

Inductive Bible Study Methods

**A Presentation of Bible Study Methods for the Serious
Student of Scripture**

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Table of Contents

Preface.....	iii
Chart.....	v
Chapter One: <i>The Three Basic Bible Study Methods</i>	1
Chapter Two: <i>The Synthetic Method</i>	3
Chapter Three: <i>The Analytic Method</i>	18
Chapter Four: <i>The Analytic Method / Paragraph Combining and Sub-dividing</i>	25
Chapter Five: <i>The Analytic Method / Basic Sentence Analysis</i>	29
Chapter Six:: <i>The Categorical Method</i>	40
End Notes: <i>Exercise Solutions</i>	49

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Preface

The Purpose for this Work

The author has discerned a need for a straightforward presentation of study methods for the serious Bible student. While many of the popular approaches to Bible study methods are on the elementary level (they sometimes consist of filling in blanks in a workbook or being led to specific conclusions by the way the author presents the material) this work attempts to provide the independent minded student a set of methodologies which can be modified to meet his or her need in studying any biblical book or topic.

While certain forms are provided for the student to use, they are not intended to bring the student to a particular conclusion. The forms provided can be used with any book of Scripture so that the student can arrive at his own conclusions. If the student prefers, he may develop his own forms or methods. It is not the form that matters, but the process.

The Students for this Work

As previously stated, this work is designed for the serious, motivated Bible student. Its philosophy is simply that understanding arrived at independently is more effective in the life of the Christian than that which is presented as a foregone conclusion. The student of this work should be independent minded, desiring to do his or her own work, and serious about not having to rely on any particular teacher or commentary for an understanding of the truth of Scripture.

The student must realize that even with the best methods, independent Bible study is not necessarily easy. The approach presented here presumes that the student will endure in study over weeks, months, and years.¹ Conclusions drawn hastily are often unsound.

The Value of this Work

The author sees a three-fold value in using the methods presented in this work. The first is that through independent Bible study the student will interact directly with the Biblical text, and therefore enjoy illumination from God the Father, personal discovery, and confident understanding.

The second value is the ability to examine the confusing presentations that are often given in churches and through the media of radio and television. All thinking students have wondered at times whether a particular statement made by a favorite teacher or pastor is accurate or whether the speaker is passing on invalid information. By using the methods of this work, a means is available to determine whether any particular doctrinal or teaching approach is actually based on what the Bible says.

The final value is that by doing personal independent study, the student is able to apply correct methods of interpretation to the text of Scripture. Logically, determining methods of interpretation precedes the application of Bible study methods.²

Study to Interpret

One must interpret the text before applying the text. Often, application is incorrectly attributed because the person applying has not arrived at the correct meaning of the text. The ability to interpret the Scriptures is not automatic. One must consider the correct methods of determining meaning using the correct approach to the word of God. For a through study of the principles of Interpretation, see the website garlandshinn.com under the heading "Methodology, Bible Interpretation." There you will find *Principles and Practices of Bible Interpretation*. It consists of the information that the author presented to his college and graduate school students during his college career. It is free to download, and to give away. Please view the "Read Me First," which also may be downloaded.

- 1 Current American culture seeks a quick fix for all problems. Instant dinners may be all right for the physical stomach, but the spiritual student must feed slowly and carefully, chewing each bite for all its worth. A professor of the author once used the illustration of the Christian student as a spiritual cow. As a cow chews her food, and swallows, food matter is stored in her first stomach where it can be regurgitated and chewed some more at a later time. This is the process of correct Bible study. Haste has no legitimate place here.

If you, the student, are a teacher of the Bible in a Sunday School or home study, and you find yourself preparing the night before you must teach, you need to do one of two things. You may correct your bad habits and begin long range Bible study program. Rearrange your schedule. Give up some activities. Turn off the television. Spend at least an hour a day studying the Word of God. This is the preferred "fix" for the problem of "the night before" preparation. If you cannot fix your problem this way, there is only one other option. Quit teaching. You are doing yourself and your students little or no good. In fact, it is likely that you are actually harming them rather than helping them. Don't fall prey to the old dictum that "I'm better than nothing." Don't believe it. The business of teaching the Word is too serious for such nonsense.

- 2 See the section in the first chapter entitled "Bible Study and Hermeneutics."

INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY METHODS

<i>The Synthetic Study</i> →	<i>The Analytic Study</i> →	<i>The Categorical Study</i>
<p>I. VIEWS BOOK IN ITS ENTIRETY.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">A. IT DOES AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">B. ITS APPROACH IS GENERAL RATHER THAN SPECIFIC.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">C. IT SEEKS TO DEVELOP QUESTIONS RATHER THAN TO PROVIDE ANSWERS.</p> <p>II. SEEKS TO UNDERSTAND:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">A. THE THEME OF THE BOOK.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">1. THE THEME IS NOT BASED ON THE CONTENT OF SPECIFIC PASSAGES.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">2. THE THEME IS BASED ON THE PURPOSE OF THE AUTHOR.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">B. THE OVERALL STRUCTURE (FIRST LEVEL OUTLINE) OF THE BOOK.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">C. THE MAJOR THEOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE BOOK BASED ON SEVERAL READINGS OF THE ENTIRE BOOK.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">D. READING ONE – GENERAL CONTENT.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">E. READING TWO – KEYS.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">F. READING THREE – CHAPTER OR PARAGRAPH TITLES.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">G. READING FOUR – STRUCTURE (OUTLINE) & THEME (BASED ON PURPOSE).</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">H. READING FIVE (OPTIONAL) – THEME, IF NOT DISCOVERED IN PREVIOUS READINGS.</p>	<p>I. DIVIDES BOOK INTO ITS SMALLER PARTS BY DETERMINING AND COMBINING SENTENCES AND PARAGRAPHS.</p> <p>II. SEEKS TO UNDERSTAND:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">A. THE MEANING OF INDIVIDUAL</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">1. SENTENCES.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">2. PARAGRAPHS.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">3. MINOR SECTIONS.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">4. MAJOR SECTIONS.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">5. MINOR DIVISIONS (LARGER BOOKS).</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">6. MAJOR DIVISIONS (LARGER BOOKS).</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">B. THE MEANING OF WORDS IN THEIR LOCAL CONTEXT.</p> <p>III. BASED ON SOUND EXEGETICAL APPROACHES.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">A. AN UNDERSTANDING OF INTERPRETIVE PRINCIPLES.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">B. THE APPLICATION OF LANGUAGE SKILLS.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">1. BIBLICAL LANGUAGES SKILLS IF POSSIBLE.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">2. BIBLICAL LANGUAGE HELPS IF NECESSARY.</p> <p>IV. MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH PREVIOUS SYNTHESIS.</p>	<p>I. COLLATES DATA FROM SEVERAL BOOKS.</p> <p>II. SEEKS TO UNDERSTAND:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">A. THE MAJOR CATEGORICAL (DOCTRINAL) THEMES OF SCRIPTURE.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">B. THE INDIVIDUAL DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE THROUGH STUDY OF MAJOR DOCTRINAL WORDS OF SCRIPTURE.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">C. HOW TO CONSISTENTLY APPLY THE CONTENT OF SCRIPTURE.</p> <p>III. BASED ON SOUND EXEGETICAL APPROACHES.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">A. AN UNDERSTANDING OF INTERPRETIVE PRINCIPLES.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">B. THE APPLICATION OF LANGUAGE SKILLS.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">1. BIBLICAL LANGUAGES SKILLS IF POSSIBLE.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">2. BIBLICAL LANGUAGE HELPS IF NECESSARY.</p> <p>IV. PRECEDED BY SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS OF ALL BOOKS INVOLVED IN THE DOCTRINE BEING STUDIED.</p> <p>V. ALL BOOKS MUST HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO A PRELIMINARY SYNTHESIS BEFORE DOCTRINAL CONCLUSIONS CAN BE DRAWN.</p> <p>VI. IN LIEU OF COMPLETE ANALYSIS OF ENTIRE BOOKS, A THOROUGH ANALYSIS OF THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT MUST BE DONE.</p>

THE THREE MAJOR METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY

PREPARED BY G. H. SHINN

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Chapter One

The Three Basic Bible Study Methods

The Meaning of *Induction*

The title of this work is *Inductive Bible Study Methods*. The word *induction*, from which the word *inductive* is derived, means to arrive at conclusions by studying all the facts concerning a topic. In other words, rather than attempting to prove a conclusion by looking at some of the facts, induction attempts to determine meaning and therefore conclusion by examining all the relevant facts in any particular case.

The three inductive methods presented in this course are all based on the idea that a person should withhold conclusions until he has all the facts.

The Importance of Induction

The question arises, "How does one know what the Bible actually teaches in any particular place or with reference to any specific topic?" This question is answered by many, if not most Christians by reliance on the teaching of their favorite Bible teacher or by reading their favorite commentary.

While the student may indeed arrive at the truth in this manner, he is robbed of the excitement of personal discovery. While doing his own inductive study, he may find that that his favorite teacher or commentary is presenting conclusions erroneously drawn.¹

For the student who has a busy life schedule several months may be required to do an adequate study of longer books. Therefore the author recommends that the student begin his inductive Bible study with the shorter New Testament epistles. A complete induction of a particular book will encourage the student to continue the inductive process.

The Three Major Categories of Bible Study

The three major methods of Bible study are synthesis, analysis, and topical (categorical) study. All other methods of study which are sometimes presented are but aspects or applications of one of these three basic methods.

For instance, a method often cited for legitimate study is the biographical. It seeks to study the biography of a particular biblical character by studying the various references to that individual in Scripture. In fact, this is an application of the categorical study, wherein the category happens to be a person rather than a topic or doctrine.

Another method that is often mentioned is *word study*. Word study is a form of the categorical approach that the student takes to study Scripture. It often occurs during the analytical phase of study, because it is during that phase that the student becomes contextually aware of doctrinally important words of the context in which he is studying. Ideally, the student should keep in mind that word study is not analysis nor synthesis. The actual procedures for word study are categorical. And while categorical study can proceed from analysis or synthesis, it is best not to interrupt either.

Other study approaches are also a form of the categorical. Biographical, and geographical studies are categorical. Some are not study methods at all. Background historical studies are sometimes greatly helpful to the Bible student, but technically are not Bible study methods.²

1 While sincere, some who claim their methods of study are inductive have failed to define true induction. A question-answer fill-in-the-blanks method is sometimes presented, which is not induction, but a Socratic approach.

2 Some Bible study works refer to "The Dispensational Method." In fact, the word *dispensation* occurs in the New Testament, and can be studied categorically as can any other doctrinal word used. The word *dispensational* should be used of neither an approach to interpretation nor method of study.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Basic Distinctions

While all three methods of study presented in this work are inductive, there are methodological differences between them. The basic distinctions are as follows: the synthetic approach attempts to view a book of Scripture as a whole, the analytic method attempts to understand the individual parts of a book, and the categorical attempts to trace a topic through several or all books of Scripture.

Further the synthetic method is based on accurate reading and recording of information from that reading. It does an overview of a particular Bible book without attempting to analyze the meaning of any specific part.³

Analysis, however, attempts to understand the structure of a book by dividing it up into its constituent parts, starting with the sentence and working outward to the paragraph, minor division, major division, etc. Analysis also applies grammatical understanding to the individual sentence in so far as the student is able to do so.⁴

Bible Study and Hermeneutics

The science of hermeneutics attempts to develop principles⁵ by which the student, while he is studying Scripture, is able to interpret what he studies. Logically, then, hermeneutics precedes Bible study.⁶

In practice most Christians “study the Bible” before they develop principles of interpretation (if they ever do). This is inevitable, and not altogether bad. Normal methods developed in hermeneutics are usually nothing more than common sense. The science of hermeneutics actually only codifies that set of methods which we use regularly in every day speech.

What often happens in reality is that believers are influenced to hold to a particular set of beliefs or doctrines based on unsound interpretive techniques. He functionally abandons sound principles of interpretation because the influences around him (pastor, well known religious figures, Christian friends, etc.) push him into a particular belief system, irrespective of whether that system is based on sound interpretation and study methods.

Many Christians have found themselves forced to abandon certain doctrinal views and assumptions that have been held, in many cases, for years or decades. Such a procedure can be at the least painful and potentially discouraging. The author of this work desires that the students of Scripture will be encouraged rather than discouraged in their personal Bible study.

3 During synthesis many questions arise concerning the meaning of individual parts. It is difficult (at least for me) to put off the study of those parts until the synthesis is complete, but the student must exercise discipline and not jump into analysis until synthesis is complete

4 The grammatical level at which any student is able to study will determine the value of individual sentence analysis the student undertakes.

