limited	1
focus	— to fix on an object or objective	2
implicational	— pertaining to suggestion of meaning that is not directly stated	2
incidental	— of minor importance	8
infinite	— unlimited	1
inspired	— illuminated	1
integrate	— to bring parts together into a whole	7
internalize	— to incorporate within the self as guiding principles	10
interpret	— explain the meaning of	2
intriguing	— pertaining to arousing interest, desire, or curiosity	10
keynote	— fundamental or central fact or idea	6
literal	— according to actual meaning of the words	1
literary device	— something in a literary work designed to achieve a particular effect	5
methodical	— pertaining to orderly procedure	2
mystical	— secret	3
observe	— to notice (in a special sense: to notice what rather than why)	2
occurrences	— appearances	9
parable	— short story that teaches a lesson about God or goodness	4

paradox	— something contrary to what would normally be expected	8
parallelism	— usually similarity but sometimes contrast between ideas	4
pertinent	— relevant or applicable to the matter in hand	8
preconceived	— pertaining to an idea or opinion formed before one had actual knowledge	9
primary	— first in importance	3
principle	— rule that underlies the working of something	5
procedure	— a series of steps followed in a regular order	10
prophecy	— declaration of God's will to men	4
qualification	— requirement	2
random	— without order or plan	9
rational	— pertaining to the reason for something	2
reincarnation	— idea of rebirth in a new body or form of life	1
revelation	— making that which was unknown and unknowable knowable and known	1
routine	— commonplace, ordinary	6
secondary	— less important than something else	3
segment	— portion	10
study	— use of the mind to obtain knowledge	1
summarize	— to present main points with only necessary details	2

supernatural	— pertaining to something outside the natural realm	1
symbol	— something that stands for or suggests something else	4
synthetic method	— “whole book method” when used with reference to Bible study	1
technique	— skilled way or art of doing some special thing	2
thematic	— relating to a theme	7
theology	— study of God	3
topical	— pertaining to topic or subject matter	1
transition	— change from one condition or subject to another	7
type	— person or thing that prefigures another person or thing	4
vice versa	— the other way around	10
vivid	— full of life	6

Answers to Self-Tests

Lesson 1

- 1 b)** studying in a disciplined way
- 2 a)** for living, faith and service.
- 3 a)** God's making known what was formerly unknowable.
- 4 c)** Natural
- 5**
 - a** 3) ordinary
 - b** 4) believer
 - c** 5) accommodated
 - d** 2) progressive revelation
 - e** 1) commentary
 - f** 6) harmony
- 6** Question and Answer Technique, Basic Principles of Interpretation, Bible Study Methods.

Lesson 2

- 1 b)** Spiritual understanding
- 2 a)** Spiritual and mental
- 3 c)** Perfect freedom from sin
- 4**
 - a** 2) Spiritual
 - b** 1) Mental
 - c** 2) Spiritual
 - d** 1) Mental
 - e** 2) Spiritual
- 5** Pencil, paper, and Bible. (In any order.)
- 6 b)** leads to an understanding of Scripture.
- 7 c)** Observe, interpret, summarize, and evaluate.
- 8 a)** "What does this say?"
- 9 c)** "What does this mean?"

- 10 a** 2) Thought questions
b 1) Fact questions

Lesson 3

- 1 a)** Doctrine and theology include all the teachings of the Christian faith.
b) Theology deals with the study of God and His relation to man and the world.
- 2 b)** The natural, normal, ordinary use of language
- 3 a)** Belief must be tested by New Testament revelation.
c) Belief must be tested by the meaning of the context surrounding the Scripture passage.
e) Belief must be based only on the Bible.
- 4** F
- 5** T
- 6** F
- 7** T
- 8** F
- 9** To live and to serve
- 10** Because the Bible deals with eternal matters of life and death. (Answers will vary.)

Lesson 4

- 1 a** 3) Earthly
b 1) One
c 2) Spiritual
- 2 b)** truth concerning future events and present needs.
- 3 b** A type is always the same as a symbol.
- 4 b** Hebrew Poetry has no set length to its lines.
c Hebrew poetry is structured around a thought pattern.
d Hebrew poets spoke especially to the feelings and emotions.

