

MANUSCRIPT BIBLE STUDY 101

Participant Notes

Our Purpose

To grow in love for Jesus through Scripture

To grow in witness to Jesus through Scripture

Caring for one another as we study together: GROUP NORMS

1. **STUDY AS THE ORIGINAL AUDIENCE:** Refer only to other parts of the Bible that the original audience would have known. The text cannot mean to us what it never meant to them.
2. **STAY IN THE TEXT:** Support your comments with the text itself. Do not appeal to outside authorities (“my pastor says” or “my study Bible says”). Gently call one another back to the text by asking, “Where do you see that in the text?”
3. **BUILD UNDERSTANDING TOGETHER:** Listen closely and build on one another’s comments. Each voice is a valuable part of our study, so participate in a way that welcomes all voices. If you find something funny (and you will), share it with the whole group!
4. **DISAGREE RESPECTFULLY:** Our differences are welcome here, and disagreement is an important part of the study process. Speak gently and respectfully when offering counter evidence from the text. Do not interrupt. Use “I” statements. No shame / no blame.
5. **OWN YOUR OWN LEARNING:** Bring yourself and be fully present. Engage your head and your heart. Embrace the joy and adventure of seeking God together.

Our Approach

We are curious investigators as we explore this communication.

We attend to author, text, and reader.

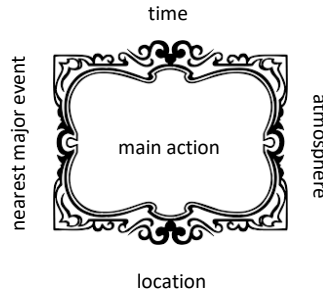
Deductive = starting with a conclusion and looking for evidence to support it

Inductive = gathering the evidence and coming to a conclusion that accounts for all the evidence

Confusion → Discovery → Clarity

Our Process

Context – framing the text before we dig in



Observe [see the text] – noting and marking what we see

Interpret [discover and understand the text] – asking and answering questions

Identify tensions and hinge points of the passage and write questions that cover various elements of the text. Include questions that help us envision the scene, relate with the characters, examine tensions or points of intrigue, and explore how different sections connect to one another.

Characteristics of Strong Questions: TIGHT		
Text-dependent / Interesting / Generate discussion / Highlight tensions / Tie observations or sections together		

Characteristics of Weak Questions		
Obvious answer	Cannot be answered by the text	Rhetorical or unclear
Limited answer (yes/no, 1-word)	Too long or too complex	Socratic (a series of easily-answered questions that lead to a point)

Observations + Curiosity → Questions

- Why did ____ say/do ____?
- How would the original audience have understood what was said/done?
- I noticed _____. Why was it important to include that?
- What might it have been like for ____ to experience ____?
- What is the relationship between/among ____?
- What is the significance of ____?

Summarize – capturing the flow of the text and this group’s grasp of the core message

Apply [respond to the text] – responding to what we hear God saying to us

Potential themes for application include God’s character, God’s mission, the experience of a particular person in the passage, imperatives in the text, promises in the text, and examples to follow or avoid.

Characteristics of Transformative Application: SHARP		
Specific / Honors the text and the study community / invites Accountability / Risky / Prayerful		