



## **Biblical Interpretation Training Manual**

Editors: Marie Wiles and Bo Whitemore

Whether you have never before interacted with the Bible or you have been faithfully studying it for years, this study is for YOU! We are so full of joy that you have taken it upon yourself to learn how to faithfully interpret God's Word. We want to encourage you in this task. There may be parts of this study that are difficult for you, but don't give up! The study of God's Word has many benefits:<sup>1</sup>

1. The source of truth (Jn 17:17b; 2 Tim 2:15)
2. The source for happiness (Ps 19:8a; Lk 11:28)
3. The source of victory over
  - a. Sin (Ps 119:11)
  - b. Satan (Mt 4:1-11)
  - c. Temptation (1 Cor 10:11-13)
4. The source of growth (Eph 4:13-15; 1 Pet 2:2)
5. The source of power (Rom 1:16; 2 Tim 1:7)
6. The source for guidance (Ps 119:105; 2 Tim 3:16-17)

We highly recommend that you do this study in a setting with oversight from another believer who has more experience interpreting God's Word, such as discipleship or a Bible study group. We will explore Ephesians Chapter 1 using the OIA (Observation, Interpretation, Application) study method. Our prayer and hope for this study is that you would learn how to read and interpret the precious Word of God and appreciate it for what it truly is — a story by God about God for the glory of God, describing how He relates to our past, our present, and our future. You must always remember that the Bible is God's very Word to us and the way He has chosen to reveal Himself to us. Because this is true of God's Word, there are seven ways we should respond to it as God's people, the Church:<sup>2</sup>

1. Believe it (Jn 6:67-69)
2. Honor it (Ps 138:2)
3. Love it (Ps 119:47-48)
4. Obey it (1 Jn 2:4-6)
5. Fight for it (Jude 3)
6. Preach it (2 Tim 4:1-2)
7. Study it (2 Tim 2:15)

We pray that this study will be a blessing to you and that you will glorify God for years to come through right understanding of His Word and obedience to it.

The Field Church Elders

Tyler Bier, Sam Cirrincione, Mike Linstead, Josh Miller, and Chad Wiles

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<sup>1</sup> John MacArthur, *How to Study the Bible* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009), pp. 27-33 and 46-63. All benefits listed here come from this source.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 63-66.

## WEEK 1: Introduction to Bible Study

### Part A: What is the Bible?

As mentioned earlier, the Bible is God's revelation of Himself to man. We are often tempted to study the Bible with a focus on ourselves or mankind in general, but right study of God's Word places the focus on Him and how he can be glorified by us. First and foremost, we must understand that the Bible is a book about God. This fact is clearly shown by the verses that begin and end the Bible.

#### **Genesis 1:1<sup>3</sup>**

*1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

#### **Revelation 22:20-21**

*20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! 21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.*

**Who is the subject or who is in focus in both of these portions of Scripture?**

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### **What does God say about the Bible?**

#### **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

*16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

#### **Hebrews 1:1-2**

*1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.*

#### **Hebrews 4:12**

*12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

#### **Psalm 19:7-8**

*7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; 8 the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;*

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<sup>3</sup> All Scripture citations will be taken from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.



## God's Revelation of Himself to Man

### Psalm 19

To the choirmaster. A psalm of David.

- 1 *The heavens declare the glory of God,  
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.*
- 2 *Day to day pours out speech,  
and night to night reveals knowledge.*
- 3 *There is no speech, nor are there words,  
whose voice is not heard.*
- 4 *Their voice goes out through all the earth,  
and their words to the end of the world.  
In them he has set a tent for the sun,*
- 5 *which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,  
and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.*
- 6 *Its rising is from the end of the heavens,  
and its circuit to the end of them,  
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.*
- 7 *The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul;  
the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;*
- 8 *the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;*
- 9 *the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;  
the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether.*
- 10 *More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold;  
sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.*
- 11 *Moreover, by them is your servant warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.*
- 12 *Who can discern his errors?  
Declare me innocent from hidden faults.*
- 13 *Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins;  
let them not have dominion over me!  
Then I shall be blameless,  
and innocent of great transgression.*
- 14 *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable in your sight,  
O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.*

Psalm 19 gives us a beautiful picture of God's revelation to man. In verses 1-6, we see what is known as God's general or natural revelation. Verses 7-14 show us special revelation. Use this information to assist you in answering the questions below.

**Who was the human author of Psalm 19? \_\_\_\_\_**

**How do you know?**

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**Describe how verses 1-6 differ from verses 7-14.**

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**Knowing that verses 1-6 describe God's general/natural revelation to man, how would you define or explain what general/natural revelation is?**

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**WEEK 2: Introduction to Bible Study (Cont.)**

**Part C: How do we get to know the Bible?<sup>4</sup>**

**Hear it**

One vital way to know God’s Word is to submit yourself to sound, faithful, biblical, expository preaching. At TFC, we faithfully provide such preaching and teaching. We also archive sermons and teaching on our website. We encourage you to go back and listen to these teachings. You’ll find them under the “Sermons” tab of our website

**Luke 11:28**

*28 But he said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”*

**Nehemiah 8:5-8**

*5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. 6 And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. 7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. 8 They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.*

**What can we learn from these verses about hearing the Word?**

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<sup>4</sup> Grace Community Church, Grace Community, and John MacArthur, *Fundamentals of the Faith Teacher’s Guide: 13 Lessons to Grow in the Grace and Knowledge of Jesus Christ*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009), pp. 34-36.

