



## HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

### SYLLABUS

Lesson 1 .....	Pages 1-10
Lesson 2 .....	Pages 11-19
Lesson 3 .....	Pages 20-23
Lesson 4.....	Pages 24-28
Lesson 5.....	Pages 29-31

## **GOALS FOR SESSION 1**

In this session we will consider the issues raised by text and manuscript. It is important to understand that the Bible, as we have received it, is a reliable translation of reliable manuscripts.

In this session we will consider various Bible study tools that will be used by the student for all sessions that follow. It is important to be familiar with basic reference materials.

In this session we will learn various terms and definitions that are used by Bible scholars. It is important not to be intimidated by terms that really define simple tasks.

In this session, we will develop an overview of the steps involved in passage inductive study. It will be important to keep these steps in mind during the balance of the class.

# THE QUESTION OF TEXT

Since we do not have any of the original autographs of any book in either the Old or New Testament, a question that is logically asked is whether the words in the books we have accurately reflect the inspired words that were originally written. This brings us to issues of text: i.e., which manuscripts do we use?

- The King James Version was written in 1611 and was the standard English translation until about 1900. It is based on a manuscript produced by scribes in the early middle ages. The Hebrew/Aramaic OT manuscript is called the Masoretic Text, (MT) and was produced c1008. The Greek NT manuscript, called the Textus Receptus (TR) was produced c1150.
- During the late 1800's, archaeologists began to discover many fragments of NT manuscripts. None of the fragments were alike, but they were much older than the TR. Some of them dated into the second century.
- With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (1948) an amazing discovery was made about the OT manuscript from C1008. It was found that the scrolls, which dated c150-100 B.C. were almost identical to the manuscript from the middle ages! In over 1000 years of hand copying, the masorites, who were the Jewish scribes who made their living copying the OT, had made almost no mistakes. This is truly one of the most remarkable feats of antiquity. Because of this accuracy, most modern translations of the Bible still rely on the MT as the manuscript they work from to make their translations.
- The debate over which manuscript to use for translation involves the NT. Archaeologists continued to find fragments of the NT and we now have over 5000 NT manuscripts, some dating to within a generation or two of the originals. Such a wealth of manuscripts is unprecedented in antiquity.

The problem is that none of them are alike. There are about 150,000 variant readings. Most, however, are trivialities. Only a handful could be considered substantial variations, but even then, no major doctrine is called into question. The English text is 98% pure.

Textual Criticism is the discipline, which assesses variant readings and tries to determine which one would have most likely been the original. Textual Criticism is concerned with:

1. External evidence by weighing the importance of a particular manuscript
2. Internal evidence by deciding which reading explains how all the others came about

Therefore, the manuscripts behind the modern translations demonstrate more breadth and accuracy than any other piece of literature in antiquity.

## KING JAMES VERSION DEBATE

There is a fiercely held conviction on the part of some that the KJV is the only version to read. The debate is not over the archaic translation. In fact, the NKJV puts it into modern English. The debate really centers on manuscripts.

Those who prefer the KJV feel that God supernaturally preserved the manuscripts from the middle ages. Any attempt, in their opinion, to try to compare variant readings is to move out of the will of God.

## THE QUESTION OF TRANSLATION

Once the textual critics have done their job, one next needs to ask which English version most accurately reflects the Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek texts. We need to realize our limitations when using an English Bible. All translations have been made from the original manuscripts by people. These people have not always agreed on the best way to interpret the text.

Consider this example of 1 Corinthians 7:36:

KJV If a man think that he behaveth himself unbecomingly toward his virgin ...  
NASB If a man thinks that he is acting unbecomingly toward his virgin daughter .....  
NIV If anyone thinks he is acting improperly toward the virgin he is engaged to .....  
NEB If a man has a partner in celibacy and feels he is not acting properly toward her ...

