

# HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE



# AGENDA

- Why should you do this ??
- Picking Content
- Picking the Technique
- Applying the Technique
- Conclusion x

# WHY Should You Study the Bible ?

## # 1 - It is the path to salvation

1 Tim 4.16

“Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.” x

# Why Should You Study the Bible ? (cont'd)

## # 2 – It provides everything we need to live the believer's life

Ps 19.7-11

- 7 “The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.
- 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
- 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.
- 10 They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.
- 11 Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward.” x

# Why Should You Study the Bible ? (cont'd)

# 3 - It specifically provides skills to develop character, which has value in both the secular and spiritual worlds

2 Tim 3.16

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness" x

# Picking CONTENT

- 1<sup>st</sup>, Decide the Type of Study
  - A Bible book or passage ?
  - A Bible-themed book
  - A topic or theme from the Bible

## A PARABLES SERIES

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Treasure in the field	Mt 13.44
Pearl of great price	Mt 13.45-46
House on the rock	Mt 7:24-27
Great banquet	Lk 15.1-7
Samaritan	Lk 10:25-37
Lost coin, lost sheep	Lk 15:1-10
Lost sons (usually 2 studies)	Lk 15:11-32
Pharisee and publican	Lk 18.9-14
Laborers in the vineyard	Mt 20.1-16
Unforgiving servant	Mt 18.23-35
Wheat and tares	Mt 13.24-30
Shrewd manager	Lk 16:1-13
Rich man and Lazarus	Lk 16.19-31
Rich fool	Lk 12.13-21
Ten virgins	Mt 25:1-13
Talents	Mt 25:14-30

# Picking Content *(cont'd)*

- 2<sup>nd</sup>, Decide resources you will use
  - A - #1 >> The Bible ! x

# BIBLE VERSIONS

## COMPARISON OF LITERALNESS

MORE LITERAL LESS INTERPRETATIVE MORE WORD FOR WORD							MORE PARAPHRASE MORE INTERPRETATIVE** MORE CONCEPT FOR CONCEPT			
Young's Literal	NAS ASV	Amp ESV	KJV NKJV RSV	NRSV NAB	NIV NJB	NCV ICB	NLT Phillips	GNT CEV	TLB	Msg
<b>NAS</b> = New American Standard <b>Amp</b> = Amplified Version <b>ASV</b> = Authorized Standard Version 1901 <b>ESV</b> = English Standard Version <b>RSV</b> = Revised Standard Version <b>KJV</b> = King James Version <b>NKJV</b> = New King James Version				NRSV = New Revised Std Version NAB = New American Bible NJB = New Jerusalem Bible NIV = New International Version NCV = New Century Version ICB = International Children's Bible			NLT = New Living Translation Phillips = J B Phillips Paraphrase GNT = Good News Translation CEV = Contemporary English Version TLB = The Living Bible Msg = The Message (but <b>Be a Berean!</b> )			



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Paul wrote about the Jews in Berea in Acts 17:11 ....

“Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so...” ✕



# Picking Content (cont'd)

- A caution about *The Message* !
  - There are some passages that are really “watered down” in impact
  - E.g. note these translations of Lk 12.46
    - NASB – “.. the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know, and will cut him in pieces, and assign him a place with the unbelievers...”
    - NIV - “..”the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers...”
    - The Message - “...the master will walk in when he least expects it, give him the thrashing of his life, and put him back in the kitchen peeling potatoes...” x

# Picking Content

- 2<sup>nd</sup>, Decide resources you will use (*cont'd*)
  - Bible Commentaries
    - *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Walford & Zuck, Dallas Theological Seminary
    - Warren Wierbe's "Be..." series, e.g. *Be Available*, *Be Comforted*
    - *The Bible Reader's Companion*, Lawrence O. Richards
    - *The Eerdman's Companion to the Bible*, Fee, Hubbard, & Tappy
    - *The Expositor's Bible* (five volumes), Nicoll & Joseph
    - *Holman Concise Bible Commentary*, Dockery
  - Bible Dictionary / Encyclopedia
    - *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Elwell
    - *Easton's Bible Dictionary*, Easton
    - *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Brand, Draper, England, Bond, Clendenen, Butler, Latta
    - *The Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land*, Negev x