### Read it

Your daily life should include prayer and reading God’s Word. How else can you come to know God’s Word without reading it? If you have never read the entire Bible, we recommend doing this over a year. See Appendix A<sup>5</sup> for an example of a one-year Bible reading plan. We recommend that you begin and end your day with the reading of God’s Word and prayer.

#### Revelation 1:3

*3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.*

#### 1 Timothy 4:13

*13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.*

**What can we learn from these verses about reading the Word?**

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### Study it

Rich, deep understanding of God’s Word comes through the study of it. The idea of studying God’s Word is exactly what we want you to learn in this guide. “Bible study is more than just reading the Bible; it involves careful observation, interpretation, and application. Reading gives you the overall picture, but study helps you think, learn, and apply what you read to your life.”<sup>6</sup> Studying God’s Word is an essential part of a Christian’s life. God’s Word is deep in riches (Rom 11:33),

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<sup>5</sup> Appendix A, Bible reading plan, p. 35

<sup>6</sup> Grace Community Church, Grace Community, and John MacArthur, *Fundamentals of the Faith Teacher’s Guide: 13 Lessons to Grow in the Grace and Knowledge of Jesus Christ*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009), p. 35.

and studying His Word is the way to mine those riches. There are many tools to aid you in your study of God's Word. See Appendix B<sup>7</sup> for Bible study tools. We also recommend that you frequently join Bible studies

**Acts 17:11**

*11 Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.*

**Proverbs 2:3-5**

*3 yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding,  
4 if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures,  
5 then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.*

**What can we learn from these verses about studying the Word?**

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**Memorize it**

Dedicating God's Word to memory is an important aspect of the Christian life. It's good not only for our personal growth but also for helping other believers and sharing the gospel. MacArthur suggests two ways to make memorizing Scripture easier for you<sup>8</sup>:

1. Memorize Scripture for certain purposes, such sharing the gospel, personal holiness, or counseling believers.
2. Understand the meaning and application of the Scripture you are seeking to memorize.

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<sup>7</sup> Appendix B, Bible study tools, pp. 36-37

<sup>8</sup> Grace Community Church, Grace Community, and John MacArthur, *Fundamentals of the Faith Teacher's Guide: 13 Lessons to Grow in the Grace and Knowledge of Jesus Christ*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009), p. 35.





**WEEK 3: Introduction to OIA Study Method**  
**Things to know and do as you approach Bible study**

**The Six P's of Sound Bible Study<sup>10</sup>**

**1. Purpose**

- To behold the reign and rule of God as revealed in His Word, thereby understanding our place in the big story of Scripture – the metanarrative. How does this text fit into the bigger narrative (creation, fall, redemption, restoration) of the Bible?
- Literal hermeneutics seeks to assert the Bible to be interpreted according to its “plain meaning” conveyed by its grammatical construction and historical content.

**2. Perspective**

- Understand the framework for the text you are studying, (Who, When, Where, How, Why). Understand the historical and literary context of the genre God has chosen to be the vehicle of His Word to His people.
- A text cannot mean what it never could have meant to its authors or its readers. The Bible is a book ABOUT GOD written *to* people who lived in the past and also written *for* us!

**3. Patience**

- Give yourself over daily to look and look and look at God's Word. You will be amazed at the wonders you will find.
- Do not immediately run to secondary sources, but spend some time rereading in multiple translations, critically thinking about the text, asking questions, and noting cross- references. Engaging in deliberate and dedicated study of God's work involves learning to live deep in the “I don't know”.

**4. Process**

- Though there is a wide variety in the types of text we find in the Bible, we must consistently apply and use our hermeneutic to properly interpret Scripture.
- The OIA study method seeks to understand the true meaning of God's word and provides a backdrop for gospel-centered thinking, allowing us to discern truth, and making wise decisions for living through a biblical lens. This is the process by which we apply our hermeneutic. This will be explained in more detail below.

**5. Prayer**

- Praise: Praise God for giving us the revelation of His will and

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<sup>10</sup> Jen Wilkin, *Women of the Word: How to Study the Bible with Both Our Hearts and Our Minds*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), pp. 49-108. Some ideas under these headings come from the editors and not this source.

character in His Word.

- Admit: Confess sins. Lay out your own set of insecurities and weaknesses as you set out to study.
- Request: Ask the Lord for ears to hear and eyes to see as you study.
- Thank: Thank Him that He has revealed himself in the Bible and that He has given you the ability to know Him.

## 6. People

- Identify people with whom you can open God's Word and seek out opportunities to meet together. We don't want to simply receive the Word. We want to share the Word as disciples of Jesus who are making disciples and multiplying churches among all nations!

## How do we interpret the Bible? Perspective is critical. (OIA)

At TFC, our view of biblical interpretation is that each section of Scripture has only one meaning, although it may have many implications. This "single meaning/multiple implications" view, also known as the "consistent contextual" view, helps us to differentiate between the *meaning* of a text and its *significance*<sup>11</sup>. The meaning is the idea or intent that the author is expressing within the text, and significance is concerned with the consequences of the author's meaning. Put another way, the meaning is the interpretation of the text; the significance is the application (or many applications)<sup>12</sup>. It should be noted that any application that comes from the meaning of a text should "legitimately fall within the pattern of meaning [the author] willed."<sup>13</sup>

The process, or method, we will use to interpret Scripture is commonly referred to as the OIA study method. These letters represent the three steps or stages in the process: observation, interpretation, and application.

