

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CENTER
THE WORD

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LESSON 1 INTRODUCTION

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WORD - THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD

I. INTRODUCTION

A. What is The Word?

1. The Word is the Word of God.
2. Other references used:
 - a. The Bible.
 - b. The Holy Scriptures.
 - c. The Law of the Lord.
 - d. The Law of God, etc.

B. Why do you read and study The Bible?

1. Possible reasons are:
 - a. It tells me more about God.
 - b. It tells me how to become a Christian.
 - c. It tells me how to live as a Christian.
 - d. It teaches me about the church.
 - e. It teaches me how I am part of the church.
 - f. etc.
2. One very important reason we study the Bible is because it is the inspired Word of God (**2 Tim. 3:16**).

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WORD: IT IS THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD (2 TIM. 3:16)

A. Meaning of the word “inspired”.

1. Literal meaning - “inspired” means “to have inhaled” or “to in-breath” air into the lungs. It also means “getting inspiration”.
2. Biblical meaning - “inspired” means “being directed by the Holy Spirit” (**2 Pet. 1:21**).

B. The Word of God is profitable (useful).

No one who has read the Bible would honestly declare it unhelpful. It is one of the best-selling books for centuries.

III. THE WORD IS PROFITABLE IN FIVE ASPECTS

A. In teaching doctrine (**Ps. 119:137**).

1. Doctrine means “teaching for faith and practices”.
2. The importance.
 - a. We are what we believe (**Pro. 23:7**).
 - b. We are transformed by what we believe (**Rom. 12:2**).
 - c. Sound doctrine is a show of good faith (**Titus 2:1-15**).
Wrong doctrine brings wrong way of life (**Titus 1:10-15**).

3. Give attention to doctrine (**1 Tim. 4:13-16**).
 - a. Meditate.
 - b. Give ourselves completely.
 - c. Brings results.
- B. In giving reproof.
1. The meaning of reproof.
 - a. Conviction of sin.
 - b. Telling us we are wrong.
 - c. Meant to bring repentance (**Pro. 1:23**).
 2. We need reproof (**Pro. 6:23**).
 - a. It is a way of life.
 - b. Part of the ministry (**2 Tim. 4:2**).

It is part of the responsibility of spiritual leadership to do so when members err or stray from following the truth.
 3. Results of accepting reproof.
 - a. It enriches (**Pro. 25:12**).
 - b. Gives understanding (**Pro. 15:32**).
 4. Results of rejecting reproof.
 - a. Man becomes brutish (**Pro. 12:1**).
 - b. Leads others astray (**Pro. 10:17**).
 - c. Leads to death (**Pro. 15:10**).
- C. In giving correction.
1. The meaning of correction.
 - a. Restoring someone from a fault, or an error.
 - b. “Punishment” or “discipline” designed to restore.
 2. Results of accepting correction.
 - a. It saves (**Pro. 23:13-14**).
 - b. It expresses love (**Pro. 3:12**).
 - c. It brings peace and delight (**Pro. 29:17**).
 3. Results of rejecting correction.
 - a. Truth has perished (**Jer. 7:28**).
 - b. Leads to rebellion (**Zeph. 3:1-2**).
- D. In teaching and training in righteousness.

1. Teaching us God's ways (**2 Pet. 3:18**).
 - a. Education, training.
 - b. The Bible is a manual for learning exercises in righteous living.
 2. We need to learn.
 - a. As a child (**Pro. 22:6**).
 - b. Precept upon precept.
 3. Results.
 - a. To inherit blessings (**Pro. 8:20-21**).
 - b. Filled with God (**Phil. 1:9-11**).
- E. In equipping for every good work.
1. Meaning of equipped is "furnished" or "prepared and ready".
 2. "Good work": work that brings glory to God (**Col. 1:10**).
 3. God's Word prepares us for doing works that will bring glory to Him (**Matt. 5:13-16**).

