

Mining God's Word: How to Study the Bible

SESSION 1

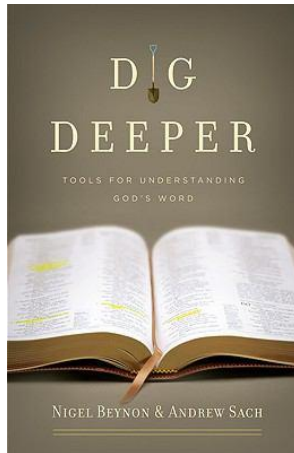
Syllabus Review

(Workbook pp. 1-3)

Course Materials

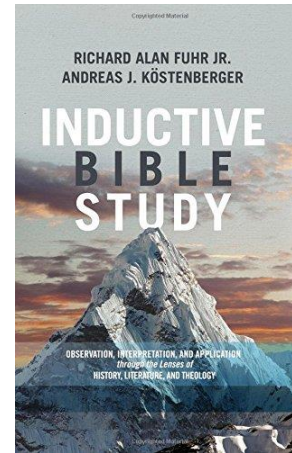
REQUIRED

- *Student Workbook*
- *Dig Deeper* by Nigel Beynon and Andrew Sach



OPTIONAL

- *Inductive Bible Study* by R. Alan Fuhr, Jr. and Andreas J. Köstenberger



Paul Goes to Jerusalem

21:1 ^s See ch.
16:10 ^t ch. 16:11

21:4 ^u ver. 11; ch.
20:23

21:5 ^v ch. 20:38
^w ch. 20:36

21 And when ^swe had parted from them and set sail, we ^tcame by a straight course to Cos, and the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara.¹ ²And having found a ship crossing to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail.³ When we had come in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left we sailed to Syria and landed at Tyre, for there the ship was to unload its cargo.⁴ And having sought out the disciples, we stayed there for seven days. And ^uthrough the Spirit they were telling Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.⁵ When our days there were ended, we departed and went on our journey, and they all, with wives and children, ^vaccompanied us until we were outside the city. And ^wkneeling down on the beach, we prayed⁶ and said farewell to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

¹ Some manuscripts add *and Myra* ² Or *brothers and sisters*; also verse 17 ³ Greek *Ioudaioi* probably refers here to Jewish religious leaders, and others under their influence, in that time

Discussion

- Why should we learn to study the Bible?
- What are some reasons that people don't study the Bible?

15 ...from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **16** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; **17** so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 TIMOTHY 3:15-17

Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

2 TIMOTHY 2:7

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

2 TIMOTHY 2:15

Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion, desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions.

1 TIMOTHY 1:6-7

15 ...our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, **16** as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. **17** You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness.

2 PETER 3:15-17

The good hand of his God was upon him. For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.

EZRA 7:9-10

Core Doctrines: Inspiration

“The special work of the Holy Spirit by which he superintended the biblical authors as they composed their writings [and so] ensured that what they wrote was what God wanted them to write.”

GREGG ALLISON

No prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 PETER 1:20-21

Core Doctrines: Inerrancy

“The Bible, in its original manuscripts, properly interpreted, will be found to be truthful and faithful in all that it affirms concerning all areas of life, faith, and practice.”

DAVID DOCKERY

“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.”

JOHN 17:17

“It is impossible for God to lie.”

HEBREWS 6:18

Core Doctrines: Sufficiency

“An attribute of Scripture whereby it provides everything that people need to be saved, and everything that Christians need to please God fully.”

GREGG ALLISON

“His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises...”

2 PETER 1:3-4

Core Doctrines: Clarity

“An attribute of Scripture whereby it is clear and thus comprehensible to all Christians who possess the normal acquired ability to read texts (though it does not mean that Scripture is necessarily easy to understand.)”

GREGG ALLISON

“The Bible is written in such a way that its teachings are able to be understood by all who will read it seeking God’s help and willing to follow it.”