There are other translational problems that arise, including ambiguity in the original languages. Consider this example from Matthew 11: 12:

NIV From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing and forceful men lay hold of it.  
NASB From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and violent men take it by force.

The Greek word "biadzetai" (to be violent) can be translated either actively or passively. It makes a difference in the translation.

- If the word is taken actively, it means that the kingdom of heaven is doing the violating. It is breaking in powerfully as a present reality, violently overthrowing the works of the devil. Men are trying to apprehend or get into the kingdom with a corresponding fervor.
- If the word is taken passively, it means that the kingdom is being attacked and violent ones are trying to seize it, either in the sense of trying to overthrow it, or in the sense of trying to use violence to enter it.

There is no way to know for sure what Jesus meant just looking at the Greek.

Consider this example of Romans 1: 5:

RSV: we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of His name among all the nations ...

NIV: we received grace and apostleship to call people from all the nations to the obedience that comes from faith ...

KJV we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all the nations, for His name ...

NEB I received the privilege of a commission in His name to lead to faith and Obedience men in all nations ...

There are over 12 different ways to translate the genitive construction in Greek and four of these ways, all meaning different things, are reflected in these translations.

### **TRANSLATION THEORY:**

#### **1. LITERAL**

- a. Should we translate ambiguous phrases literally and let the reader make the choice on what the author meant?

b.e.g. should we translate the Greek word "sarx" in Paul's writings literally as "flesh" as does the NASB and KJV, even though we understand that in one instance he might mean the sinful human nature and in the others the natural human body?

#### **2. DYNAMIC EQUIVALENT**

- a. Should we try to translate the Hebrew or Greek word or phrase with a word or phrase that is the essential equivalent in our culture?
- b. e.g. should we translate "holy kiss" as "handshake" as the NIV and GNB do?

#### **3. FREE TRANSLATION (PARAPHRASE)**

- a. Should we try to be highly relevant and unhook altogether from the words in the original and try to translate the basic idea into modern language?
- b. E.g. should we translate "lamp" as "torch" (Phillips) or as "flashlight" (L8)?

- It should be obvious from these examples that a number of translations are important for the serious English Bible student in order to know where the translational problems exist.
- A dynamic equivalence version, like the NIV, is preferred by many as their personal Bible.
- Others prefer a literal translation, such as the NASB or KJV, as their personal Bible.

It is probably better not to use the free translations as a study Bible because much of the interpretative work has been done for you. If you use the KJV or NKJV as your primary study Bible, it is best to get a version that has the NU text notes.

# BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

This bibliography is a listing of some books available under various theological categories to help you in making good investments as you purchase a study library. These books do not require a knowledge of Hebrew or Greek. The explanations will help you understand the sort of tools that they are and their intended use. Some of the titles are available from more than one publisher; only one is listed here. Also listed are current CSO members' prices, when known.

## **CONCORDANCES**

The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible by James Strong. (Nelson. \$19.95) Strong's concordance has been the most important English Bible reference tool for over a century. Many of the other key reference tools build off Strong's, which makes it a doorway into a wealth of research. The problem is that it is based on the King James version of the Bible, which many people no longer use today.

The NIV Exhaustive Concordance by James R. Kohlenberger III and Edward Goodrick. (Zondervan, \$21.95) Kohlenberger and Goodrick made a break from the Strong's numbering system. Therefore, an index that cross references their numbers to Strong's must be used in order to move to other tools. Some later versions use Strong's numbering system.

The New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance. Robert Thomas, ed. CA. J. Holman, \$25.95) Based on the NASB translation but uses Strong's numbering system.

The New Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament (Hendrickson, \$26.95) and The New Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament (Hendrickson, \$22.95) These concordances show where a particular English word is used in that particular translation in the Bible. This approach is useful because most users move from English to the original languages. However! these works have two limitations:

1. The English word being looked up does not always indicate the same Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek word being used in the original.
2. While the word being researched might be one English word in one translation, it might be a different English word in another. This is especially true of KJV and many other translations. Wigram's concordances take up where Englishman's leave off, and shows everywhere that a particular original language word is used in the Bible. This helps in discovering all of the different ways that a word can be translated.