LESSON 2 THE WORD IS COMPLETE IN WISDOM

I. IT IS DIVINE KNOWLEDGE (ROM. 11:33)

- A. Two kinds of knowledge.
 - 1. Man's knowledge - sense knowledge.
 - a. Learned through our five senses.
 - b. Limited (**Job 38, 39**).
 - c. Not dependable.
 - 2. God's knowledge - revelational knowledge (**1 Cor. 2:6-13**).
 - a. Revealed by the Spirit of God (**Eph. 1:17**).
 - b. Revealed to our spirits.
 - c. Dependable.
- B. Apply our hearts to His knowledge (**Pro. 22:17-21**).
 - 1. It causes trust in God.
 - 2. It is excellent.
 - a. In counsel.
 - b. In knowledge.
 - 3. It is reliable.
 - a. Words of truth.
 - b. Sound answers.
 - 4. It sets free (**John 8:31-32**).

II. IT IS PURE WISDOM

- A. It is Truth (**Pro. 30:5**).
 - 1. It is flawless.
 - 2. It speaks of God's integrity.
- B. It is right (**Ps. 19:8; 33:4**).
 - 1. It gives joy to the heart.
 - 2. It speaks of God's justice.
- C. It is trustworthy.

1. It has been tested and proven (**Ps. 119:140**).
2. It keeps one from sin (**Ps. 119:9, 11**).

III. IT IS ETERNAL WISDOM (ISA. 40:6b-8; PS. 119:89)

- A. It is everlasting (**Mark 13:31**).
 1. “Things” are temporal. E.g.
 - a. Creation.
 - b. People.
 2. God’s Word is “forever” (**Ps. 119:152**).
- B. It is unchangeable (**Ps. 33:11**).
 1. To all generations.
 - a. God’s counsel.
 - b. God’s thoughts.

IV. IT IS PERFECT WISDOM (PS. 19:7)

- A. It is complete.
 1. We must not change it.
 - a. Do not add (**Pro. 30:6**).
 - b. Do not take away (**Rev. 22:18-19**).
- B. It changes lives.
 1. Converts the soul (**Ps. 19:7**).
 2. Making wise the simple (**Ps. 119:130**).

LESSON 3 THE WORD IS CREATIVE (HEB. 11:3; PS. 33:6)

I. THE WORD BRINGS LIFE (PHIL. 2:16)

A. Causes spiritual birth (**1 Pet. 1:23**).

1. It is the “seed of life”.
2. It is incorruptible “seed”.

B. Feeds the spirit (**John 6:63**).

1. It is spirit.
2. It is life.

II. THE WORD “BUILDS UP” (ACTS 20:32)

A. It is spiritual food (**1 Pet. 2:2**).

1. Desire the Word.
2. Causes growth.
It gives spiritual nourishment to the spirit life.

B. It is divine provision (**2 Pet. 1:3-4**).

1. To partake of His divine nature.
 - a. Holiness (**1 Pet. 1:16**).
 - b. Fruit of the Spirit (**Gal. 5:22-24**).
2. To escape being corrupted by evil desires.
 - a. Evil desires often grow little by little. “Kill it” with the Word of God. Do not “feed it” and it will die (**James 1:13-15**).
 - b. Evil desires come in a subtle manner. Arrest and resist it with the Word of God (**James 4:1-3**).

III. THE WORD PRODUCES FAITH (ROM. 10:17)

A. God’s Word speaks (**Gal. 3:5**).

1. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God.
2. Produces wonders.
E.g. healing of crippled man in Lystra (**Acts 14:8-10**).

B. Does not return void (**Isa. 55:10-11**).

1. Likened to rain and snow.
E.g. God gives rain and snow for their designated purposes, i.e. provide the farmer his food and seeds for the next planting.
2. Accomplishes God's will.
The Word of God will fulfill the purpose for which it was given or sent.

IV. THE WORD CONVICTS IN POWER (I THESS. 1:5)

- A. It causes convictions that change lives (**Jer. 23:22, 28**).
 1. Speak God's Word faithfully.
 2. It contains life.
It imparts life to the receptive heart.
- B. It produces powerful effects (**Jer. 23:29**).
 1. As a "fire": it burns.
 - a. The process of burning destroys the "impurities" but purifies the indestructible.
 - b. The Word of God, allowed to burn in our hearts, will destroy all that is not worth keeping and purify that which really counts for eternity (cf. **1 Cor. 3:11-13**).
 2. Like a "hammer": it breaks and drives.
 - a. It can break something into pieces. It can also drive something into place.
 - b. Similarly, there will be times when the Word of God will break parts of us so that He can "drive" into place that which He wants in our lives.
- C. It penetrates deeply (**Heb. 4:12**).
 1. Discerns our thoughts and intents.
It penetrates the very secret chambers of the heart.
 2. Knows our need.
 3. Works continuously and faithfully.

