



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

BIBLE FOUNDATIONS

A Printable Bible Study Worksheet

A Reusable Guide for Reading, Understanding, and Applying Scripture

The Short Answer

Bible study does not require mastering a complicated system. A reader can begin with an open Bible, prayer, careful observation, and a willingness to let Scripture shape the conclusions.

This reusable worksheet brings together foundational skills developed throughout the 3Nails Bible Study Methods series:

PRAY - Ask God for wisdom, humility, and understanding. **READ** - Read the passage carefully - and more than once. **OBSERVE** - Notice what the passage actually says. **CONTEXT** - Understand the surrounding passage, speaker, audience, genre, and setting. **INTERPRET** - Ask what the biblical author is communicating. **CONNECT** - Investigate relevant words, cross-references, themes, and related passages without forcing connections. **BIBLICAL STORY** - Ask where the passage belongs within Scripture's unfolding story. **JESUS** - Recognize legitimate connections to Jesus and the Gospel where Scripture provides them. **APPLY** - Respond faithfully to what Scripture teaches. **PRAY AND RESPOND** - Turn what has been learned into worship, confession, thanksgiving, trust, obedience, or prayer.

The worksheet is not intended to replace careful Bible reading. It is designed to keep sending the reader back to the Bible.

Psalm 119:18 · Acts 17:11 · 2 Timothy 2:15 · 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Opening Memory Anchor

OPEN THE BIBLE. READ CAREFULLY.
UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT. FOLLOW WHERE SCRIPTURE LEADS.



PART ONE BEGINNER GUIDE

1. HOW SHOULD THIS WORKSHEET BE USED?

This worksheet can be used with a Bible chapter, a paragraph, a short passage, a teaching of Jesus, a Psalm, a biblical narrative, a section of a New Testament letter, a prophetic passage, a wisdom passage, or another manageable section of Scripture.

For most studies, begin with a complete paragraph or natural section rather than one isolated verse.

The worksheet does not require every question to be answered every time. Some passages will require more attention to historical context. Others will require more attention to genre. Others may contain an important word, a cross-reference, a biblical theme, or a difficult interpretive question.

The questions are tools. They should serve the passage rather than forcing the passage into a predetermined system.

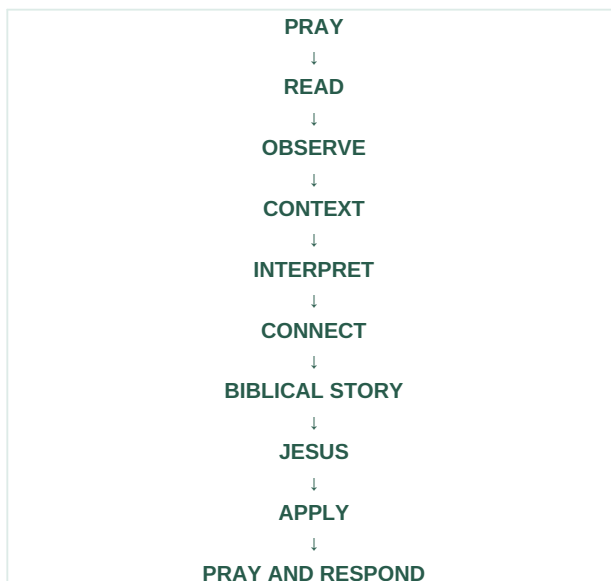
For deeper study on individual skills, see: #265 - How to Study a Biblical Topic; #266 - How to Study a Word in Scripture; #267 - Comparing Common Bible-Study Methods; #268 - How to Trace a Theme Through the Bible; #269 - Cross-Reference Study; #270 - Using Commentaries Responsibly; #271 - How to Recognize Scripture Taken Out of Context.

The purpose of #273 is to bring those skills together into one reusable study tool.

Memory Anchor

**THE WORKSHEET SERVES SCRIPTURE.
SCRIPTURE DOES NOT SERVE THE WORKSHEET.**

2. THE BIBLE-STUDY PATH



This sequence is not a rigid formula. A reader may return to an earlier step after discovering something new. A cross-reference may reveal additional context. A word study may require rereading the paragraph. A difficult interpretation may require examining the entire chapter. A connection to Jesus may become clearer after considering the larger biblical story.

