

Bible Study for Every Christian

Part 3: Observation

BIBLE STUDY FOR EVERY CHRISTIAN (PT. 3) Observation

THE PROCESS OF INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

- 1) Preparation
- 2) Observation
- 3) Meditation
- 4) Interpretation
- 5) Evaluation
- 6) Application

II. OBSERVATION

- *Exegesis* is using careful reading, thought, and analysis along with all available tools to systematically study the details of the text in order to arrive at its meaning.
- "What does this really say?"

II. OBSERVATION

- **B. The Process**
 - 1. Always Remember the Big Picture.
 - 2. Choose a Biblical Book.
 - 3. Read up on the Book's Background.
 - 4. Read through the Book Multiple Times.
 - 5. Identify the Paragraphs (Prose) or Sections (Poetry).
 - 6. Make Observations and Ask Questions of the Text.

II. OBSERVATION

- **B. The Process**
 - **7. Look up all proper nouns.**
 - Unger, Merrill F. *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*. Rev. and updated edition ed. by R. K. Harrison. Moody.
 - **8. Analyze the grammar.**

A BRIEF GRAMMAR LESSON

- **Clause** – a part of a sentence that contains a subject and a verb.
 - **1) Independent** – a clause that expresses a complete thought or stands alone; a complete sentence.
 - E.g., Charlie ate supper.
 - **2) Dependent** – a clause that does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone; not a complete sentence.
 - E.g., while Charlie ate supper.
 - E.g., when Charlie ate supper.
 - E.g., as Charlie ate supper.

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A BRIEF GRAMMAR LESSON

- **Phrase** – a group of words in a sentence without a subject and a verb.
- **1) Prepositional phrase** – a group of words without a verb that is introduced by a preposition.
 - Common Prepositions: of, with, about
 - Anything that a squirrel can be to a stump or an airplane can be to a cloud.

A BRIEF GRAMMAR LESSON

- **Phrase** – a group of words in a sentence without a subject and a verb.
- **2) Verbal phrase** – a group of words without a main verb but with either...
 - a verb plus -ed or -ing (participles or gerunds)
 - *Hearing the phone ring*, I answered it.
 - *Waiting for a text message* kept me glued to my cell phone. (gerund)
 - "to" plus a verb (infinitive).
 - They cannot be made to *listen*.

THE KEY TO ANALYZING THE GRAMMAR

- Break the text down into smaller units.
- Identify the main clause—the sentence's subject and verb.
- Identify all the other phrases and clauses.
- Understand their relationship to each other.

THE BEST TOOL

- Block diagramming
- Diagrams the paragraph as a whole.
- Each phrase and clause is kept in the natural order of the passage.
- Supporting phrases and clauses are indented under what they modify.
- The relationships of whole sentences, clauses and phrases are visually apparent at a glance.
- Fully developed in W. Kaiser's Book, *Toward An Exegetical Theology*

BLOCK DIAGRAMMING EXAMPLES

- Ezra 7:10 - 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.

BLOCK DIAGRAMMING EXAMPLES

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.

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BLOCK DIAGRAMMING EXAMPLES

For [reason of previous verse]
 Ezra had set his heart [main proposition]
 to study the law [goal]
 of the LORD
 and to practice *it*, [goal]
 and to teach [goal]
 His statutes [content of the Law]
 and ordinances [content of the Law]
 in Israel. [to whom? Or where?]

BLOCK DIAGRAMMING EXAMPLES

■ Eph. 5:22-24 - Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ **For** the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. ²⁴ **But** as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.

BLOCK DIAGRAMMING EXAMPLES

Wives, *be subject*
 to your own husbands,
 as to the Lord.
 For the husband is the head
 of the wife,
 as Christ also is the head
 of the church
 He Himself *being* the Savior
 of the body.
 But as the church is subject
 to Christ,
 so also the wives *ought to be*
 to their husbands
 in everything.

BLOCK DIAGRAMMING EXAMPLES

Wives, *be subject* [main subject and verb]
 to your own husbands, [to whom?]
 as to the Lord. [how?]
 For the husband is the head [reason]
 of the wife,
 as Christ also is the head [comparison]
 of the church
 He Himself *being* the Savior
 of the body.
 But as the church is subject [comparison]
 to Christ, [to whom?]
 so also the wives *ought to be*
 to their husbands
 [to whom?]
 in everything.
 [to what extent?]

II. OBSERVATION

- B. The Process
 - 7. Look up all proper nouns.
 - 8. Analyze the grammar.
 - 9. Identify a preliminary theme.

HOW TO IDENTIFY THE THEME

- 1) Directly stated:
 - 1 Tim. 4:6-16
 - Theme = 4:16; "yourself" (4:6-12); "your teaching" (4:13-16)
- 2) Contained in the words or concepts repeated:
 - Eph. 1:3-14 – will or purpose of God
- 3) Discerned from the context:
 - Eph.4:25 – illus. of process of sanctification.

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 - 9. Identify a preliminary theme.
 - 10. Look up Cross References.

CROSS REFERENCES

- Parallel passages or cross references that use the same words in the original language:
 - NAU
 - Gospels: Harmony of the Gospels; Thomas & Gundry's *A Harmony of the Gospels*.
- Passages that contain the same or similar ideas and concepts:
 - *Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*.
 - *MacArthur Topical Bible*.

II. OBSERVATION

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 - 11. Study the Key Words.

WHY STUDY KEY WORDS?

- If words have been in a language for any period of time they acquire a variety of senses.
- E.g., The leaders of the company were cool with how the board ran its affairs.
- The leaders of the company lost body temperature because of how the piece of lumber dripped its affairs.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE KEY WORDS

- Words that play a key role in the passage
- Words that occur frequently in that book or author
- Words that are major biblical words: justified, propitiation, redemption

HOW TO STUDY KEY WORDS

- (i) Look them up in a Bible Dictionary.
- (ii) Look them up in Greek (NT) or Hebrew (OT) dictionaries.
- (iii) Do a concordance search.
 - Where?
 - In the same book
 - In other books the same author wrote
 - In other books written about the same time
 - In the entire Scripture

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HOW TO STUDY KEY WORDS

- (iii) Do a concordance search.
 - What?
 - The various senses of the word.
 - The connotation of the word.
 - Is it used only literally or also figuratively.
 - The synonyms - the words that are used with it.
 - The antonyms - its opposites.
- (iv) Based on the context of your paragraph, decide the sense of the word the author intended.

THE DANGERS OF WORD STUDY

- (i) The root fallacy.
- (ii) Reading all the senses of the word into that one passage.
- (iii) Choosing the sense you like best regardless of the context.
- (iv) Reading the meaning of the English word back into the Greek or Hebrew word.
- (v) Giving a word the exact same sense every time it occurs.

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