# Picking Content

- 2<sup>nd</sup>, Decide resources you will use (*cont'd*)
  - Bible Concordance
    - *Collins Thesaurus of the Bible*, Day
    - *Dictionary of Bible Themes*, Manser
    - *New Nave's Topical Bible*, Swanson, Nave
    - *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*, Strong
  - Bible Cross-reference
    - *Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, Canne, Browne, Blayney, Scott, Torrey
  - Other supporting resources
    - Bible lands culture
    - Bible archaeology
    - Topical Bible<sup>x</sup>

# Picking Content *(cont'd)*

- 3<sup>rd</sup>, Pick the study focus/subject/theme
  - Do you feel led to one in particular ?
  - Are there others who want to study something together with you ?<sub>x</sub>

# PICKING the Technique

- YOUR study technique sets the tone
  - Pray regularly for Holy Spirit guidance
    - The Holy Spirit is the Teacher
    - The Bible is the authority

I Cor 2.13

“And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual”

- All other resources are to be accepted as valid only in the framework of the Bible<sub>x</sub>

# Picking the Technique *(cont'd)*

- Two methods of study
  - I. Deductive
    - Moves from general to specific
    - Assume a hypothesis about a passage & then decide if the passage supports it
      - “Jesus is compassionate” > Does the passage prove this ?
        - Take the “woman at the well” as example > John 4.7-26
    - Difficult to see if the passage supports it or not
    - Questionable if this approach leads to in-depth learning<sup>x</sup>

# Picking the Technique *(cont'd)*

- Two methods of study *(cont'd)*
  - 2. Inductive
    - “Exegesis” > finding the key ideas, facts, principles contained in a passage
    - Moves from the specific to the general
    - Assembles the specifics to a conclusion about the passage
    - Much easier to work with
    - Forces student to look deeper, allows the Holy Spirit to bring up more
    - Helps students to learn to study the Bible on their own<sup>x</sup>

# APPLYING the Technique

- Using the Inductive Method

- Martin Luther described this method ...

"I study my Bible as I gather apples. First, I shake the whole tree that the ripest might fall .Then I shake each limb, and when I have shaken each limb, I shake each branch and every twig. Then I look under every leaf . I shake the Bible as a whole , like shaking the whole tree (~ [Context](#)). Then I shake every limb—study book after book (~ [Overview of Book](#)). Then I shake every branch, giving attention to the chapters when they do not break the sense (~ [Observation of Chapters](#)). Then I shake every twig, or a careful study of the paragraphs and sentences and words and their meanings (~[Greek/Hebrew Word Studies](#)).“

([Commentator's notes in blue](#))<sup>x</sup>



# Applying the Technique: Inductive Method (cont'd)

I KEEP six honest serving-men  
(They taught me all I knew);  
Their names are What and Why and When  
And How and Where and Who. \*

- Step # 1: **Observation**
  - Don't fall into trap of immediately jumping into interpretation
  - Gather the facts ... Who, What, Where, When, Why, How (5W's & H)
    - Who is involved in the passage ?
    - To whom was this piece written ?
    - What are the circumstances ?
    - What was said ?
    - Where does the story take place ?
    - When did the story occur ?
    - How did certain persons behave ?<sub>x</sub>

\**The Elephant's Child*,  
Rudyard Kipling

## DO YOU OBSERVE LIKE DR WATSON ... OR LIKE SHERLOCK HOLMES?

- From: “A Scandal in Bohemia” in The Complete Sherlock Holmes [New York: Doubleday, 1927]
- **Holmes:** “You **see**, but you do not **observe**. The distinction is clear. For example, you have frequently seen the steps which lead up from the hall to this room.”
- **Watson:** “Frequently.”
- **Holmes:** “How often?”
- **Watson:** “Well, some hundreds of times.”
- **Holmes:** “Then how many are there?”
- **Watson:** “How many? I don’t know.”
- **Holmes:** “Quite so! You have not **observed**. And yet you have **seen**. That is just my point. Now, I know that there are seventeen steps, because I have both **seen** and **observed**” x