5 Hermeneutics is not the application of principles of interpretation, but it is the development of those principles. Once developed, the principles developed by hermeneutics can then be applied by the student during Bible study.

6 See *Principles and Practices of Bible Interpretation* by this author.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Chapter Two The Synthetic Method

What is Bible Synthesis?

Synthesis is a method of Bible study that is based on synthetic reasoning. Sometimes the word synthesis is actually used in titles of books dealing with Bible survey. A good example of this is the book *Synthetic Bible Studies* by James Gray, who was president of Moody Bible Institute in the first part of the 20th century.

Sometimes called Bible survey,⁷ synthesis is also called *the overview method*. This phrase contrasts synthesis with analysis, which looks at each book of the Bible in great detail. During synthesis, the student is like a pilot in a plane who looks at the whole forest, rather than the explorer on the ground who may examine individual trees.

In many traditional Bible study method and Bible survey books, the “observation, interpretation, application” model is promoted. In this model, Bible survey is usually considered part of the observation process. Analysis seems to be the act of interpretation in this method. Application is not actually a part of Bible study, but is the result of a carefully done synthesis and analysis.

Beware! Many Bible survey books go well beyond synthesis methodology and encroach upon the analysis area. (*Jensen’s Survey of the New Testament*, which some have used as a textbook for college survey courses, often does this.)

Why is Bible Synthesis Important?

The personal spiritual value of Bible synthesis should not be ignored. Most of the books of the Bible were actually written with the synthesis method in mind. For example, the epistles of the New Testament were meant to be read from beginning to end, probably aloud, by the recipients of the letters. From repeated synthetic reading of the Bible much spiritual value comes.

The primary academic importance in doing Bible synthesis is to develop contextual awareness. While synthesis is no guarantee against making errors in interpretation, it does provide a basis for avoiding violations of context. The context of a book is multi-layered. There is the book context, the historical context, the cultural context, and the language context.

The Book Context

The book context asks the following questions: 1) Who wrote the book? 2) To whom did the author address the book? 3) Why did he write the book? 4) How did he develop his theme? Generally each of these questions is easy to answer. On occasion, however, certain elements are simply unknown, such as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The believer will realize that God had a purpose in withholding some information, and will avoid unhealthy speculation.

The first two questions, *Who wrote?* and *To whom did he write?*, should be the occasion for further study. After determining the name of the author, the student should do biographical study to determine as much about the authorial background as possible. Likewise, the recipients of a book should be examined closely for as much detail as possible about them. Articles in Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias should be scanned for information on these topics. Also, individual volumes have been written on the Biblical writers, often with discussion of their writings found in the Bible.

⁷ *Synthesis* is a better term than *survey* for this method. According to Webster, the word *synthesis* means “the composition or combination of parts or elements so as to form a whole.” The emphasis of this method is viewing the whole by combining the parts. It is the overall contextual study of a book of Scripture.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

What was the purpose for the author's writing the book? This question is sometimes easy to answer and at other times extremely difficult. The theme (the purpose stated in a single sentence or title) can best be determined by repeated reading of the entire book.

The development of the author's purpose is best determined by developing a broad outline of the book in question. This broad outline should seek to show the development of the author's theme by relating major section to major section. The method of developing this outline is discussed below (see the example provided by the author using the Gospel of Matthew).

The question, *How did he develop his theme?* is answered by developing a broad outline of the book. One does not seek to analyze the major sections of the book, but simply attempts to determine the changes in the author's flow of discussion. As the student discovers the various sections of the author's work through several readings, he will begin to develop ideas for titles for each major section.

The Historical Context

The student should read widely in historical areas. Besides Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, the student will find books on the history of Bible times very valuable. Doing general background study of history is part of the synthetic approach to book study. It should not be left for analysis.

When synthesizing an individual book the student will usually find references to historical persons, places or events. Such references should be noted and researched in works such as *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, the *New Bible Dictionary*, and related works. The careful student will not overlook major encyclopedias such as *Britannica* or *Americana*. Study of individual historical individuals in secular works should not be ignored. Several excellent works have been produced on Alexander the Great, Herod the Great, Nebuchadnezzar and others. Generally, the more reading done in historical areas, the better grasp the student will have of important persons, places and events.

The Cultural Context

Nothing is more important than the cultural elements that are assumed as the background for the writing of the Bible. Since there are continually new discoveries being made, the student should look for up-to-date books in manners and customs.⁸ In addition, the student should not overlook books on archaeology, particularly those written from a conservative Bible-believing perspective.

The Language Context

Even if the student has not studied Biblical languages it is possible to develop some idea of the language context of a book. But the student must use a good translation in order to do so. Paraphrases (such as the Living Bible) or "dynamic equivalence" translations (such as the NIV) are simply not adequate for serious Bible students.

While reading an individual book, look for key words that seem to express the purpose of theme of the book. Sometimes a word or word family will be repeated so often in a book that it signals the purpose of writing quite dramatically. Such is the case with the words *king* and *kingdom* in the Gospel of Matthew (see example).

At other times a particular phrase, sometimes repeated, will help signal the theme. Such is the case in the Book of Judges with the phrase "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," which

⁸ Gower's *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times* and related works are valuable. Much information on culture and customs can be found in Bible encyclopedias and dictionaries, as well. As noted, works on archaeology in the lands of the Bible will also provide an area of research.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

occurs two times in the book. This phrase gives a good summary of the purpose for the author's writing the book.

A Note to Biblical Language Students

If the student has studied Greek and/or Hebrew, he should attempt to do his synthetic reading from the original. If one reads the Greek or Hebrew text aloud, it will help in this matter. Sometimes language elements that speak to the purpose of the book can best be seen in the original language.

Should the student feel uncomfortable reading the original language text he may use the interlinear. Again, the student should read the Greek or Hebrew text aloud, and go back and observe the translation. If one does this enough times, eventually he will find it possible to read the text without the help of the interlinear.

Who should do Bible Synthesis?

Bible synthesis should be performed by every serious student of Scripture, and it should be performed repeatedly. (The author has personally synthesized each of the books of the New Testament at least 10 times.) Reading books about Bible synthesis is not synthesis. Such books show the results of the synthesis of others and are actually commentaries on the Bible book. Therefore, no book on Bible synthesis (no matter how good it is) should be consulted until after the student has performed his own synthesis. This includes Bible handbooks, such as Halley's or Unger's, which are presentation of the author's synthesis of each book.

When should Bible Synthesis Occur?

Logically, synthesis precedes analysis, but follows developmental hermeneutics. In other words, the student should have developed his principles of interpretation (hermeneutics) before actually engaging in Bible synthesis. And the student should perform Bible synthesis before doing analytical studies. *One must not perform analysis without having already performed synthesis.*

Bible synthesis is the first step in applying the hermeneutical principles the student has developed. Primarily, the student is examining the overall context of a book as a prelude to actually interpreting individual passages. By doing a consistently accurate synthesis, the student is less likely to take things out of context when doing analysis. By first developing the overall approach of the author to his readers, the student is more easily able to place himself in the reader's situation, and therefore interpret from their point of view. Since the original readers were closer to the author in time, language, and culture, they were more likely to be able to discern "authorial intent" than the modern reader.

What are the Methods of Bible Synthesis?

The basic method of Bible synthesis is to read the biblical text (See below "The Reading Process.") In order to make synthesis a true "overview" of the book, the material from the reading process should be summarized in an easily accessible fashion. Therefore the author has developed the "Synthesis Book Worksheet."

The New Testament Synthesis Book Worksheets

When one examines the wealth of material that has been done in Bible synthesis, the variety of methods that various authors use is overwhelming. For this course the author has developed a simplified method based on several readings of the book. The goal is to fill in the "New Testament Synthesis Book Worksheet." The worksheet is designed to get all the synthetic data from a synthesis on one easy to observe set of sheets. The sheet is divided into three sections: introductory material, keys, chapter (paragraph) titles. From the chapter titles, the student can fill in the broad outline worksheet

Inductive Bible Study Methods

provided. It is recommended that the student rework the chapter titles into parallel titles for the broad outline.

Introductory Material

This section has six simple subsections that the student is to fill in. It is actually beyond the scope of the synthetic method to develop an in-depth introduction. Such an activity should wait until the analytical method is employed. Nevertheless, even in the synthetic process, it is good to list a few simple introductory matters.

Name of Book

Write the name of the book from the English Bible. Students of Biblical languages may desire to use the original language title for the book. In some cases, particularly in the Old Testament, titles such as Psalms will cause the student to do further outside research. What does the word “Psalm” actually mean? From what language is it taken? What was the original title of the book? Likewise Ecclesiastes, Canticles, Genesis, Deuteronomy, etc. will cause the student to perhaps research the title in a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia.

Name of Author

Write the author’s name.⁹ Some works have multiple authorship, such as the Psalms. In this case, the student will indicate the various names that he discerns to be the authors of a book. In some books, such as the Epistle to the Hebrews, no author is generally agreed upon. In such cases, the student should write “unknown” in the author slot rather than to speculate.¹⁰

Date of Writing

In the Old Testament some books were written over a rather long period of time, such as Jeremiah or Isaiah. Usually New Testament books were written rather quickly and can be given a date? Where would the student go to find the date of a particular book? Is there a problem with the date? Do scholars differ on when they think the book was written (see Galatians)?

Place of Writing

This will help determine the particular situation of the author. Some of Paul’s epistles were written while he was in jail, and are thus called the prison epistles. How could an author’s situation affect what he writes?

Recipients

Authors tailored their writing to their recipients. Paul wrote with a somewhat different style to the Corinthians than he did to Timothy and Titus. Why? Could certain words or phrases have a technical meaning to the recipients because of their particular circumstances? Would Jewish readers have a different cultural, language, and historical background than gentile readers? How would this affect the author’s language and style?

9 Such questions as *What does the student know about the author? From where did he come? What is his personal background? Where would one go in the library to research the author?* are rightfully answered as part of the analytical process. In synthesis, it is sufficient to simply list the author’s name.

10 For the various views of disputed authorship, one can consult a book on Old or New Testament introduction. A thorough discussion of authorship issues will be presented in the better works on introduction. Introduction is not part of synthesis proper even though most books on introduction include synthetic material, such as a broad outline of the book. Introductions can also be valuable resources for “seed plot” development. See the relevant sections in the section on Analysis in this work.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

The ultimate interpretation question is “What would the original recipients of the writing have thought the author meant?” Therefore it is vital that the student thoroughly study the recipients of the writing as part of his synthesis.

Developing the Purpose for Writing

From this point on, the student must fill in the following sections while reading of the book. See below under “The Reading Process.”

The purpose for the writing of a document answers the question, “Why did the author write?” Another way of saying this is, “What was the author’s main intention when he wrote?” There are several methods for helping the student determine the author’s purpose.

Keys

A key is a literary element that helps the reader determine the author’s intent in writing. Three keys have been listed: key word(s), key phrase, and key verse. Not all books will have all three keys. In fact in some books a specific key will be difficult to find. Nevertheless, it is of great help to attempt the discovery of these literary elements, because searching for keys is part of the observation process, and is valuable of itself.

Key Word(s)

Usually a key word will be repeated often enough so that it is obvious to the reader. Rarely will there be more than one or two key words for a particular book. However, in longer books the student sometimes finds a key for a particular major section. If the student cannot find a key word, he should not despair. He may find one the next time he synthesizes the book. In some of the shorter books, no key word may be obvious. Remember, searching for keys is part of the process of observation, and is valuable even if no key is found.

Key Phrase

A key phrase can be as short as a prepositional phrase such as “in Christ” or as long as a complete sentence such as “In the beginning God created the heavens and earth.” The student should give the phrase and list its verse reference.

Key Verse

While a key phrase may be repeated, usually a key verse is not. It is simply the single verse in the book that most readily summarizes the theme. If the student thinks that the key is actually two or more verses that summarize the theme, he should not hesitate to list them here.

A special kind of key verse is called a “signature verse.” A signature verse occurs at or near the end of a book and summarizes the author’s purpose. John’s Gospel has a signature verse.

Chapter or Paragraph Titles

A chapter is the major division of a book. The chapters in English Bibles are not adequate and the student must develop his own divisions of the book. For instance, Matthew’s gospel has 28 traditional chapters. However, these are inadequate, for they do not actually divide the book logically. In reality, by topic there are only eleven actual chapters in Matthew.