Good Bible study often moves back and forth through the passage. But one principle should remain constant: UNDERSTAND BEFORE APPLYING.

THE REUSABLE BIBLE STUDY WORKSHEET

PASSAGE:

DATE:

TRANSLATION(S):



3. PRAY - BEGIN WITH HUMILITY

Before analyzing the passage, pray. Ask God for understanding, wisdom, humility, attention, a willingness to be corrected, a desire to know Him, and a willingness to obey what Scripture teaches. READ: Psalm 119:18.

PRAYER BEFORE STUDY

4. READ - WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE SAY?

Read the entire passage slowly. Then read it again. When possible, read it in more than one trustworthy Bible translation. Do not begin by searching commentaries, sermons, videos, or explanations. Begin with Scripture.

FIRST IMPRESSION

What immediately stands out?

READ IT AGAIN

What did the second reading reveal that was missed the first time?

5. OBSERVE - WHAT IS ACTUALLY IN THE TEXT?

Observation asks: WHAT DO I SEE? Before asking what the passage means, notice what it says.

PEOPLE

Who appears in the passage?

PLACES

Where does the passage occur?

EVENTS

What happens?

REPEATED WORDS OR IDEAS

What words, phrases, ideas, or actions repeat?

COMMANDS

Is anyone commanded to do something?

PROMISES

Does the passage contain a promise? To whom is it given?

WARNINGS

Are there warnings?

QUESTIONS

Does someone ask a question?



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CAUSE AND EFFECT

Look for relationships such as BECAUSE -> THEREFORE; IF -> THEN; SIN -> CONSEQUENCE; COMMAND -> RESPONSE; PROMISE -> HOPE; PROBLEM -> SOLUTION. What cause-and-effect relationships appear?

CONTRASTS

Look for BUT, HOWEVER, LIGHT / DARKNESS, WISE / FOOLISH, FAITH / UNBELIEF, OLD / NEW, LIFE / DEATH, RIGHTEOUSNESS / SIN. What contrasts appear?

6. SUMMARIZE THE PASSAGE BEFORE INTERPRETING IT

Try to describe the passage in one or two sentences without explaining what it means for life today.

THIS PASSAGE SAYS

If the passage cannot yet be summarized clearly, read it again.

PART TWO

WANT TO GO DEEPER? INTERMEDIATE

7. CONTEXT - WHAT SURROUNDS THE PASSAGE?

A verse belongs to a paragraph. A paragraph belongs to a section. A section belongs to a biblical book. A biblical book belongs within the larger story of Scripture.

For a fuller treatment of this skill, see #271 - How to Recognize Scripture Taken Out of Context.

READ	What comes before and after?
IDENTIFY	Who is speaking? Who is listening?
FOLLOW	What argument or story is developing?
CHECK	What genre and historical setting matter?
COMPARE	Does this fit other clear Scripture?
ASK	Does the passage actually teach the conclusion being drawn?

WHAT COMES BEFORE THIS PASSAGE?

WHAT COMES AFTER?

WHO IS SPEAKING OR WRITING?

WHO IS BEING ADDRESSED?

WHAT SITUATION OR QUESTION IS BEING ADDRESSED?

8. WHAT KIND OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE IS THIS?

Check the best description: ☐ NARRATIVE ☐ LAW ☐ POETRY / PSALM ☐ WISDOM ☐ PROPHECY ☐ GOSPEL ☐ LETTER ☐ APOCALYPTIC ☐ OTHER: _____

GENRE SAFEGUARD

NARRATIVE - Something happened. That does not automatically mean readers are commanded to imitate it. LAW - Ask who received the command and where it belongs within God's covenant dealings. POETRY - Expect imagery, metaphor, emotion, parallelism, praise, and lament. WISDOM -



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Expect general principles of wise living rather than unconditional guarantees about every circumstance. PROPHECY - Consider the historical situation, covenant setting, judgment, warning, hope, and restoration. LETTERS - Follow the author's argument rather than isolating individual sentences. GOSPELS - Read Jesus' words and actions within the Gospel writer's presentation of His identity, mission, death, and resurrection. APOCALYPTIC - Expect vivid imagery and symbolism that should not be assigned arbitrary meanings.

HOW DOES THE GENRE HELP INTERPRET THIS PASSAGE?

9. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Ask only what is useful for understanding the passage.