# PRACTICE INTERROGATING GOD'S WORD with 5W/H QUESTIONS

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- John 7:1 “After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him”
- **Who?** **Jesus** Focus On The Obvious: FOTO=people, places, events
- **When?** **After these things** -Time Phrase *Ask: What time is it?*
- **What?** **What are “these things”?** - Check Context > Events since John 5.18
- **Where?** **Walking in Galilee (not Judea)** - Check a Map
- **Why?** **Unwilling to walk in Judea** - For explains purpose
- **Why not Judea?** **Jews seeking to kill Him<sub>x</sub>**

# Applying the Technique: Inductive Method

- Step # 1: Observation (cont'd)
  - Exercise on “Observation”
    - Read 2 Timothy 1.1-9
      - List all of the things you observe about God within each verse
      - List questions and facts according to the 5W’s & H
        - Who, What, Why, Where, When, How<sub>x</sub>

## **2 Tim 1.1-9: Observations about “God”**

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, my beloved child:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, with a clear conscience, as I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day.

4 As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy.

5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.

6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands,

7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,

9 who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,

**1) Made Paul an apostle by His will**

[2Ti 1:1](#)

**2) Gives grace, mercy and peace**

[2Ti 1:2](#)

**3) Is the Father**

[2Ti 1:2](#)

**4) Is thanked**

[2Ti 1:3](#)

**5) Is served with a clear conscience**

[2Ti 1:3](#)

**7) Gave a gift (gives gifts)**

[2Ti 1:6](#)

**8) Does not give us a spirit of timidity**

[2Ti 1:7](#)

**9) Gives a spirit of power and love and discipline**

[2Ti 1:7](#)

**10) Gives us His power which enables us to suffer for the gospel**

[2Ti 1:8](#)

**11) Saved us**

[2Ti 1:9](#)

**12) Called us with a holy calling**

[2Ti 1:9](#)

**13) Calls us not according to works**

[2Ti 1:9](#)

**14) Calls according to His own purpose and grace**

[2Ti 1:9](#)

**15) Called us in Christ Jesus from all eternity (before time began)**

[2Ti 1:9](#) x

# Applying the Technique: Inductive Method *(cont'd)*

- Step # 2: **Interpretation**
  - Drawing meaning & significance from the observations
  - Focus more on answering the How & Why
    - Look for relationships among the observations
    - What significance do the relationships show ?
    - Ask “What does this mean ?”
    - Draw out the main theme of the passage<sub>x</sub>

# Applying the Technique: Inductive Method

- **Step # 2: Interpretation** *(cont'd)*
  - *Principles of Bible Interpretation Per Bob Smith*
    - Attitude: Desire to be taught by God
    - Discover the writer's intent
    - Interpret literally
    - Observe the context
    - Relate to historical/cultural setting
    - Consider the literary mold
    - Observe the author's scope and plan
    - Compare Scripture with Scripture
    - Study word meanings and grammar
    - God speaks in human terms
    - Use the original languages to resolve difficulties
  - **CAUTION: Keep Observation and Interpretation within the passage context<sub>x</sub>**

## Applying the Technique : Inductive Method *(cont'd)*

- Step # 3: **Application**
  - Gets into the “So What ?” & “What Now ?”
  - What does the passage mean to the student ? How has the student been affected ?
  - What is the action that should be taken by the student ?<sub>x</sub>



# Applying the Technique: Inductive Method

## Some 2 Tim 1.1-9 Example Observations generating DEEPER 5W & H questions....

**WHAT** have you learned about God from this exercise? (Always try to ask this question - What does this text teach about God the Father, Jesus and/or the Spirit?)

