

## Search the Scriptures Chapter Analysis Format

Bible study consists of Observation, Interpretation and Application.

1. **Observation** is discovering what the author is saying looking specifically at Who, What, When, Where, Cause & Effect. This is always the most challenging portion of Bible study, which most people give only cursory attention to (unfortunately). The key to doing Bible study is “training the eye to see.” Seeing correctly helps you Interpret correctly and so on. There are four basic things to look for:

- **Terms** – Terms have specific meaning based on their context.
- **Structure** – Look for Grammatical and Literary structure. Grammatical helps us see important info like subject, object, and main verbs. Literary structure reveals clues through recognition of things like questions and answers; cause and effect; etc.
- **Literary form** – are we looking at poetry, narrative, history, or prophecy.
- **Atmosphere** – reveals feeling, mood, tone and environment – what it is like to be in the author’s shoes.

2. **Interpretation** is finding out what he means. The foundation of accurate interpretation is correct observation. This is why much time and diligence should have been given to observation. The more time you give to observation, the less time it will take to do interpretation. Many people rush into interpretation without laying the vital foundation of observation and their understanding becomes colored by "what they think ... what they feel ... the way they see it ... and what others have said . . . ." We must be very careful not to "distort the scriptures to our own destruction" as the "unlearned and unstable" referred to in II Peter 3:16.

I. The key is to ask questions:

- A. As you have observed the passage, you have recorded various questions about the text in the right hand margin of your observation worksheet.
- B. You might want to go through the text again and ask yourself more questions.
- C. List all these questions on a sheet of paper.

IV. Find the answers to your questions making sure you keep all your interpretation within:

- A. The main theme of the book
- B. The occasion of the book
- C. The passage's place in time and history
- D. The culture of that period
- E. The geographic locations referred to
- F. The atmosphere of the passage

VII. Do any necessary word studies and list key definitions. Here's where a Bible Dictionary or *Vine's Expository* can be extremely helpful.

VIII. Check cross-references

- A. A cross-reference is another Scripture that supports, illumines or amplifies the scripture that you are studying.
- B. One of the vital elements to consider in Bible study is the comparison of Scripture with Scripture. This is the purpose of doing cross-references. Scripture must agree with Scripture; therefore, any time you seem to find apparent discrepancy in meaning, check your interpretation, for somewhere you have gone amiss. Scripture cannot contradict Scripture.
- C. When doing cross-references, if you are comparing one word with another word, make sure you have checked the Greek or Hebrew. For example, the KJV takes several different Greek words and translates all of them under the English word "suffer": However, a study of the Greek will show a different meaning or shade of meaning for each one. So, make sure you are comparing "likes".
- D. The procedure of checking cross-references:
  - 1. Use the reference system in your Bible (with discretion), a topical Bible, or a concordance and look up related Scriptures.
  - 2. Carefully study the context of your cross-references. Remember Scripture cannot be wrenched out of its context and be made to support truth without the danger of coming up with a pretext.

### Search the Scriptures Chapter Analysis Format

3. When you find a cross-reference which illuminates the scriptures you are studying, you may want to make note of it in the margin of your Bible next to the appropriate Scripture.
- IV. Read other sound translations—be very careful if using a paraphrase.
- V. Summarize your conclusions, making sure:
  - A. They do not violate the general theme of the book you are studying.
  - B. They are in context. A text out of context is a pretext.
  - C. They are in accordance or agreement with what the author said in other parts of his writing.
  - D. They do not violate other Biblical truths.
  - E. They are not "prejudiced" to one particular doctrine or school of theology, as this often distorts one's interpretation.

### 3. **Application** is applying that truth to your life.

Accurate interpretations and correct application rest on the accuracy of your observations. Therefore, it is vital that you do not neglect to develop skills of observation which may, at first, seem difficult, laborious and time consuming. Application is finding out what the Word is saying to me, and doing something about it. Application is vital. Without it, the Scriptures are useless. We are warned about "being hearers of the Word but not doers" in James 1:22-25.

Observation and Interpretation are the "hearing" and Application is the "doing." Once again, correct application must be based on accurate interpretation and accurate interpretation must be based on correct observation.

Meditate upon the Word, ask the Spirit to reveal its application to life. Then drive home that application, letting the sword of the Word go deep and discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. God's Word is relevant for today. Show people the relevancy of the Word, the practicality of the Christian life and you will see lives transformed before your eyes.

- I. The basis of application is found in I Timothy 3:16-17 A. Scripture is PROFITABLE for:
  - A. Doctrine: *teaching*, what you believe determines what you are.
  - B. Reproof: *conviction*; shows you where you are wrong.
  - C. Correction: *restoration to a right state*; shows you how to correct what is wrong.
  - D. Instruction in righteousness: the word "instruction" in the Greek is "paideia", *the whole training and education of a child*; shows you how to live, what is right and what is wrong.
  - E. The Scripture has everything you need to meet any and all situations of life. .... that the man of God might be perfect (Gk. *artios* complete, fitted) thoroughly furnished (Gk. *exartizo*, exactly right) unto ALL GOOD WORKS."
- VI. Therefore, when applying a Scripture, ask "*what have I learned?*" "*Am I reproved?*" "*Is there a means of correction?*" "*Is there instruction for righteous living?*"
- VII. You are encouraged to make your application as specific as possible.

### 4. **Summary Items.**

- I. When you have completed the portions of Observation, Interpretation, and Application, develop a short Title that captures the theme and insights of the passage of Scripture studied.
- II. List any of the specific themes that you identified. Themes help bring focus to your Interpretation, ensuring you are following the author's intent behind his writings.
- III. Identify a key verse that speaks to your Observations, Interpretations, and/or Applications. Write down why you selected that particular verse.

**Search the Scriptures Chapter Analysis Format**

**Passage/Chapter:**

v s #	Observations (What do I see?) [Who, What When Where, Cause & Effect]	Interpretation			Remarks/Application (or place application end of study)
		Definitions/Word Studies	Cross References (with correlation)	What does it mean? [What questions (& answers) come to mind?]	

**Passage Title:**

**Theme(s):**

**Key Verse (Why):**

**Application:**