As one reads repeatedly, the major sections of a book will likely become evident. One may find several chapters in longer books actually make up one major of a book. Sometimes a division will occur in the body of a traditional chapter. While reading, note these divisions, and record them.

The student will title chapters (book divisions) once developed through repeated reading. Often (usually) these chapters will not be identical to the chapters in the English Bible.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Title

A title summarizes the content of a paragraph or chapter. For the purposes of the initial synthesis, we will use the chapters and paragraphs as they are presented in the English Bible. However, as stated above, while synthesizing a book the student will likely discover that he does not agree with where a particular chapter¹¹ begins or ends. Do not hesitate to make up chapter divisions that differ from the English Bible. Make refinements to divisions as repeated readings cause a re-evaluation.

In the case of very short books, such as Jude or Obadiah, the student can only write paragraph titles rather than chapter titles. However, in any book three chapters or shorter, paragraph titles rather than chapter titles may also be preferred by the student. It's up to you!

Students just beginning synthesis tend to make their titles too long. In order for a title to be effective it must be short. It should be five words or fewer. Students often struggle with this at first, but persistence pays, and if the student keeps at it success will follow. Here are a some suggestions.

1. The student should emphasize nouns and verbs in chapter titles. A title such as "Moses Receives the Law" is much superior to "Moses Ascends Mt. Sinai to Receive the Law from God." Remember, a title is a summary of contents, not a description of contents.
2. The student should avoid adjectives in titles initially,¹² except for *a*, *an*, and *the*. Rather than "Consistent Victory Over the Flesh for the Sincere Believer" the student may simply write "Victory over the Flesh."
3. The student should not string preposition phrases together for a title. Avoid titles such as "In the beginning of the battle for the land." (That is an actual title a student submitted in a synthetic paper.)
4. The student should avoid conjunctions altogether. Usually he should only use "and" when joining two nouns or verbals together in a three-word title, such as "Spirit and Flesh" or "The Gentile and Guilt."
5. The excellent student must buy and use a good thesaurus.¹³ The author recommends *Roget's Thesaurus* for best results. (The "thesaurus" in modern computer word processors is not actually a thesaurus at all, but a list of synonyms. It should not be overlooked, but is not adequate for the purposes of synthesis. The student can purchase better dictionaries of synonyms at a good book dealer. (The author has been using *Funk and Wagnall's Standard Handbook of Synonyms, Antonyms and Prepositions* since college days, and finds it almost as good as a *Roget's Thesaurus*. In fact, for some purposes, it's better.¹⁴)

The Seed Plot

The "seed plot" is for the purpose of growing ideas. While reading, the student will observe "Seed Elements," that is, information that he would like to develop further during the analysis phase of his book study. If the student desires to do a *word study* on a particular word from his reading, he should list it in Seed Plot at this point. One should also place *proper names* and *geographical references* in the

11 Some students will desire to develop their own paragraphs as well as chapter divisions. The next chapter in this work provides a method for paragraph development. It is best to finish the synthesis before beginning paragraph development.

12 In refining titles for a broad outline, adjectives can be helpful to make titles parallel, if not overdone.

13 The word *thesaurus* is Greek for a treasury. For the Bible student, a good thesaurus is a more valuable treasury than the largest story house full of gold or silver.

14 A book of synonyms is very helpful when making parallel outlines. See the author's outline of Matthew in this work for an example of parallel outlining.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Seed Plot. Other ideas or questions which arise can be included in the Seed Plot. List the reference (traditional chapter and verse) where the observation was made.

Rightfully, developing geographical background, word studies, etc. are not part of the synthetic method. Therefore the student should develop the material in the seed plot as part of the analysis of the book.¹⁵

Doctrinal questions that arise when studying a book should be noted in the seed plot. The student will find such words as redemption, justification, inspiration, etc., and will desire to study not only those words, but words related to them in various contexts. Such material should be developed using the categorical methods discussed later in this work, for they are actually doctrinal studies which categorize various topics presented in Scripture.

Broad Outline

Before developing a broad outline from the chapter titles, the student may desire to make a preliminary effort to record the purpose of the book. This is sometimes called the provisional controlling purpose. The theme of the book may be provided as a title for the broad outline, which should, in some sense, reflect the general purpose for writing the book in its headings. The theme as a title for the broad outline will be a short (5 words or fewer) pithy statement as to the purpose of the writing.

Some students desire to title the traditional paragraphs while reading. From there, by combining paragraphs, a division (chapter) of the book can be developed. After having completed the reading process (see below) the student will have a rather good idea which paragraphs belong together as a unit.

Some books, such as Matthew's Gospel, very easily fall into larger sections. Some shorter books are more difficult. But the author's development of the theme is best reflected in how the student presents his broad outline.

The broad outline is more formal than the chapter titles and may be longer. It is still best, however, to limit the length of the outline titles to as few words as possible.

The student should use Roman numerals for the main divisions of the book: I, II, III, IV, etc. If the he believes that a longer book requires one to subdivide the main sections, the student should use A, B, C, etc. for those designations. However, a broad outline is perfectly acceptable at the Roman numeral level. See the example from the Gospel of Matthew provided with this discussion.

The outline should be parallel. By parallel we mean that the same grammatical form should be used throughout a particular level. For instance, if the title for Roman numeral I consists of an article, a noun, and a verb, the same grammatical elements should be followed for Roman numeral II, III, IV, etc.

Example:

- I. The Apostle's Witnessing
- II. The Believer's Understanding
- III. The Scripture's Explaining

¹⁵ Word studies are of two types, lexical and doctrinal. Lexical study consists of looking up words in a standard lexicon. (A lexicon is a limited dictionary, such as *A Manual Lexicon of the New Testament* by Abbott-Smith.) Doctrinal word studies are part of the categorical method. However, when doing analysis of a book, it is sometimes helpful to interrupt the process to do a doctrinal word study in order to understand a salient analytical point. This is virtually the only time when analysis and categorical study come together. The student will find that he tends to lose sight of analysis when doing doctrinal word studies, and must force himself to return to analysis. The reason for this will be observed in this work in the categorical Bible study section. Lexical word studies are part of the grammatical aspect of analytical Bible study.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Note in the example above that once the student uses a possessive for one outline title, he must continue to use possessives throughout the parallel structure. Likewise, nouns or participles that end in -ing, -ed, -tion, etc. should be continued.

Titles for subsections are not required to be parallel with their main heading. If the student has A, B, C, etc. under Roman numeral I, he may use a different scheme of parallelism for those letters than the one for the Roman numeral level. (But A, B, C, etc. must be parallel to one another.)

If the student does subdivide the main headings, he should remember that only one subtitle is not sufficient. If the student has a letter A under Roman I, he must have a letter B. If the student cannot figure out how to divide into at least two subheadings, he should drop the A title, as it is actually a titling of the same material as Roman I.

The Broad (Synthetic) Outline of the Gospel of Matthew

This outline provides an illustration of a broad outline for a longer book. While each of the sections could be subdivided, it is not necessary to do so at the synthetic stage of Bible study. This outline is a highly refined effort, the result of several reworkings by the author after having done several surveys of the book. It is not expected that the first outline effort of the beginning student will be as carefully worded as this one.

The Presentation and Rejection of the King

Chapter	Title	Reference	
I.	The Birth and Early Ministry of the King.....	1:1-4:25	(First Narrative)
II.	The Kingdom/Law Discourse by the King.....	5:1-7:29	(First Discourse)
III.	The Power and Authority of the King.....	8:1-9:34	(Second Narrative)
IV.	The Presentation of the Kingdom by the King.....	9:35-10:42	(Second Discourse)
V.	The Opposition to the King.....	11:1-12:50	(Third Narrative)
VI.	The Kingdom/Parable Discourse by the King.....	13:1-52	(Third Discourse)
VII.	The Ministry of the Rejected King.....	13:53-17:27	(Fourth Narrative)
VIII.	The Kingdom Life Discourse by the King.....	18:1-35	(Fourth Discourse)
IX.	The Judean Ministry of the King.....	19:1-23:39	(Fifth Narrative)
X.	The Prophetic/Kingdom Discourse by the King.....	24:1-25:46	(Fifth Discourse)
XI.	The Death and Resurrection of the King.....	26:1-28:24	(Sixth Narrative)

Note that when Matthew wrote his book, he structured it very carefully. A repeated reading will show that he began with a narrative section that is primarily action or event oriented. Following each narrative, he provided a discourse, a section of teaching by the Lord. He continued this structure until he completed the sixth narrative, which is followed by no discourse, as it would have been anticlimactic.

The Reading Process

The heart of synthesis methodology is the reading process. Here are some suggestions to help the student with that process.

Read the Entire Book

First, the student must read the entire book at one sitting if possible. Most books of the New Testament can be read in an hour or less for the average reader. Generally it is unwise to read for

Inductive Bible Study Methods

survey purposes more than an hour at a time without taking a break. If the reading becomes burdensome, most people will avoid it.

Some books, like the gospels or some Old Testament, are difficult to read even in two hours. If the book is too long to read at one sitting, such as the book of, Matthew, Luke, Acts, Psalms, or Isaiah, the student should divide it into two or three manageable sections for the reading process.

Read Aloud

Many find reading aloud helps their retention of what is read. Remember, speed reading is not the goal of synthesis. One must learn to read carefully and thoughtfully as one would read a letter from a loved one. Reading aloud with a partner is helpful to some.

Another process is to listen to someone's reading on a tape. The entire Bible is available in taped format. It is better to listen to reading tapes for synthetic purposes while not doing anything else. Driving or doing the dishes distracts from the process. Sit at the table and listen carefully, perhaps following along in your own Bible.¹⁶

Read from Various Versions

The value of having more than one version is not that the student can choose which version he particularly likes or dislikes. Bible versions are attempts to communicate the truth of Scripture through translation. And various theories of translation exist, ranging from the quite literal through the periphrastic, and even fantastic.¹⁷

The author of this course recommends that the student read from more than one version, but avoid paraphrases,¹⁸ or grossly literal versions.¹⁹

The King James Version is still a good one to use, especially if a person was raised with its language. Be sure to keep a good dictionary that carries archaic words, because the KJV uses some words in ways that are no longer current. The author used the *New American Standard Bible* for many years and found it a good version for doing synthesis.²⁰ The *New King James Version* is a good version for synthesis as well.²¹

Read Repeatedly

When reading a shorter book it is possible to do the five readings below one day at a time. With longer books, if the student has divided a book into sections, it may be preferable to read the first section five times, then the second section five times, etc.

16 At one time, the author recorded a reading of each book from a modern version, and listened while reading along. Doing so allows time to pause the recording and think, or record an idea.

17 The author came across a "street language" version at a convention some time ago. The approach taken was totally subjective, and the result could not rightly be called a version. Some of the wording was down right offensive, because gross street terms were used that should not be used by sincere believers.

18 Paraphrases are actually not so much translations as they are commentaries. As commentaries they can have a particular value, but as a study tool they are virtually useless.

19 Though hard to find, from time to time someone will publish a version wherein the attempt is made to translate a particular Greek or Hebrew word the same way throughout. Such versions, sometimes called *concordant versions*, are extremely difficult to read, and forget that a particular Greek or Hebrew word may have a range covered by several words in English. Only by discovering that range, and determining contextually which English translation is legitimate can an accurate (or perhaps better a semi-accurate) translation be made.

20 The NASB is a translation based on the critical text.

21 The NJKJV is based on the majority text. The author has over 20 versions in his library, and finds it enjoyable to pick two or three to read while doing synthesis. Some of the older versions such as the *Revised Standard Version* and the *American Standard Version* are very clear and enjoyable to read. The *English Revised Version* (1881) is also enjoyable, but is more difficult to read as it reflects the translation style of an earlier time. My first version of choice is the NKJV.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

How many times should a student read a book for synthetic purposes? The author has developed various reading schemes over the years, and depending on the individual, they all seem to work. Here is one example:

First Reading

The first reading is for general content and to begin to fill in the “Synthesis Book Worksheet.” Read at a reduced speed, and pause when necessary to record information. Take your time filling out the worksheet. It is recommended that if you are handwriting to record information that you use a pencil, so that you can change your record as you develop and refine your thinking.

Second Reading

The second reading is specifically to find keys. The careful student should read slowly thinking about the words and sentences he is observing. The student may begin to fill in the seed plot at this time as well. The process for finding keys will not necessarily end after the second reading.

Third Reading

The third reading is for discovering chapter divisions. It is likely that by this reading, the student may already have a general idea of the main divisions of the Bible book. The student will continue to fill in the seed plot if necessary.

