

# Sermon Prep

## Lesson 2 Notes

### Inductive Bible Study

#### Method

In order to help us better understand our bibles we will put forth a simple method of study. This method has often been referred to as Inductive Bible Study.

The basic premise of this method is to learn to let the Bible speak for itself

“The Bible means what it says so it is our job to simply learn to recognize what it is saying”

This method has 4 simple components

- Observation
- Interpretation
- Application
- Replication

While there are many who have taken it upon themselves to organize and communicate these principles we will lean heavily upon the work of Duval and Hayes and their book “Grasping God’s Word”

Duval and Hayes take the reader on a journey to understanding and applying any biblical text.

The goal of this journey is to take the reader from the understanding of the author and the original readers to the value the text provides for the reader today.

We will call it traveling from their town to our town

Like any journey if we want to reach our destination we must take the right steps

Confucius is credited with saying

“The journey of 1000 miles begins with a single step”

That may be true but it is also possible to turn a journey of 1000 miles into a journey of 2000 miles or even a never ending journey if we start out in the wrong direction.

We need to make 5 stops along the way if we are going to reach our goal of understanding what value a text has for the modern reader

## Step 1: Grasping the Text in Their Town

In other words, what did the text mean to the author and original readers

This is paramount because if we fail here we will never truly understand a text or its message

To discover this we need to read the text carefully, over and over.

We want to attempt to see as much as possible in the text. Look, look, and look again, observing all that you can.

What do you see? Use questions like who, what, when, where, why, and how.

Next we want to write out what the passage meant for the biblical audience. Use past-tense verbs and state in your own words what this meant to them.

- For example

1 Chronicles 4:9-10

Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, "Because I bore him in pain." And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, "Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!" So God granted him what he requested.

Jabez, whose name means "to cause sorrow" cried out to God to be blessed and God granted him his request

Jabez is praying the promises of God

## Step 2: Measuring the Width of the River

This is accomplished by asking: what are the differences between the biblical audience and us?

The Christian today is separated from the biblical audience by differences in culture, language, situation, time, and often covenant.

These differences form a river that hinders us from moving straight from meaning in their context to meaning in ours.

The width of the river, however, varies from passage to passage.

Sometimes it is extremely wide, requiring a long, substantial bridge for crossing.

Other times, however, it is a narrow creek that we can easily hop over.

In this step you look for significant differences and similarities between our situation and the situation of the biblical audience. Failure to understand and bear in mind the width of the river is one of the quickest ways to derive faulty theology from a text.

- Our example

Jabez lived under a different covenant than We do

That covenant had specific promises concerning blessings and land.

### Step 3: Crossing the Principles Bridge

Here we want to ask: What is the theological principle in this text?

Your task is not to create the meaning but to discover the meaning intended by the author.

- The principle should be reflected in the text.
- The principle should be timeless and not tied to a specific situation.
- The principle should not be culturally bound.
- The principle should be relevant to both the biblical and the contemporary audience.

Write out the theological principle (or principles) in one or two sentences. Use present-tense verbs.

- Our Example

Just like Jabez we have received promises from God. We should pray the promises of God

## Step 4: Consult the Biblical Map

How does our theological principle fit with the rest of the Bible?

To do this we must reflect back and forth between the text and the teachings of the rest of Scripture.

Is your principle consistent with the rest of Scripture?

If not you have missed it and need to try again

- Our Example

Peter said that we have received great and precious promises from the Lord that we can partake in. Throughout the Bible we are encouraged to pray and John tells us to pray according to the will of God

## Step 5: Grasping the Text in Our Town

Finally we want to ask How we can live out these theological principles

We cannot leave the meaning of the text stranded in an abstract theological principle.

In this case we want to be specific

“I can or should or must...”

- Our Example

General application

We can pray the promises of God

Specific application

God has promised to make me and able minister of the new covenant. I can trust in and pray for God to do just that