WAYNE GRUDEM

Core Doctrines: Authority

“An attribute of Scripture whereby it possesses the right to command what believers are to do and prohibit what they are not to do. Because God is its author, Scripture possesses divine authority.”

GREGG ALLISON

“All the words in Scripture are God’s in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.”

WAYNE GRUDEM

Core Doctrines: Necessity

“An attribute of Scripture whereby it is essential for knowing the way of salvation, for progressing in godliness, and for discerning God’s will. Without Scripture there can be no salvation, growth in holiness, or knowledge of God’s will.”

GREGG ALLISON

“If we humans say anything authentic about God, we can do so only on the basis of divine self-revelation; all other God-talk is conjectural.”

CARL F.H. HENRY

Core Doctrines: Illumination

“The work of the Holy Spirit by which he enables the understanding of Scripture by enlightening its readers.”

GREGG ALLISON

For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:11-12

Core Doctrines: Transforming Power

Scripture is not merely the written record of God's revelation in the past, but it is also the instrument through which he acts in the present.

Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

HEBREWS 4:11-12

Historical Challenges

- **Time:** The events depicted in Scripture occurred in a historical context far removed from the twenty-first century
- **Geography:** The events recorded in the Bible took place in lands far removed from that of most Bible students
- **Culture:** The cultures reflected in the Bible are drastically different than our own.

Literary Challenges

- **Language:** The Bible was written in languages that are far different from English and that most people do not speak or read.
- **Genre:** There are many types of literature utilized by the biblical authors, some of which are very unfamiliar to modern Bible readers. To properly understand the Bible, we need to learn how to navigate the diverse genres represented in Scripture.

Personal Challenges

- **Over-Familiarity:** We can become so familiar with Scripture that we begin to assume we know what it says and what it means without careful study.
- **Theological Assumptions:** We can begin to think a passage means whatever is most consistent with my personal theological position.
- **Our Sin:** We are all prone to believe what we want to believe rather than submit to God's Word properly interpreted and applied.

How NOT to Study the Bible

Everyone has a Bible study method, but not every method is a good one!

- The “What this means to me” Method
- The Bible Roulette Method
- The Hyper-Cross-Reference Method
- The Word Study Method
- The Expert Method
- The Newspaper Method

The “OICA” Method

- **Observation:** What does it say?
- **Interpretation:** What does it mean?
- **Correlation:** How does it fit?
- **Application:** Why does it matter?

Using OlCA to Study a Book

- “This course will introduce a methodology for studying entire biblical books. It is our conviction that this is the best way to study the Bible.”
(Workbook, p.8)
- What might be the benefits of studying a whole book of the Bible, rather than isolated passages?

First Steps: Read, Read, Read!

- Read the whole book several times over, especially if it's a shorter book.
- Make notes about things you notice, repeated ideas, questions you have, etc.
- Look for key information about the book itself, like its **author**, **audience**, **occasion**, and **purpose**.
- At this stage, the idea is to do as much of this as possible without a commentary or study Bible.

First Steps: Background Study

- **Author:** The writer(s) of the book.
- **Audience:** The original readers of the book.
- **Occasion:** The situation or events that prompt the author to compose the book.
- **Purpose:** The effect or result that the author intends the book to accomplish.

Example: Philemon

- Read Philemon (printed on pp. 9-10 of the Workbook)
- Make note of as much information about the author and the recipient(s) as you can (p. 10, q. 1)
- Use the boxes on pp. 11-12 to record your observations.

Example: Philemon

- Read Philemon again.
- Make note of as much information you can about the relationship between the author and audience and what it tells you about the occasion of the letter (p. 12, q. 2).
- Record your observations in the boxes on pp. 12-13.

Example: Philemon

- Read Philemon again.
- This time, take note of what the letter says about the author's purpose in writing. (p. 13, q. 3).
- Record your thoughts in the box on p. 14.

Homework

- Read *Dig Deeper*, pp. 11-26
- Complete Workbook, pp. 15-30
- Next class: Tuesday, February 20, 7:00-9:00 PM.