Lesson 5

- 1 **a)** bird's-eye view
- 2 **c)** read the whole book through.
- 3 **d)** communicate.
- 4 **b)** Comparison
- 5 **b)** Preparation
- 6 **c)** Radiation
- 7 **a)** Particularization
- 8 **c)** Contrast
- 9 **c)** Interchange

Lesson 6

- 1 And, the, to
- 2 **b)** After
- 3 **d)** Because
- 4 **a)** But
- 5 **b)** structure.
- 6 **c)** Mood
- 7 **a)** Discourse
- 8 **c)** Apocalypse
- 9 **a)** Simile
- 10 **b)** Change
- 11 **a)** Biographical

Lesson 7

- 1 **c)** reading and writing.
- 2 **d)** found in all of the chapters.
- 3 **b)** content.

- 4 a)** less attention than other terms.
- 5 b)** drama to poetry.
- 6 a)** more positive at the end than at the beginning.
- 7 c)** ideological.
- 8 d)** all of the paragraphs.
- 9 c)** application.

Lesson 8

- 1 c)** They are still alive today.
- 2 a)** Collection of data.
- 3 b)** teach historical lessons.
- 4 b)** collect your data.
- 5 d)** collection, interpretation, organization.
- 6 a)** application of biographical study.
- 7 c)** textual outline.

Lesson 9

- 1 b)** they illustrate His divine nature.
- 2 b)** The length of the book where the topic is mentioned.
- 3 a)** not used in the Bible as illustrations or symbols.
- 4 c)** step 3.
- 5 b)** comparison of summary statements of categories.
- 6 c)** both increased and rearranged.

Lesson 10

- 1 c)** purpose.
- 2 b)** to get personal strength from God's word.
- 3 a)** verses, paragraphs, or chapters.
- 4 a)** part of every Christian's daily activity.

- 5 b)** methodical study is better than haphazard study.
- 6 c)** decide on a verse that contains directions to follow or warnings to heed.
- 7 b)** What does this mean?
- 8 a)** Interpretation
- 9 a)** become tools to help you handle truth accurately.
- 10 c)** help you grasp the main idea in each verse.
- 11 b)** unify all your observations and interpretations.
- 12 b)** change very little the steps for the study.
- 13 b)** each verse is important for what it contributes to the whole passage.
- 14 b)** choose a passage in which all verses are related to one another in some way.

Unit Student Reports

UNIT STUDENT REPORTS AND ANSWER SHEETS



DIRECTIONS

When you have completed your study of each unit, fill out the unit student report answer sheet for that unit. The following are directions how to indicate your answer to each question. There are two kinds of questions: TRUE-FALSE and MULTIPLE-CHOICE.

TRUE-FALSE QUESTION EXAMPLE

The following statement is either true or false. If the statement is

TRUE, blacken space A.

FALSE, blacken space B.

1 The Bible is God's message for us.

The above statement, *The Bible is God's message for us*, is TRUE, so you would blacken space A like this:

1 ☒ ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTION EXAMPLE

There is one best answer for the following question. Blacken the space for the answer you have chosen.

- 2** To be born again means to
a) be young in age.
b) accept Jesus as Savior.
c) start a new year.
d) find a different church.

The correct answer is b) *accept Jesus as Savior*; so you would blacken space B like this:

2

A		C	D
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STUDENT REPORT FOR UNIT ONE

*Answer all questions on Answer Sheet for Unit One. See the examples on the **DIRECTIONS** page which show you how to mark your answers.*

PART 1—TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

The following statements are either true or false. If the statement is

TRUE, blacken space A.

FALSE, blacken space B.

- 1** I have carefully read all of the lessons in Unit One.
- 2** God revealed His total plan all at once.
- 3** Truth can be illustrated by figurative language.
- 4** A sincere Christian doesn't need to study the Bible methodically.
- 5** The groundwork of Bible study is interpretation.
- 6** Ungodly teachers misuse Scripture to make false doctrines.
- 7** Most words in the Bible have hidden, mystical meanings.
- 8** Many times Jesus explained His own parables.

PART 2—MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

There is one best answer for each of the following questions. Blacken the space on your answer sheet for the answer you have chosen.

- 9** Studying the Bible is different from studying other books because the Bible
 - a)** has a lot of difficult and long passages.
 - b)** is not written in ordinary human language.
 - c)** was written a very long time ago.
 - d)** is God's special and unique message to people.

10 Many words in the Bible have enriched meanings because they

- a)** reveal spiritual truth to us.
- b)** aren't found in other books.
- c)** come from Hebrew and Greek.
- d)** are found in parables and types.

