

A Cheat Sheet for Inductive Bible Study

(* = Optional: Requires more time and study)

Observation:

1. Read the text
2. Ask the reporter questions (Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?)
3. Compare translations
4. Look for literary clues* (cause and effects, raise and answer a question, comparison/contrast, repeated words, commands, promises)
5. Answer character questions
 - a. What does this section teach me about the character of God?
 - b. What does this section teach me about the character of man?
6. Complete structural diagram*
7. Outline the text

Interpretation:

1. Answer remaining questions with secondary resources:
 - a. Bible dictionary (answers: Who? Where? What?)
 - b. New Testament dictionary (Lexicon)*
 - c. Study Bibles, One-Volume Commentaries, and Concise Commentaries
 - d. Pastoral and Academic Commentaries
 - e. Systematic theology*
2. Write your understanding of each verse (everything you know)
3. Paraphrase; that is, rewrite the text in your own words (just the main thoughts)
4. Find the main idea

(Author) wrote (this section) in order to (some action verb) (recipients)
(dominant theme and theme limiter).
5. Consider the Gospel*

Application:

1. Based on the main idea, what does God want me to believe?
 - a. Is there something false that you need to stop believing?
 - b. Is there something true that you need to start believing?
 - c. Is there an existing belief that you need to change?
2. Based on the main idea, what does God want me to obey?
 - a. Is there something you need to stop doing?
 - b. Is there something you need to start doing?
 - c. Is there an action that you need to change how you do it?