**WHAT** do you see repeated about God?

**WHO** is God to us in terms of our relationship with Him?

**WHAT** does this teach us about God's character?

**WHY** did Paul become an apostle?

**HOW** did Paul serve God? **HOW** should we serve God?

**WHAT** have you learned about your salvation?

**WHAT** has God given us that should embolden our walk with Him and for Him?

**WHAT** and Who are we to count on when we suffer for the gospel?

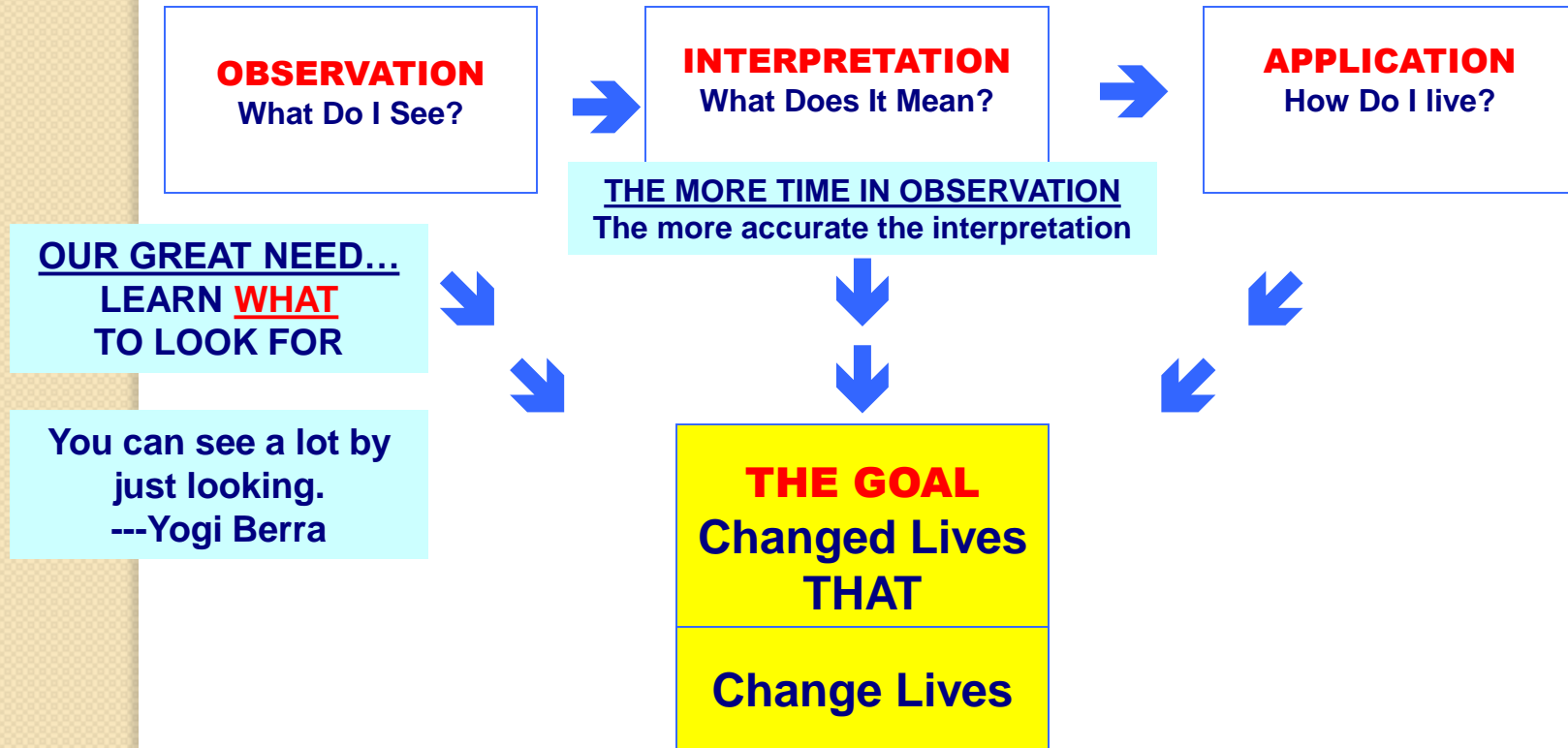
**HOW** is our calling described?

**WHY** were any called? (see [2Ti 1:9](#))

**WHEN** did God call those He would save?

**HOW** do we (or should we) respond?

# SUMMARY: HOW TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE



“...grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.” (2 Peter 3:18) ×

## Applying the Technique : Inductive Method (cont'd)

- Step # 4: **Add from other resources**

- What's the cultural background ?

- Gideon: Israelite's state at the beginning

- Israelites agriculture-based > Bible dictionary

- Harvest in Jezreel Valley > Maps

- Midianites rob harvest coming up Jordan Valley > Both

- Can Bible archaeology shed any light ?

- Outside evidence for Jesus' existence



### Did Jesus Exist? Searching for Evidence Beyond the Bible

Lawrence Mykytiuk

Did Jesus of Nazareth, "the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5), really exist? What's the evidence outside of the Bible? Classical and Jewish writings from the first several centuries C.E. give us a glimpse of the person who would become the central figure in Christianity mere decades after his crucifixion.

