

Personal Bible Study

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The Training Center

The Training Center is a ministry of Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas. The Training Center is the tangible expression of one of the three guiding metaphors that best describes the vision and mission of Fellowship; namely, that Fellowship is a “greenhouse,” a “training center,” and a “launching pad.” The necessary link between the greenhouse and launching pad is the Training Center where people are prepared and equipped for leadership in life and ministry.

CORE TRAINING

Core Training is a training track of ten training experiences for everyone at Fellowship. These ten trainings are meant to provide a starting point for engaging life at Fellowship and growing into a prepared and equipped spiritual leader. Whether you are new to Fellowship or have been around for decades, The Training Center is the place to start growing and developing.

BIBLE AND THEOLOGY

Panorama of the Bible

We Believe or Our Faith

Personal Bible Study

MISSION AND MINISTRY

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Leadership Lab

Great Commission: Evangelism & Discipleship (coming 2020)

LIFE AND GROWTH

Align Your Finances with the Heart of God

Re I Frame Family: Marriage and Parenting

Great Commandment: Worship, Prayer, and Spiritual Growth (coming 2021)

DISCOVER

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Preface

“BE DILIGENT (STUDY) to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing (handling) the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15 NKJV) How one approaches, reads and studies the Bible determines the benefit one receives from it. It has been said that we must all handle the Scriptures carefully and that in doing so, one is either a surgeon who rightly divides the Word of Truth or a butcher who hacks away at it.

This six-week course of study is designed for future surgeons, men and women who approach the Scriptures reverently and wisely. It is designed to expose the serious, emerging student of the Word to good principles and practices in Bible reading, observation, interpretation, and application.

This is a beginning study, not a final destination. Together, let's explore the book and begin to rightly divide it's life-giving message.

—Robert V. Cupp
BiLD Training Center
Spring, 2012
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PSALM 119:18

Open my eyes Lord, that I may
see wonderful things in your Word.

“It is only when truth is discovered that it is appropriated.
When a man is simply told the truth, it remains external
to him and he can quite easily forget it. When he is led to
discover the truth himself, it becomes an integral part of
him and he never forgets.”

—WILLIAM BARCLAY

Session One

I. INTRODUCTION

II. THE VALUE OF THE WORD OF GOD

From Psalm 119

Seven Key Benefits

1. Psalm 119:9-11 NASB

*How can a young man **keep his way pure?** By keeping it according to Your word. ¹⁰With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments. ¹¹Your word I have treasured in my heart, **That I may not sin** against You."*

Benefit: _____

2. Psalm 119:25 NASB

*My soul cleaves to the dust; **Revive me** according to Your word.*

Benefit: _____

The grass withers,
the flower fades,
but the word of our
God stands forever.

—ISAIAH 40:8

Every word of God
is tested; He is a
shield to those who
take refuge in Him.

—PROVERBS 30:5

Reading the Bible

There is no substitute for personally reading the Scripture. Hearing the Word is beneficial, but reading the text for yourself, looking at the words, seeing the passage, observing the structure, feeling the narrative, this is so foundational to a life-long practice of absorbing the truth of God's Word.

Sermons will assist you in your growth. Biblical teaching will explain the meaning of the text. But the non-negotiable building block of grasping the Scripture begins with personal, consistent, purposeful reading of the Word of God.

Read the Scriptures; over and over again, read the Scriptures. Make it a spiritual discipline that defines who you are.

—ROBERT V. CUPP

Psalm 119:114 MSG

You're my place of quiet retreat;
I wait for your Word to renew me.

3. **Psalm 119:89, 160** NASB

Forever, O LORD, Your word is **settled** (it stands firm) in heaven... The sum of Your word is **truth**, And every one of Your righteous ordinances is **everlasting**.

Benefit: _____

4. **Psalm 119:24, 37** NASB

Your testimonies also are my delight; They are my **counselors**...
Turn away my eyes from looking at vanity (i.e. worthless things).
And revive me in Your ways.

