



PWOC

Protestant Women of the Chapel

WORKSHOP: Basics of Inductive Bible Study

by Madeleine Quick

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

RELEVANCE: Studying the Word of God is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, but the process of studying the Word of God can seem like a difficult task if you do not know what you are doing. The Inductive Bible Study Method is a way to study the text, with a "God-centered" lens. The student seeks to dig in the text to find the original meaning and the correct interpretation that leads to proper application of God's Word, in action, in her life.

INTRODUCTION:

- **Proverbs 12:22** (ESV) *Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD...*
I Kings 22:23 *...behold, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets...*
- **Galatians 6:2** *Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*
Galatians 6:5 *For each will have to bear his own load.*

POINT 1: CONTEXT- Who? What? Where? When? Why?

The Inductive Bible Study Method can be packaged in several different ways. This workshop will break the process into four different steps, each step addressing a specific question or questions. The four steps with their questions are as follows:

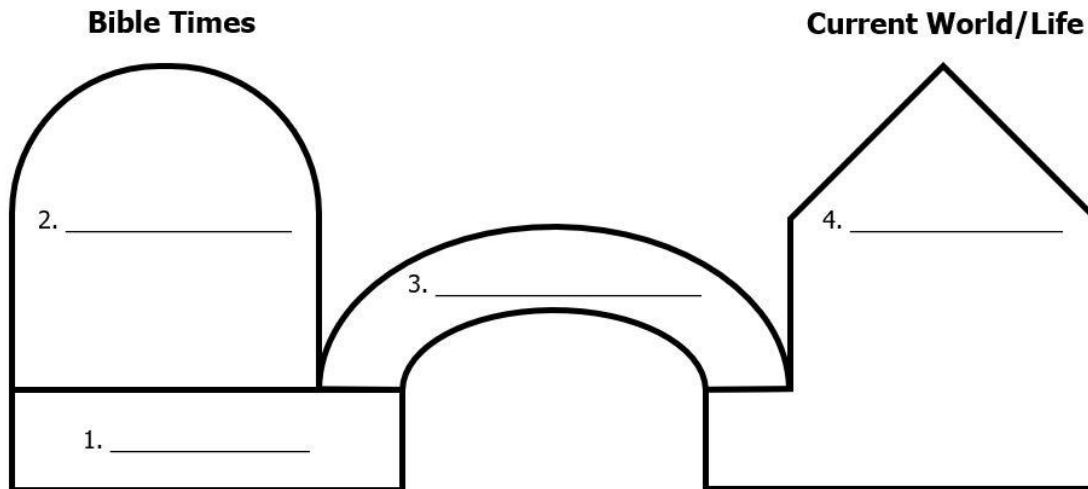
- 1- **Context:** Who? What? Where? When? Why?
- 2- **Observations:** What does the text say?
- 3- **Interpretation(s):** What does the text mean?
- 4- **Application(s):** How does the text change me?



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- The Oxford English Dictionary defines "context" as: *The circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed.*

THE INDUCTIVE JOURNEY



Here are the questions you can answer as you gather Context:

- **Who:** The author- Who wrote the book and who is the audience?
- **What:** What type of text is the book? (History, Wisdom, Poetry, Gospel, Epistle, Prophecy)
- **When:** When was the book written?
- **Where:** In what location was the book/letter written? What was going on at the time?
- **Why:** Why was the book written? What's its purpose?

*Study Bibles will often have this information as part of the introduction for a book. A commentary can also provide this information. A link for online commentaries is listed in the Resources section (**Appendix D**).*

ACTIVITY 1: CONTEXT

Turn to someone near you and introduce yourself; you will be partners for the remainder of the workshop. Tell them **WHO** you are 😊.

After you've introduced yourselves, look at Galatians 1:1-2 to answer the first "w" question. **Who** wrote Galatians? **Who** is the audience? (*Give partners the chance to meet each other and to answer the questions.*)



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- Galatians 1:1-3 (ESV) *Paul, an apostle- not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead- and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia:*

Who wrote Galatians?

Who is the audience?

In your Participant's Guide, **Appendix B**, you have **Basic Context Notes for the Book of Galatians**, which address the Who, What, When, Where, Why questions. Take a minute to look it over with your partner.

POINT 2: OBSERVATIONS- What does the text say?

Through step one, Context, we have the basic setting for the story. Now in step two, Observations, we are making note of what stands out within that setting- the "landmarks" that are present.

Galatians 6:1-10 (ESV)

6 Brothers [and sisters], if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. **2** Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. **3** For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. **4** But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor.**5** For each will have to bear his own load.