Approximate date or biblical period:

Relevant historical events:

Relevant cultural practices:

Political or religious setting:

Does any modern cultural assumption risk being imported into the passage? Consider assumptions about FAMILY, MARRIAGE, MONEY, SUCCESS, WORK, LEADERSHIP, JUSTICE, FREEDOM, POWER, RELATIONSHIPS.

Safeguard

Historical background can illuminate Scripture. It should not become an excuse to make the passage say something the text itself cannot support.

10. INTERPRET - WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE MEAN?

Now move from: WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE SAY? to: WHAT IS THE AUTHOR COMMUNICATING?

WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE MAIN POINT?

WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE REVEAL ABOUT GOD?

WHAT DOES IT REVEAL ABOUT PEOPLE?

WHAT DOES IT REVEAL ABOUT SIN?

WHAT DOES IT REVEAL ABOUT FAITH, OBEDIENCE, GRACE, OR REDEMPTION?

Complete this sentence: "In its original context, this passage teaches that..."

11. HOW CONFIDENT IS THE INTERPRETATION?

Not every conclusion has the same level of biblical support. Use this simple scale:



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EXPLICIT	Scripture directly states it.
STRONGLY SUPPORTED	The context provides strong evidence for the conclusion.
REASONABLE INFERENCE	The conclusion fits the evidence but is not explicitly stated.
UNCERTAIN	More than one interpretation may reasonably account for the text.
SPECULATIVE	The evidence is too weak to claim the conclusion confidently.

MY CURRENT CONCLUSION IS: ☐ EXPLICIT ☐ STRONGLY SUPPORTED ☐ REASONABLE INFERENCE ☐ UNCERTAIN ☐ SPECULATIVE
WHY?

Memory Anchor

LET THE CONFIDENCE OF THE CLAIM MATCH THE STRENGTH OF THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE.

12. CONNECT - ARE THERE IMPORTANT WORDS TO INVESTIGATE?

Not every passage requires a word study. Choose words that materially affect the interpretation. For a fuller treatment, see #266 - How to Study a Word in Scripture.

IMPORTANT WORD:

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

HOW IS IT USED IN THIS PASSAGE?

HOW IS IT USED ELSEWHERE BY THE SAME BIBLICAL AUTHOR?

DO TRANSLATIONS RENDER IT DIFFERENTLY?

WHAT DOES THE CONTEXT SUGGEST THE WORD MEANS HERE?

Word-Study Safeguard

A dictionary lists possible meanings. The context determines which meaning fits the passage. Do not place every possible Hebrew or Greek meaning into one verse.

13. CONNECT - WHAT CROSS-REFERENCES ACTUALLY HELP?

List only passages that genuinely illuminate the text. For deeper study of cross-references, see #269 - Cross-Reference Study.

CROSS-REFERENCE 1:

Connection:

CROSS-REFERENCE 2:

Connection:

CROSS-REFERENCE 3:

Connection:

Then ask: ☐ AN EXPLICIT QUOTATION OR REFERENCE? ☐ A STRONG BIBLICAL CONNECTION? ☐ A RELATED IDEA? ☐ ONLY A POSSIBLE RESEMBLANCE?

Cross-Reference Safeguard

A cross-reference is an invitation to investigate. It is not automatically an inspired interpretation.



14. DOES A LARGER BIBLICAL THEME APPEAR?

For a fuller treatment, see #268 - How to Trace a Theme Through the Bible.

Possible themes include CREATION, COVENANT, KINGDOM, TEMPLE, SACRIFICE, PRIESTHOOD, EXODUS, HOLINESS, SIN, GRACE, FAITH, JUSTICE, JUDGMENT, FORGIVENESS, RESTORATION, RESURRECTION, NEW CREATION.

THEME:

WHERE HAS THIS THEME APPEARED EARLIER IN SCRIPTURE?

WHERE DOES IT APPEAR LATER?

DOES SCRIPTURE EXPLICITLY CONNECT THESE PASSAGES?

Theme-Tracing Safeguard

Repeated similarity does not automatically establish intentional biblical symbolism. Do not force a theme merely because two passages share an interesting detail.

15. WHERE DOES THIS PASSAGE FIT IN THE BIBLICAL STORY?

Use only the stages that genuinely apply.

CREATION

Does this connect to God's original design?

FALL

How has sin affected what is happening?