Benefit: _____

5. **Psalm 119:105** NASB

Your word is a **lamp** to my feet
And a **light** to my path.

Benefit: _____

But his delight is in the law of the LORD. And in His law He meditates day and night.

—PSALM 1:2

This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

—JOSHUA 1:8

Psalm 19

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

² Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.

³ There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.

⁴ Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.

In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun,

⁵ which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course.

⁶ It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat.

⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul.

The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart.

The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

⁹ The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever.

The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous.

¹⁰ They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.

¹¹ By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

¹² Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

¹³ Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression.

¹⁴ May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

6. **Psalm 119:174-175** NIV

*I long for your **salvation**, LORD, and your law gives me delight.*

¹⁷⁵*Let me live that I may praise you, and may your laws **sustain** me.*

Benefit: _____

7. **Psalm 119:65** NIV

***Do good** to your servant **according to** your word, LORD.*

Benefit: _____

Seneca (1st cent. A.D. Roman statesman and philosopher) believed that if we are our own authority we enslave ourselves to ourselves, which is the worst bondage of all.

John 8:32

Jesus said, "...and you shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Anthanasius wrote, "For indeed the holy and God-breathed Scriptures are self-sufficient for the preaching of truth."

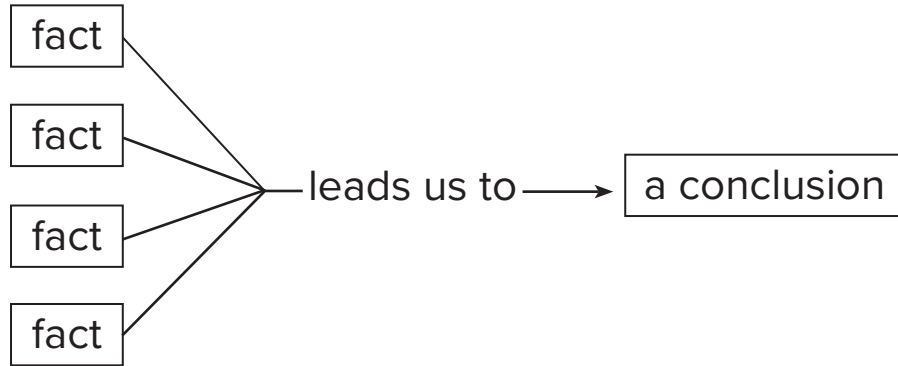
"It is the spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life."

—JESUS /JOHN 6:63

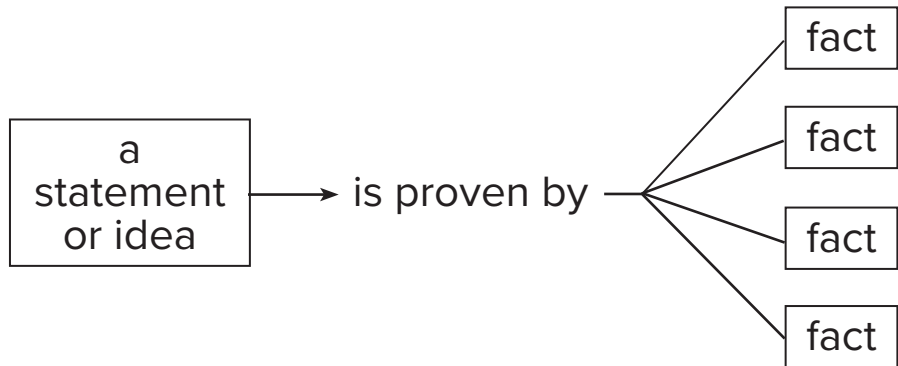
For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

—HEBREWS 4:12

Induction



Deduction



III. INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

A. Inductive vs. Deductive

- * Induction: seeing, examining, recording “facts”... then drawing a conclusion.
- * Deduction: proposing or formulating an idea... then seeking “facts” that support the idea.