LESSON 4 THE WORD SAVES AND NURTURES

I. THE WORD SAVES (JAMES 1:21)

- A. The Word cleanses (**John 15:3**).
- B. The Word keeps from sin (**Ps. 119:11; 1 Tim. 4:15-16**).
- C. The Word sanctifies (**John 17:17**).
 - 1. To purify, i.e. to set apart from sin.
 - 2. To consecrate, i.e. to set apart for God.
- D. The Word is our spiritual weapon (**Eph. 6:17**).
 - 1. Spiritual warfare.
 - a. Not fighting flesh and blood.
 - b. Against Satan and his hosts.
 - c. Need spiritual weapons (**2 Cor. 10:3-5**).
 - 2. The Sword of the Spirit.
 - a. Jesus used it during temptation. "It is written" (**Matt. 4:1-11**).
 - b. We must know the Word.
It makes us wiser than our enemies (**Ps. 119:97-98**).
 - c. We must do what it says (**James 1:22**).

II. THE WORD NURTURES

- A. It preserves (**Ps. 37:31**).
 - 1. Obedience to the Word.
 - a. Brings security.
 - b. Brings confidence.
 - c. Brings stability.
 - 2. God backs up His Word (**Pro. 3:21-26**).
 - a. Keep the Word.
 - b. The Word keeps you:
 - i. from danger.
 - ii. from fear.
- B. It teaches (**Ps. 94:12**).
 - 1. Word gives life and health (**Pro. 4:20-22**).

- a. Spiritual life.
 - b. Health for the body.
2. Each generation needs teaching (**Ps. 78:1-8**).
- C. It brings understanding (**Ps. 119:18**).
1. Spiritual understanding (**Pro. 9:10**).
 2. Understanding is God-given.
 - a. Revelation light (**Ps. 36:9**).
 - b. Enlightens the heart (**Ps. 119:104**).
 - c. Enables true learning (**Ps. 119:73**).
 - d. Brings obedience (**Ps. 119:34**).
- D. It gives direction (**Ps. 119:105**).
1. Into the presence of God (**Ps. 43:3**).
- God's Word is Light and Truth that leads us into His presence.
2. For daily living (**Pro. 6:20-23**).

LESSON 5 THE WORD CONTAINS GOD'S PROMISES TO US

I. GOD'S PROMISES BRING HOPE (PS. 119:43, 49)

- A. What is hope?
 - 1. Anticipation with pleasure.
 - 2. Expectation with confidence.
- B. Importance of hope.
 - 1. It is part of our spiritual armour.
 - 2. It is protection for the mind (**1 Thess. 5:8; Rom. 15:13**).
 - a. Discouragement.
 - b. Giving up.
 - c. Quitting.
 - d. Despair.
 - 3. We are saved by hope (**Rom. 8:24-25**).
- C. What does hope produce?
 - 1. Enables us to endure (**1 Thess. 1:3**).
Hoping in God's Word (**Ps. 119:81**).
 - 2. Enables us to believe (**Rom. 4:18**).
 - 3. Causes us to rejoice (**Rom. 5:2, 12:12**).

II. GOD'S PROMISES BRING JOY (PS. 119:14)

- A. Results of believing God's Word (**Rom. 15:13**).
 - 1. Filled with all joy (**1 Thess. 1:6; Ps. 119:111**).
 - 2. Filled with peace (**Ps. 119:165**).
- B. Importance of joy.
 - 1. It is our strength (**Neh. 8:10, 13, 17**).
 - 2. Comes by understanding God's Word (**Ps. 119:24**).
 - 3. Not dependent on outward circumstances (**Hab. 3:17-19**).
- C. For every occasion (**Phil. 4:4; 1 Thess. 5:16**).

III. GOD'S PROMISES BRING DELIVERANCE (PS. 119:170)

- A. Only the Lord can deliver (**Ps. 33:16-19**).
 - 1. Natural resources are useless.
 - a. People.
 - b. Horses (**Ps. 20:7**).