ISRAEL / COVENANTS

Does this passage belong within God's covenant dealings with Israel?

JESUS

Does the New Testament connect this subject to Jesus?

CHURCH

How does the Gospel shape the way believers understand or live this truth?

NEW CREATION

Does Scripture connect this subject to God's promised future?

DO NOT FORCE EVERY BOX TO HAVE AN ANSWER. Some passages naturally connect to several stages. Others do not.

16. HOW DOES THIS PASSAGE CONNECT TO JESUS?

Do not begin by trying to find a hidden reference to Jesus in every detail. First understand the passage in its own context.

Then ask whether Scripture provides a legitimate connection through: ☐ PROMISE ☐ PROPHECY ☐ COVENANT ☐ SACRIFICE ☐ PRIESTHOOD ☐ KINGSHIP ☐ KINGDOM ☐ TEMPLE ☐ EXODUS ☐ SIN AND FORGIVENESS ☐ GRACE ☐ REDEMPTION ☐ RESURRECTION ☐ NEW CREATION ☐ THE GOSPEL ☐ NO DIRECT CONNECTION IS CLEAR IN THIS PASSAGE

WHAT IS THE CONNECTION?

WHAT SCRIPTURE SUPPORTS IT?

Christ-Centered Safeguard



**DO NOT FORCE JESUS INTO EVERY DETAIL.
FOLLOW SCRIPTURE'S STORY TO HIM.**

17. ARE OUTSIDE STUDY TOOLS NEEDED?

Only after observing and interpreting the passage personally should outside resources normally become prominent. For fuller guidance on using commentaries responsibly, see #270 - Using Commentaries Responsibly.

WHICH TOOL HELPS WITH WHICH QUESTION?

BIBLE / BIBLE APP	Reading the full passage and surrounding context
STUDY BIBLE	Brief historical, cultural, and interpretive background
CONCORDANCE	Finding where a word or phrase appears elsewhere
BIBLE DICTIONARY	People, places, customs, objects, and historical background
BIBLE ATLAS	Geography, travel, nations, cities, and regional setting
BLUE LETTER BIBLE	Word-study tools, cross-references, translations, and study resources
BIBLE HUB	Parallel translations, cross-references, and commentaries
COMMENTARY	Comparing informed interpretations after personal study

WHAT QUESTION STILL NEEDS HELP?

RESOURCE CONSULTED:

WHAT DID IT SUGGEST?

RETURN TO THE BIBLE: Does the explanation fit the actual passage? ☐ YES ☐ PARTLY ☐ UNCERTAIN ☐ NO

WHY?

Resource Safeguard

Outside resources are assistants, not authorities over Scripture. Listing a resource does not mean 3Nails endorses every theological position, methodology, study note, commentary, interpretation, or conclusion it contains. Compare resources carefully and continually return to Scripture.

18. WHAT IF CAREFUL CHRISTIANS DISAGREE?

Good context does not mean every difficult passage becomes equally clear. Sometimes careful Christians read the same paragraph, recognize the same historical setting, respect the same genre, study the same words, agree on the central biblical truth, and still disagree about a secondary interpretive question.

When that happens: IDENTIFY WHAT SCRIPTURE EXPLICITLY SAYS. DISTINGUISH INTERPRETATION FROM EXPLICIT TEACHING. UNDERSTAND THE STRONGEST BIBLICAL REASONING FOR THE MAJOR VIEWS. DO NOT CARICATURE ANOTHER VIEW. DO NOT CLAIM GREATER CERTAINTY THAN THE TEXT SUPPORTS.

WHAT IS CLEAR?

WHAT IS DISPUTED?

WHAT ARE THE MAIN INTERPRETATIONS?

WHICH INTERPRETATION CURRENTLY APPEARS TO BEST ACCOUNT FOR THE TEXT?



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HOW CERTAIN IS THAT CONCLUSION?

Memory Anchor

WHERE SCRIPTURE SPEAKS CLEARLY, BELIEVE IT.
WHERE CHRISTIANS DRAW INFERENCES, IDENTIFY THEM AS INFERENCES.
WHERE SCRIPTURE LEAVES MYSTERY, DO NOT MANUFACTURE CERTAINTY.

19. APPLY - HOW SHOULD THIS TRUTH SHAPE LIFE?

Application comes after interpretation.