Fourth Reading

The fourth reading is for titling the main divisions (chapters) of the book. By now, the student probably has a good idea of the major divisions of the book and may want to concentrate on developing his understanding of the author's purpose.

Fifth Reading

This final reading (in most cases) is optional. It seeks to find the purpose (theme of the book) if not already discovered. Usually the student will have already developed a thematic statement. On a few occasions, however, fifth and even further readings are necessary because of the difficulty of finding a theme.²²

During the fifth reading, the student may desire to begin refining his titles for the purpose of developing a formal broad synthetic outline.

Outside Reading

The reading of books by others who have done syntheses can be valuable. Sometimes a particular method that an author uses will appeal to the student. At other times, the student may get help on thinking through the theme or broad outline. Or perhaps the author has researched background information that the student has not seen elsewhere.

Sometimes the student gains benefit from how he *disagrees* with another's results. He may see that the author has not correctly understood the theme. Perhaps the commentator has not understood the development of the theme and has not correctly outlined the book. One should have the ability to say why he disagrees with a particular view. He should be able to defend his results from opposition without rancor or emotional reaction.

22 One book of the New Testament is quite difficult when it comes to discovering a theme, the Epistle of James. No single purpose seems to jump out at the student when reading the book. In the July, 1978 edition of *Biblioteca Sacra*, D. Edmond Heibert has an article entitled “The Unifying Theme of the Epistle of James.” His first sentence reads, “The Epistle of James is notoriously difficult to outline.” It is equally difficult to find a specific purpose that covers the entire book. But it can be done!

Inductive Bible Study Methods

At any rate, the student should not read other's syntheses until he has completed his own. Remember that God works *primarily through direct interaction with His word*, not through works about His word, as good as they may be.

A Final Word about Synthesis

Synthesis is the primary method of Bible study. The next step, analysis, is often portrayed as “in depth Bible study.” However, anyone who has done adequate synthesis, realizes that it is also an in-depth method.²³ While analysis is necessary to the interpretive process, it is best accomplished only after a thorough synthesis. Enjoy your synthesis.

Note: The following pages contain the worksheets presented in the discussion above. These may be copied by the student, or the student may desire to develop his own system (recommended).

23 Personally, the author enjoys synthesis more than analysis. For one thing it is easier to do. And it lays the ground work for doing contextual interpretation better than analysis. But synthesis only lays the ground work. Analysis is the proper place to actually implement the interpretive process on a paragraph by paragraph basis.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Synthesis Book Worksheet Introductory Material

Name of Book		Name of Author	
Date of Writing		Place of Writing	
Recipients			

Keys

Key Word(s)		Key Phrase(s)	
Key Verse(s)			
Purpose for Writing			

Chapter (Paragraph) Titles

Number	Title	Reference
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Chapter (Paragraph) Titles Continuation Page

21		
22		
23		
24		
25		
26		
27		
28		
29		
30		
31		
32		
33		
34		
35		
36		
37		
38		
29		
40		
41		
42		
43		
44		
45		
46		
47		
48		
49		
50		

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Broad Outline

Name of Book _____

I.
II.
III.
IV.
V.
VI.
VII.
VIII.
IX.
X.
XI.
XII.
XIII.
XIV.
XV.
XVI.
XVII.
XVIII.
XIX.
XX.
XXI.
XXII.
XXIII.
XXIV.
XXV.
XXVI.
XXVII.
XXVIII.
XXIX.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Chapter Three

The Analytic Method

Paragraph Development, Combining Sentences and Titling

Sentences and Titling

Nothing is more important than synthesis. Many jump immediately into analysis without having done an adequate synthesis, and consequently tend to interpret haphazardly, and according to previous conclusions. Once synthesis is completed, the student is ready to analyze the book, and the first step in analyzing the book is to develop and title paragraphs. (This may have already been done in the later stages of synthesis, especially with shorter books.)

With longer historical books, the student may, without previous synthesis, be tempted to limit analysis to those portions of general doctrinal interest. Certainly not every student has time to do a formal analysis through the book of Luke or Acts, for instance. But everyone can synthesize those books using the previous methods presented. Based then on synthesis, certain chapters or sections can then be analyzed in depth.

Unless a student is preparing to teach a longer book, he may not be able to do a thorough analysis of all sections. But those who are to teach a book must complete both a synthesis and an analysis before beginning the teaching.

Paragraph Development

Paragraph development is the first step in the process of analysis. During synthesis, it is best to title the paragraphs that are found in an English Bible, such as the NASB. By the time he finishes his synthesis, the alert student will already realize that some of the paragraphs are not to his liking. Rather than change the paragraphs during synthesis, it is better to wait until the synthesis is completed. This will keep the student from slipping over into analysis, which could greatly slow down the synthesis, and also render the synthesis less than totally effective.

Because of time constraints, some students may desire not to develop their own paragraphs, but simply accept the paragraphs from an English Bible. If that is the case, this chapter can be skipped.

The Paragraph

The Paragraph and Analysis

The paragraph is the basic unit of analysis. Until one has isolated each paragraph in the book (or large section in the case of some long Old or New Testament books), one has nothing to analyze. There is nothing to “tear apart” for the purpose of analysis until the paragraphs have been determined.

The Paragraph and Synthesis

In the case of shorter books, the student may have already adjusted the paragraph to fit his understanding of the text during synthesis. This is because in short books, synthesis takes place on the paragraph rather than longer chapter level. However, for analytical purposes, even if such adjustment has taken place during synthesis, it is best that the student still go through the process of developing

Inductive Bible Study Methods

paragraphs that is presented in this chapter.²⁴ If nothing else, it will provide as a check on previous adjustments, and may provide insight to the paragraph that the student had not previously observed.

Definition of a Paragraph

According to Webster, a paragraph is “a subdivision of a written composition that consists of one or more sentences, that deals with one point, or gives the words of one speaker, and begins on a new usually indented line.”

Of course in the New Testament we do not have dialogue in the same form as a novel. In some books, such as the gospels, the Acts, and some Old Testament sections a change of speaker is found, but pure dialogue virtually never. Therefore, the paragraphs with which the biblical analyst deals rarely include back and forth dialogue. Most of the paragraphs which biblical students analyze are, in simplest form, “a subdivision of a written composition that deals with one or more sentences.”

While “indented paragraph Bibles” are more common than previously, most Bibles do not indicate paragraphs by indenting the first line. One common method is to embolden the verse number when the editors believe a new paragraph should begin. However in some Bibles the first verse of a chapter is not emboldened, even if it does not, in the editor's opinion, begin a paragraph.

Another way commercially printed Bibles indicate that a paragraph is beginning is by placing a paragraph marker (§), at the end or beginning of a paragraph.

Step One - Paragraph Determination

The method taught in this course for determining a paragraph is by “sentence combining.” We will learn how to determine what the various sentences in a chapter are, and to combine them into paragraphs.

Sentence Determination

Before one can determine which sentences to combine, one must determine where each sentence ends and begins. The simple method is to use the sentence keys in your English Bible. The English keys to a sentence are understood by everyone who has gone to school. A sentence begins with a capital letter, and ends with an end punctuation mark. In English there are three *end punctuation marks*: the period (.), the question mark (?), and the exclamation point (!). By carefully observing these keys, the student can determine the beginning and ending of each sentence.²⁵

Sentence Recording

Recording the beginning and ending of a sentence is relatively simple. Use the chapter and verse references to indicate where the sentences begin and end. Using a piece of lined paper,²⁶ on the far left of the sheet record them as the example on the next page does for the first few sentences of Matthew 24:²⁷

24 The beginning student often uses the paragraphs provided by other sources, such as paragraph Bibles. While this is acceptable for those who do not wish to do independent study of the Bible, eventually the serious student will desire to develop his own paragraphs. Besides providing a basis for independent outlining of the book, this method forces the student to think through the author's style and development of his topic, which is the ultimate purpose for both synthesis and analysis.

25 The student of the original languages of Scripture will want to determine the sentences from the Greek or Hebrew text rather than the English translation. While often the sentences will be the same, there are glaring examples of places where the English text combines sentences, or even divides one sentence into several.

26 This can be done more easily with a computer, but when I started in 1964 doing this, there were no computers. I originally wrote this paper in the middle 1970s; but still no computers.

27 I have used the sentences as found in the NASB for this illustration.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

24:1

24:2a

24:2b

24:3

24:4

24:5

24:6

24:7

24:8

24:9

24:10

24:11

24:12

24:13

24:14

24:15-18

24:19

24:20-21

24:22

24:23

24:24

← Some sentences are only part of a verse.

Some sentences are more than one verse long.

Caution: Some verses contain three or more sentences while there are a few sentences in Scripture that are as long as eleven or twelve verses. Note from the Matthew example on this page that most sentences are one verse, and this is true in much of the Bible, BUT DON'T COUNT ON IT.

The process of sentence recording should continue until the student fills as many sheets as necessary in order to cover the chapter section which he has previously determined during synthesis.²⁸

Sentence Combining

The student is ready to begin the paragraph determination process at this point. It is best to use a Bible that has no paragraph identification,²⁹ although such Bibles are becoming increasingly difficult to find. At any rate, the student should studiously ignore any paragraph divisions that have been provided in his English (or Greek) New Testament.

First, read, and re-read as many times as necessary the chapter division with which you are dealing.

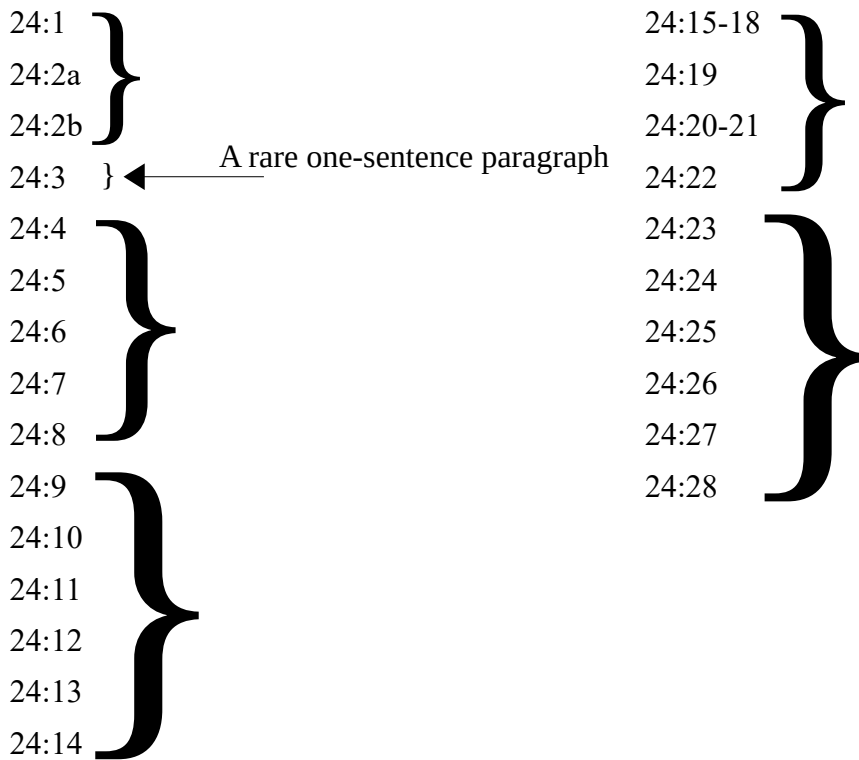
Second, as you read attempt to discern which sentences make up a single paragraph. This may take a few readings, and the student may change his mind a time or two during the process, but it's worth the effort. Mark your verse recording sheet in pencil (you may need to erase if you change your mind) by putting a bracket or parenthesis connecting verse references that make up a paragraph.³⁰ On the next page is an example from Matthew 24:

28 The chapter which begins in Matthew 24:1 continues through the 25th chapter. See the author's synthetic outline of Matthew earlier in this work. The student should record all sentences until he has completed a chapter.

29 This is to avoid contaminating the process by being influenced by another's paragraph divisions. The mature independent Bible student WANTS TO DO HIS OWN WORK, and does not rely on the work of others.

30 If using a computer, I recommend that you print out the sentences references and do this part by hand with a pencil. It's easier. However, if you desire to do it with a computer, simply put a return space by hitting the enter key between where you determine paragraphs begin and end.

Inductive Bible Study Methods



When to Break a Paragraph

Many students find the most difficult part of this process is deciding if a sentence is the last in a particular paragraph, or if the paragraph continues. Some students tend to make paragraphs larger rather than smaller, but this is not universal. In general, it is better to make a paragraph of as few sentences as possible.

