

discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living
Leader's Guide

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINES

LESSON 2: STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD – PART 1

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Discipleship Essentials module entitled Christian Disciplines. This series of lessons introduces the disciplines of a Christian life, including prayer, Bible study, as well as fixing our mind on eternal things. This is exciting content that should energize and renew the spiritual life of mature Christians and propel newer Christians into deeper faith. The material is practical in nature, yet focussed on the many spiritual rewards of a life devoted to God.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

The intended audience for these lessons is new Christians, those who would like a refresher on the basics of Christianity, as well as those preparing to teach these Christian practices and beliefs. Also, those with an interest in Christian thought will find value in these lessons as they pertain to daily living and choices.

The Leader's Guide is intended to help you as a leader in your preparation. These lesson outlines may be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials found online at www.discipleshipessentials.org.

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CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINES

LESSON 2: STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD – PART 1

PURPOSE

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce a method of Bible study that will help participants understand how to interpret and apply the Word of God to their lives.

LEADER'S NOTE

This lesson teaches a simplified method for inductive Bible study. This lesson comes in two parts. This first lesson deals with observation, and the next lesson discusses interpretation and application. The attached worksheet gives participants practise going through each step of the inductive method. You may wish to give this activity a try after completing both sets of lessons, then determine if the participants are ready for it. It is something you might assign for homework, but it might be helpful to go through a few sections of the chart together to make sure they understand it. The attached chart has been filled in for you, the leader, with some point-form ideas. It is not exhaustive, and there may be different ways to apply truths for each passage.

INTRODUCTION

Select two or three of the following questions to ask the group.

- ❖ What is Bible study? What is the difference between reading a book and studying it?
- ❖ Ask participants whether the following statements are true or false:
 - Many passages will have more than one way to be correctly interpreted.
 - There may be many ways to apply one passage of Scripture.
 - The Bible is always clearly understood at first reading.
 - Studying the Bible is too difficult for most Christians.
 - Every word of the Bible is given by God, and is true.
- ❖ How frequently do you read the Word of God? Do you have a systematic reading plan or do you randomly pick out passages to read?



STUDY

Instruct the group on the following points.

TEACH

- ❖ **Introduction to Inductive Bible Study:** There are several ways to study the Bible. We can use tools such as concordances or Bible study books which help us in our thinking. We can also use a deductive method which starts with an idea and looks to Scripture to confirm it. The method we will look at today allows Scripture to speak for itself, and lets us gather evidence and observations from the text. This is called the inductive study method.
- ❖ **Three Step Inductive Study Method:** The three steps to inductive Bible study method are:
 - **Observation** involves observing the text by asking **"What does it say?"**
 - **Interpretation** involves interpreting the message or the meaning of the text by asking **"What does it mean?"**
 - **Application** involves applying the message of the passage to your life, by asking **"What does it mean to me?"**
- ❖ **Observation:** Every quality Bible study starts with good observations. Interpretation depends directly on the nature of the observations made. Our natural tendency is to move immediately into interpretation without making proper observations. Observation deals only with the text, not the meaning of the text. The process of observation asks questions of the text such as what, how and why. It also looks for repeated words, themes or ideas as well as grammatical construction.

Who?	Who is writing? Who is mentioned? Who is the audience?
What?	What is discussed? What is happening? What is the time frame?
Where?	Where is this occurring?
When?	When did this take place?
Why?	What reasons are given? <i>WARNING: Many "why" questions are interpretation.</i>
How?	How did it happen?
Repeated Words	Are there any words, phrases or ideas that are repeated?
Cause/Effect	Cause and effect means if "this" happens, then "that" will result.
Questions	Does the writer ask any questions?
Preposition/ Conjunction	What words connect key ideas and relationships? How are phrases linked together?
Verb tenses	Is it past, present or future tense?
Literary Form	Is it a poem, a story or a parable? Is it factual or figurative?
Atmosphere/ Mood	Does the author seem forceful, sad, excited, concerned, etc.?
Comparisons/Contrasts	Does the author make any comparisons? Any contrasts between things?
Commands/ Promises	Are there any commands for us to obey? Any promises for us to claim?



TASK

- *Have participants work through the observation process using Romans 12:1-2.*

TEACH

- ❖ **Practising the Study of God's Word:** We will become more comfortable studying God's Word as we practise. It might be helpful to find others to study with. Then you'll be able to learn from one another and help each other understand.