6 Let the one who is taught the Word share all good things with the one who teaches. **7** Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. **8** For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. **9** And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. **10** So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.



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Once you have read the entire section, go back to the top and slowly work your way through the text, making Observations of the following:

- **Key Words** - You can mark **theme** words- these may have been identified in the Context step. Lists of keywords for each book of the Bible are available for download from the Precepts Website (Link in Resources, **Appendix D**).
- **Time, Locations and People**
- **Repeated Words, Ideas and Phrases**
- **Transition Words**- *but, therefore, because, likewise, if/then ...*
- **Lists**- Make a note when the author makes several points in a row
- **Commands**
- **Dialog, Declaration**, or when a person addresses a crowd

As you make observations, it can be helpful to mark down what you see with different colors, symbols, etc. Use whatever markings or color-coding works for you; make it your own. Not everyone is comfortable writing directly in their Bible; using a notebook for Observations is perfectly fine.

ACTIVITY 2: OBSERVATIONS

Whole group: Go back to the Galatians 6:1-10 passage. We are going to find **keywords** in our passage.

Partners: Now go back and mark any **commands** that you see in the text. Mark them however you think is best- you're welcome to use different colors.

POINT 3: INTERPRETATION(S)- What does the text mean?

Once you have spent time making Observations (take the time to do it well, proper Observations will help you with Interpretation and Application), you can work on the **Interpretation** section. When you think of Interpretation section, think of answering the questions, "What does the text mean?" or "Why does the text say what it says?"

- *If you rush into interpretation without laying the vital foundation of accurate observation, your understanding will be colored by your presuppositions—what you think, what you feel, or what other people have said, rather than what God's Word says. (Kay Arthur, How to Study the Bible)*
- *And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. -Galatians 6:9*



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A very good, God-centered starting place for making Interpretation in the text is to look for the gospel in every section of text that you study.

- A concise definition of the gospel: ***The gospel is the _____ that sinful man can be made _____ with a holy God through _____ in Jesus Christ.*** (Eric Johns, Bethel Church, Fairbanks, Alaska, Sermon: "God is Holy; We are Sinners")
- **Where do you see the gospel in this verse?** *For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.* -Galatians 6:8

Here are the main questions you can answer for this section:

- Based on the Context and Observations made, **What would this text have meant to the original readers?**
- **How is the gospel stated in this section of text?** Either directly stated or seen in the text.
- **What are some whole-Bible connections that can be seen in this section of text?** How does this text fit into the whole of Scripture? Where does it fit within the salvation story of humanity? David Nelson calls this "The Grand Biblical Narrative," made up of Creation, Fall, Redemption and Restoration.
- **Can I summarize what I just read or re-write it in my own words?** This can be challenging at first, but very beneficial for helping one remember and process what was read.
- **What are questions I have as I read the text?** You can mark these or write them down to look up in commentaries. A list of reputable commentaries is in the Resources section (**Appendix D**).

It is important to note that some of the work for this step of Interpreting, "What does the text mean?" cannot be done by just looking at the text. For this step it can be helpful to utilize commentaries or other resources to gather information on questions you have in the text.

- **Galatians 6:2** *Bear one another's burdens* [weight, physical or spiritual, of everyday living] *and so fulfill the law of Christ.*

Galatians 6:5 *For each will have to bear his own load* [personal responsibility to God for one's own spiritual work/walk].



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ACTIVITY 3: INTERPRETATION(S)

Partners: Work with your partner to rewrite part of our passage in your own words (your workshop leader will assign a portion of Galatians 6:1-10 to you). In about 5 minutes, we will come back together and piece our summaries together.

Assigned verse(s) from Galatians 6:1-10: Galatians 6:_____

Rewritten in my/our own words:

POINT 4: APPLICATION(S)- How does the text change me?

As you spend time in the text and look at your Observations and Interpretations, Application(s) should flow. Here are some questions you can answer as you look to make proper Application:

- **What does this text say about who God is?** Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- **What does this text reveal to me about my sin?** What does it stir in my heart to confess and repent of?
- Based on these answers, **What does this look like in my life?** What needs to shift in response to the truth presented in this passage? Or, in other words, **How does the text change me?**

Hebrews 4:12 *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.*

ACTIVITY 4: APPLICATION(S)

Whole Group: Let's take a look at one of those Application questions. **What does this text say about who God is? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?**



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Partners: Now turn to your partner and answer the second question. You can be as general or as specific as you'd like. **What does this text reveal to me about my sin?** Use one of the guiding questions below if you need a starting point. Take about 5 minutes to discuss with your partner.

