



college ministry of prairie lakes church

## Inductive Bible Study

### Why do inductive Bible Study?

- To discover truths from the Bible we would not see with only a “first glance” reading.
- Over time, it makes us better casual readers of the Bible. Our minds become trained to read the Bible through this lens. In addition, we gain more insight and background info through careful study, which then helps us understand the whole Bible better anytime we read it.
- It is a means of meditating on and delighting in God's word, which is a source of life and joy for followers of Christ (Ps. 119; Deut. 32:46-47).

### **Step 1: Observation: collect the data of the passage.**

- Print a copy of the passage so you can mark it up with pens / highlighters.
- Mark up the text (in whatever way you'd like, these are just suggestions):
  - o Circle repeated words or phrases
  - o Underline key sentences
  - o Put a box around people, places, or names.
  - o Draw arrows to sections that connect, or related ideas
  - o Put a question mark next to parts you don't understand
- Identify the kind of literature: story, letter, poem, greeting, prophecy, etc.
- Separate the passage into sections. (Note: paragraphs and verses were added by later editors, not the original writers of the Bible.) Identify the paragraphs & sections yourself, and mark them off with lines or brackets.

### **Step 2: Interpretation: determine the author's main message.**

- Go one section at a time; begin with the first section you identified.
- For that section, answer the following questions:
  - o What is the main idea of this section?
  - o What is the author trying to tell us?
  - o Why is this section here? If it wasn't, what ideas would be missing?
  - o What ideas or stories come before and after this section?
- Consult a study Bible or an online tool to help with confusing parts.
- Let Scripture interpret Scripture: if something is confusing, see if it is more clearly taught in another part of the Bible (this is called cross-referencing).
- Your eventual goal is to have a clear, simple sentence summarizing the author's main point in each section.

### **Step 3: Application: apply the author's main message to our lives today.**

- Take your summarizing sentence from Interpretation, and begin to list ways that idea could apply to our lives and world today:
  - o Begin by considering all believers in general; then move specifically to you and your personal, specific situations.
  - o What does the author want his listeners to do? To believe?
  - o What are some action steps someone could take in light of the author's main message?