- **Observation-** in this step we take note of what is going on in the text with as much detail as we can. We gain perspective regarding the text. We consider the context within which the text is happening and relevant background information.
- **Interpretation-** after careful consideration of the details we discovered in the observation stage, the metanarrative of the book in which we are studying, and where our text lies in redemptive history, we determine the intent of the author, the meaning of our

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<sup>11</sup> Michael J. Vlach, *The Old in the New: Understanding How the New Testament Authors Quoted the Old Testament*, (The Woodlands, TX: Kress, 2021), p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10

<sup>13</sup> Robert H. Stein, *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1994), pp. 39-44, quoted in Michael J. Vlach, *The Old in the New: Understanding How the New Testament Authors Quoted the Old Testament*, (The Woodlands, TX: Kress, 2021), p. 10.

text.

- **Application-** What is the significance of the text? How does the meaning affect your life? How can you apply the text to your life?

These steps must always be done in order. There's never a situation in which you would skip observation or interpretation. The accuracy of each step depends on the accuracy of the step before it. Neglect of important details while observing can lead to improper interpretation. Improper interpretation will lead to ill-informed application. These problems lead to beliefs and actions that do not glorify God.

### **Personal Reflection**

**Why is it crucial that you understand the importance of purpose, perspective, patience, process, prayer, and people when reading and studying the Bible?**

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**How does the O.I.A. method of study compare to how you previously approached the study of the Bible?**

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## WEEK 4: OIA Study Method

Now that you have an idea of how this process flows from beginning to end, it's time to go into more detail about how to perform each step of the process.

To understand the intent and meaning of Scripture, you must first understand the context in which it was written. God has an intentional meaning of what is being said, but, when read out of context, we can miss the meaning or, worse, come away with the wrong meaning. According to Zuck, several things should be considered for establishing the context:<sup>14</sup>

- The verses just before and after the text you are interpreting
- The paragraph in which your text occurs
- The book in which your text occurs
- The period of time or era in redemptive history in which your text occurs
- The way in which your text fits into the entire message of the Bible
- The historical-cultural environment when your text was written

As you begin this process, **the first thing you should always do is pray.**

### **Observation**

When we are observing our text, we are looking at the details within and the circumstances surrounding the text. As we make our observations, we will focus on the literal (historical-grammatical) meaning of the words, circumstances, and context of the section of Scripture we are reading.

1. ***Literal***- the usual, customary, and normal uses and senses of words are used in the text. This means we should accept words to have their ordinary meanings and never go beyond what is written. Literal interpretation recognizes the use of figures of speech such as nuance, metaphors, similies, hyperbole, play-on words, evocative language, and symbolism that the biblical writers sometimes use. The uses of these figures of speech are always purposeful, and their purpose must be understood when interpreting Bible passages. Zuck offers us some guidelines for treating figurative language:<sup>15</sup>
  - The literal sense of the text is always best unless you have a good reason to think otherwise.
  - Figurative language is intended if literal language would suggest an impossibility.

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<sup>14</sup> Roy B. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth*, Colorado Springs, CO: Victor Books, 1991), p. 77

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* p. 148.

- If the literal meaning is absurd, figurative language is intended.
  - If the literal sense promotes sinful/immoral action, the figurative sense is intended.
  - Figurative language is sometimes followed by a literal explanation.
  - Figurative language is sometimes marked by adjectives or phrases that qualify it. Examples: “*living* Stone” (1 Pet 2:4) is not referring to a stone, and “the sword **of the Spirit**” (Eph 6:17) is not referring to an actual sword.
2. **Grammatical-** the impact grammar has on the text must be considered. Biblical interpretation must take into account parts of speech, forms of words, their functions, and syntax. In order for you to gain proper understanding of Scripture, you must be able to interact with the parts of each sentence you read. Here is a list of the parts of a sentence that would be helpful for you to know:<sup>16</sup>
- Subject (noun), the person, place, thing, or concept on which the sentence is focusing. Typically, this noun is the one doing the action of the sentence.
  - Predicate (verb), the action that the subject is doing.
  - Object (noun), the person, place, thing, or concept upon which the subject is acting. This is typically to whom the action is being done.
  - Adjectives, words that describe or modify nouns and pronouns.
  - Adverbs, words that describe or modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs.
  - Pronouns, words that replace nouns that have already been introduced (he, him, she, her, it, they, them, etc.).
  - Conjunctions, words that make it possible to build more complex sentences and build on ideas (and, but, or, however, etc.).
  - Articles, words that convey specificity (a, an, the)
  - Prepositions, words that describe the relationships between other words in a sentence (in, around, to, under, through, upon, etc.)
3. **Historical-** It is important to know the historical context, setting(s), and circumstances surrounding the writing of Scripture. Your goal for considering the historical context is simply to understand the setting in which a book in the Bible was written. You must consider what was going on when a book was written. One major influence on how passages in the Bible can be understood is through the historical culture of the biblical writers. Zuck offers us several aspects to consider in terms of the

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<sup>16</sup> Grammarly, Grammarly Blog, “The 8 Parts of Speech: Examples and Rules,” March 28, 2023. <https://www.grammarly.com/blog/parts-of-speech/>.

historical culture of the biblical writers:<sup>17</sup>

- Religious
- Economic
- Legal
- Agricultural
- Architectural
- Fashion
- Domestic
- Geographical
- Military
- Social

As mentioned above, the goal we have in mind is understanding the intent or meaning of the author. Below you will find a list of several questions you can ask to aid you in observation.