B. Inductive Bible study

Requires...

1. Carefully reading (re-reading) of the Biblical text (passage).
2. Observing the literary structure of the text (key words, strong verbs, linking words, comparisons and so forth).
3. Recording the fruits of observation of the text.
4. Asking good questions of the text (who? what? when? where? why? how?).

Inductive Bible Study focuses on “facts”...

- Words and word relationships
- structure
- context
- literary devices
- mood and atmosphere
- fundamental questions
- and...*
- historical background
- geographical setting
- cultural clues
- language insights

Ezra—Our Model

VERBAL IDEAS from Ezra 7:10	LAW OF BIBLE STUDY	PRIMARY CONCERN
“set his heart”		
“study”		
“practice”		
“teach”		

IV. A MODEL STUDENT FOR INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY... EZRA

A. Introduction

Ezra 7:10 NASB

For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach his statutes and ordinances in Israel...

1. Read the verse carefully several times.
2. What do you see? Gather the facts.
Circle key words. Underline strong verbs.
Notice the literary structure. Other...
3. Note the chart on the preceding page.



“It’s not great literature, but it will look good on the coffee table.”

They told Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses.

Ezra the scribe stood on a high wooden platform built for the occasion.

Ezra opened the book... the people all stood up...

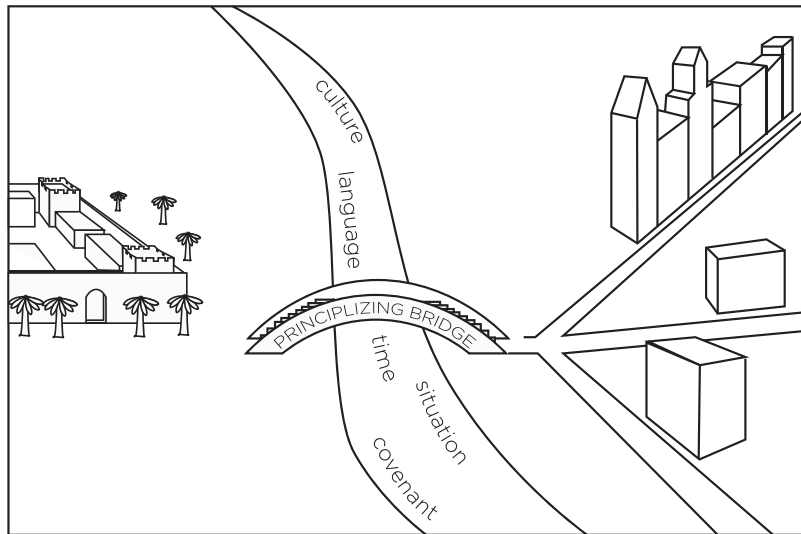
They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read.

Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to them all, “This day is sacred to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep...”

For all the people had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

—NEHEMIAH 8

Bridging from the Biblical Context to the Present Day



Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 24

PASSAGE
(Historical)



PRINCIPLE
(Timeless)



PRACTICE
(Timely)

V. INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

5 Laws of Bible Study

1. The Law of OBSERVATION

What do I see?

2. The Law of INTERPRETATION

What does it mean?

3. The Law of APPLICATION

How does it work?

4. The Law of CORRELATION

Where does it fit?

5. The Law of COMMUNICATION

How do I share?

Asking the Fundamental Questions

Asking simple questions such as those suggested below can be your most important tool for making exciting discoveries in observation.

Who?

- Who is this passage talking about?
- Who are these words addressed to?
- Who wrote or spoke these words?

What?

- What kind of passage is this? Poetry? Narrative? Direct teaching? Prophetic?
- What is the atmosphere of this passage? Calm? Emotionally intense? Fearful? Rejoicing?
- What happens in this passage?
- What preceded this passage and what follows it?
- What do I learn about God, Jesus Christ, or the Holy Spirit in this passage?
- What difficult words are here and what do they mean?
- What will happen if I follow this person's example?
- What will happen if I obey the command God gives here?
- What will happen if I later ignore what I'm learning in this passage?