The primary question to ask is, “Does this sentence continue the *specific* topic as the rest of the sentences in the paragraph?” If there is a subtle shift in topic, it is best to begin a new paragraph. A new paragraph may continue the general topic, even though the specific topic changes. Through practice the diligent student will begin to discern this shift.

One way to see a subtle shift is if the sentence begins with a word designed to distinguish what is said in the paragraph from what has previously been said. Such words as *but*, *then*, and *or*, when used as the first word in a sentence, can *sometimes* signal a subtle but definite shift in specific topic. Words such as *and*, *for*, *when*, and *while*, can signal a continuation of a specific topic.

However, single word signals are by no means universal and vary greatly from author to author, and even from book to book that a single author has written. The best way to determine topic is to practice discerning the meaning of an individual sentence as compared to other sentences in a series of sentences.³¹ Some students will find this more difficult than others, but keep at it. At the very least the

31 Over the years I have experienced much growth in this area. When comparing the paragraphs which I develop today as opposed to twenty or thirty years ago, I have found that practice has given me much insight that was not originally there. But that insight is reliant on having done the original paragraph development in the first place. One can only get better if one keeps at it.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

student will find himself immersed in searching out the meaning of the sentences before him, which is always a good thing.

Paragraph Comparison

During synthesis of shorter books the student may have titled paragraphs rather than chapters. In a longer book like Matthew, this will not be true; however in a short book like Jude or Obadiah, or even 2 Peter, which has only three chapters, the student may have chosen to title paragraphs and combine them to form his own chapters.

In general however, the student should not develop paragraphs until he is ready to begin to analyze the book. In other words, this step, along with paragraph titling, should be one of his final acts of synthesis.

After having developed paragraphs, the student should then compare them to the paragraphs in one or two Bibles. Usually he will find his paragraphs differ from those in the paragraph Bible, and sometimes (often?) the student's development will be superior to the one he finds in published works.³²

However, from time to time, the student will discern a better paragraph structure than his own when observing others paragraph breaks. Adjusting paragraphs is done when this occurs.

Step 2 - Paragraph Titling

The Purpose for Paragraph Titling

Sometime during their elementary education, many students have been introduced to the idea of a topic sentence. A topic sentence is supposed to introduce the theme of the paragraph to the reader. In modern writing often, though by no means always, topic sentences are the first sentence in a paragraph.

Ancient writers did not always conform to what are considered good writing practices by modern standards. Topic sentences are sometimes hard to find, if they occur at all. Even though an ancient writer did not necessarily include a topic sentence, the topic, or "controlling purpose" for any given paragraph can usually be discerned.

Paragraph titling is the process where the student attempts to discern the controlling purpose of a particular paragraph, and write a short, pithy title that will express that purpose. Remember, the purpose here is not to develop a teaching presentation. It is not important whether someone who might read your titles understand why you worded it the way you did. This is a process to help the student consider a way to summarize the purpose for the paragraph having been written.

The Structure of Paragraph Titling

It is best to keep paragraph titles as short as possible. Often one word will express the main idea, and some modifiers will expand that idea into an understandable topic. A good rule of thumb is to limit the length of a paragraph title to five words or fewer. While a beginner will find this difficult, with practice, the process will become easier.

The Method of Paragraph Titling

After reading the paragraph several times, the student should attempt to formulate a preliminary title for that paragraph. This will not necessarily be the final form for the title, but it is a beginning. The student should ask himself several questions at this point:

1. Why did the author write this paragraph?

32 When the author was taught this, he found himself being skeptical. However, after a few months he discovered that the paragraph divisions he gave to a book were indeed often better than many paragraph Bibles, especially the older publications that had not been edited in a long while. When comparing the older printings of the KJV with the New American Standard, for instance, he found that the newer Bibles conformed more closely to his own works.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

2. What does the sentence flow of the paragraph tell me about his purpose for writing?
3. How does this paragraph relate to the overall section which I am studying?
4. Do previous paragraphs lead into this paragraph so that I can discern a movement in the author's discussion.
5. Do subsequent paragraphs further develop the thought of this paragraph? If so, how do they do so?

After some practice, these questions begin to come to the student's mind. With practice he will be able to develop ease in understanding the overall structure of the author's development of his general theme.

Eventually the student should attempt to write a short title for the paragraph. As stated above, the final paragraph title should be five words or fewer. If the title is too long, it will appear rambling and will indicate that the student is not sure of the actual purpose for the author's including the paragraph in the overall development of his theme. The shortness of the title will ensure that the student has adequately summarized the actual topic for the paragraph.³³

An Example of Paragraph Titling³⁴

Below is a sample of the paragraph titles for Matthew 24. Note that the same structure for combining sentences may be used to develop paragraph titles:

24:1	}	The Prediction by Jesus	24:15-18	}	Instruction about the Abomination
24:2a			24:19		
24:2b	}	The Questions by the Disciples	24:20-21	}	The Coming of the Son
24:3			24:22		
24:4	}	The Beginning of Sorrows	24:23	}	
24:5			24:24		
24:6			24:25		
24:7			24:26		
24:8	}	The Continuation of Sorrows	24:27	}	
24:9			24:28		
24:10					
24:11					
24:12					
24:13					

³³ If necessary, write out a sentence for each paragraph. Then after some time has elapsed, attempt to shorten it into a five word phrase. It is vital that the student of the Bible not attempt to formulate titles that please others, or for teaching purposes. Bible study is for the benefit of the individual believer, whether he ever teaches anything or not.

³⁴ These are not the initial titles for these paragraphs. Note that they are all similar in style, a noun followed by a prepositional phrase. It is not necessary that the student's first attempts should be so carefully structured.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

24:14

When to Break a Paragraph

Many students find the most difficult part of this process is deciding if a sentence is the last in a particular paragraph, or if the paragraph continues. Some students tend to make paragraphs larger rather than smaller, but this is not universal. In general, it is better to make a paragraph of as few sentences as possible.

Once the student has completed this stage throughout an entire chapter that he determined during synthesis, he is ready to begin combining paragraphs into minor sections and major sections.³⁵

35 It is not necessary that one sit alone and do this! Some find study partners very helpful, and can work as a team to come up with paragraphs and their titles. Over the years I've encouraged my college and seminary students to do synthetic study with a partner, or even as a group function.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Chapter Four

The Analytic Method

Paragraph Combining and Sub-dividing

The Analytical Outline

Paragraph combining produces a broader sectioning of the book than paragraph development. A work such as Isaiah or Jeremiah in the Old Testament or Luke or Acts in the New Testament may have extremely long chapters. For instance, a chapter in Isaiah may have several visions on a single topic, each of which may be made up of several paragraphs. It will be necessary for the student to combine paragraphs into sections, which in turn receive a title. In some parts of a book, minor sections will be combined into major sections, so that the student has a multi-layered structural diagram of the book once he has finished the combining process.

Paragraph sub-dividing will happen anytime a paragraph is long enough. The judgment of the student will determine if a long paragraph needs to be sub-divided. The rule of thumb here is that if it is at all possible to divide a paragraph into two or more sub-sections, the student should do so.

Paragraph Combining

The Purpose of Paragraph Combining

After reading a chapter³⁶ several times, the student may discern what appear to be slight changes of emphasis within the overall topic. Through paragraph combining, the student will divide the chapter into sections. For clarity we will refer to these as “minor sections.”³⁷

The Method of Paragraph Combining

Paragraph combining is a similar process to sentence combining. After reading through a chapter several times, the student will note that some paragraphs appear to fit together as a section of the overall chapter. These should be combined and given a title similar in form to the paragraph title.

An Example of Paragraph Combining

In the synthetic outline of Matthew's gospel, the author's chapter X includes both chapters 24 and 25 in the traditional Bible chapter divisions. The paragraphs in this rather long section can be combined to make several minor sections of the author's chapter. Observe the following paragraph divisions of the entirety of “Chapter X. The Prophetic Kingdom Discourse – Matthew 24:1-25:46.”

36 Remember, a chapter in our discussion is not one found in the traditional divisions in modern Bibles. It is the result of the student's synthesis of the book. A student chapter may be several traditional chapters long. In reality, the only value of the traditional chapter/verse divisions in the Bible are to help find specific information. They do not represent, by themselves, an adequate outlining approach.

37 On rare occasions minor sections of a chapter can be combined to form major sections that are not the same as the actual chapter. For a chapter to contain two or more major sections is extremely unusual. The “major sections” are almost always the same as the actual chapter divisions the student formulated while doing the synthesis.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Chapter X The Prophetic Kingdom Discourse- 24:1-25:46

Paragraph	Reference	Title
1	24:1-2	The Prediction by Jesus
2	24:3	The Question by the Disciples
3	24:4-8	The Beginning of Sorrows
4	24:9-14	The Continuation of Sorrows
5	24:15-22	The Instruction about the Abomination
6	24:23-28	The Coming of the Son
7	24:29-31	The Sign of the Son
8	24:32-35	The Parable of the Fig Tree
9	24:36-41	The Days of Noah
10	24:42-44	The Parable of the Goodman
11	24:45-51	The Parable of the Wise Servant
12	25:1-13	The Parable of the Ten Virgins
13	25:14-30	The Parable of the Talents
14	25:31-46	The Judgment of the Gentiles

The above 14 paragraphs in Chapter X can be combined to form minor sections in the work. Note the following combination:

Paragraphs	Reference	Title
1-7	24:1-31	The Doctrine of the End
8-13	24:32-25:30	The Illustrations of the End
14	25:31-46	The Judgment of the Gentiles

Paragraph Sub-dividing

Longer paragraphs such as # 14 in the above illustration should be sub-divided if at all possible. At the sentence combining level, it became clear to the author that we had one long paragraph. It also began to dawn on him, as he further worked out the paragraph divisions and minor divisions of the chapter, that paragraph #14 actually stood alone as a minor section of the chapter.

Note the following sub-divisions of paragraph 14, "Judgment of the Gentiles."

Sub-Division	Reference	Title
1	25:31-33	Christ Sits in Judgment
2	25:34-40	Christ Dialogues with the Righteous
3	25:41-46	Christ Dialogues with the Unrighteous

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Further Sub-divisions

In longer books such as Matthew, it will not be uncommon to find that the subdivisions of a paragraph can be further sub-divided. Note sub-divisions 2 and 3 in the above example. Both are several verses long, and one wonders whether or not they could be further sub-divided. Note the following sub-divisions below:

Christ Dialogues with the Righteous- 25:34-40

Sub-Division	Reference	Title
1	25:34-36	The King Invites the Righteous
2	25:37-39	The Righteous Question the King
3	25:40	The King Answers the Righteous

Christ Dialogues with the Unrighteous- 25:41-46

Sub-Division	Reference	Title
1	25:41-43	The King Condemns the Unrighteous
2	25:44	The Unrighteous Question the King
3	25:45-46	The King Answers the Unrighteous

The Analytical Outline

At this point the student has enough information to formulate the analytical outline for chapter X. Beginning with the broadest divisions of the chapters, that is, the minor sections, and working down to the paragraph and sub-paragraph level, the student can develop an outline that looks like this:

- X. The Prophetic Kingdom Discourse – 24:1-25:46
 - A. The Doctrine of the End – 24: 1-31
 - 1. The Prediction by Jesus – 24:1-2
 - 2. The Question by the Disciples – 24:3
 - 3. The Beginning of Sorrows – 24:4-8
 - 4. The Continuation of Sorrows – 24:9-14
 - 5. The Instruction about the Abomination – 24:15-22
 - 6. The Coming of the Son- 24:23-28
 - 7. The Sign of the Son – 24:29-31
 - B. The Illustrations of the End – 24:32-25:30
 - 1. The Parable of the Fig Tree – 24:32-35
 - 2. The Days of Noah – 24:36-41
 - 3. The Parable of the Goodman – 24:42-44
 - 4. The Parable of the Wise Servant – 24:45-51
 - 5. The Parable of the Ten Virgins – 25:1-13
 - 6. The Parable of the Talents – 25:14-30
 - C. The Judgment of the Gentiles – 25:31-46
 - 1. Christ Sits in Judgment – 25:31-33
 - 2. Christ Dialogues with the Righteous – 25:34-40
 - a. The King Invites the Righteous – 25:34-36
 - b. The Righteous Question the King – 25:37-39

Inductive Bible Study Methods

- c. The King Answers the Righteous – 25:40
- 3. Christ Dialogues with the Unrighteous – 25:41-46
 - a. The King Condemns the Unrighteous – 25:41-43
 - b. The Unrighteous Question the King – 25:44
 - c. The King Answers the Unrighteous- 25:45-46³⁸

With time and patience the student can work his way chapter by chapter using the same method. By and large, the outline and titles will be superior to anything available commercially for two reasons:

1. They will be the result of the student's own work and therefore he will "own" the outline in a unique way.
2. Most commercially available outlines that are found in commentaries and Bibles really aren't all that good anyway. It doesn't take much effort to make a better outline.³⁹

38 For a complete example see the author's analytical outline on Matthew. It is under New Testament/Matthew at the following website: garlandshinn.com.