**WHO** is speaking? God chose a particular author to write a particular book. How does this particular choice of author influence the way we read the text? Who is this about? Who is the audience? Who are the main characters?

**WHEN** do/will the events occur or did/will something happen to someone? Where does it fit into the timeline of the bigger story of Scripture? What historical timeframe is this being spoken in?

**WHERE** did or will this happen? Where was it said? What do you learn about the culture, social structures, or geography/ maps?

**HOW** does the author use literary genres to communicate its message? How would it have been read by the original audience? Each book of the Bible uses one or more literary genres to communicate its message. Our ability to accurately interpret and apply a text depends on how well we understand the nuances of each of these genres: historical narrative, parables/ storytelling, poetry, wisdom literature, prophecy, epistles, and apocalypse.

**WHY** is something being said or mentioned? Why would/will this happen? Why at that time and/or to this person/people?

**Below, you'll find the text, Ephesians 1:3-14. Use it for the exercises that follow.**

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<sup>17</sup> Roy B. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth*, Colorado Springs, CO: Victor Books, 1991), pp. 80-90.

### **Ephesians 1:3-14 (ESV)**

**3** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,*

**4** *even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love*

**5** *he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,*

**6** *to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.*

**7** *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,*

**8** *which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight*

**9** *making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ*

**10** *as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.*

**11** *In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,*

**12** *so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.*

**13** *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,*

**14** *who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

## WHO:

\_\_\_\_\_ is speaking.

- Ephesians 1:1
- Ephesians 3:1

## WHO:

\_\_\_\_\_ is the audience.

- Ephesians 1:1

## WHEN/ WHERE:

The location of the audience of Ephesians is in \_\_\_\_\_.

Paul is writing to them from \_\_\_\_\_.

- Ephesians 1:1
- Ephesians 3:1
- Ephesians 4:1
- Ephesians 6:20
- Do some research to determine the date of the writing. \_\_\_\_\_ A.D.

## HOW:

Ephesians is a \_\_\_\_\_, also known as an \_\_\_\_\_, and includes a salutation, thanksgiving, exposition, exhortation, and closing.

- Ephesians 6:21-22
- Context of relationship. (We are listening in on one side of a “phone” conversation!)
- It is not a theological essay, grabbag of devotional verses, or divine behavior manual.
- Read aloud in its entirety. It is a coherent line of thought from beginning to end.
- Ch. 1-3 New Testament doctrinal section / Ch. 4-6 practical section.

## WHY:

- There was no specific occasion or problem that inspired this letter.
- Ephesians articulates general instruction in the truths of the cosmic redemptive work of God in \_\_\_\_\_;
- The unity of the church among diverse peoples; proper conduct in the church, home, and the world.
- Unity and love in the bond of peace mark the work of the Savior as well as Christians’ grateful response to his free grace in their lives.



**WEEK 5: OIA Study Method**  
**Observation that leads to comprehension (Observation cont.)**

After gaining proper perspective, we can seek to comprehend what is happening in the passage. Put away any study Bible notes or commentaries (podcasts, sermons, anything that tells us what the text is saying). We must first spend time in the text ourselves in order to filter those useful tools.

**Colossians 1:9**

*And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,*

**Acts 11:17**

*Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.*

The main question to answer here is: **What does it say?**

To grow in our comprehension of Scripture, we must become first-class observers. Everything else depends on it! We can only go as deep into Scripture as we are willing to push through and dissect the text to see what is waiting to be discovered.

**First, take the time to pray.**

**1. Repetitive Reading**

- “What does it say?”
- Gain general familiarity with the text by reading it from start to finish multiple times.
- Ask yourself, “If I were to take a pop quiz, could I answer basic contextual questions?”

**2. Annotation**

- Underline, box, or circle keywords, main points, or transition words.
- What attributes of God<sup>18</sup> are being illustrated or celebrated?
- Note words you don’t understand or you want to read in another translation to bring clarity.
- Write questions you have but don’t run to find the answer!
- Try creating a color-coded annotation key or use this one (you can use the Ephesians text above to practice):

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<sup>18</sup> For a list of God’s attributes, see Appendix C, pp. 38-39

- Red: God, Jesus, Holy Spirit
- Blue: Prayer, blessing
- Pink: Sin/fallen condition, warning
- Purple: Command to follow, promise, principle
- Green: History/context
- Orange: Key phrase or important repetition of words
- Black: Transition words

**3. Define Key Words or Verses**

- Use a dictionary to reframe your understanding and use other translations to better uncover the meaning of a word or verse.

**4. Ask questions about your text**

- Parts of the text may seem hard to understand, out of place, in contradiction with other parts of Scripture, or just odd.
- Jot down any questions that come to mind as you make your observations.
- Most of the time, these questions can be answered within the text or Scripture around the text.