TRUTH TO BELIEVE

TRUTH ABOUT GOD TO REMEMBER

COMMAND TO OBEY

SIN TO CONFESS OR AVOID

PROMISE TO TRUST

WARNING TO TAKE SERIOUSLY

ATTITUDE TO CHANGE

RELATIONSHIP REQUIRING FAITHFUL ACTION

REASON TO WORSHIP

REASON TO HOPE

ONE CONCRETE RESPONSE

Because of what this passage teaches:

Application Safeguard

Do not ask only: "WHAT DOES THIS VERSE MEAN TO ME?" First ask: "WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE MEAN?" Then ask: "HOW SHOULD THAT TRUTH SHAPE LIFE?"

20. PRAY AND RESPOND

Turn the study back toward God. Prayer may include PRAISE, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, TRUST, REQUEST, INTERCESSION, SURRENDER, OBEDIENCE.

PRAYER:

A FULL WORKED EXAMPLE - MARK 2:1-12

21. WHAT DOES USING THE WORKSHEET ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE?

READ: Mark 2:1-12

OBSERVE - Jesus returns to Capernaum. A crowd gathers. Four people bring a paralyzed man. Because they cannot reach Jesus through the crowd, they lower the man through the roof. Jesus sees their faith. Jesus tells the man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Some scribes question this internally.



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They recognize that forgiving sins belongs to God. Jesus knows their thoughts. Jesus heals the man. The man rises, takes his bed, and leaves. The crowd is amazed and glorifies God.

CONTEXT - Mark has already presented Jesus as the Son of God, the One proclaiming God's kingdom, One who teaches with authority, One who commands unclean spirits, and One who heals disease. READ: Mark 1.

INTERPRET - The passage is not merely JESUS HEALS A PARALYZED MAN. The controversy centers upon Jesus' authority to forgive sins. Jesus asks which is easier: to declare forgiveness or to command the paralyzed man to rise? The visible healing confirms the authority behind Jesus' invisible declaration. Mark 2:10 gives the central claim: The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

CONFIDENCE SCALE - Conclusion: Jesus claims authority on earth to forgive sins. GRADE: EXPLICIT. Why? Because Mark 2:10 directly states that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. This conclusion does not depend merely upon a symbolic detail, a possible cross-reference, a theological deduction, a later commentary, or a similarity with another passage. The text itself states the claim.

A SECONDARY QUESTION - Who exactly is included when Mark says Jesus "saw their faith"? Readers may ask whether "their" refers primarily to the four men carrying the paralytic, the paralytic together with his friends, or the group more generally. The passage does not pause to explain the grammatical and theological implications in detail. Careful readers may therefore discuss the question differently. But that secondary uncertainty does not overturn the passage's clear central claim: Jesus has authority to forgive sins.

CONNECT - Daniel 7:13-14 provides important background for the title SON OF MAN. The connection should be investigated carefully rather than assumed merely because the same words appear.

BIBLICAL STORY - Sin is humanity's deepest problem. Throughout Scripture, forgiveness belongs to God. The sacrificial system demonstrates the seriousness of sin and the need for atonement. Jesus does more than heal the man's body. He claims authority concerning the man's sin.

JESUS - The passage explicitly centers on Jesus. His identity and authority are the heart of the controversy.

APPLY - The passage invites readers to recognize that humanity's deepest need is not merely physical improvement but reconciliation with God. Jesus has authority that belongs to God. Faith should therefore be directed toward Him.

PRAY AND RESPOND - Praise Jesus for His authority and mercy. Confess sin rather than hiding it. Trust His sufficiency. Bring others to Him in faith.

Worked-Example Memory Anchor

OBSERVATION SAW THE HEALING.

CONTEXT REVEALED THE CONTROVERSY.

INTERPRETATION IDENTIFIED THE CLAIM.

THE CONFIDENCE SCALE SHOWED WHY THE CLAIM IS EXPLICIT.

CAREFUL READING LEFT SECONDARY QUESTIONS OPEN.

THE PASSAGE POINTED TO JESUS.

A SHORTER PASSAGE DOES NOT NEED EVERY TOOL

22. DOES EVERY STUDY NEED ALL TEN STEPS IN EQUAL DEPTH?

No. Consider Psalm 117. It contains only two verses. READ: Psalm 117.