39 It may seem strange, but most analytical outlines in Bibles are terrible. They ignore the paragraph divisions of the chapter, and often their titles are not very accurate. In addition, they are usually not parallel. However, synthetic outlines in commercial works seem to be somewhat better. Even so, the serious student should never rely on another's outline. The only legitimate use of another person's outline is to check it with the one the student has produced to see if it gives a better presentation of the material. It is always good to be willing to learn from another person. But do so *after* having completed your own work!

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Chapter Five

The Analytic Method

Basic Sentence Analysis

Once the student has developed paragraphs from individual sentences, he is ready to analyze the individual sentences. This chapter deals with basic sentence analysis. Every student should be able to analyze a biblical sentence using these principles. Sentence analysis has three parts:

1. Determining the type of sentence.
2. Determining the structure of the sentence.
3. Analyzing the grammatical elements of the sentence.

Most committed students of Scripture get somewhat nervous when approaching grammatical study. This is understandable, as many have not thought grammatically since school days, and then perhaps not as successfully as they would have liked. However, the simple grammatical functions taught in this chapter can be mastered by virtually one dedicated reader of the English text of Scripture.

For the purposes of this course, sentence analysis will be done using English only. For the student of Greek, see “Diagramming the Greek New Testament” by this author.

Sentence Types

Sentences are of the following types:

1. **Simple declarative.** Declarative sentences make one or more affirmations or declarations. Most sentences are of this type.

Example: “But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.” - Matthew 24:8

2. **Interrogative.** Interrogative sentences ask questions. Often in the biblical text, interrogative sentences ask only rhetorical questions, which expect no answer.

Example: “And when did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or naked and clothe you?” - Matthew 25:38

3. **Imperative.** Imperative sentences make simple commands.

Example: “Therefore, be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.” - Matthew 24:42

4. **Conditional.**⁴⁰ Most conditional sentences have two clauses, an *if* clause, and a *then* clause. Others have a helping verb such as *may* or *might* without a separate clause indicating the condition.

Example: “But if that evil slave says in his heart, ‘My master is not coming for a long time,’ and shall begin to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards, the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and shall cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; weeping shall be there and the gnashing of teeth. -Matthew 24:48-51

40 In the Greek language of the New Testament 3 kinds of conditions are regularly found. The *first class* condition affirms the reality of the condition from the viewpoint of the speaker, and should be understood “if, and it is so.” The *second class* condition denies the reality of the condition, and should be understood, “if, but it is not so”. The *third class* condition is the same as the typical condition in English and expresses the possibility that the condition is either so or not so, and should be understood “if, and maybe it is and maybe it isn't so.” Which condition is actually represented by the translated word *if* can only be discerned by examining carefully the Greek sentence. The English reader is left to commentaries to discover which condition is being expressed. For a discussion with examples of the Greek conditional sentences, see this author's *Elementary Greek*.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

In the above sentence the *if* clause consists of the words, “But if that evil slave says in his heart, ‘My master is not coming for a long time,’ and shall begin to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards ...” The *then* clause is the rest of the sentence, “...the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and shall cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; weeping shall be there and the gnashing of teeth.”

Basic Sentence Structure

The first step in determining the structure of the sentence is to observe the individual clauses. *A clause is a group of words that has a subject and a verb.*

Clauses are of two types, dependent and independent. The independent clause or clauses of a sentence are the basic structure for which the student is searching. Every sentence has at least one independent clause. The dependent clauses are *subordinate clauses* and they somehow modify the independent clause or clauses, or even other dependent clauses.

The Three Sentence Structures

The *simple sentence* has one independent clause and therefore has a single subject and a single predicate. The subject and predicate may be compound.

The *compound sentence* has two or more independent clauses, each with its own single or compound subject and predicate.

The *complex sentence* has one independent clause and at least one dependent clause.

Determining the basic sentence structure is very important. If a sentence is compound, each clause is important equally in the author's expression of truth. If a sentence is complex, the relationship between clauses tells the student the emphasis of the sentence. If the student does not analyze the basic sentence structure correctly, he can inadvertently make a secondary thought the main idea, and thereby miss the point of the sentence, and perhaps the paragraph in which it resides.

The Simple Sentence

The following simple sentence has only one independent clause. It has only one subject (This) and one predicate (is).

Example: “This is the great and foremost commandment.”- Matthew 22:38

However, a simple sentence can have a compound subject, and still be simple.

Example: Roger and Joy are young children.

In the above example the words *Roger* and *Joy* are subjects of the predicate *are*.

A simple sentence can also have a compound predicate, and still be simple.

Example: The pilot flew over the building and photographed it.

The subject *pilot* performed two acts: he *flew* and he *photographed*.

For more discussion concerning simple English sentences see an English grammar available in any good bookstore.

The Compound Sentence

A compound sentence is a sentence with two or more independent clauses, each with its own subject and predicate. The following compound sentence has only two clauses. It is taken from Matthew 24:31 in the New American Standard Bible:

And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

The above sentence has two clauses, each with its own subject and own verb:

Inductive Bible Study Methods

1. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet...
2. ... and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

The simple subject of the first clause is *He* and the simple predicate (verb phrase) is *will send*. The simple subject of the second clause is *they* and its simple predicate is *will gather*.

The Complex Sentence

Any sentence that consists of one independent clause, but one or more dependent clauses is considered complex. These dependent clauses are called subordinate because they cannot stand as the main clause and somehow modify the clause. Three types of subordinate clauses exist: 1) the adverbial subordinate clause, 2) an adjectival subordinate clause, and 3) a noun subordinate clause.

The Adverbial Subordinate Clause

Hebrews 13:2 is a complex sentence with an adverbial subordinate clause.

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

The independent clause comes first, followed by the dependent clause:

1. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers
- A. for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Note that the dependent clause begins with the word *for*. When "*for*" is used to introduce a subordinate clause it is called a *subordinate conjunction*. The following is a list of the most common subordinate conjunctions in English:

after	inasmuch as	supposing that
although	in case that	than
as (far/soon) as	in order that	then
as, as if	insofar as	though
as though	in that	till
because	lest	unless
before	no matter how	until
even if	now that	when, whenever
even though	once	where, wherever
for	provided (that)	whether
how	since	while
if	so that	why

Some of the words in the list can also be used for other things, so be careful. They are only subordinate conjunctions when they actually stand at the beginning of a subordinate clause.

The Adjectival Subordinate Clause

The adjectival subordinate clause is also called the relative clause. It is called a relative clause because it is introduced by a pronoun rather than a conjunction. Acts 11:1 contains a relative clause:

Now the apostles and the brethren who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

The two clauses of this sentence are:

1. Now the apostles and the brethren...heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.
A. ...who were throughout Judea...

The subordinate relative clause tells which brethren heard that the Gentiles had received the word of God. When the word *who* does not ask a question, but points out an individual or a group of individuals it is called a *relative pronoun* because it relates the clause back to a specific person, place or thing, either singular or plural.

Following is a list of all the relative pronouns in English:

that	which	whom, whomever
what	who, whoever	whose

Again notice that the above words are not always relative pronouns. They are only relative pronouns when they introduce a clause that further describes an individual person place or thing, or a group of persons, places, or things.

The Noun Subordinate Clause

The first sentence in Matthew 10:34 contains a noun clause.

Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth.

The two clauses are:

1. Do not think...
A. ... that I came to bring peace on the earth.

In the Bible it is most common to see noun clauses beginning with the word *that*. But again the word *that* does not always introduce noun clauses. Sometimes it points out, in statements such as "That man is tall," where it is a demonstrative pronoun. *That* is another subordinate conjunction, but only a conjunction when it introduces a clause a noun clause.

Also, especially in normal English, but not so much in the Bible, noun clauses can exist without any single word conjunction. Notice the italicized portions of the following English sentences. Each is a noun clause. In some cases (as in number 4 below) one could insert *that* before the noun clause, but this is not always so.

1. *What the newspapers say* is probably false.
2. I do not know *where the book is*.
3. Give the books to *whoever can use them best*.
4. I know *he is correct*.

If the student is able to analyze a sentence using the material in this section, he likely to have a better understanding of the meaning of the sentence in context than otherwise. Attempt to analyze the sentences in the following passage from 1 John by first determining the type of sentence and second by determining the structure of the sentence. Follow these directions:

Directions:

1. Underline the type of each sentence (declarative, interrogative, imperative, conditional).
2. Underline the structure of each sentence (simple, compound, complex).
3. Find and underline the main independent clause or clauses for each sentence. Use a single underline for this step.
4. Underline each subordinate dependent clause with a double underline.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

5. Circle each subordinate conjunction. Refer to the list above.
6. Place a box around each relative pronoun.

Type of Sentence	Structure of Sentence
Declarative	Simple
Interrogative	Compound
Imperative	Complex
Conditional	

And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

Type of Sentence	Structure of Sentence
Declarative	Simple
Interrogative	Compound
Imperative	Complex
Conditional	

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

Type of Sentence	Structure of Sentence
Declarative	Simple
Interrogative	Compound
Imperative	Complex
Conditional	

But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Type of Sentence	Structure of Sentence
Declarative	Simple
Interrogative	Compound
Imperative	Complex
Conditional	

And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Type of Sentence	Structure of Sentence
Declarative	Simple
Interrogative	Compound
Imperative	Complex
Conditional	

These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.

Basic Grammatical Analysis

Grammatical interpretation means grammatical analysis. The minimum analysis that ought to be done will be presented in this chapter. For a more detailed approach to grammatical analysis for the advanced student, see the next chapter.

Determining the Verb

By definition, a verb indicates either action or state-of-being. The easiest way to determine the verb is by simply asking, *What is the action?* The two possible outcomes are, I found an action! or I could not find an action! In the first case, the verb is an action verb. In the second case, the verb is probably a state-of-being verb. The most common state-of-being verb is the verb *to be*. The following chart indicates all the forms of the verb *to be*:

am	are	is
was	were	be
being	been	

Several other words can be used as state-of-being verbs as well. But, be careful, because some of them, such as taste, look, and smell, are also sometimes action verbs. The chart below lists other English words that are sometimes used as state-of-being verbs:

appear	taste
become	seem
feel	smell
look	sound

Virtually all other verbs are action verbs.

Analyzing the Verb

Each clause has a predicate, which contains a verb or verb phrase. A verb is a word in a clause that affirms the action or state of being.

The student must be able to identify the verb and determine the following.

1. ***The nature of the verb.*** The nature of the verb is determined by telling whether the simple verb is 1) an action verb or 2) a state-of-being verb. The most common state of being verbs in English are forms of the verb *to be*: *am, are, is, was, were, be, being, and been*. Another aspect of the verbal nature deals with the issue of transitivity, which we will deal with under the voice of the verb.

These forms of *to be* are only state-of-being verbs when they stand alone as the verb. They are not state-of-being verbs when they precede an action verb. They are then called *helping verbs* or *auxiliary verbs*.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

2. ***The tense of the verb.*** English has six verb tenses: present, past, future, present perfect, past perfect, future perfect.

The Present Tense

The present tense is formed in the following ways: 1) the simple present *eat, eats*; 2) the emphatic present *do eat, does eat*; 3) the progressive present *am, is, are eating*.

The Future Tense

In modern English the future tense is formed by adding one of the helping verbs *will* or *shall*. Two ways are used to express the future: 1) the simple future *shall/will eat*; 2) the progressive future *will/shall be eating*.

The Past Tense

The past tense is formed one of three ways: 1) the simple past *ate*; the emphatic past *did eat*; 3) the progressive past *was/were eating*.

The Perfect Tenses

The simple present perfect is formed by using the helping verb *have* or *has* plus the past participle of the verb: *have/has eaten*. The progressive present perfect uses *have* or *has* with *been* plus the present participle of the verb: *have/has been eating*.

The simple past perfect is formed by using the helping verb *had* plus the past participle of the verb: *had eaten*. The progressive past perfect is formed by using the helping verb *had* with *been* plus the present participle of the verb: *had been eating*.