**5. Outline**

- Summarize the main points by recognizing the overall structure and purpose of the text.
- How does this fit into the greater story of the particular book and/or the Bible as a whole?
- What is the main point of this passage?

**What words do you need to define?**

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**WEEK 6: OIA Study Method**  
**Comprehension that leads to proper interpretation**

Once you have gained a thorough scope of the context, structure, language, and detail of what you are reading, it is time to look into its meaning. This is the interpretation phase of the study.

Here we are asking the main question: **What does it mean?**

**First, take time to pray.**

This is why the observation portion of the study is so crucial: You cannot interpret deeper than you observed. This task may seem overwhelmingly daunting, so how are we to approach such a daunting task? With the help of the Holy Spirit that indwells each of us as believers in Jesus. We must pray and ask the Holy Spirit for help and rely on His power.

**1 Corinthians 2:12-14**

*12 Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. 13 And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. 14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

**John 14:26**

*26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*

Give yourself permission to fail and stumble towards interpretation on your own so that, when you use some commentary, you have already done some critical thinking on your own to understand the text yourself. Be committed to understanding the true meaning of God's word.

Use **paraphrasing** and **cross-referencing** as you ask questions of the text. Here's a list of questions that may aid you in your interpretation:

- What is the doctrine that the passage is teaching?
- Why is the author writing this particular passage?
- What sinful, fallen, or broken condition is being addressed or corrected?
- What deeper sin or heart issues are being exposed or corrected?
- How does this passage point to God's character/attributes and glory?
- How do we see God's redemptive plan (the Gospel) being worked out in the people's lives?

**Paraphrasing:** The skill of writing someone else's thoughts/words in your own words. Paraphrasing helps you focus on what is being said. Use other translations and dictionaries to get closer to understanding the meaning of the words.

**Cross-references:** The verses listed in the margins or at the bottom of the page of a study Bible or that come to mind. They identify commonalities between different parts of the Bible. "Let Scripture interpret Scripture." (resources: MacArthur Study Bible, ESV Study Bible, Blue Letter Bible)

**What other Scripture does this bring to mind for you?** Also, take the time to look up the cross references. Scripture interprets Scripture. What might the other verses clarify?

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**Verses 3-6:** v. 3 (1 Cor 1:3-5; 1 Pet 1:3; Rom 8:32); v. 4 (Deut 7:6; Eph 2:10; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Tim 1:9; Jam 2:5; Eph 5:27; Col 1:22; 1 Thess 4:7); v. 5 (Jn 1:12-13; Rom 8:29-30; Eph 1:11); v. 6 (Matt 3:17; Jn 10:17; Rom 9:23; Eph 2:7; Phil 4:19; Col 1:13; 1 Pet 2:9)

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**Verses 7-10:** v.7 (Ex 15:13; Matt 20:28, 26:28; Rom 3:23-24; 8:1; Col 1:14; 1 Tim 2:6; Tit 2:14; Heb 9:15); v. 8 (Rom 5:15, 11:33; Eph 1:11); v. 9 (Rom 16:25; Eph 3:3-9, Col 1:26-27); v. 10 (Mk 1:15; Ac 3:19-21; Phil 2:9-10; Col 1:20)

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**Verses 11-14:** v. 11 (Deut 4:20; Ps 37:18; Rom 8:28; Eph 3:11; Phil 2:13) v. 12 (Eph 1:6; Phil 1:1; Jam 1:18) v. 13 (Acts 13:26, 15:7; Rom 1:16; Eph 4:30; Col 1:5; 2 Tim 3:15) v. 14 (Acts 20:32; Rom 8:15-17; 2 Cor 1:22)

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**Based on what we learned about the context, (purpose and perspective), why do you think the author was writing this particular passage?**

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**What sinful, broken, or fallen condition is being addressed or corrected?**

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**How does this passage point to God's character and glory?**

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**How do we see God's redemptive plan (gospel) being worked out in people's lives?**

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**What questions or confusions do you still have?**

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**How would you paraphrase this passage?**

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**WEEK 6: OIA Study Method**  
**Proper interpretation that leads to God-glorifying life (Application)**

The final step in our Bible study process is application, where we will take what we have observed and interpreted and apply it to our everyday lives. While this step is essential, it is crucial that it comes last *after* we have fully understood the original intent of the passage.

The main question we are asking: **How should this change me?**

**First, take time to pray.**

**James 1:22-25**

*22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.*

**Psalm 1:1-3**

*1 Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;  
2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.  
3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water  
that yields its fruit in its season,  
and its leaf does not wither.  
In all that he does, he prospers.*

**Psalm 119:1-5**

*1 Blessed are those whose way is blameless,  
who walk in the law of the LORD!  
2 Blessed are those who keep his testimonies,  
who seek him with their whole heart,  
3 who also do no wrong,  
but walk in his ways!  
4 You have commanded your precepts  
to be kept diligently.  
5 Oh that my ways may be steadfast  
in keeping your statutes!*



As we seek to be doers of the Word, and not just hearers, we must address heart beliefs as well as outward actions. It is clear from Scripture that our hearts and minds transform us from the inside out. So, as you spend time applying God's word, make sure that you focus on your heart as well as behaviors that you should change in repose to God's word.

**What attributes of God's character has this Scripture shown you more clearly?** If you need a reference, there is a list of attributes in Appendix C (pp. 38-39).