PRAY - Ask God for understanding. READ - Read the entire Psalm. That takes only moments. OBSERVE - All nations are called to praise the Lord. All peoples are called to praise Him. The reasons given are God's steadfast love and God's enduring faithfulness.

CONTEXT - The entire Psalm is already being read. There is no need to search several surrounding paragraphs simply to complete a worksheet box.

INTERPRET - The central point is clear: The nations are called to praise God because of His steadfast love and enduring faithfulness.

BIBLICAL STORY - The call for the nations to worship God fits the wider biblical movement toward blessing reaching the nations. READ: Genesis 12:1-3; Psalm 67.

JESUS / NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTION - Romans 15:11 explicitly quotes Psalm 117:1 while describing the nations praising God. That is a strong, direct biblical connection.

APPLY - Praise God for His steadfast love and faithfulness. Recognize that worship of God is not limited to one ethnicity or nation.

PRAY AND RESPOND - Thank God for His faithfulness and pray for His name to be praised among the nations.

WHAT WAS NOT NECESSARY? A lengthy Hebrew word study was not required to grasp the Psalm's main point. Multiple commentaries were not necessary. A detailed historical reconstruction was not required. A large chart of biblical themes was not necessary. Dozens of cross-references were not needed. The passage could be studied faithfully without filling every possible worksheet section.

Memory Anchor

A THOROUGH STUDY DOES NOT MEAN FILLING EVERY BOX.

IT MEANS USING THE TOOLS THE PASSAGE ACTUALLY REQUIRES.

THE ONE-PAGE QUICK STUDY

23. WHAT IF THERE IS ONLY A SHORT TIME TO STUDY?

Use this abbreviated version.

PASSAGE:



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PRAY

Ask God for understanding.

READ

Read the passage at least twice.

OBSERVE

What stands out?

CONTEXT

What comes before and after?

Who is speaking or writing?

Who is being addressed?

INTERPRET

What is the main point?

Complete: "This passage teaches that..."

CONFIDENCE

My conclusion is: ☐ EXPLICIT ☐ STRONGLY SUPPORTED ☐ REASONABLE INFERENCE ☐ UNCERTAIN ☐ SPECULATIVE

CONNECT

Is there an important word, cross-reference, or biblical theme worth investigating?

JESUS / BIBLICAL STORY

Where does this passage fit within Scripture's larger story? Is there a legitimate connection to Jesus?

APPLY

Because this passage teaches this truth:

A faithful response is:

PRAY

FINAL CHECK

- ☐ DID I READ THE PASSAGE IN CONTEXT?
- ☐ DID I DISTINGUISH OBSERVATION FROM INTERPRETATION?
- ☐ DID I ALLOW SCRIPTURE TO SHAPE THE CONCLUSION?
- ☐ DID I AVOID FORCING WORD STUDIES OR CROSS-REFERENCES?
- ☐ DID I DISTINGUISH EXPLICIT TEACHING FROM INFERENCE?
- ☐ DID I LET THE CONFIDENCE OF THE CLAIM MATCH THE EVIDENCE?
- ☐ DID I FOLLOW THE BIBLICAL STORY RATHER THAN INVENT CONNECTIONS?
- ☐ DID I CONNECT TO JESUS ONLY WHERE SCRIPTURE LEGITIMATELY LEADS?
- ☐ DOES THE APPLICATION GROW FROM THE PASSAGE'S MEANING?
- ☐ DID I RETURN TO SCRIPTURE AFTER CONSULTING OUTSIDE RESOURCES?
- ☐ DID I USE ONLY THE TOOLS THIS PASSAGE ACTUALLY NEEDED?
- ☐ AM I WILLING TO CHANGE MY INTERPRETATION IF THE TEXT REQUIRES IT?

FINAL BIBLE-STUDY SUMMARY



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

24. WHAT DID THIS PASSAGE TEACH?

PASSAGE:

IN ONE SENTENCE, THE MAIN POINT IS:

MY CONFIDENCE IN THAT CONCLUSION IS: ☐ EXPLICIT ☐ STRONGLY SUPPORTED ☐ REASONABLE INFERENCE ☐ UNCERTAIN ☐ SPECULATIVE
THE MOST IMPORTANT THING LEARNED ABOUT GOD:

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING LEARNED ABOUT JESUS OR THE GOSPEL:

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING LEARNED ABOUT PEOPLE:

AN IMPORTANT WORD, CONNECTION, OR THEME:

SOMETHING STILL NOT FULLY UNDERSTOOD:

IF CHRISTIANS DISAGREE ABOUT THIS PASSAGE:

What is clear?