11 The harmony of the Bible means that the Bible is

- a)** very easily understood.
- b)** never misinterpreted by people.
- c)** one single system of truth.
- d)** only for pastors to read.

12 A Christian who studies the Bible methodically will

- a)** miss the Holy Spirit's illumination.
- b)** understand it better than one who doesn't.
- c)** not be able to use his own ideas.
- d)** need to be a special kind of person.

13 In John 4:4 Samaria is mentioned. The question *Where is Samaria?* is a question of

- a)** observation.
- b)** correlation.
- c)** interpretation.
- d)** evaluation.

14 Which sentence below gives an *implication* that can be drawn from Philippians 1:12-14?

- a)** The palace guards know that Paul is a Christian.
- b)** Even bad circumstances can help the church's witness.
- c)** Paul's brothers are growing more bold.
- d)** Paul is in prison because he is Christ's servant.

15 In explaining to someone the parable of the lost sheep in Luke 15:3-7, it would help to begin by

- a)** reading to them all the verses that have the word *sheep*.
- b)** pointing out other parables about sheep and shepherds.
- c)** telling them that the meaning is mystical.
- d)** describing what real sheep and shepherds are like.

16 The teaching in Mark 7:17-19 about foods should be followed by believers today rather than the one in Leviticus 11:1-23 because

- a)** Leviticus 11:1-23 was written to the Jews.
- b)** none of the Old Testament applies to us today.
- c)** the New Testament is God's final revelation.
- d)** Jesus did away with Old Testament laws.

17 We can decide that a passage of Scripture has a doctrinal truth if the passage

- a)** gives God's will for man now.
- b)** has reasonable implications.
- c)** is found in the New Testament.
- d)** has a direct command in it.

18 When interpreting parables in the Gospels, it is important to remember that those parables

- a)** teach about Christ and His kingdom.
- b)** present several central truths.
- c)** have many hidden meanings.
- d)** are abstract spiritual allegories.

19 In John 15:1 Jesus says *I am the real vine*. The word *vine* in this passage is a

- a)** type.
- b)** symbol.
- c)** parable.
- d)** prophecy.

20 Read Luke 1:52. What kind of parallelism is expressed in Mary's words?

- a)** Synonymous
- b)** Synthetic
- c)** Antithetic

END OF REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIT ONE. Follow the remaining instructions on your answer sheet and return it to your GU instructor or office in your area, then begin your study of Unit Two.

STUDENT REPORT FOR UNIT TWO

*Answer all questions on Answer Sheet for Unit Two. See the examples on the **DIRECTIONS** page which show you how to mark your answers.*

PART 1—TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

The following statements are either true or false. If the statement is

TRUE, blacken space A.

FALSE, blacken space B.

- 1** I have carefully read all of the lessons in Unit Two.
- 2** Interpreting Scripture involves separating central issues from secondary issues.
- 3** Cruciality is more often found in narrative passages.
- 4** Not all of the smaller words in the Bible are routine.
- 5** It is not important to notice which words are being used figuratively.
- 6** Progression can be found in some doctrinal passages.
- 7** The literary form of Habakkuk is the same all the way through.
- 8** Habakkuk has more than one ideological progression.

PART 2—MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

There is one best answer for each of the following questions. Blacken the space on your answer sheet for the answer you have chosen.

- 9** In studying a book of the Bible synthetically, the first step is to
 - a)** read the whole book through.
 - b)** make a careful outline.
 - c)** notice the literary style.
 - d)** find announcements of content.

10 A writer who describes how two things are alike is using the literary device of

- a)** climax.
- b)** cruciality.
- c)** comparison.
- d)** continuity.

11 In Psalm 1, the writer contrasts the two classes of people by using

- a)** introductory preparation.
- b)** narrative form.
- c)** geographical progression.
- d)** antithetic parallelism.

12 The literary devices of climax and cruciality both deal with

- a)** forceful repetition.
- b)** the critical or pivotal point.
- c)** details that are subordinate.
- d)** announcements of content.

13 First John 5:13 says I am writing this to you so that you may know that you have eternal life. The phrase which is the logical connective of purpose is

- a)** am writing.
- b)** to you.
- c)** so that.
- d)** may know.

14 In order for a book to have structure, the writer of it must

- a)** select and arrange his material.
- b)** include many parables and types.
- c)** avoid figurative language.
- d)** use the same literary form throughout.

15 In Habakkuk 1:2-4 the literary atmosphere is one of

- a)** encouragement.
- b)** discourse.
- c)** substantiation.
- d)** questioning.