Knowing that God is \_\_\_\_\_ shows me that I am \_\_\_\_\_.

**Examine your P.A.S.T. How might this attribute affect your Prayers, Actions, Speech, and Thinking?**

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Here's a list of questions that will aid you in making applications. Be familiar with these questions to regularly apply all Scripture to our lives after adequate study:

- In what ways am I looking to find hope and fulfillment in things besides God?
- In what ways am I seeking to earn favor from God and not living by grace?
- What do my actions suggest that I'm wrongly believing about God's character, our relationship, and what He has said in His Word?
- In what ways am I making my treasure something other than Christ?
- What old, sinful thoughts am I trusting of which I should repent?
- In what new thoughts and beliefs should I be believing and walking?

**Application(s):**

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## Appendix A: Bible Reading Plan<sup>19</sup>

### 52 Week Bible Reading Plan

Week	Epistles (Sunday)	The Law (Monday)	History (Tuesday)	Psalms (Wednesday)	Poetry (Thursday)	Prophecy (Friday)	Gospels (Saturday)
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 1-2
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 4-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 3-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 3-4
3	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 8-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 6-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 12-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 5-7
4	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 12-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 9-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 18-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 8-10
5	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 16-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 12-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 23-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 11-13
6	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 20-23	<input type="checkbox"/> Judge 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 15-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 29-33	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 14-16
7	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 24-27	<input type="checkbox"/> Judge 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 18-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 34-39	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 17-19
8	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 28-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Judge 12-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 21-23	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 40-44	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 20-22
9	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 32-35	<input type="checkbox"/> Judge 17-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 24-26	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 17-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 45-50	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 23-25
10	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 36-39	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruth	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 27-29	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 19-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 51-55	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 26-28
11	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 40-43	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 30-32	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 21-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 56-61	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 1-2
12	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 44-47	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 33-35	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 23-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 62-66	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 3-4
13	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 48-50	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 36-38	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 25-26	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 5-6
14	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 39-41	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 27-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 7-8
15	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 21-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 42-44	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 29-30	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 12-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 9-10
16	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 9-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 26-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 45-47	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 31-32	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 17-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 11-12
17	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 13-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 48-50	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 33-34	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 22-26	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 13-14
18	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 17-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 51-53	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 35-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 27-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 15-16
19	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 6-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 10-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 54-56	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 37-38	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 32-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 1-2
20	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 15-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 57-59	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 39-40	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 37-41	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 3-4
21	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 11-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 29-32	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 20-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 60-62	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 41-42	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 42-46	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 5-6
22	<input type="checkbox"/> Gal 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 33-36	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 63-65	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 47-52	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 7-8
23	<input type="checkbox"/> Gal 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 37-40	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 66-68	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 2-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Lamentations	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 9-10
24	<input type="checkbox"/> Eph 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 10-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 69-71	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 11-12
25	<input type="checkbox"/> Eph 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 14-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 72-74	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 7-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 13-14
26	<input type="checkbox"/> Phil 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 7-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 19-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 75-77	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 13-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 15-16
27	<input type="checkbox"/> Phil 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 10-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 78-80	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 8-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 19-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 17-18
28	<input type="checkbox"/> Col 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 13-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 81-83	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 25-30	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 19-20
29	<input type="checkbox"/> Col 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 16-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 84-86	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 31-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 21-22
30	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Thes 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 19-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 87-89	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 37-42	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 23-24
31	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Thes 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 22-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 21-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 90-92	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 14-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 43-48	<input type="checkbox"/> John 1-2
32	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Thes	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 25-27	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 93-95	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 16	<input type="checkbox"/> Dan 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> John 3-4
33	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Tim 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 96-98	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 17-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Dan 7-12	<input type="checkbox"/> John 5-6
34	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Tim 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 10-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 99-101	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 19	<input type="checkbox"/> Hosea 1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> John 7-9
35	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Tim 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 9-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 15-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 102-104	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 20-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Hosea 8-14	<input type="checkbox"/> John 10-12
36	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Tim 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 13-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 20-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 105-107	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 22	<input type="checkbox"/> Joel	<input type="checkbox"/> John 13-15
37	<input type="checkbox"/> Titus	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 17-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 25-29	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 108-110	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 23-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Amos 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> John 16-18
38	<input type="checkbox"/> Philemon	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 111-113	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 25	<input type="checkbox"/> Amos 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> John 19-21
39	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 114-116	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 26-27	<input type="checkbox"/> Obadiah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 1-2
40	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 5-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 29-32	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 117-118	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 28	<input type="checkbox"/> Jonah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 3-4
41	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 8-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 33-36	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 119	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 29-30	<input type="checkbox"/> Micah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 5-6
42	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 11-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 120-121	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 31	<input type="checkbox"/> Nahum	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 7-8
43	<input type="checkbox"/> James 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 122-124	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Habakkuk	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 9-10
44	<input type="checkbox"/> James 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 7-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 29-32	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 125-127	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Zephaniah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 11-12
45	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Pet 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 10-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 33-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 128-130	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Haggai	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 13-14
46	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Pet 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 13-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezra 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 131-133	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Zechariah 1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 15-16
47	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Pet	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 16-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezra 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 134-136	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Zechariah 8-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 17-18
48	<input type="checkbox"/> 1John 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 20-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Neh 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 137-139	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Malachi	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 19-20
49	<input type="checkbox"/> 1John 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 23-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Neh 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 140-142	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 21-22
50	<input type="checkbox"/> 2John	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 26-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Neh 10-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 143-145	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 23-24
51	<input type="checkbox"/> 3John	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 29-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Esther 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 146-148	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 12-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 25-26
52	<input type="checkbox"/> Jude	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 32-34	<input type="checkbox"/> Esther 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 149-150	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 18-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 27-28

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<http://www.Bible-Reading.com>

<sup>19</sup> Nathan Bingham, "Bible Reading Plans for 2023", (Ligonier Ministries, 2022). There are multiple Bible reading plans available through this source.