[Read more...](#)

*Biblical Archaeology Review*, Jan-Feb 2015 x

# Applying the Technique : Inductive Method

- Step # 4: Add from other resources (cont'd)

## 50 People in the Bible Confirmed Archaeologically

Posted By [Biblical Archaeology Society Staff](#) On March 3, 2014 @ 9:21 am In [People in the Bible](#) | [119 Comments](#)

In "[Archaeology Confirms 50 Real People in the Bible.](#)" <sup>[1]</sup> in the March/April 2014 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Purdue University scholar Lawrence Mykytiuk lists 50 figures from the Hebrew Bible who have been confirmed archaeologically. The 50-person chart in **BAR** includes Israelite kings and Mesopotamian monarchs as well as lesser-known figures.

Sargon II, one of fifty Hebrew Bible figures identified in the archaeological record.

Mykytiuk writes that "at least 50 people mentioned in the Bible have been identified in the archaeological record. Their names appear in inscriptions written during the period described by the Bible and in most instances during or quite close to the lifetime of the person identified." The extensive Biblical and archaeological documentation supporting the [BAR study](#) <sup>[2]</sup> is published here in a web-exclusive collection of endnotes detailing the Biblical references and inscriptions referring to each of the 50 figures.

## Added Technique: Inductive Method

- More study value by OUTLINING the passage at the beginning
  - Organizes what the initial readings bring to us
  - Gives structure to the Inductive exegesis going on
    - Assures relationships between context & discoveries
  - Helps organize your thoughts into practical groupings
  - Provides a structure to plan the study from <sup>x</sup>

## Added Technique : Inductive Method (cont'd)

- Steps in outlining:
  - Read the passage in context several times
  - Write a Summary thought in your own words (belongs at the end)
  - Write the main thought as the study's Introductory thought (belongs at the beginning)
  - List the various other thoughts in sequence
  - Revise your Introductory & Summary thoughts based on what you have learned<sup>x</sup>

# Added Technique : Inductive Method (*cont'd*)

## Outlining exercise...

- YOU read James 1.1-3 several times
- Develop an outline for the passage  
(*work with a neighbor if you want*)
- WE will create the final outline together

.....

- (1<sup>st</sup> major point)
  - (sub points)
- (2<sup>nd</sup> major point)
  - (sub points)
- (3<sup>rd</sup> major point)
  - (sub points)

.....

## James 1.1-3

- 1 “James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
- 2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,
- 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.” x

## Added Technique : Inductive Method (cont'd)

### One possible outlining solution ...

- James
  - A servant of God
  - Of the Lord Jesus Christ,
- To the twelve tribes
  - Scattered among the nations
  - Greetings.
- Consider it pure joy
  - my brothers,
  - whenever you face trials of many kinds
  - because you know that the testing of your faith
  - develops perseverance<sup>x</sup>

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#### James 1.1-3

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To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
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## Added Technique : Inductive Method (cont'd)

- Now “flesh out” the beginning outline using the steps of the Inductive Method on the passage
  - 1<sup>st</sup>, Observation
    - Study the passage’s context
    - Refer to culture & history behind the passage
    - Who, What, Where, When, Why & How questions
    - What is emphasized ?
    - What are the contrasts stated ?
    - Are there particular ideas that stand out ? x

James 1.1-3

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To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
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## Added Technique : Inductive Method

- “Fleshing out” the beginning outline (*cont’d*)
  - 2<sup>nd</sup>, Interpretation
    - Answer the Why questions
      - Why did someone say or do something ?
      - Why did something happen ?
      - What do the repeated words mean ?
      - What is the main point of the passage ? x

James 1.1-3

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## Added Technique : Inductive Method

- “Fleshing out” the beginning outline *(cont’d)*
  - 3<sup>rd</sup>, Application
    - What should the passage observations and interpretations mean to the student ?
    - What life actions and/or changes does this call for ? x

James 1.1-3

- 1 “James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
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## Added Technique : Inductive Method

- Inductive exercise (cont'd)

Some answers for James 1.1-3 from *Into Thy Word*

[www.intothyword.org](http://www.intothyword.org)

- 1) What does it say > The General Idea

- Seek Jesus to deal with problems!
- The key to dealing with our problems is to keep our eyes upon Christ, allowing Him to be not only Savior, but also Lord.