Theological Wordbook of the New Testament. Affectionately known as "Kittels" or in the abridged version as "Uttle Kittels" does the same as the wordbook above. Abridged version about \$30; full set about \$400.

New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology. Zondervan. \$109.95.

You do not need to know the Greek or Hebrew alphabet to use the toots above.

## **BIBLE DICTIONARIES**

New Bible Dictionary. Intervarsity Press, \$19.95. This dictionary provides articles on biblical topics. Next to an exhaustive concordance, this is the most important tool to have on your shelf.

Zondervan Pictorial Bible Encyclopedia. Zondervan. \$94.95. Five volume set.

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. Eerdmans. \$105.95. Four volume set.

## **BIBLE ATLASES**

The Macmillan Bible Atlas. Macmillan, \$25.95. This atlas shows battles, movements, journeys of Jesus and the apostles, etc. in detailed maps covering Genesis to Revelation.

Hammond's Atlas of Bible Lands. This atlas includes terrain maps, photographs, diy plans, time charts, etc. The maps are uncluttered and include political as well as other boundaries.

The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands. Includes many fine maps and color plates. Written mainly about Israel, this atlas contains two major divisions on the physical and historical geography of the Holy Land.

Student Map Manual: Historical Geography of the Bible Lands. This combination atlas/historical geography is unique in using an eastward orientation rather than a northward one. It contains very detailed regional maps, extensive archaeological maps and site information (including the archaeology of Jerusalem) and historical maps with summaries of historical periods. It indexes ancient, modern, and alternative place names.

## **LEXICONS**

Genius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament; A Dictionary Numerically Coded to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. Baker, \$27.95 and Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: a Dictionary Numerically Coded to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. Baker, \$17.95. These dictionaries function with Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek words the same way that Webster's functions for English. Each word is coded to Strong's so the student does not need to know the original language alphabets. Strong's, the Englishmen's OT and NT concordances, and these lexicons, function together as a word study set.

For those who can read the Greek alphabet, a good lexicon is A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. University of Chicago, \$54.95.

## **WORD STUDY BIBLES**

The Complete Word Study Old Testament and The Complete Word Study New Testament by Spiros Zodhiates. (AMG \$28.95 and \$18.95) Strong's numbering system over words in the Bible, as well as grammatical codes that point to specific Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek grammar forms being used. Great tools for students who do not know the original languages.

Spirit Filled Life Study Bible. Jack Hayford, the editor of this Bible, has included word studies from the Hebrew and Greek on words strategic to study. These "word wealth" entries are scattered throughout the text.

## **WORD STUDY DICTIONARIES**

Zodhiates wrote word study dictionaries to go along with the word study Bibles listed above.

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. Nelson, \$14.95. Word study dictionaries are different from lexicons because they provide small articles on individual words. Vine's classic volume offers a look at English words from the KJV, but gives cross references to modern words more likely to be used in updated versions. Vine's is particularly helpful in determining why a biblical author would have used one word as opposed to another.

Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament Moody, \$36.95. You need to know the Hebrew alphabet to use these wordbooks. Two volume set.

## **TOPICAL CONCORDANCE**

Nave's Topical Bible. Elaborate scripture index, which lists each verse in the Bible with topical headings under which they may be studied.

The Zondervan Topical Bible. Quotes in full many verses listed under each topic, Gives brief definitions and cross references to other headings.

The New Compact Topical Bible. A "mighty midget" that saves spaces by listing references rather than quoting them. Contains more topics than the Zondervan on which it is based. It also has numerous subdivisions to assist in location.



## PRELIMINARY DEFINITIONS

**EXEGESIS:** From the Greek word "exegesis:" a bringing out, explanation.

The use of this word implies a bringing out of the text what was originally there. This implies faithfulness to the author's original meaning.