- c. Silver and gold (**Eze. 7:19**).
 2. He promises to deliver (**Ps. 72:12**).
 - a. When we cry to Him.
 - b. When we have no helper.
 3. He sent His Word (**Ps. 107:17-20**).
 - a. Healed.
 - b. Delivered.
- B. Jesus proclaimed deliverance (**Luke 4:18; Isa. 61:1**).
1. To the captives.
 - a. Habits.
 - b. Fear.
 - c. Bondages.
 2. To the broken-hearted.
 3. To the bruised.
- C. His deliverance is complete (**2 Cor. 1:9-10; Ps. 56:13**).
1. For the past - (delivered).
Guilt and condemnation of sin.
 2. For the present - (doth deliver).
Power and influence of sin.
 3. For the future - (will yet deliver).
Presence of sin.

IV. GOD'S PROMISES BRING BLESSINGS (PS. 1:2-3)

V. GOD'S PROMISES BRING COUNSEL (PS. 73:24)

- A. His counsel bring delight (**Ps. 119:24,35**).
- B. His counsel provides direction and guidance (**Ps. 119:105**).
1. Direct our "footsteps" (**Ps. 119:133**).
 2. Enlighten our "footpath".
- C. His counsel renews our minds (**Pro. 4:20-23**).
1. We are to read, study and meditate on them.
 2. They impart life to our spirits and health to our bodies.
 3. We are to saturate our hearts with them, for out of our hearts will flow the springs of life.

LESSON 6 DEVOTIONAL READING AND MEMORISING THE WORD

I. DEVOTIONAL READING OF THE WORD

A. Why should we read the Word?

1. Think about lessons 1-5 and review the importance of the Word of God
2. The Word is God's revelation and communication to us.

B. What should be our attitude in reading the Word?

1. Read it devotionally - meditate day and night (**Ps. 1:2**).
2. Read it with hunger and thirst (**Matt. 5:6**).
3. Read it with joy (**Ps. 119:162**).
4. Read it with love (**Ps. 119:97, 113, 127**).

C. How should we plan for it?

1. Schedule a set time each day.
 - a. Must be consistent.
 - b. Morning, noon or evening.
Highly recommended to do so in the morning and evening.
 - c. Spend at least 20 minutes.
As we develop in our walk with the Lord, we will want to spend more time or may even set aside other time in the day to do so.
 - d. Do not rush through this very important time of the day.
2. Use a suitable place.
 - a. Use the same place everyday, if possible.
But you should learn to do it anywhere you go.
 - b. Use a place conducive to reading, praying and thinking.
E.g. reading on the bed will help you fall asleep easier than keep awake.
3. Some practical tips to help you.
 - a. Be totally awake!
 - b. Read aloud, if possible.
 - c. Ensure the place is properly lighted, not dim and too cosy.
 - d. Play soft worship music.
 - e. Keep away from distractions, e.g. TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, etc.

D. How should we begin?

1. There should be a balance of text.
 - a. 2 chapters a day from the Old Testament.
 - b. 2 chapters a day from the New Testament.
 - c. 1 chapter a day from the Psalms.
 - d. 1 chapter a day from the Proverbs.

2. Be realistic; do the achievable.
 - a. It is better to read through a passage or chapter with understanding than rush through two chapters without any understanding.
 - b. As we develop in our devotional life, we will be able to understand and enjoy more and so you will want to read more.
 3. Use of printed materials to help you.
 - a. Daily bread.
 - b. Devotional guides.
 - c. Read the Bible in one-year guides.
 - d. Others.
 - e. Use them but do not totally rely on them only!
- E. The “2 PROAPT” method.
1. It is a simple outlined guide but with practice it will help you to develop other study methods. You can find other modes and methods to study the Word.
 2. Use the chart attached.

Pray & Preview - for direction, enlightenment, correct attitude.
Decide on passage, paragraph and context.
Read it again and again.
Observe - follow the thinking of the writer.
Application - what shall I do as a result of this Word? How does it apply to my life?
Pray - pray for obedience to do God’s Word.
Tell - tell someone what you learned, write it down.
 3. Try the above approach using this scripture: **Matt. 6:25-34.**

II. MEMORIZATION OF THE WORD

- A. Be familiar with the context.
- B. Understand the content.
- C. Refer to other translations.
- D. Memorized passages as well as isolated verses.
- E. Keep a humble spirit.