16 In writing his Epistles, Paul often used discourse because he wanted to

- a)** tell an interesting story.
- b)** express feelings of sorrow.
- c)** teach important truths.
- d)** include interesting details.

17 In the book of Habakkuk, a simile is used in

- a)** 1:11.
- b)** 2:1.
- c)** 2:4.
- d)** 3:18.

18 Synonymous parallelism is found in Habakkuk

- a)** 2:9.
- b)** 3:12.
- c)** 2:20.
- d)** 1:16.

19 The fate of the Babylonians is emphasized in Habakkuk 2:5-19 by the literary device of

- a)** progression.
- b)** parable.
- c)** repetition.
- d)** drama.

20 We find a truth we can apply to our lives today in Habakkuk

- a)** 2:4.
- b)** 1:6.
- c)** 3:7.
- d)** 2:13.

END OF REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIT TWO. Follow the remaining instructions on your answer sheet and return it to your GU instructor or office in your area, then begin your study of Unit Three.

STUDENT REPORT FOR UNIT THREE

*Answer all questions on Answer Sheet for Unit Three. See the examples on the **DIRECTIONS** page which show you how to mark your answers.*

PART 1—TRUE-FALSE QUESTIONS

The following statements are either true or false. If the statement is

TRUE, blacken space A.

FALSE, blacken space B.

- 1** I have carefully read all of the lessons in Unit Three.
- 2** In *character exposition*, the main purpose is to present an argument.
- 3** Interpreting biography involves understanding why the author wrote it.
- 4** An example of a topical study is the life of King Saul.
- 5** In studying a Bible topic, there are two limitations.
- 6** Devotional study should be done methodically.
- 7** The interpretation step in devotional Bible study involves asking one key question.
- 8** Fact questions are unimportant in devotional Bible study.

PART 2—MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

There is one best answer for each of the following questions. Blacken the space on your answer sheet for the answer you have chosen.

- 9** The kind of biography in which the person's life is secondary to how he influences his nation is
 - a)** argument.
 - b)** character exposition.
 - c)** narrative exposition.
 - d)** simple narrative.

10 When the question is, *What is the author trying to prove by telling about this person?* the answer would be that the type of biography is one of

- a)** argument.
- b)** character exposition.
- c)** narrative exposition.
- d)** simple narrative.

11 The verses in Amos below that have to do mostly with biographical argument are

- a)** 1:1-2.
- b)** 3:9-10.
- c)** 7:4-6.
- d)** 7:10-15.

12 Suppose you want to prepare a Bible study that will teach about a person's spiritual life and how he affected others. Which kind of biography should you choose?

- a)** Argument
- b)** Character exposition
- c)** Narrative exposition
- d)** Simple narrative

13 Topical studies from the Bible about nature can teach us about God because

- a)** there are many such topics in the Bible.
- b)** nature is a familiar thing to everyone.
- c)** His power is seen in nature, which He created.
- d)** nature is God's only revelation to us.

14 If you wanted to study the idea of God's *grace*, the best approach would probably be the

- a)** whole book method.
- b)** devotional method.
- c)** biographical method.
- d)** topical method.

15 The step in the topical method that is concerned with organizing the material is step

- a) 2: Classify into Categories.
- b) 6: Summarize Entire Outline.
- c) 1: List Occurrences.
- d) 3: Examine Context.

16 Step 4 of a topical study of *acceptable words* in Ephesians 4, 5, and 6 would be

- a) state what is said about WORDS TO LISTEN TO.
- b) summarize what is said about acceptable words.
- c) decide how many groups of ideas there are.
- d) carefully note all the direct and indirect references.

17 A passage for devotional Bible study should include

- a) a complete thought or thoughts.
- b) only one chapter.
- c) several long paragraphs.
- d) a number of illustrations.

18 Which of the following verses in Romans 16 would be good for a devotional Bible study?

- a) 2
- b) 16
- c) 17
- d) 27

19 In Philippians 3:17-21, the literary device Paul uses to make his point is

- a) preparation.
- b) interrogation.
- c) cruciality.
- d) contrast.

20 Which sentence expresses an *interpretation* of Philippians 2:1- 11?

- a) The key verse of Philippians 2:1-11 is verse 5.
- b) I need to have the same attitude Jesus had.
- c) Jesus always had the same nature as God.
- d) Verse 3 could be titled Christian Motive.