**HERMENEUTICS:** From the Greek word "hermeneuo:" to interpret. Traditionally, the word refers to the whole science of interpretation. Some define hermeneutics as determining what a text meant originally and then determining how this applies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in a given cultural setting. This is a less common definition. Usually the latter part is called application.

**APPLICATION:** The task of applying the conclusions of exegesis and hermeneutics to a contemporary situation; Le., what it means in light of what it meant. A more specialized branch of application is called "ethics." (what is morally right.)

**INDUCTIVE STUDY:** Sometimes used as a synonym for exegesis; more frequently used as a "catch phrase" including exegesis, hermeneutics, and application.

**HOMILETICS:** The task of packaging the work of exegesis, hermeneutics, and application for oral presentation. The term is usually associated with the task of preaching as opposed to teaching.

**EPISTEMOLOGY:** Related to "knowing." We need to ask whether there is truth, and if so, how can it be known. Our set of knowledge is called our worldview. We all interpret data based on our world view-we ask if it is true in light of our experience.

- 1.Can truth be known outside ourselves?
- 2.Does it make sense to my head? (systematic consistency)
- 3.Is there cognitive dissonance? (head knowledge and experience don't jibe)

### **GENERAL REVELATION: What exists**

The search for truth begins with nature. Nature points to a truth outside ourselves because the order and consistent laws that characterize it point to such a truth. But, alas, all nature does is point. The search for truth continues with common moral truth. Philosophers have observed certain universal morals; some things are considered right in many cultures (such as loving one's child) and some things are considered wrong (murdering one's child).

## **SPECIAL REVELATION: God exists**

Maybe secular philosophy is wrong! Suppose we begin with God. Since man hasn't been very successful at learning truth, it would have to be revealed to him if it can be known at all. Revealed truth would require the imparting of a message from God in the form of a messenger, person, book, or other form of communication.

The Bible presents itself as just such an instrument of communication. It offers a provisional system to be tested. Its probability as a source for Truth will be determined by how systematically consistent it is. If it is Truth, it will ultimately bear witness to itself by making sense of our experience.

- a. God is rational, ordered and consistent
- b. The world reflects His rationality, His order, and His consistency
- c. Jesus is the key to God's communication to His created order. Jesus is the LOGOS, the Word of God.

COSMOLOGICAL LOGOS: Without Him the world would not have been made

EPISTEMOLOGICAL LOGOS: Without Him, there would be no knowledge

SOTERIOLOGICAL LOGOS: Without Him, there would be no salvation

- d. God is transcendent (unreachable); He has made himself imminent (reachable) in the person of Jesus. The unknowable has made Himself known through His Word.

# PASSAGE INDUCTIVE STUDY

Inductive study is generally thought of as exegesis, hermeneutics, and application. We might rephrase by saying that inductive study is composed of:

OBSERVATION: (exegesis) What does this passage say?

INTERPRETATION: (hermeneutics) What does this passage mean?

APPLICATION: How does the meaning of this passage apply to me?

Accurate interpretation and correct application rest on the accuracy of your observations. Therefore, it is vital that you develop observation skills, even if at first they seem time-consuming or you feel less than adequate doing it. Inductive study is a learning process that will not happen overnight. It is developed by practicing it over and over again. Sometimes all three phases of the study will seem to happen simultaneously. When words or passages make an impression on you, stop for a moment and meditate on what God has shown you.

BEGIN WITH PRAYER. Inductive study is the most effective Bible study method, at least for beginners. But without the work of the Holy Spirit, it is only a method. Read John 16:13-14. Ask God, by His Spirit, to lead you into all truth and to open your eyes to the wonderful things in His Word. Begin and continue your study with an attitude of prayer.

## SESSION ONE HOMEWORK

In this class, we will be working with a pericope from the book of 1 Corinthians. In order to prepare for Session 2, read the book of 1 Corinthians. Using your colored sheet, work through the section entitled "Exegesis."