Notes from My Spiritual Journey for _____ (date) .

(2 PROAPT)

1. Pray
2. Preview

The Word
Lesson 1-10

6. Pray.

7. Tell...am I to pass on what I am getting to someone else?

What :

To whom :

How :

LESSON 7 BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD

I. THE JOY OF DISCOVERY - A POSSIBILITY FOR ALL

- A. Definition of “discover”: to obtain insight or knowledge the first time, to ascertain, unearth, explore.
A discoverer is one who finds out things for himself.
- B. Practice, patience and perseverance are needed for learning any skill.
- C. As you learn and practise, may you experience -
 - 1. The joy of discovering truths in the Bible yourself.
 - 2. The joy of realizing that the Bible has something special to say to you personally.
 - 3. The joy of sharing with others the truths which have special meaning to you.
 - 4. The joy of knowing that the Holy Spirit is the Revealer of Truth as you seek to discover it in His Word.

II. ATTITUDES TOWARD BIBLE STUDY

- A. Faulty attitudes.
 - 1. The defeated: I will not be able to understand, so why try?
 - 2. The negative: I doubt if anything I discover would be good or right.
 - 3. The lazy: I do not know if I want to invest the time and energy to learn how to study.
- B. Helpful attitudes.
 - 1. The positive: I want to learn how to study the Bible. The Holy Spirit is my Teacher who will help me.
 - 2. The receptive: God asks of me only an open heart and an open mind so that He can reveal Himself and His truths to me.
 - 3. The expectant: I am coming to God’s Word to let Him speak to me.
 - 4. The faithful: I realize that God has placed a price on His Word: faithfulness and diligence in study. If I only scratch the surface, my reward is a few crumbs. If I dig deeply into the Word, my reward will be rich treasures.

III. PROCEDURES IN BIBLE STUDY

- A. Observe: exactly what the author is saying.
The more careful and thorough your observations, the more meaningful will be your interpretations, the fairer will be your evaluations, and the richer will be your applications.
 - 1. Meaning of observation: the act, power or habit of seeing and noting; thorough and careful notice.

2. Purpose of observation is to saturate yourself thoroughly with the content of the passage.
 3. Observation demands concentration, takes time and practice.
- B. Interpret: objectively what the author has written.
Determine what he really meant by what he said. Discover the thoughts, attitudes, emotions, purpose of the author. Think about the time the passage was written. If necessary look up the background of the book of the Bible you are studying. Learn about the author and what was happening at the time the Book was written.
- C. Summarize: concisely the key ideas in a passage.
Try to summarize the facts you observed and then the meaning of the facts.
- D. Evaluate: fairly what the author has written.
- E. Apply: personally, the message revealed.
Application is the fruit which will come forth through the other processes.
- F. Actualize: your convictions.
Actually, do what the Lord revealed to you through the scripture. If you have read a scripture on Forgiveness- then put that into practice immediately.

IV. SPECIFIC THINGS TO OBSERVE

- A. Key words.
1. Words which are important.
 2. Repetition of words.
 3. E.g. : use **Matt. 6:25-34** passage for practice.
“anxious” - appeared 4 times : v. **25, 27, 28, 34.**
“life” - appeared 3 times : v. **25, 27.**
- B. Advice, admonitions, warnings, promises, encouragements.
1. Look for imperative verbs.
 2. E.g. : “do not be anxious” : v.**25, 31, 34.**
“look” : v. **26.**
“consider” : v. **28.**
“seek” : v. **33.**
- C. Reasons, results for doing things.
1. Cause and effect relationship : if you do this, then this will happen.
 2. **Matt. 6:33.**
 3. **James 4:7** “Resist the devil and he will flee from you”.
- D. Contrasts, comparisons, illustrations.
1. Comparison is the association of things that are similar.

E.g. **Matt 6:26, 28.**

2. Contrast is the association of things that are opposite, often introduced with “but”. E.g. **Matt. 6:32-33.**

E. Repetition and progression of ideas, statements.

1. This will often give you a clue as to the author’s purpose in a passage.

2. Take special note of lists of items or ideas.

Compare the items and see if there is any significance in the order.

Do ideas progress toward a climax?

3. **Matt 6:25-30** birds of the air
lilies of the field cf. Solomon
grass of the field.