- Are there areas in my life where I have "given up" in doing good either in heart or deed?
- Am I sowing in the flesh or the Spirit? In what way? What is my motivation?
- Do I love my brother or sister in Christ enough to restore them gently and/or bear their burdens?
- Do I consider myself above other people? Which people? Why?
- Do I seek to "share all good things" with my teachers? What would that look like today?

The answers to these questions cause my heart to repent, confess, and ask for forgiveness and to look to Christ's work on the cross to cover my shortcomings, failures, and faults (1 John 1:9- *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness*).

What does this text reveal to me about my sin?

APPLY IT TO LIFE:

Individual: How would God have me respond today? **What does this look like in my life? How does the text change me?** How does Galatians 6:1-10 apply to my life? What do I need to do in response to the truth presented in the passage?

Closing thought: If my study of God's Word ends with head-knowledge and not a heart-response, I have missed the mark.



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HOMEWORK:

In the space below, write down how you want to approach God's Word, making note of any new tools you found helpful from this workshop to study Scripture.

Write out a prayer or take the next few minutes to pray. First, take time to praise God for who He is and specifically praise Him for the attributes you saw in the Galatians text during your study today. Then stop and confess the areas that the Word of God has shown you- areas where you fall short, areas where sin has crept in, and ask for forgiveness. Take time to thank God for His Word and thank Him for who He is. Thank Him for the good news of the gospel and other responses of thankfulness that the text has stirred in your heart. Finally, ask God for wisdom as you walk forward and leave your time of study today. Ask Him for help and guidance as you walk out the Application points you have made about Galatians 6:1-10 and ask Him for eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to respond, as you continue your study of His Word from this day forward.



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APPENDIX A: INFALLIBILITY OF SCRIPTURE

- **Numbers 23:19 (NIV)**- *God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?*
- **Psalm 19:7**- *The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.*
- **Psalm 119:142**- *Your righteousness is everlasting and your law is true.*
- **Isaiah 40:8**- *The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.*

Quotes backing the infallibility of scripture:

- *The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God's words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God. (Systematic Theology, Wayne Grudem)*
- *Scripture is therefore the perfect and only standard of spiritual truth, revealing infallibly all that we must believe in order to be saved and all that we must do in order to glorify God. (John MacArthur, "What does Sola Scriptura mean?")*
- *It is most profitable for us to study God's word as written in the Bible. It is God's written Word that he commands us to study. The man is 'blessed' who 'meditates' on God's law 'day and night' (Psalm 1:1-2). God's words to Joshua are also applicable to us: 'This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may be careful to do all that is written in it; for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success' (Joshua 1:8). It is the word of God in the form of written scripture that is 'God-breathed' and 'useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness' (2 Timothy 3:16). (Systematic Theology, Wayne Grudem)*
- *The heart cannot love what the mind does not know. (Jen Wilkin, Women in the Word)*



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APPENDIX B: BASIC CONTEXT NOTES FOR THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

Who: The author of Galatians is believed to be Paul the apostle of Christ (Gal 1:1). Theologically, everything written in Galatians lines up with Paul's view elsewhere in his writings.

There are differing opinions as to who the "Galatians" are as the recipient of Paul's letter. The first opinion takes the Galatians to be the churches in the region of Galatia, the Northern part of the Roman province and the second opinion, and more widely accepted, is that the letter is written to the churches in the southern part of the region of Galatia. There is a list of reasons as to why the "Southern Galatia Opinion" is more widely accepted, these include: there is no text evidence that Paul made a trip to Northern Galatia, the name "Galatians" is appropriate for those in the southern province, and the influence of Judaizers was extensive in Southern Galatia. Much of Paul's rebuke in the book of Galatians was correction against those in Galatian church who were believing false gospel affected by the Judaizers.

What (Type of Literature): Letter (Epistle)

When: It is believed that Paul wrote the letter shortly after his first missionary journey but before the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), before or in 49 AD.

Where: Written in Antioch of Syria shortly before the Jerusalem Council.

Why: It was written to clarify and defend the truth of the gospel (2:5,16) in the face of a false gospel. Paul wrote to correct those in the Galatian churches who were believing and/or acting in a false gospel. Paul did this by:

- Defending his message and his authority as an apostle
- Considering the Old Testament basis of the gospel message
- Demonstrating how the gospel message Paul preached worked practically in daily Christian living.