Specifically ask yourself these sorts of questions:

- => What genre of literature is this book?
- => Who (who is the author? Who is it written to? Whose names are mentioned?)
- => What (What is the general purpose? What is the tone of the author?)
- => When (When was it written? What was going on about then?)
- => Where (Where are the places mentioned in this book?)
- ~ Why (Why was the book originally written?)
- => How

Next week we will go over this information and then look specifically at 1 Corinthians 6: 12-20, which will be our pericope for the next two weeks.

## **GOALS FOR SESSION 2**

During this session, we will review your exegetical findings for 1 Corinthians. Next, we will begin looking at a specific exegesis of 1 Corinthians 6: 12-20.

During this session, we will select at least two words for a word study. As we are doing our exegesis, choose at least two words that might need further clarification.

Also in this section, we will begin formulating interpretative questions from our pericope. Interpretative questions draw meaning from the text and help with organization of thoughts. They are also helpful for Bible study leaders and teachers to use to foster participation among students.

Finally, we will work on a paraphrase of our pericope. Paraphrasing is helpful for internalizing the meaning of the verses.

In this session, we will also begin an outline of 1 Corinthians 6: 12-20. Outlines are important for prioritizing points from the text.

In this session, we will also introduce visual paragraph analysis. We will use 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 as our first paragraph. We will use 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 as our second paragraph. We will use 1 Corinthians 7: 1-4 for our third paragraph. The purpose of this exercise is to see how the thoughts are developed within the text.

## WORKING THROUGH OUR PERICOPE

### 1 Corinthians 6: 12-20

All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable.

All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything. [13] Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. [14] Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power. [15] Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! [16] Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "The two shall become one flesh." [17] But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. [18] Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins

against his own body. [19] Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? [20] For you have been bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body.

## PARAPHRASE OF 1 CORINTHIANS 6:12-20

There is freedom in Christ, but we have to watch out for two things: some things are not helpful and some things are enslaving. It is wrong to say that food and the stomach (which God will do away with anyway) go together just as the body and sexual indulgence go together. The reason for this is that the body was created by God, not for sin, but for His purpose. Just as God raised Christ Jesus, He will also raise up our bodies through His power. Do you see now that your body is part of God's plan for Christ's church, His body here on earth? You do not take members of Christ's church and make them members of a house of prostitution. No way! God said that two people who join together sexually become one flesh. Don't you understand that someone who becomes sexually involved with a prostitute becomes one flesh with her? Similarly, one who joins spiritually with the Lord is one spirit with Him. Run fast and hard from sexual misconduct. Other sins are outside your body, but sexual impurity involves your body as well as your spirit in the sin. When you accepted Christ, the Holy Spirit came to live in your body, sent by the Father. Therefore, your body is not your own; you were redeemed from Sin at great cost by the Lord Jesus Christ. So use your body not to sin, but to glorify God.

## CROSS REFERENCES

Romans 12:1

I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. NASB

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship. NIV

Philippians 3:20,21

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christi who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. NASB

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. NIV



## OUTLINE OF 1 CORINTHIANS 6:12-20

### Theme: Glorify God with your body

- I. By doing profitable things that are not enslaving (6: 12)
- II. By understanding that God made the body for a purpose (6: 13)
- III. By knowing that your body is part of God's plan for the church (6: 14,15)
- IV. By staying away from sexual sin (6:16,17,18)
- V. By recognizing that the Holy Spirit lives in you (6:19)
- VI. By realizing that you were redeemed at great cost (6:20)

# VISUAL PARAGRAPH ANALYSIS

## Paragraph Contextual Relationships

Paragraph A: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Idolaters, sexually immoral people, drunks, or people who cheat others out of things or reputation will not inherit the kingdom of God. Some believers used to be like that, but they were redeemed, forgiven, and set apart for service because of Christ and the Holy Spirit.