F. Questions.

1. Is it used to introduce an idea, summarize a series of ideas, or just to challenge the thinking?

2. E.g. **James 4:1-4; Matt. 6:25b, 26b, 27-28a.**

G. Important connectives: prepositions, conjunctions.

1. Connectives are very important in revealing key ideas and relationships.

2. Be alert for some of the following:

a. “But” - introduces a contrast, e.g. **Matt. 6:33.**

b. “If” - introduces a conditional clause, e.g. **Matt. 6:30.**

c. “For, because therefore” - introduce reason and results, e.g. **Matt. 6:25, 31-32, 34.**

d. “In, into, with” - important connectives.

e. “In order that” - sets forth a purpose, e.g. **Eph. 6:11, 13.**

H. Atmosphere.

1. Note the general tone of a passage.

E.g. mood of joy, thanksgiving, concern, humility, anger.

2. The mood of a writer is often revealed by the way he addresses his readers.

3. Note emphatic statements too, for the use of words and phrases to reveal his feelings.

V. SEEK TO KNOW MEANING

A. Begin by asking yourself questions.

1. Examples:

a. Why did Jesus say...?

b. Why did Paul say....?

c. What is the meaning of....?

- d. What is the significance of.....?
 - e. What is the implication of.....?
 - f. What is the relationship between.....?
2. Purpose: to stimulate your thinking.

B. Answering questions.

1. May involve defining some words.
2. Compare translations - find out other words used.
3. Cross reference, for additional insight into meaning, e.g. **Luke 12:22-31; Rom. 14:17; Phil. 4:4-7.**
4. Wrestle with meanings.
Have to think, meditate, integrate and draw conclusions.
5. Summarize findings.

VI. PERSONALIZE BIBLICAL TEACHINGS

A. Evaluation.

Does what the Scriptures say has value for today?

B. Application and actualization.

1. E.g. *if I really take the Scriptural teaching in this passage seriously, the difference it would make in my life is....*
2. Analyse your concerns.
3. What actions do I need to take? Pray.

VII. REMINDER: THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE REVEALER OF TRUTH

A. We need His guidance as we observe, interpret, evaluate, apply and actualize.

B. He is a part of the entire process, enabling us to be alert in our observations, discerning in our interpretations, honest in our evaluations and application and courageous in actualizing the truths in our own lives.

LESSON 8 STUDY PRINCIPLES ON A NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGE

I. OBSERVE THE DETAILS

A. Look for key words.

1. The passage to use for practice is **1 Cor. 13**.
The “structural diagram” of **1 Cor. 13** is attached. Make your observations directly on the printed page.
2. Read the passage and underline what you consider to be some of the key words.

B. Look for other details.

1. Reread the passage.
2. Paul gives no admonition in this passage, but he makes strong use of some other approaches.
 - a. Cause-and-effect relationships:
How many examples can you find? The little word “if” is one of your clues.
 - b. Contrasts:
How many contrasts can you identify? Circle key connectives.
 - c. Comparison and illustrations:
Note what use he makes of these.
 - d. Repetition and progression of thought:
This passage has several examples of repetition of thought patterns and listing of items. Make note of the repetitions. Does there seem to be a progression of thoughts? Is there a climax?
 - e. Description: Note the positive and negative aspects of love.
 - f. Grammatical constructions:
Study the verbs in the passage. What do you note about their tenses?
Also note the personal pronouns. When are they used, and when are they not used?

C. Analyse the structure.

1. Study the verses and bracket those which seem to focus on the same idea.
The diagram itself provides a clue for bracketing.
2. Try to summarize the main idea in each section with a phrase.
3. Consider also the order in which Paul arranged his ideas.
4. Are they arranged logically or psychologically?

II. SEEK TO KNOW MEANINGS

A. Ask yourself questions.

1. Our concern is what Paul meant by what he said.
2. Some questions you may use:
 - a. Why did Paul say.....?

- b. What is the meaning of.....?
- c. What is the significance of.....?
E.g. the illustrations; "I am" (v. 12) and "I gain" (v.3).
- d. What is the implication of.....?
- e. What is the relationship between.....?
E.g. between "have not love" and being "a noisy gong".

