MANUSCRIPT BIBLE STUDY 101

*Trainer Notes [30 minutes]* **Bring: handout, bookmarks, 4 identical objects**

**Purpose [7 minutes]**

Every time we study the Bible, our purpose is the same:

* To grow in love for Jesus through Scripture
* To grow in witness to Jesus through Scripture

Remember that Bible study is always *people* meeting God in Scripture. Just as important as what we experience through the text is our experience as a study community together. There is a chart of “GROUP NORMS” on your handout.

[5 minutes] Take 5 minutes now to talk with a neighbor about two things:

* Which of the group norms is especially important to you personally?
* Why are group norms an essential part of forming our study community?

Group norms are like guardrails on a twisty highway. They keep us safe and together as we move forward along the road.

**Our Approach [8 minutes]**

Above all, Scripture is communication. Studying the Bible *inductively* means to approach the author, text, and original readers from our perspective as curious investigators. We want to gather evidence about the communication and come to a conclusion that accounts for all the evidence.

The opposite would be to study the text *deductively*, starting with a conclusion and looking for evidence to support it. Studying deductively makes us more like persuasive lawyers than curious investigators.

[3 minutes] Approaching complexity with an inductive posture is helpful far beyond just Bible study. Turn to a neighbor and try to think of other areas of life that could benefit from an inductive approach.

*After the pairs discuss, invite a few to share their ideas. Examples:*

* *Gathering more information in a conflict, not jumping to conclusions.*
* *Learning more about a neighborhood, not making a judgmental comment about it.*
* *Better “investigation” skills as you study in your classes could make you a better student.*

**Our Process [15 minutes]**

Look at the Bible study bookmark. This is a quick summary of the process we will follow as we study together. While we observe, it will feel a bit chaotic or confusing as we see the text but are not yet talking about what it could mean. While we interpret, it will feel like discovering the text and seeking meaning. While we apply, it will feel finally like clarity as we consider how the meaning of the text connects with our lives. Throughout the process, have fresh eyes as we look at the author, text, and original readers. Even if you have studied this passage before, you have not studied it *today* with *this community of people, and we serve God, who is alive and wants to speak to us*.

[2 minutes] For a more thorough explanation of each stage of our study process, please take a moment now to read through the “Process” section of your handout.

[10 minutes] Inductive Mini-Games:

Now that you have read an overview of the inductive process, let’s practice a couple of the skills.

*This activity should be lively and fast-paced, just enough of each game to give the room a taste without getting frustrated or overly competitive.*

1. SEE. *Three volunteers and trainer stand up front, each holding an identical small object, like a coin, soda can, pen, packaged snack, etc.* We will take turns naming an observation about this object. If you can’t think of one, you’re out. Let’s make as many observations as we can.
2. DISCOVER. Everyone, it’s your chance to get to know me better. For 2 minutes, ask any question you’d like, and I’ll do my best to answer. Be kind and curious!
   1. Now let’s take 2 more minutes to name which of those questions were most helpful in allowing you to get to know me better. Why were those questions more effective?
3. SYNTHESIZE. *Three volunteers and trainer stand up front.* Tell us the name of a favorite movie. What is a summary of the story? If you had to answer in one short sentence, what is the core message of that movie?

[3 minutes] What questions can I answer for you about the inductive approach to Bible study?