Paragraph B: 1 Corinthians 6: 12-20

The body is not for sexually immoral purposes, but set apart for God's service. Since sexual union makes people one flesh in the eyes of God, believers should run from sexual immorality because the Holy Spirit indwells them and their bodies belong to God. Believers should use their bodies to bring glory to God.

Paragraph C: 1 Corinthians 7:1-4

It is preferable for a man to not marry, but since people experience sexual desire and fall into sin, it is better for a man and woman to marry rather than to indulge in sexual immorality. This way, they are committed to each other and their bodies belong to each other and are one flesh.

## Permanent Principle:

A Christian should value his body as a place where God lives and should realize that, because of the Spirit's presence and power, he can turn from sexual immorality and use his body to honor God.

## Application

In our culture, there are many opportunities for sexual immorality. People are seduced by explicit sexual programming on television and uncensored pornography on the internet. Sexual immorality on college campuses is seen as normal. Christians should understand that they are not to be involved in "safe sex" or any other sort of sexual relationship outside of marriage. Christians must learn to appropriately value their bodies as the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, and must only use their bodies to do those things, which bring honor and glory to God.

# INTERPRETATIVE QUESTIONS

1. It is lawful to be joined to a prostitute but not profitable?
2. Why does Paul say God is going to do away with food; didn't Jesus eat food in His glorified body?
3. What price has bought me? To whom was it paid?
4. How is my body a member of Christ?
5. If the body is going to die, why does God care so much about how we treat it?
6. How is my body a temple? What does it mean to have the Holy Spirit in me?
7. If you're going to sin, wouldn't it be better to sin against your own body than against someone else's body?
8. How did God raise the Lord? When will we be raised? What kind of power raises us?
9. How does a sexual union make two people one flesh in God's eyes?

## **SESSION TWO HOMEWORK**

Choose at least two more words from our pericope and do a word study on these.

Rework your paraphrase until it reflects the true intent of the text. Be ready to defend your work in class.

Finally, locate other sections of scripture that deal with the same topic as our pericope.

Hints: Using your topical Bible, you might want to look under sections on Sexuality, immorality, temple of the Holy Spirit, etc.

Using your concordance, you might take one of the words from your word study homework and find other places where that word is used in scripture.

## **GOALS FOR SESSION 3**

Read through the book of Jonah. This will be our pericope for the remainder of the class. Using your colored sheet, work through the section entitled "Exegesis."

Specifically, ask yourself these sorts of questions:

1. What genre of literature is this book?
2. Who? (Who is the author? Who is it written to? Whose names are mentioned? etc.)
3. What? (What is the general purpose of the book?)
4. When? (When was it written? What was going on about then?)
5. Where? (Where are the places mentioned in this book? Where was the author when he/she was writing?)
6. Why? (Why was the book originally written?)
7. How? (How did we get this book? How was it culturally received? etc.)

# EXEGESIS OF JONAH

Today, we will begin by working through the first 2 chapters of the book of Jonah. For your convenience, three translations are attached to this study as appendices. You may want to highlight, underline, etc. on these sheets.

To help you as you begin, consider the following:

## IDENTIFY THE CONTEXT

One of the most important principles of handling the Word properly and studying the Bible inductively, is to exegete scripture in light of its context. The context is the environment or setting in which a passage, chapter, or book exists. Context is the words, phrases or sentences surrounding the text.

What sort of literature is the book? \_\_\_\_\_

Is it Historical? Biographical? Poetic? Prophetic? Epistle? Apocalyptic? Hint:  
Sometimes a book can reflect more than one sort of literature.

Who is the author? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you know about the author's family?

