

Four Ways to Study the Bible

Different Questions, Complementary Methods

DEVOTIONAL SOAP

GUIDING QUESTIONS

How can I respond to what God has said today?

BEST FOR

Daily Bible reading & reading the whole bible more quickly.

STRENGTH

Simple, relational, and repeatable

WATCH FOR

Keep each verse in context

INDUCTIVE PASSAGE STUDY

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What does this passage communicate?

BEST FOR

Books of the Bible and in-depth passage study

STRENGTH

Let's the biblical text set the agenda

WATCH FOR

Do not rush into application

DEDUCTIVE SYSTEMATIC / THEMATIC

GUIDING QUESTIONS

What does Scripture teach about this topic?

BEST FOR

A deep dive on a specific topic or doctrine

STRENGTH

Brings the Bible's teaching together

WATCH FOR

Avoid proof-texting

BIBLE THEOLOGY WHOLE BIBLE STUDY

GUIDING QUESTIONS

How does this theme develop across Scripture?

BEST FOR

OT/NT connections and developing Bible themes

STRENGTH

Shows the unity and unfolding story of Scripture.

WATCH FOR

Do not force connections

START WITH YOUR QUESTION > CHOOSE A METHOD

SOAP BIBLE STUDY

A SIMPLE DEVOTIONAL METHOD



SCRIPTURE

2-5 MIN

- Choose a passage.
- Read it slowly at least once.
- Write the verse(s) that stand out.



OBSERVATION

5-7 MIN

- What is happening in the passage?
- What does it reveal about God or people?
- Note words or ideas that stand out.



APPLICATION

5-7 MIN

- How does this truth meet my life?
- Is there something to believe, change, or do?
- Choose on specific response.



PRAYER

3-5 MIN

- Thank God for what you learned.
- Ask for help to live it out.
- Pray the passage in your own words.

SCRIPTURE > OBSERVATION > APPLICATION > PRAYER

INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

A 30-40 MINUTE PASSAGE METHOD

1

SCRIPTURE

5 MIN

- Choose one complete passage.
- Read it slowly 2-3 times
- Notice what comes before & after.

2

OBSERVE

10 MIN

- Mark important or repeated words/ideas.
- Find contrasts commands, & reasons.
- Write at least 5 observations.

3

INVESTIGATE

5-10 MIN

- Ask questions raised by the text.
- Check the book and original context.
- Use study notes after you own work.

4

SUMMARIZE

6-7 MIN

- State the authors main point.
- Explain it in 1-2 clear sentences.
- Make sure it fits the whole passage.

5

RESPOND

5-10 MIN

- What should I believe or become?
- What should I do or hope for?
- Choose one response and pray.

OBSERVATION > INTERPRETATION > APPLICATION > PRAYER