The simple future perfect is formed by using the helping verbs *will/shall have* plus the past participle of the verb: *will/shall have eaten*. The progressive future perfect is formed by using the helping verbs *will/shall have been* plus the present participle of the verb: *will/shall have been eating*.

3. ***The voices of the verb.*** The voice of the verb tells whether the subject of the verb is acting or being acted upon. Therefore there are two voices: when the subject is acting, the voice is said to be transitive active. When the subject is being acted upon, the voice is said to be transitive passive.

The Transitive Verb

Any action verb that has a direct object or objects is transitive active. The word *transitive* refers to the transference of the action of the verb. Any verb which transfers the action back upon the subject is transitive passive. Only active and passive verbs are transitive, which can only be true of action verbs. State-of-being verbs indicate no action, so cannot be transitive. Such verbs are called *intransitive*, which we will discuss below.

The Transitive Active Verb

Any action verb *in any tense* which has a direct object is transitive active.

Example: The artist painted a picture. The subject, *artist*, acted, *painted*, and the direct object, *picture*, received the action of the verb.

Example: The massive crowd will have destroyed the lawn by the afternoon. The subject, *crowd*, acted, *will have destroyed*, and the direct object, *lawn*, received the action of the verb.

The Transitive Passive Verb

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Any action verb *in any tense* which transfers the action back upon the subject is transitive passive. The passive voice always uses some form of the verb *be* plus the past participle of the verb.

Example: The steak is being eaten by the woman's husband. The subject, *steak*, is receiving the action of the verb, *being eaten*. The one performing the eating is indicated in the prepositional phrase *by the woman's husband*. Such prepositional phrases indicate the *agent* of the action, in this case, the word *husband*.

Example: The package has been delivered. The subject, *package*, is receiving the action of the verb, *has been delivered*. In this instance, no agent of the action is indicated, so the reader cannot know who performed the action.

The passive voice can be used in all tenses:

Example: The simple past tense, *The steak was eaten*, or the progressive past tense, *The steak was being eaten*.

Examples: The future tense, *The steak will be eaten*. The present perfect, *The steak has been eaten*. The past perfect tense, *The steak had been eaten*. The future perfect tense, *The steak will have been eaten*.

The Intransitive Verb

Any action or state-of-being verb can be intransitive. The word intransitive indicates that no action is transferred upon an object, or back upon the subject. There are two kinds of intransitive verbs: intransitive copulative (state-of-being verbs only), or intransitive complete (any verb, both action or state-of-being).

An intransitive copulative verb indicates that the state-of-being verb has a complement to the subject of some kind. The complement can be either a noun or an adjective, and such words will be in the predicate in normal prose writing.

Example: The ball is red. The subject, *ball*, is being described by the adjective complement *red*. The state-of-being verb *is* links the two words, and is therefore sometimes called a linking verb. Also of note is that the word *red* is an adjective. Adjectives that follow a state-of-being verbs, and which complement the subject, are sometimes called *predicate adjectives*, because they are in the predicate part of the sentence.

Example: The teacher is a woman. The subject, *teacher*, is described by the noun complement, *woman*. The state-of-being verb, *is*, links two nouns. The noun *woman* is sometimes called a *predicate noun*, or sometimes a *predicate nominative*.

In both examples, the word following the state-of-being verb is a kind of *subject complement*, one being a predicate adjective, *red*, and the other being a predicate nominative, *woman*.

Determining the Subject

The importance of determining the subject or subjects of a sentence or clause cannot be over estimated. The subject is that about which the sentence is affirming something. If the student cannot isolate the subject, he cannot understand the sentence.

The easiest way to find the subject is to ask the question *who?* or *what?* immediately followed by the verb or verb phrase.

In 1 John 2:26 first isolate the verb phrase for each clause by underlining each word in it, and then ask the question "who or what?" plus the verb phrase.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.

In the first clause, who or what *have written*? The answer, *I*, is the subject. In the second clause who or what *are trying*? In this case the answer is the relative pronoun *who*.

Exercise One

In the following sentences underline the verb phrase in each clause, and then place parentheses around the subject of the clause. The solution is in the *Endnotes*.¹

1. And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.
2. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.
3. But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.
4. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.
5. I have written these things unto you concerning them who seduce you.

Determining the Direct Object

If the verb in the sentence or clause is an action verb it might have a direct object. State-of-being verbs *cannot have a direct object*. To find the direct object of a verb state the subject and the verb and then ask the question *who?* or *what?*

These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.

In the above sentence, the subject and verb phrase is underlined for each clause. State the subject and the verb phrase and ask *who?* or *what?*

The subject/verb construction for the first clause is *I have written*. To find the direct object ask *I have written what?* The answer is *things*. The word *these* is actually a modifier of *things*.

The subject/verb construction for the second clause is *who are trying*. Ask the question, *Who are trying what?* The answer is *to deceive*. *To deceive* is a verbal noun, that is, a noun derived from a verb. It is called an infinitive, which can do anything a pure noun can do. Here it is a direct object.

Determining the Subject Complement

Instead of a direct object. state of being verbs *might* have a subject complement. Subject complements are found just like direct objects. The subject/state of being verb is underlined in each of the three clauses in the following sentence. Ask the same question as with the direct object and you should be able to find the subject complement.

And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

Ask the question, *This is what?* The answer is *message*, so the subject complement is the noun *message*. Ask the question, *God is what?* The answer is *light*, making *light* the subject complement.

When a verb has a subject complement, it is referred to as an *intransitive copulative* verb.

Note that we skipped the subordinate clause, *...which we have heard from Him and announce to you...* This clause has one subject, *we*, with two verbs, *have heard* and *announce*. If one asks *We have heard what?* there is no answer, for there is no subject complement. The same is true if one asks, *We announce what?* Again, note there is no subject complement. Finally, ask the question, *Darkness is what?* Again, no subject complement occurs in this clause.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Remember, state of being verbs *might* have a subject complement, but they are not required to have one. If a state-of-being verb has no subject complement, it is an *intransitive complete* verb. This is quite important, as intransitive complete verbs emphasize the subject as acting in the simplest sense, which is not true of either intransitive copulative, or transitive verbs, whether active or passive.

Exercise Two

In the following sentences, find either the direct object of action verbs or the subject complement of state of being verbs. Underline the verb and put parentheses around the correct word, infinitive, or clause that makes up the direct object or subject complement. Write above it either DO for direct object or SC for subject complement. Write NONE above verbs that are complete. Again, the solutions are in the *Endnotes*.²

1. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.
2. But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.
3. And this is the promise that he has promised us, *even* eternal life.
4. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.

identifying the Pronouns Antecedents

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of and refers to a noun. The antecedent of a pronoun is the noun which the pronoun replaces. Below is a list of the most common pronouns:

I	me	my	mine	myself
you	your	yours	yourself	he
him	his	she	her	hers
it, its	we	us	our	they
them	their	this	these	who
whom	whose	which	that one	someone
anyone	everybody	everyone	somebody	something

In Bible study it is important whenever possible to find the antecedent for each pronoun. Usually (but by no means always) the antecedent of a pronoun is easy to find because it will either be in the same sentence as the pronoun, or else in an immediately previous sentence. The rule of thumb is that a pronoun refers back to the *first noun* to which it can refer. If you can find an antecedent in the immediately preceding sentence or clause, go back no further unless there is a legitimate reason to do so.⁴¹ However, rarely no antecedent occurs.

Also, pronouns such as *someone*, *anyone*, etc. are considered indefinite. As such they are sometimes used legitimately without an antecedent.

Remember, the antecedent of a pronoun in the Biblical text never refers to you, the current day reader. It might refer to the original readers. But it cannot refer to modern day readers by direct

⁴¹ A change in your theology is not sufficient reason to not apply a pronoun to its immediate antecedent. Grammar should drive the meaning of the text. The student's theological perspective should not drive the grammar. However, if the supposed antecedent produces an absurdity, keep looking further back in the context.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

interpretation. To do so is to confuse interpretation with application. Only after having interpreted the original antecedent can one decide whether the pronoun is applicable to the modern-day reader. Many times it will not.

Exercise Three

In the following selection from Ephesians 3, find all the personal pronouns write them in the space provided, and write their antecedents next to them. If no antecedent occurs, write NONE. The solution is in the *Endnotes*.³

I Because of this, I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles, ² if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, ³ that by revelation He made known to me the mystery, just as I wrote a small amount, ⁴ regarding which when reading you are able to understand my insight in the mystery of the Christ....

	Pronoun	Antecedent
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

Conclusion

This basic approach to English grammar will provide the student with a sufficient base to understand the force of most clauses in the New Testament. Further in-depth analysis could only be based on an extensive study of the English language, which is beyond the scope of this course.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Chapter Six The Categorical Method

An Introduction to the Categorical Method

Both the synthetic and analytic study are book studies. The categorical method gathers data on a specific doctrinal topic of Scripture from several books.

Categorical study, sometimes called doctrinal or theological study, seeks to understand the following:

1. The major categorical (doctrinal) themes of Scripture.
2. The specific doctrines of Scripture through the study important doctrinal words.
3. The consistent application of Scripture derived through a normal, grammatical, historical interpretive procedure.

Like synthesis and analysis, categorical study must be based on sound exegetical practices. It approaches Scripture as the only legitimate source of doctrinal understanding. By applying correct interpretive procedure, and the application of language skills, it continues the process begun in synthesis and analysis, upon which it must be based.

A tendency exists that must be avoided: the desire to enter into doctrinal study without having done the preliminary synthesis and analysis. Indeed, synthesis and analysis provide the first step in categorical study, and basic categorical study can be incorporated into both the previous two methods. When one, through synthesis and analysis, begins to recognize important doctrinal words (as noted in the seed plot), it becomes imperative, after having completed the previous methods, to enter into whole-Bible study. Only through a complete induction of every place in the Bible where a topic occurs can one be thoroughly grounded in the Bible-based approach to doctrine.

Several dangers can interrupt or warp the doctrinal understanding of the sincere student. Not only do most Christians live in an atmosphere of doctrinal expression, often the result of conclusion arrived at because of previous teaching rather than personal interaction with the text of the Bible, many sincere believers arrive at false conclusions as a result of poor study methodology. This leads us to the prerequisites for the categorical study of the Bible.

Requirements for Categorical Study

All Bible study, including categorical study, requires three elements: time, effort, and commitment. If one is to be an adequate student of Scripture, these three elements must be pursued.

Time

Bible study takes time, and that means that the serious student must plan to use time carefully. This is especially true with categorical study, for the student must search out multiple places a particular doctrine or category is presented in the Bible.

As a corollary to time, patience is needed. Diligence in careful handling of Scripture comes only with concentration over time, and constancy in study.

Effort

Bible study is hard work which requires personal discipline. There is no room for spiritual laziness in the study of scripture. Not only must the student have developed good methods of study, one must implement them carefully and diligently. This is the meaning of 2 Timothy 2:14, "Be diligent to present

Inductive Bible Study Methods

yourself as one approved to God, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, carefully handing the word of truth.”⁴²

Also, the student must not become distracted by other pleasurable pursuits. A careful organization of needed leisure time should be the aim of the Bible student, along with discipline to keep to one’s schedule in Bible study.⁴³

Commitment

Correctly conceived, commitment to study is an *outcome of Bible study*, not the cause of it. For one’s commitment to learning God’s message to man stems from one’s commitment to God through the Lord Jesus Christ. That commitment will provide the basis for all aspects of the Christian living.

It must not be thought, however, that everyone has the same gifts and abilities. Those who are drawn to extensive study in the original languages are generally⁴⁴ gifted by God to do so. But even for nominal study, an artificial commitment to Bible study is not adequate. It must be an outgrowth of one’s relationship to the God of the universe.

Categorical study is perhaps the most difficult of all methods of study. It requires a commitment to spend time in hard labor, for certain skills and use of tools must be understood and developed to arrive at adequate doctrinal understanding.

The Tools for Categorical Study

Language Skills

As mentioned previously in this work, an understanding of Biblical languages is basic to independent study of Scripture. This is true in every aspect of synthetic and analytic study. For the categorical student, it is imperative. If one is to develop one’s only doctrinal position without undue reliance on others, one must have Biblical language skills. And the more time one expends mastering those skills, the more likelihood that the student will have an accurate doctrinal construct.

This does not mean, however, that every Christian should master the biblical languages. For instance, one can do Greek or Hebrew word studies using helps for English readers. Granted, there will be some limitations without a thorough knowledge of those languages, but much understanding can be gleaned even for the English-only student.