## Appendix B: Bible Study Tools

We recommend these helpful tools to you as an aid in your study of God's Word. We want to stress that the Bible should ALWAYS be the first place that you go to gain biblical understanding. After a thorough study on your own, these sources can help you deepen your understanding and reveal things you may not have considered as you studied.

### **Study Bibles**

Study Bibles are a rich source of biblical knowledge. They contain information regarding the background, author, date, outline, and notes for each book of the Bible. They often provide clarity on tougher texts and plenty of cross-reference verses.

Recommendations for study Bibles:

1. The MacArthur Study Bible
2. Zondervan NASB Study Bible
3. Crossway ESV Study Bible

### **Commentaries**

Commentaries provide an in-depth look into books of the Bible that study Bibles simply cannot facilitate. They often comment on the language, translation possibilities, background, setting, and the notes of other commentators as they go verse-by-verse through entire books of the Bible. Unfortunately, space prohibits us from making recommendations for commentaries on every book of the Bible.

Recommendations for commentaries:

1. MacArthur New Testament Commentaries
2. New American Commentaries
3. Expositor's Bible Commentaries

Resources to find commentaries by book of the Bible:

1. *Commentaries for Biblical Expositors* by Jim Rosscup<sup>20</sup>
2. [bestcommentaries.com](http://bestcommentaries.com)

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<sup>20</sup> Jim Rosscup, *Commentaries for Biblical Expositors: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Works*, (The Woodlands, TX: Kress Christian Publications, 2004). This book ranks the best commentaries of each book of the Bible and gives an explanation of their strengths and weaknesses so that you can decide which commentary is best for your study.

## Appendix B: Bible Study Tools

### Other tools for Bible study

- **Concordance**
  - An alphabetical listing of all the words used in the Bible, their general definitions, and their locations in Scripture
  - Aids in understanding particular words and their usage in Scripture
  
- **Introduction commentaries**
  - Focus on the background, setting, context, and outline of each book with greater detail than other resources.
  - Recommendations:
    1. *The MacArthur Bible Handbook* by John MacArthur
    2. *MacArthur's Quick Reference Guide to the Bible* by John MacArthur
  
- **Treasury of Scripture knowledge**
  - A massive resource for cross-references
  - Helps you to better understand a given verse by referencing more verses that interpret, support, and clarify that verse
  - Recommendations:
    1. *The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge* by Jerome Smith
    2. *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge* by Hendrickson Publishing
  
- **Systematic theology study**
  - Organize all of the beliefs and doctrines of Christianity
  - Clearly explain doctrine with Scripture to support it
  - Recommendation:
    1. *Biblical Doctrine* by John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue
  
- **Websites and apps**
  - Access to thousands of sermons and resources by topic or Scripture
  - Recommendation:
    1. Grace to You (gty.org)
    2. OnePassion Ministries (onepassion.org)
    3. G<sup>3</sup> Ministries (g3min.org)

## Appendix C: Attributes/Character/Perfections of God<sup>21,22</sup>

- aseity: He is completely independent of all things, perfectly self-sufficient and does not depend on anything outside of Himself.
- attentive: He hears and responds to the needs of His children.
- blessedness: He is perfectly delighted with Himself and happy.
- compassionate: He cares for His children and acts on their behalf.
- creator: He made everything.
- deliverer: He rescues and saves His children.
- destroyer: He will unmake both heavens and earth.
- eternal: He is not limited by and exists outside of time. He has no beginning.
- faithful: He always keeps His promises.
- foreknowing: He has known and loved His people from eternity.
- generous: He gives what is best and beyond what is deserved.
- glorious: He displays His greatness and worth.
- glory: He has the consummate beauty of the totality of all His perfections, His supreme significance and splendor.
- good: He deals bounteously with His creatures.
- gracious: He freely bestows salvation on undeserving sinners.
- holiness: He is perfectly distinct above everything outside of Himself and is absolutely morally separate from sin.
- holy: He is pure, blameless, and flawless in all of His being.
- immense: He transcends and fills all space.
- immutable: He never changes.
- incomprehensible: He cannot be fully understood.
- independent: He is perfectly self-sufficient and does not depend on anything outside of Himself.
- infinite: He has no limits in His person or power.
- jealous: He will not share His glory with another.
- jealousy: He is zealously protective of all that belongs to Him, including Himself and His name, glory, people, right to receive worship, land, city, and ultimate obedience.
- just: He is fair in all His actions and judgements.
- love: He has determined to give of Himself to Himself and others. He has affections for Himself and His people.
- loving: He demonstrates selfless love for His children.
- longsuffering: He is perfectly placid in Himself and toward sinners despite their disobedience. He acts calmly with proper affection.
- merciful: He does not give His children the punishment they deserve and has deep compassion for them.
- omnipresent: He is boundless, present in all places at once.