Where? When?

- Where does the action in this passage take place?
- When did the action occur?

Why?

- Why did the speaker or writer communicate these words?
- Why did God allow this to happen?
- Why did Jesus say what He did?

How?

- How should this passage affect my life?
- How would I have handled the situation presented in this passage?
- How did God work in someone's life in this passage?
- How does this passage relate to other parts of Scripture?

—R. Yohn, *First Hand Joy*, 20

VI. INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY:

Observation: What do I see?

A. First Impressions

Read the passage carefully (and repeatedly).

Ask the fundamental questions of Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? (Don't get bogged down with answering all of the questions... that comes later...just ask the hard "observational" questions.)

Note the helpful guide on the preceding page.

B. Fundamental Questions: Practice

Romans 12:1-2 NASB

Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

How?

Inductive Bible Study and Reading the Text

- Read **repeatedly**.
- Read **carefully**.
- Read **purposefully**.
- Read **consistently**.
- Read with an **open mind** and a **ready pencil**.
- Learn to use circles, underlines, brackets, numbering, arrows, asterisks, question marks, and the like...
- Create your own Bible **marking** system.

Read the passage several times.

³²Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. ³³When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. ³⁴Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

³⁵The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.”

³⁶The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar ³⁷and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”

³⁸There was a written notice above him, which read: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

³⁹One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Christ? Save yourself and us!”

⁴⁰But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under

the same sentence? ⁴¹We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

⁴²Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

⁴³Jesus answered him, “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.”

⁴⁴It was now about the sixth hour, and darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour, ⁴⁵for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two.

⁴⁶Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last.

⁴⁷The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, “Surely this was a righteous man.” ⁴⁸When all the people who had gathered to witness this sight saw what took place, they beat their breasts and went away. ⁴⁹But all those who knew him, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things. —Luke 23:32-49 NIV

WHO <i>list persons</i>	WHAT <i>they did</i>	HOW <i>they responded to Jesus</i>	HOW <i>Jesus responded</i>
criminal 1			
criminal 2			
soldiers			
centurion			
the people			
women			
Jesus			

2 Timothy 3:14-17 NASB

You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

How?

All Scripture is

...inspired by God
...profitable (for man)

1. teaching
2. reproof
3. correction
4. training

...so that...
• adequate
• equipped

Practice: Fundamental Questions

Exodus 2:23-25 NIV

During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. ²⁴ God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. ²⁵ So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

How?

John 11:35 NASB

Jesus wept.

Can you follow the pattern of asking fundamental questions of this brief passage? Try and see.

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

How?

THINKING AHEAD

Asking the “Fundamental Questions” often leads the interpreter to examine the context (that which goes before...that which comes after). Do you see the value as you look at one brief verse, but need more information?

In “Interpretation” (Law 2) the importance of context (verse, sentence, paragraph, chapter, so forth) cannot be overstated.

CONTEXT

Jesus wept.

Context deals with what comes before and what comes after a passage under study.

- Jesus with Martha and Mary...distress over Lazarus' death.
- Broader context: Earlier, Jesus requested to come to Lazarus who was sick.
- Broader: soon Jesus will enter Jerusalem for His last week of life (next chapter).
- Broader: the public ministry of Jesus is near to a close... His death is on the near horizon.
- Broader: Why did Jesus die? Why do people die? Sin of humanity and death?
- So forth...

Practice: Identify Key Words

Circle what you consider to be a key word or words in the following passages (also mentally ask your “Fundamental Questions”).

Romans 8:1 NASB

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

John 17:3 NASB

“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

2 Corinthians 5:20 NASB

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

RESOURCES

Often a key word is an important theological concept (reconciliation, condemnation, so forth). Bible Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, and Theological Dictionaries can often provide a concise article on the word/concept.