Interpretive Skills

Because language skills generally take more time to master, sometimes the conclusion that they are the most important skill arises. However, this is not true. At least as important is the development of interpretive skills. To help the student develop those skills, see the author’s work entitled *Principles and Practices of Bible Interpretation*. Many pitfalls exist for the student who has an inadequate background in this area.

Personal Skills

By this is meant the individual’s mental viewpoint and thinking process. Categorical study is difficult, and one needs to have the skills of mental discernment to produce accurate conclusions. While

42

43 One needs to let the brain rest, but such rest must not be to the point where the thinking process atrophies. Hobbies are a wonderful thing, as well as spending time with loved ones, and serving actively in various ways. Time should be scheduled for those needs. When adequately scheduled, time away from study produces a better time of study. It is as easy to become “burned out” in Bible study as any other activity.

44 But not always. Intense Bible study, especially in language and culture, cannot be limited legitimately to those gifted as teachers, for instance. All Christians can study the Bible correctly, even intensely. But not all are given the spiritual grits to teach or evangelize.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

not every Christian has been gifted in this area, every Christian can develop a mental viewpoint through categorical study that helps keep one from falling into error. Sometimes, the mere fact that one has learned how to interpret accurately will keep one from being led astray by false doctrine.

Therefore, it is not required that every Christian should be a “theologian” in the technical sense. But if one can do basic word studies using a concordance, even without intense language study, groundwork for the evaluation of doctrinal topics becomes easier.

Mental discipline in synthesis and analysis results in a recognition of which words to study. For most Christians this will be the important doctrinal words of Scripture. Such words will come to the notice of the student in both synthetic and analytic study. They will be found in the “seed plot” and will often occur in more than one place in Scripture.

Word Studies

The basic tool for word study is the concordance. For many years, this author used two concordances for word study. Early, before learning biblical languages, the best work to begin a word study was Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance. Not only was every Greek word provided, it was given a number, so that when looking up an English word, that number could be used to find the Greek or Hebrew word used in any sentence in the Bible. Strong’s numbering system became a convenient way to discern Greek and Hebrew words, and is still used today in some works, even for the student who studies the Hebrew and Greek.⁴⁵ This author rarely uses Strong’s today.

The second concordance is for New Testament studies only. It is the Greek – English Concordance by J. B. Smith. It is keyed to Strong’s number system (though an error occurs at a certain place and a jump of 100 occurs). However, it is alphabetical by the Greek alphabet rather than the English. Therefore, it is helpful to have learned the Greek alphabet in order to use it conveniently. Furthermore, it is tabular. That is, it provides tables which indicate every reference in the New Testament where a Greek word occurs, and how it is translated in the King James Version. It provides a count for all the translation occurrences, and a total for all uses of the Greek word. Again, the author rarely uses this work today.

For the English-only reader the best way to begin a word study is to use a computer program. And the best program for this is E-sword, which is free of charge, and provides a King James Version edition where each of Strong’s numbers follows each English word. By searching on Strong’s number, the student will get a list of every place in the New Testament the word occurs. One can then download the results to a word processor.

By searching on the English word, the student can find everywhere that English word occurs in the KJV, and by looking up the words can determine how many different Greek words are translated by the English word.

By using these two search methods, the student can begin a study of a particular set of Greek words for an English translation for the purposes of comparison and contrast.⁴⁶

45 Strong’s Concordance is still available today, though there are better tools for doing Greek or Hebrew word studies for the English-only reader. One word of warning here. The lexicon provided in the concordance is inadequate, as it usually simply provides all the ways in which a Hebrew or Greek word is translated in the King James Version. Also, it is bulky, and difficult to use, because it does not list the words by the Hebrew or Greek alphabet, but by the English translation in the King James version. To find all the uses of a Hebrew or Greek word, one must refer to the lexicon Strong provided and look up every English word with the same number of the original language word to find every instance where it occurs. It takes quite a while to find all the locations of a particular Greek or Hebrew word using this method, and much better (faster) ways are available today.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

A Complete Induction

In order to do a thorough doctrinal study, one must find every word that relates to that doctrine and do a study on each word. That study consists of observing every place a word occurs and identifying whether the word occurs with reference to the doctrine under study or not. One must not assume, therefore, that a particular word always relates to a particular doctrine, nor that only one word relates to the category being studied.

Dr. Irving Babbitt stated the following: “The basis for all real thinking is the ability to withhold judgment until all the facts are in.” The student must be discerning, and do a complete study in an area of a category in order to avoid partial or outright incorrect conclusions. Later in this chapter a section on “Basic Categorical Distinctions” occurs. This deals only with the broad outline of doctrine, but does not provide all the subdivisions. Those subdivisions come with complete induction of words in various categories to see where they fit. When doing a categorical word study, one should relate it to one of the doctrinal categories *if possible*.⁴⁷

One can readily see that categorical study is time consuming. Not everyone can establish such a study routine to determine doctrinal understanding quickly. Categorical study, in fact, is a life-long process, and unless one desires to teach Bible Doctrine, it may not be the best use of one’s study time to spend hours in categorical study. Again, discernment is necessary in this area.

Everyone can do some doctrinal study, and everyone can think doctrinally. But the teaching of doctrine requires complete induction in a categorical area, and this can, and often does, take hours, days, weeks, months and years. So, the key is for the individual to do what they can categorically without it becoming burdensome.

A Word Study Chart

The following Chart provides a convenient way to begin a word study. It provides a convenient way to example Greek words for the English reader. The first part of the chart provides a place for certain conclusions. The space for the Greek Word may be filled in using either the English transliteration of the word provided by Strong’s Lexicon (or others), or by the actual word in Greek letters.

In the Translation column, one should use a Bible version that provides a word equivalent translation rather than a paraphrase or dynamic equivalent translation (the NIV, for example).

46 There is a temptation to use only the Strong’s number for a particular English word, but this can lead to serious error. The fact that an English word can be a translation of different Greek words needs to be undertaken to determine if all of those words can be used in the categorical study under question. Sometimes a Greek or Hebrew word will be translated a certain way because it has a legitimate relation to the doctrine one is studying. It may be a noun, verb, or adjective for of the same root, for example, and is legitimate to study as part of the category under question. Other times it will be from a totally different root, and this needs to be noted, so that distinctions can be made by the student. Is a particular doctrine related to two different word roots, or is one of those roots more correctly translated a different way because it has no such relationship? Only diligent study can tell.

47 For several reasons it is not always possible to categorize a word doctrinally or accurately. An important word may not be doctrinal in the general sense, but may provide cultural or language background that will perhaps affect the understanding of a specific passage. It is also possible for a particular word to be inaccurately categorized. For instance, words dealing with the ages and the dispensations may be, and sometimes are, incorrectly categorized under The Doctrine of Last Things, when they actually belong to the Doctrine of the Bible. Furthermore, some passages may speak to more than one doctrinal category. For instance, the Doctrine of the Fall of Man may have words associated with it that relate to both the Doctrine of Man and the Doctrine of Sin and Unrighteousness.

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Basic Categorical Distinctions

The following list is of doctrinal categories for theological studies. Note that each one has subdivisions. This is not to be taken as exhaustive. One may find other subdivisions that apply.

I. The Doctrine of Scripture

Revelation

Word of God

Communication

The Ages (periods of various kinds of revelations)

The Dispensations (acts of dispensing revelations)

Pauline Stewardship

Mosaic Stewardship

Inspiration

Sufficiency

Inscriptionation

Prophecy

Prophet

Bearing along

II. The Doctrine of God

The Trinity

Names of God

The Decree

Counsel

Election

Predestination

Good Pleasure

Essence

Spirit

Attributes

Nature

III. The Doctrine of Jesus Christ

His Person

His Deity

His Humanity

Birth, Nature of (incarnation)

Death, Nature of

Kenosis

His Resurrection

Inductive Bible Study Methods

His Ascensions

His Works

 With General Reference to Mankind

 With Specific Reference to Israel

 With Specific Reference to the Gentiles

His Davidic Kingship

His Priesthood

 Christophanies

IV. The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

His Personality

His Deity

His Works

 Regeneration

 Baptism

 Gifting

 Filling

 Sealing

V. The Doctrine of Man

Nature

 Body

 Soul

 Spirit

 Fallen/Adamic

The Image and Likeness of God

The Mentality of Man

VI. The Doctrine of Sin and Unrighteousness

Unrighteousness

Sin

 Categories of Sin

 Various Wrongdoing

VII. The Doctrine of Salvation

Gospel

 Saving Grace

Redemption

Propitiation

Reconciliation

Election

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Security

Christian Life

Law Vs. Grace

The Mosaic Law and Other O. T. Covenants

Living Grace

New Trinitarian Relationships for the Believer

Abiding in the Father

Abiding the Son

Control (filling) of the Spirit

Fruit of the Spirit

Worship

Priesthood

Sacrifice

The New Covenant (Heb 13)

Service

Enemies

The Flesh

The World

The Devil

Resurrection

Bodily Change

Snatching Away (Rapture)

VIII. The Doctrine of the Church

The Church Universal

Distinct from Israel

Metaphor of the Body of Christ

Membership

Spiritual Gifts

Metaphor of the Building

Elements of the Foundation

Elements of the Structure

Metaphor of the Family/household

The Church Local

Its Nature

Its Purpose

Fellowship

Breaking Bread

Inductive Bible Study Methods

Its Organization

Leadership

Service/servant

IX. The Doctrine of Spirit Beings

Angels

Cherubim

Seraphim

Organization

Satan, Devil, etc.

His Nature

Chrub

Fall of

His Attacks

His Minions

Demons, unclean spirits, etc.

X. The Doctrine of Last Things

Davidic Covenant

The Kingdom of God

The Unending Nature of

The Millennial Period

Amillennialism

Postmillennialism

Premillennialism

The Tribulation Period

Mid Tribulationalism

Post Tribulationalism

Pre Tribulationalism

Daniel's 70th Week

Divisions of

The Events of (An Analysis of the Revelation)

End Notes – Exercise Solutions

1 Here are the solutions for Exercise One.

1. And (this) is the message which (we) have heard from Him and announce to you, that (God) is light, and in Him there is no (darkness) at all.
Note: In the final clause the word *there* is a place holder, and not the subject. In such sentences, the true subject normally follows the verb.
2. If (we) say that (we) have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, (we) lie and do not practice the truth.
Note: Two peculiar uses occur in this sentence. The first is the verb walk, which appears to have no subject. But if one asks the question “Who walks?” the answer may come to mind. The subject is the understood pronoun *we*. The second peculiar use is the split verb *do practice*. Normally in English, we place the negative adverb *not* between the parts of the verb. It is important to remember that *not* is an adverb, and not part of the verb phrase.
3. But if (we) walk in the light as (He) Himself is in the light, (we) have fellowship with one another, and the (blood) of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.
4. And (this) is the promise that (he) has promised us, even eternal life.
5. (I) have written these things unto you concerning them (who) seduce you.

2 Here are the solutions for Exercise Two.

- | | | | | |
|--|------------------|-------------------|------|------|
| | DO of <i>say</i> | DO of <i>have</i> | NONE | NONE |
|--|------------------|-------------------|------|------|
1. If we say (that we have (fellowship) with Him) and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and *do not practice* the (truth).

	DO of <u><i>do practice</i></u>		
--	---------------------------------	--	--
 2. But if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have (fellowship) with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses (us) from all sin.

	NONE	NONE	DO of <i>have</i>
--	------	------	-------------------
 3. And this *is* the (promise) that he has promised (us), *even* eternal life.

	SC of <i>is</i>	DO of <u><i>has promised</i></u>	
--	-----------------	----------------------------------	--
 4. If you *know* (that He is (righteous)), you know (that everyone also who practices (righteousness) is born of Him).

	DO of <u><i>practices</i></u>	NONE (Transitive passive verb)	
--	-------------------------------	--------------------------------	--

3 Here are the Solutions for Exercise Three.

Pronoun	Antecedent
1. <u>I</u>	<u>Paul</u> (the antecedent is in 1:1)
2. <u>you</u>	<u>saints in Ephesus</u> (the antecedent is in 1:1)
3. <u>you</u>	<u>saints in Ephesus</u>
4. <u>me</u>	<u>Paul</u>
5. <u>you</u>	<u>saints in Ephesus</u>
6. <u>He</u>	<u>God</u>
7. <u>me</u>	<u>Paul</u>
8. <u>I</u>	<u>Paul</u>
9. <u>you</u>	<u>saints in Ephesus</u>
10. <u>my</u>	<u>Paul</u>