B. Answering questions.

1. The asking of questions is to stimulate your thinking and to serve as a guide for identifying those words, phrases, and statements which need interpretation.
2. Select those which seem to be the most relevant for answering.
E.g. the key word "love" must be interpreted. What did Paul mean by the word "love"?
3. Seek to answer some of the questions you asked by utilizing these:
 - a. Define words.
 - b. Compare translations.
 - c. Study cross-references.
 - d. Wrestle with meanings.
4. In seeking to interpret the message, it is very important that you wrestle with meanings:
 - a. What is Paul really trying to say as to the importance of love?
 - b. Why did he arrange his thoughts in the order he did?
 - c. Why does he describe both the positive and negative aspects of love?

III. PERSONALIZING BIBLICAL TEACHINGS

A. Some light from interpretation.

1. When Paul describes love, he approaches it in an impersonal way, "love is...".
2. But everything he says about love has to do with personal relationships.
3. Possibly this is the reason for the emphasis on the negative aspect - "love is not...".
4. We know that Paul is speaking about a special kind of love - "agape" - a self-giving love which God extends to us through Christ.
5. How do we actualize it in our own lives?

B. Evaluation.

Are Paul's statements in this chapter valid for our relationships of today?

C. Application and actualization.

1. Review **1 Cor. 13:4-7**.
2. Consider seriously the way Paul describes what love is and what it is not.
3. Think about a problem situation in which there are conflicts, disagreements, misunderstandings - a real situation in which you have been involved or are now involved.
 - a. Present situation:
What can you actually do if you are going to demonstrate these evidence of love as described in **13:4-7**? What might be the outcome?
 - b. Previous situation:

To what extent did or did you not demonstrate these evidences of love? What were the results? How might the results have been different?

READ: 1 Corinthians 13

Structural Diagram-- 1 Corinthians 13

- 1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels,
but have not love,
I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.
- 2 If I have the gift of prophesy
and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge
and if I have a faith that can move mountains,
but have not love,
I am nothing.
- 3 If I give all I possess to the poor
and surrender my body to the flames,
but have not love,
I gain nothing.
- 4 Love is patient, love is kind.
It does not envy,
it does not boast,
it is not proud.
- 5 It is not rude,
it is not self-seeking,
it is not easily angered,
it keeps no record of wrongs.
- 6 Love does not delight in evil
but rejoices with the truth.
- 7 It always protects,
always trusts,
always hopes,
always perseveres.
- 8 Love never fails.
But where there are prophecies, they will cease;
where there are tongues, they will be stilled;
where there is knowledge, it will pass away.
- 9 For we know in part
and we prophesy in part,
- 10 but when perfection comes,
the imperfect disappears.
- 11 When I was a child,
I talked like a child,
I thought like a child,
I reasoned like a child.
When I became a man,
I put childish ways behind me.
- 12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror;
then we shall see face to face.
Now I know in part;

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then I shall know fully,
even as I am fully known.

- 13 And now these three remain : faith, hope and love.
But the greatest of these is love.

LESSON 9 STUDY PRINCIPLES ON A NEW TESTAMENT NARRATIVE

I. THE SIX GUIDE WORDS

- A. The six guide words are very useful in obtaining insights into the details of a story (narrative).
- B. The six words are:
1. **Where** : Note the setting of a story.
Locate it on a map, if possible.
 2. **When** : Note the time element in a story.
 3. **Who** : Note the characters in a story and how each is described.
 4. **What** :
 - a. Note the exact order and details of the events, actions, and conversation of the characters.
 - b. Note the way characters respond to each other.
 - c. Read the story imaginatively, trying to build mental image, recreating the story in your own mind.
 - d. As you read, try to see, hear, feel what the characters saw, heard, and felt.
 5. **How** :
 - a. Note how the story ends.
 - b. Note how the events and actions of the characters shaped the ending.
 - c. Note how the characters act and respond as normal human beings.
 - d. Note how they respond to each other.
 6. **Why** :
 - a. Observe more than mere words.
 - b. Ask yourself some questions :
 - i. Why did the events happen as they did?
 - ii. Why did the characters act and respond as they did?
 - iii. Could they have responded differently?

II. APPROACH TO A NARRATIVE

- A. Be realistic.

View it in the context of the historical setting of that day.

B. Be imaginative.

Visualize what you would be seeing and hearing.

Try to see and hear not only the words and actions of Bible persons, but the tone of their voices, facial expressions, bodily responses.