END OF REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIT THREE. Follow the remaining instructions on your answer sheet and return it to your GU instructor or office in your area. This completes your study of this course. Ask your ICI instructor to recommend another course of study for you.

C2321 Understanding the Bible

UNIT ONE ANSWER SHEET

*Congratulations on finishing your study of the lessons in Unit 1!
Please fill in all the blanks below.*

Your Name

Your GU Student Number
(Leave blank if you do not know what it is.)

Your Mailing Address

.....

City

Province/State Postal/Zip

Country

Occupation Age

Sex

Are you married? How many members are in your family? ...

How many years have you studied in school?

Are you a member of a church?

If so, what is the name of the church?

What responsibility do you have in your church?

.....

How are you studying this course: Alone?

In a group?

What other GU courses have you studied?

.....

.....

Cut this page and send to your GU instructor



ANSWER SHEET FOR UNIT ONE

Blacken the correct space for each numbered item. For all questions, be sure the number beside the spaces on the answer sheet is the same as the number of the question.

1	A	B	C	D	8	A	B	C	D	15	A	B	C	D
2	A	B	C	D	9	A	B	C	D	16	A	B	C	D
3	A	B	C	D	10	A	B	C	D	17	A	B	C	D
4	A	B	C	D	11	A	B	C	D	18	A	B	C	D
5	A	B	C	D	12	A	B	C	D	19	A	B	C	D
6	A	B	C	D	13	A	B	C	D	20	A	B	C	D
7	A	B	C	D	14	A	B	C	D					

Write below any questions you would like to ask your instructor about the lessons.

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Now look over this student report answer sheet to be sure you have completed all the questions. Then return it to your GU instructor or office in your area. The address should be stamped on the copyright page near the front of your study guide.

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ANSWER SHEET FOR UNIT TWO

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1	A	B	C	D	8	A	B	C	D	15	A	B	C	D
2	A	B	C	D	9	A	B	C	D	16	A	B	C	D
3	A	B	C	D	10	A	B	C	D	17	A	B	C	D
4	A	B	C	D	11	A	B	C	D	18	A	B	C	D
5	A	B	C	D	12	A	B	C	D	19	A	B	C	D
6	A	B	C	D	13	A	B	C	D	20	A	B	C	D
7	A	B	C	D	14	A	B	C	D					

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UNIT THREE ANSWER SHEET

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ANSWER SHEET FOR UNIT THREE

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1	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	8	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	15	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
2	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	9	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	16	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
3	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	10	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	17	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
4	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	11	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	18	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
5	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	12	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	19	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
6	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	13	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	20	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
7	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	14	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D					

Write below any questions you would like to ask your instructor about the lessons.

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Now look over this student report answer sheet to be sure you have completed all the questions. Then return it to your GU instructor or office in your area. The address should be stamped on the copyright page near the front of your study guide.

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C2321 *Understanding the Bible*

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The GU office in your area will be happy to send you
information about other GU courses that are available and their
cost. You may use the space below to ask for that information.

.....
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.....

INVITATION TO ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST AS LORD AND SAVIOR

Becoming a Christian and receiving the gift of eternal life is a choice you make. God has done everything possible to open the door to heaven for you. Jesus suffered a cruel death on the Cross, taking the punishment we rightfully deserved, so that the very worst of sinners can now be fully forgiven and receive the gift of eternal life.

To receive this gift, you need to admit that you are a sinner and ask God to forgive you of all the evil deeds you have done. You need to trust in and take Jesus Christ into your life as your Lord and Savior.

If you are ready to receive Jesus, say this prayer now and mean it from your heart:

Dear Father in heaven, I recognize today that I have sinned against you, and it is my desire to turn away from my sins from this day forward. Please forgive me. I also believe You sent Your Son, Jesus Christ, to die in my place on the cross and that He rose from the dead on the third day. I receive Him today as my Lord and Savior by faith and will live for Him the rest of my life. Please change my life and make your presence known in me. I ask this in Jesus' holy name, Amen.

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Please write in BLOCK letters:

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E-mail address:

1. *Were you a Christian, having understood God's plan of salvation and accepted Jesus as your Savior, before starting this course?*
2. *Did you accept Jesus Christ as a result of studying these lessons?*
3. *Do you belong to a local church? If so, what church?*
4. *Would you like to have an address of a local church in your area?*
5. *Would you like to have information about other courses like this that you can study?*

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