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<sup>21</sup> Steven Lawson, *The Attributes of God*, (Sanford, FL: Ligonier Ministries, 2017), p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, eds., *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), pp. 168-188.

## Appendix C: Attributes/Character/Perfections of God

- omniscient: He perfectly knows Himself and all things.
- omnipotent: He is all-powerful.
- oneness: He has unity in His perfect uniqueness of essence, being neither more than one essence or more than one divine essence.
- patient: He is untiring and bears with His children.
- perfection: He is morally perfect, holy, just, and good, being the sum of all conceivable perfections.
- provider: He meets the needs of His children.
- refuge: He is a place of safety and protection for His children.
- righteous; He is always good and right, preventing any violation of the justice of His character.
- self-existent: He has life in Himself and depends on no one.
- self-sufficient: He is not vulnerable and has no needs.
- simplicity: He is indivisible and lacks composition. Therefore, each of His perfections are His essence.
- spiritual: He does not have a material body and is transcendent.
- sovereign: He rules over all things with absolute control.
- timeless: He is distinct from time, existing both inside and outside of it.
- transcendent: He is greater than and independent of all creation, including space, time, matter, and force.
- truthful: He speaks accurately and authoritatively and is perfectly reliable.
- will: He has perfect determination and sovereign ordination of all things.
- wisdom: He has perfect knowledge of how to act skillfully to accomplish all His good pleasure- to glorify Himself.
- wise: He enacts His perfect will by the highest ends and means.
- wrathful: He hates and punishes all unrighteousness.
- worthy: He deserves all glory and honor and praise.



## Appendix D: Quick-reference guide for OIA: To-Do List

### Observation

- I have prayed as I enter into study of God's Word and as I finish study of God's Word.
- I have read the text I am studying thoroughly
  - I have read the text (repeatedly).
  - I have read the surrounding text (before and after).
  - I have read the paragraph in which my text is found.
  - I understand where this text fits into the book of the Bible in which it is found.
- I understand the context of the text I am studying
  - I know the author of the book in which my text appears.
  - I know the reason why this book was written.
  - I know who is the intended audience of this book.
  - I know the historical context of this text and book.
- I have made thorough observations of the text.
  - I have annotated the text.
  - I understand the meaning and usage of all words.
  - I have identified and understand any uses of figurative language.
  - I have analyzed the grammatical nuances of the text, taking into account parts of speech, syntax, etc.
    - Who/what is the subject of this text?
    - What action is the subject taking?
    - To whom/what is the action being done?
  - I have researched and bridged any historical gaps that may affect the meaning of any part of the text.
    - Religious, economic, legal, agricultural, architectural, fashion, domestic, geographical, military, and/or social
  - I have considered the WHO, WHAT, WHEN WHERE, WHY, and HOW of this passage.
    - WHO is speaking? Who is this about? Who are the main characters?
    - WHAT is the subject or event covered in the chapter? What do you learn about the people, place, or events?
    - WHEN do/will the events occur or did/will something happen?
    - WHERE did or will this happen? Where was it said?
    - WHY is something being said or mentioned? Why would/will this happen? Why at that time and/or to this person/people?
    - HOW will it happen? How is it to be done? How is it illustrated?
- I have asked questions of my text.
  - I have resolved any parts of the text that:
    - were hard to understand
    - appeared to contradict with other parts of Scripture
    - seemed out of place or odd
- I have outlined the text, making note of the main and supporting points.

## Appendix D: Quick-reference guide for OIA: To-Do List

### Interpretation

- I have prayed as I enter into study of God's Word and as I finish study of God's Word.
- I have read associated cross-reference verses to aid my understanding.
- I have paraphrased the text.
- I have considered several questions to aid my interpretation:
  - What is the doctrine that the passage is teaching?
  - Why is the author writing this particular passage?
  - What sinful, fallen, or broken condition is being addressed or corrected?
  - What deeper sin or heart issues are being exposed or corrected?
  - How does this passage point to God's character/attributes and glory?
  - How do we see God's redemptive plan (the Gospel) being worked out in the people's lives?
  - Other questions
- What does this passage mean?
- I have made my interpretation.

### Application

- I have prayed as I enter into study of God's Word and as I finish study of God's Word.
- What attributes of God's character has this Scripture shown me more clearly?
- How might this/these attribute(s) affect your Prayers, Actions, Speech, and Thinking (PAST)?
- I have considered several questions to aid me in making applying this text to my life.
  - In what ways am I looking to find hope and fulfillment in things besides God?
  - In what ways am I seeking to earn favor from God and not living by grace?
  - What do my actions suggest that I'm wrongly believing about God's character, our relationship, and what He has said in His Word?
  - In what ways am I making my treasure something other than Christ?
  - What old, sinful thoughts am I trusting of which I should repent?
  - What issues of the heart and character are being addressed in this passage?
  - In what new thoughts and beliefs should I be believing and walking?
  - How does this text shape my view of the world around me?
  - How will this text shape and change how I approach my life?
  - How does this text shape how I will love people around me?
- How should this section of Scripture change me?
- I have determined the way(s) this Scripture applies to my life.
- In accordance with what God has revealed to me through this text, I have made plans for how I will change in order to better glorify Him.