What remains disputed?

ONE TRUTH TO REMEMBER:

ONE RESPONSE TO MAKE:

ONE VERSE OR PASSAGE TO RETURN TO:

FINAL PRAYER:

GO DEEPER IN THE BIBLE STUDY METHODS SERIES

#265	HOW TO STUDY A BIBLICAL TOPIC	Use when asking what Scripture teaches across multiple passages about one subject.
#266	HOW TO STUDY A WORD IN SCRIPTURE	Use when an important biblical word affects interpretation.
#267	COMPARING COMMON BIBLE-STUDY METHODS	Use when choosing among structured study methods.
#268	HOW TO TRACE A THEME THROUGH THE BIBLE	Use when following an idea through Scripture's unfolding story.
#269	CROSS-REFERENCE STUDY	Use when evaluating connections between passages.
#270	USING COMMENTARIES RESPONSIBLY	Use when outside interpretation would help after personal study.
#271	HOW TO RECOGNIZE SCRIPTURE TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT	Use when testing whether a biblical claim respects its passage, audience, genre, and setting.

These studies are companions. They are not replacements for Scripture.



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Final Memory Anchor

PRAY. READ. OBSERVE. CHECK THE CONTEXT. INTERPRET. WEIGH THE EVIDENCE. CONNECT CAREFULLY. FOLLOW THE BIBLICAL STORY. LOOK TO JESUS WHERE SCRIPTURE LEADS. APPLY THE TRUTH. PRAY AND RESPOND. THEN KEEP READING.

ROOTED IN SCRIPTURE - POINTING TO JESUS

No worksheet can replace knowing Scripture. No Bible-study method can replace Scripture. No commentary can replace Scripture. No study Bible can replace Scripture. No word-study tool can replace Scripture. No cross-reference system can replace Scripture. No teacher can replace Scripture. And no 3Nails study can replace Scripture.

These are tools. Scripture is authoritative.

The purpose of learning Bible-study methods is not to become dependent upon increasingly complicated methods. It is to become increasingly capable of opening the Bible and reading it faithfully.

Begin simply. Pray. Read the passage. Notice what is there. Keep reading until the context becomes clearer. Ask what the biblical author is communicating. Investigate difficult questions. Compare Scripture with Scripture. Use tools carefully. Distinguish what Scripture explicitly teaches from what is inferred. Let the confidence of the conclusion match the strength of the biblical evidence. Recognize uncertainty where it genuinely exists. Follow the unfolding biblical story. Recognize Jesus where Scripture leads to Him. Then respond to what God has revealed.

Some studies will use nearly every section of this worksheet. Others may require only a few. That is not a failure. A detailed word study is unnecessary when no important word requires one. A commentary is unnecessary when the passage is already clear. A large theme-tracing exercise is unnecessary when the passage does not depend upon one.

Do not use a tool simply because the worksheet contains a box for it. The goal is not to complete every blank. The goal is to understand Scripture.

Over time, many of these questions may become instinctive. A reader begins automatically asking: WHAT COMES BEFORE THIS? WHO IS SPEAKING? WHO IS LISTENING? WHAT KIND OF LITERATURE IS THIS? WHAT IS THE AUTHOR'S POINT? IS THIS EXPLICIT OR INFERRED? HOW CERTAIN SHOULD THIS CONCLUSION BE? DOES THIS CROSS-REFERENCE REALLY CONNECT? DOES THIS PASSAGE ACTUALLY NEED A WORD STUDY? WHERE DOES THIS BELONG IN THE BIBLICAL STORY? HOW DOES THIS LEGITIMATELY CONNECT TO JESUS? WHAT DO CAREFUL READERS AGREE ABOUT? WHERE DOES REAL UNCERTAINTY REMAIN? HOW SHOULD THIS TRUTH SHAPE LIFE?

That is the larger purpose of the worksheet. Not merely to complete a Bible study. But to learn how to study the Bible.

Open the Word. Read carefully. Ask good questions. Use the tools the passage actually requires. Follow where Scripture leads. Then open it again tomorrow.

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