Outline of Galatians Chapters 5 & 6:

IV. Practical application to Christian living 5:1—6:10

A. Balance in the Christian life ch. 5

1. Living without the Law 5:1-12
2. Living without license 5:13-15
3. Living by the Holy Spirit 5:16-26

B. Responsibilities of the Christian life 6:1-10

1. Toward sinning Christians 6:1
2. Toward burdened Christians 6:2-5
3. Toward teachers 6:6-9
4. Toward all people 6:10

Source: SonicLight <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/galatians.pdf>



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APPENDIX C: INTERPRETATION HELPS

Outline of what Paul was saying to the Church in Galatia (Galatians 6:1-10):

Specific instruction for the responsibilities of Christians toward others in a variety of situations: sinning Christians (v. 1), toward burdened Christians (vv. 2-5), toward teachers (vv. 6-9), and toward all (v. 10).

How is the gospel stated in the text?

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you fulfill the law of Christ." Support one another, especially in burdensome times, and you will "love your neighbor as yourself." As you love others and consider them as more important than yourself, you reflect the love that Christ has for the Church. God loved the world so much that He sent Jesus, His Son, to die on the cross for the penalty of our sins.

What are some whole-Bible connections we can make in the text?

Fulfill the law of Christ: Galatians 5:14, John 13:34, 1 Corinthians 9:21. This instruction is for believers or those who have been redeemed and are in the process of growing in the likeness of Christ, so this section would fall in the "Restoration" section of David Nelson's "Grand Biblical Narrative" (Creation-Fall-Redemption-Restoration).

Maddie's summarization example (Try on your own): "All friends, if there is a sinning believer, you who are walking in the Spirit, call them out of their sin, but do it gently. Be careful that you do not fall into sin in the process. Help support one another's faults, tensions and grief and in this way you will 'love your neighbor as yourself.' If anyone thinks that they are above others when they are not, they have deceived themselves. Each believer should test their own actions then they can know their own heart without comparing themselves to others for each person has their own 'cross' to bear. Those who are taught by a teacher should provide all good things for their teachers. Do not be fooled, God cannot be mocked. If you withhold giving, it will be withheld from you. Whoever works hard to please their flesh, they will receive destruction. Whoever works hard to please the Spirit that dwells within them, from the Spirit they will receive a quality of life that is great because the person is abiding in Christ through the Spirit. Do not stop doing good in the Spirit for at the time God designates, we will reap a harvest if we do not become like an unstrung bowstring and give up. Because of all of these things, as we can, let us do good things to all people we meet and especially do good to those who are part of the family of God."



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Possible questions that participants may have from the text:

What does "law of Christ" mean in verse 2?

Read Galatians 5:14, John 13:34, 1 Corinthians 9:21- "love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all of your soul and with all of your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself."

What do "all good things" mean in verse 6?

This section is referring to believers who learn from teachers. Paul is saying that those who benefit from teachers should give good things (good physical provision) to their teachers.

What does it mean that "God cannot be mocked" in verse 7?

Paul is giving a sharp warning to those who think that they are above giving to their teachers. If you withhold from giving, it will be withheld from you.

What does "eternal life" mean in verse 8?

Eternal life can refer to the gift given to believers through faith. Paul is referring to eternal life in verse 8 as a quality of life that depends on the extent to which he or she walks with God.

(Source: Holman Christian Standard Study Bible)



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APPENDIX D: RESOURCES

Books:

Women of the Word: How to Study the Bible with Both Our Hearts and Minds, Jen Wilkin

How to Study your Bible, Kay Arthur

Lord, Teach me to Study the Bible in 28 Days, Kay Arthur

Grasping God's Word, J. Scott DuVall & J. Daniel Hay

Systematic Theology, Wayne Grudem

Sola Scriptura, the Protestant Position on the Bible, John MacArthur

Theology and Practice of Mission: God, the Church, and the Nations, David Nelson's Chapter "The Story of Mission: The Grand Biblical Narrative"

Articles & Websites:

<https://www.gotquestions.org/inductive-Bible-study.html>

<https://www.risenmotherhood.com/inductive-bible-study-method/>

<https://www.precept.org/>

https://www.precept.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/HowToStudytheBibleInductively.pdf?utm_source=PMI_Training-Team&utm_medium=Link&utm_campaign=DOWNLOAD_How-To-Study-the-Bible-Inductively

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/tips/the-inductive-method-of-bible-study-the-basics-11628183.html>

Commentaries and Original Language Helps:

<https://www.soniclight.org>

Strongs Comprehensive Concordance of the Bible

Vines Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

Printable Resources:

<https://www.risenmotherhood.com/blog/freeworksheets>

This workshop was a team effort. Many thanks to a special lady whose impact on my life reaches farther than she will ever know. Julie McCammon, your eyes that see the details, and reverence for the very Word of God, have made this workshop one that will reach beyond what just my words alone could ever do. I am forever thankful for the time you took to refine and revise. Thank you, dear friend!



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