When did the book events take place? \_\_\_\_\_

From what city did Jonah leave? \_\_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_\_\_

Find out what you can about that city and record the results here? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did God want Jonah to go? Find out everything you can about that city and its actions during the same time:

Find out what else was happening or had happened in Jonah's life by looking for other mentions of his life in other OT books and other NT books. Record your findings here:

## **OBSERVE WHAT IS OBVIOUS**

Begin by looking for things that are easy to see. Sometimes facts are repeated; these facts might be about people, places, or events. See if you see anything that is repeated:

## **TREAT THE TEXT OBJECTIVELY**

Let the text speak for itself. Many times we study the Word subjectively-to get something for ourselves-something that "speaks to our heart" or to find a verse we can use to help someone or set someone straight. Because the scripture says that we are to be sanctified by truth, and God's Word is Truth, our primary goal should be to know truth and then to adjust our beliefs accordingly.

## **DETERMINE THE BOOK'S THEME**

After reading through the first two chapters of Jonah, what theme do you see emerging? \_\_\_\_\_

## **IDENTIFY ANY KEY NAMES**

Mark any names distinctively or write them on a separate paper.

## **IDENTIFY KEY WORDS**

Highlight key words or mark them distinctively. Always use the same system of marking throughout your study. \_\_\_\_\_

### **IDENTIFY CONTRASTS**

For an example of contrast, read 2 Timothy 1:7. What is the contrast? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the contrasts that you see in Jonah? \_\_\_\_\_

### **IDENTIFY COMPARISONS**

For an example of comparisons, read 2 Timothy 2:3. What is the comparison? \_\_\_\_

### **LOCATE EXPRESSIONS OF TIME**

Look for words like "then," "after this," and "when." Write any time expressions that you see in Jonah:

### **HOMEWORK FOR SESSION THREE**

Work through the workbook for session 4. Do the exegesis for chapters 3 and 4 of Jonah. Be prepared to share them in class.



## **GOALS FOR SESSION FOUR**

Complete the exegesis of the book of Jonah.

Work through the interpretative steps for the book of Jonah.

Formulate interpretative questions.

Outline the book of Jonah.

Write a statement of the meaning of the book of Jonah.

## EXEGESIS OF JONAH 3,4; HERMENEUTICAL ANALYSIS

Complete your exegesis of Jonah chapters 3 and 4 by following the steps in Session 3.  
Write your results here: \_\_\_\_\_

Now that you have completed the exegesis of the book of Jonah, you have answered the question: What does the passage say? Today, we will begin with our hermeneutics. Hermeneutics answers the question: What does the passage mean?

### CONTEXT RULES

Consider the passage in light of its context and the entire Word of God. Is your interpretation consistent with the theme, purpose, and structure of the book?

Is your interpretation consistent with other scripture about the same subjects? Have you considered the historical and cultural context?

## **CONTRADICTIONS**

Scripture is inspired by God; therefore, it never contradicts itself. If there is an apparent contradiction, your interpretation of at least one part is incomplete or wrong. Obscure passages are difficult, even when correct principles of interpretation are used. Doctrine (interpretation) should be based on clear teachings in scripture that are repeated.

## **INTERPRET LITERALLY**

The Bible isn't a secret book! God has spoken to us so that we can know His truth. Therefore, the Bible should be taken at face value in a natural, normal sense. Look first for a clear teaching, not some hidden meaning. Evaluate figures of speech.

Consider what is said in view of the literary style of the context. There are more similes and metaphors in poetical and prophetic literature than in historical or biographical sections. Apocalyptic literature gives us the most problems!

## **WHAT IS THE ORIGINAL INTENT?**

Don't twist verses to support an interpretation that is not clearly taught. When we assign meaning to a passage that is not what the author intended, we take upon ourselves the same authority given by God to the original author. If you have any doubts, determine which words are creating the doubt. Do a word study on those words. List your word studies here:

Now, formulate your interpretative questions. Have at least five:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Complete your interpretative work by outlining the book of Jonah here:**

Now, complete your study by stating the meaning of the book of Jonah here: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **HOMEWORK FOR SESSION FOUR**

Write a short 3 sentence paraphrase for each of the four chapters of Jonah \_\_\_\_\_

## APPLICATION

Unlike most other prophetic parts of the Old Testament, the book of Jonah is a narrative account of one prophetic mission. It is similar in that regard to accounts of the ministries of Elijah and Elisha, as well as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

Bible narratives often compress much time into small spaces. Only forty-eight verses tell the entire story. In its scope (a single extended episode) and its character delineation, it is much like the book of Ruth.