TASK

- *As a group, work on filling out the attached worksheet. You may want to break into small groups. A master copy with the answers filled in is provided, as well as a blank copy. You may wish to coach students if they are stuck.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ❖ Why is it important to discern for ourselves what the Word of God is saying? Why learn how to study the Bible when we could listen to others talk about the Bible, or read books about the Bible?
- ❖ Are you part of a Bible study group? What are the benefits of studying the Bible alongside others?
- ❖ What Bible study methods have you used in the past?
- ❖ What are the benefits of an inductive Bible study method?

PRAYER

Thank God for His gift of the Word of God. Thank Him that He has provided us with a mind that can comprehend the Scriptures and a desire in our hearts to know Him better. "Ask God the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give (them) spiritual wisdom and insight so that (they) might grow in (their) knowledge of God" (Ephesians 1:17).

**WORKSHEET: Luke 19:1-10 Inductive Bible Study**

BIBLE VERSES	OBSERVATION	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION
1. Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.	Jesus was travelling to Jerusalem (v.28). He did not intend to stay long.	Jesus was going to the cross but He had time to stop for one man who needed Him.	I should not be so absorbed with my ministry that I do not stop to share God's love with someone as I go about my work.
2. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich.	He was a chief tax collector in the system. He had accumulated wealth.	Tax collectors collected taxes from their fellow citizens for the Roman Empire.	People saw tax collectors as working for the enemy.
3. He was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature.	Zacchaeus knew Jesus was there. There was a crowd. He was short, shorter than the people in the crowd.	For whatever reason, this rich man wanted to find Jesus	Do not believe the lie that rich people do not want/need Jesus.
4. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way.	He really wanted to see Jesus. He calculated ahead.	Zacchaeus felt drawn to Jesus. The person of Jesus is attractive.	Sometimes we have to separate from the crowd to have an encounter with God.
5. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today. "	He knew Zacchaeus. He invited Himself to his house. He gave Zacchaeus an order. Jesus did not defer to the social/political position Zacchaeus' wealth afforded him.	Jesus does not reject people because of how society views them. He sought a man people considered unworthy of His attention. There is a correlation to the passage in <u>John 4</u> - The Samaritan Woman.	We should always consider how Christ would look at someone, not simply at how society looks at them.
6. So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.	Zacchaeus opened his home to Jesus. He responded to Him as his superior. He was glad to have Jesus in his home.	Jesus didn't just speak with this man, but He ate with him. He wanted to build a relationship with Zacchaeus.	People are more interested in a relationship than being preached at.
7. And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."	Jesus did this in front of everyone. He was not ashamed of Zacchaeus. The people called Zacchaeus a sinner. Their attitude was different from Jesus' attitude.	They did not think He should go to Zacchaeus' house. They did not consider themselves sinners; they	Do I feel holier than others, or do I realize that I am just as much a sinner as anyone else?



		considered themselves better than Zacchaeus. Jesus goes to help sinners.	
8. And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold."	He stood up. He called Jesus Lord. He called attention to the decision he was making. Half of what he owned must have been a lot of money. Repentance involves a change in attitude and action. True repentance involves restitution.	Standing is a sign of respect. He admitted that if he had indeed cheated people, he would repay those people four times. Why did he do it? He wanted to compensate for the wrong he had done. See <u>Luke 3:8</u> : "Bear fruits in keeping with repentance."	If I really repent I should see change in my life.
9. And Jesus said to him,	Jesus is talking to Zacchaeus by name. He says "this man" not "you".	Jesus is declaring him forgiven before all those present	
"Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.	Zacchaeus was saved that day. When did salvation come? The same day that Jesus came.	Jesus brings salvation.	When I talk to people about their salvation, I need to talk about Jesus.
	Zacchaeus was not the literal son of Abraham.	He was the son of Abraham through faith (see Galatians 3:9)	
10. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."	Son of Man is Jesus. This is a title, His position, and role.	"For" signifies the conclusion of this account.	Jesus came for the lost.



WORKSHEET: Luke 19:1-10 Inductive Bible Study

Verses	Observation	Interpretation	Application
1. He entered Jericho and was passing through.			
2. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich.			
3. And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature.			
4. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way.			
5. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today."			
6. So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully.			
7. And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner."			
8. And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold."			
9. And Jesus said to him...			
"Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham.			
10. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."			