James 1.1-3

- 1 “James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
- 2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,
- 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.”

## Added Technique : Inductive Method

- Inductive exercise (cont'd)

Some answers for James 1.1-3 from *Into Thy Word*

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- 2) What is the Background ?
  - James is addressing the new Church.
  - They were starting to become complacent when suddenly Steven was martyred (Acts 7:54-60).
  - A wake up call is being pronounced that Christianity is dangerous and requires a level of faith that some may not be willing to give. x

James 1.1-3

- 1 “James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
- 2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,
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# Added Technique : Inductive Method (cont'd)

- Inductive exercise Some answers from *Into Thy Word (cont'd)*

## 3) What does it Mean ?

- James simply tells us we can actually profit from trials.
- He starts out his book by massive humbleness in confessing who Jesus is
- James realized that his life and purpose was all about who God is, and not who he is (More information: Psalm 15; 101; 2 Thess. 1:12; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 1:1).
- James' desire was to communicate with passion, conviction, clarity, and truth.
- We are to look at whatever situation we face and say *this is good, this will better me, or this will help me. I may not understand it, but I can trust God. He is there and He will carry me through it!* ✕

## James 1.1-3

- 1 “James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
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# Added Technique : Inductive Method

- Inductive exercise

Some answers from *Into Thy Word (cont'd)*

## 4. Key Words

(Look them up and define them; then, use the ones that further your understanding of the passage you are studying.)

- *James* is a form of Jacob-Gen. 49
- *Bondservant*, in Greek times, meant the lowest form of a slave, totally at the master's disposal and even expendable. For us, it means total, surrendered devotion to the Lord.
- *Twelve tribes* refers to all those who are Jewish.
- *Count it joy* refers to declaring our situation as happy and fulfilling. It is to change our mindset and focus. It is realizing the sovereignty of God and that He is in control, even when life seems to be turned upside down and inside out!
- *Trials* refer to persecution or any harsh circumstance, adversity, or temptation.
- *Testing* refers to the circumstances that God allows so we will learn perseverance, produce our Fruit, and further prove and develop our faith. ✕

James 1.1-3

- 1 “James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
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# Added Technique : Inductive Method (cont'd)

- Inductive exercise

Some answers from *Into Thy Word (cont'd)*

## 5. Applications

- We are called to declare our situation - whatever it may be - as joy!
- It is not a question of if we have problems, but when, as we all will face them.
- As Christians, we are all brothers and sisters under God. We are family, and need to treat others in Him with the same reverence and endearment as Christ has treated us!
- Joy will allow us to enjoy our relationship with Christ and with others.
- Joy helps us develop authentic happiness that comes from and with harmony with God and others. x

### James 1.1-3

- 1 “James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
- 2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,
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# Added Technique : Inductive Method (cont'd)

- Inductive exercise

Some answers from *Into Thy Word* (cont'd)

## 5. Applications (cont'd)

- Joy helps us understand God's perspective and gives us the confidence and patience to endure anything!
- Joy is not happiness, because we may not be content and pleased with it; rather, joy is hope; it is our hope.
- Our pleasure comes from knowing He is in charge and cares for us (Psalm 34:1-8; 1 Thess. 5:18)!
- This gives us our maturity, our character, and enables our Fruit to benefit others. These are for our direct benefit and growth that He works out both for our benefit and for His glory (Romans 5:3; chap. 8) × .

### James 1.1-3

- 1 “James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
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- 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.”

# Resources Used ....

- New American Standard Bible: 1995 update. (1995). (Jas 1:3). LaHabra, CA:The Lockman Foundation.
- Logos Bible Software
- Small Group Leaders' Handbook:The New Generation, Jimmy Long/IVP
- Small Group Idea Book, Cindy Bunch, Editor, IVP
- "Leading Inductive Bible Studies", Into Thy Word Ministries [www.intothyword.org](http://www.intothyword.org)
- InterVarsity Urbana 15, "Sample Series for Small Group Bible Study" ,
- <https://urbana.org/blog/sample-series-small-group-bible-study>
- Basics of Bible Interpretation, Bob Smith
- Preceptaustin.org