Both Jonah and Ruth use structural symmetry effectively. The story is developed in two parallel cycles that call attention to a series of comparisons and contrasts. The story's climax is Jonah's prayer of confession, "salvation comes from the Lord." This is the middle of his three confessions. List them all:

1. Jonah 1:9 \_\_\_\_\_
2. Jonah 2:9 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Jonah 4:2 \_\_\_\_\_

The book of Jonah uses representative roles in a way that is easy to understand.

The theme of the story is God's loving concern for all peoples - including the people of Nineveh, the great enemy of Israel. Jonah represents Israel's jealousy of her favored relationship with God and her unwillingness to share God's compassion with the nations.

STATE THE PERMANENT PRINCIPLE OF JONAH HERE:

In Jonah 2:9, Jonah says that he will do what he has vowed. Take some time to summarize your own commitment to God. Ask yourself some of these questions and answer honestly:

What is good about the current quality and quantity of my praying?

Do I have to be in trouble before I pray? \_\_\_\_\_

Do I insist that God answer "my way?" \_\_\_\_\_

Is my commitment to my church one that allows me to learn, worship, serve, and be served? If one of these aspects is missing, what should I do to improve my relationship with my church? \_\_\_\_\_

What steps am I taking to "hear God" through scripture? If this is not adequate, what changes am I willing to make? \_\_\_\_\_

How willing am I to obey God? What is one large or small "mission" from God that I have refused to obey, or obeyed with reluctance? \_\_\_\_\_

After this time of introspection, think of how God pursued Jonah, even into the Mediterranean. Thank God for His times of faithfulness to you, especially during times when you may have tried to distance yourself from Him. Confess to God any reluctance you have to fully obey Him. Make commitments to God that He asks from you. Notice that most of Jonah's prayer reflects on God's character traits. Praise God for those qualities of His that are most important to you. Record your thoughts here:

Can you think of an area of your life where you have been called upon to show compassion or have been given (or have given) a second chance?

What was the double standard in Jonah's life? Is there one in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

Jonah referred to dying several times. Most people experience disappointments that cause them (at least temporarily) to find little joy in this life. What are some healthy ways that you could cope with such disappointments? \_\_\_\_\_

Think of ways God has taken care of you during those disappointing times: \_\_\_\_\_

Now, it is time for our summary:

The theme of the book:

The permanent principle(s) \_\_\_\_\_

How the permanent principle applies to me (us)



## **CONTRADICTIONS**

Scripture is inspired by God; therefore, it never contradicts itself. If there is an apparent contradiction, your interpretation of at least one part is incomplete or wrong. Obscure passages are difficult, even when correct principles of interpretation are used. Doctrine (interpretation) Should be based on clear teachings in scripture that are repeated.

**INTERPRET LITERALLY** d has spoken to us so that we can know His truth.

Therefore, the Bible should be taken at face value in a natural, normal sense. Look first for a clear teaching, not some hidden meaning. Evaluate figures of speech.

consider what is said in view of the literary style of the context. There are more similes and metaphors in poetical and prophetic literature than in historical or biographical sections. Apocalyptic literature gives us the most problems!

## **WHAT IS THE ORIGINAL INTENT?**

Don't twist verses to support an interpretation that is not clearly taught When we assign meaning to a passage that is not what the author intended, we take upon ourselves the same authority given by God to the original author. If you have any doubts, determine which words are creating the doubt. Do a word study on those words. List your word studies here:

Now/ formulate your interpretative questions. Have at least five:

1.