Refer to Appendix A, page 91, for a listing of “Essential Tools for Bible Study.”

C. Key Words

Often Biblical passages use important, key words or terms. Identifying a key word (in the Observation phase) is critical to the later understanding of the text.

Read the following verse. What do you think is the key word (or key words)? What questions does this verse raise in your mind?

LADIES

Ephesians 5:22 NIV

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

MEN

Ephesians 5:25 NIV

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

EVERYONE

Ephesians 6:1 NIV

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Key Words

...any of a number of **important** terms (concepts, people, places, things...) that are **important** to grasping the meaning of the text.

...therefore, the serious student of the Word will have access to a “toolbox” of handy tools/aids for understanding key words.

- Bible Dictionaries
- Bible Encyclopedias
- Concordances
- Bible Atlas (maps)
- Bible Handbooks

See Appendix A for further information.

Repeated Key Words: Observation

Hebrews 11:1-6 NIV

¹ Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. ² This is what the ancients were commended for.

³ By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

⁴ By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

⁵ By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.

⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

D. Repeated Key Words

On occasion the Scriptures will repeat a number of times a particular word or phrase. This is often an interpretive or clue indicator of the importance of the repeated word in the passage.

Read Joshua 3:1-13 and circle every occurrence of the phrase “ark of the covenant” or “ark.”

Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and went to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over. ²After three days the officers went throughout the camp, ³giving orders to the people: “When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, who are Levites, carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. ⁴Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before. But keep a distance of about a thousand yards between you and the ark; do not go near it.” ⁵Joshua told the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.” ⁶Joshua said to the priests, “Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people.” So they took it up and went ahead of them. ⁷And the LORD said to Joshua, “Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses. ⁸Tell the priests who carry the ark of the covenant: ‘When you reach the edge of the Jordan’s waters, go and stand in the river.’” ⁹Joshua said to the Israelites, “Come here and listen to the words of the LORD your God. ¹⁰This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites. ¹¹See, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth will go into the Jordan ahead of you. ¹²Now then, choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. ¹³And as soon as the priests who carry the ark of the LORD—the Lord of all the earth—set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap.”

GO TO PAGE 27

Additional Search

- Box all geographical places or tribal peoples.
- Double-box all proper names or classes of people.
- Double-underline any theological terms that might be important to the text.

Word Meaning

...consult a Bible Dictionary for the article on the “Ark of the Covenant.” The article will provide helpful background material.

See “Essential Tools” on page 91 for reference works.

Joshua 1:1-9

¹ After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: ² "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. ³ I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. ⁴ Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Great Sea on the west. ⁵ No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

⁶ Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. ⁷ Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. ⁸ Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

- Key Words? Repeated words (or phrases)?

- Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

- Mood or atmosphere of this passage?

- Learning about Moses? Joshua?

Based on **Joshua 3:1-13** from page 25

Now, mentally ask “Fundamental Questions” regarding this text.

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

How?

RECALL...

the example of Ezra.

For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach his statutes and ordinances in Israel.

—EZRA 7:10

LAW OF OBSERVATION

Fundamental Questions

Who?

What?

Where?

When?

Why?

How?

- Key Words

- Repeated Key Words

Value of the Word

Independent Study Project:

* Read Psalm 119 (all 176 verses). Can you find the three or four verses that do not specifically mention “the word” (or its various synonyms... e.g. “statutes,” “judgments,” et al.)?

List all of the various, different words used to refer to the Word of God.

Or, mark in your Bible (underline) all the various occurrences of the Word (or synonyms for the Scriptures/Word).

5 LAWS OF BIBLE STUDY

1. Law of Observation: “What Do I See?”
2. Law of Interpretation: “What Does It Mean?”
3. Law of Application: “How Does It Work?”
4. Law of Correlation: “Where Does It Fit?”
5. Law of Communication: “How Do I Share?”