C. Be emphatic.

Empathy means to identify with a person and his problems and his feelings.

III. STUDYING A NARRATIVE

A. Observe the details.

1. Passage to practise the skills in the use of the six guide words is **Luke 23:32-49.**

Read the section quickly and note these things :

Where : Note the places mentioned in the account.

When : Note the references to time.

Who: Note the many persons mentioned in the account.

What : Look for some key words in the statements that Jesus and other persons make.

2. Analyze carefully the passage.

a. Your first reading should give you an overview of the main emphasis in the passage.

b. Make a more careful study of a part of the passage, noting especially how each person responds to Jesus.

c. Divide a sheet of paper into four sections and record the details in chronological order. (before you look at the chart on the last page, try to do as much as you can on your own)

Section 1 : Record the WHOs - list the persons (other than Jesus) mentioned in the passage.

Section 2 : Record WHAT they did relating to Jesus.

Section 3 : Record HOW they responded to Jesus in terms of what they said. Note the titles they gave Him and the pronouns they used relating to Jesus.

Section 4 : Record HOW Jesus responded.

B. Seek to know meanings.

1. Ask yourself questions.

- a. About the words and actions of persons :
 - i. any significance in the titles the different persons gave Jesus?
 - ii. any significance in the pronouns they used? Note that the soldiers said “you” and the rulers said “he”.
- b. About key words :
 - i. one of the key words is “save”.
 - ii. used by the rulers, the soldiers and one of the criminals.
 - iii. Ask yourself -
what does the word “save” mean?
what did it mean to those who were speaking to Jesus?

2. Seek to find answers to questions.

You might gain further insights by doing some of these things :

- a. Define the words : check the dictionary look for the Greek meaning of the word “save”.
- b. Cross-references :
 - i. read the account of Jesus’ crucifixion in other gospels.
 - ii. consider the use of the word “save” in Luke 19:10; John 12:47.

What did Jesus mean by the word “save”?

- c. Translations : read the account in other translations to see if you gain additional insight.

C. Personalize biblical teachings.

The persons who witnessed the crucifixion reflect the many ways persons can respond to Jesus. They are a composite of humanity and can represent the many kinds of people.

But they can also represent the many ways each of us can respond to Jesus at different times in our lives.

1. Identify responses.

What kind of responses do the following reflect?:
Soldiers, rulers, first criminal, second criminal, people, centurion.
(How did Jesus respond to the Father? **Luke 23:46**).

2. Identify with a person.

While it is easy to be judgmental of those at the cross, at different times in our lives, each of us may have responded to Jesus in any one of these ways.

Think about your present feelings and a problem or situation which you are facing. Identify with one person at the cross which reflects your response to Jesus right now:

- a. anger because Jesus is not doing what you want Him to do.
- b. watching on the sidelines, not getting too involved.
- c. taking Jesus rather casually.
- d. demanding that He “save” your situation.
- e. feeling totally helpless, praying “remember me”.
- f. praising Him.
- g. beating your breast.

3. Mediate on this scene at the cross.

Complete these statements:

One thing I can believe is.....

One thing I have learned about relationship is.....

The Good News I find in this scene at the cross.

4. Pray about your response to Jesus.

Luke 23:32-49 (NIV)

WHO | **WHAT** | **HOW** | **HOW**

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(persons)	(they did)	(they responded verbally)	(Jesus responded)
1. Criminal on the right, A	hurled insults at Him	“Aren’t you the Christ? <u>Save</u> yourself and us!”	
2. Criminal on the left, B	rebuked criminal A. admitted his wrongs and acknowledged Christ’s innocence	requested Jesus “remember me, when you come into Your Kingdom.”	“I tell you the truth, today you will be with Me in paradise.”
3. Soldiers	crucified Him. divided up His clothes by lots. mocked Him; offered Him wine vinegar.	“If you are the King of the Jews, <u>save</u> yourself.”	“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”
4. People	stood watching (v. 35); saw what took place (v. 44-46), they beat their breasts and went away.		
5. Rulers	sneered at Him.	“He <u>saved</u> others; let Him <u>save</u> Himself if He is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.”	
6. Centurion	saw what happened (v. 44-46). praised God.		“Surely this was a righteous man.”
1. Those who knew Him, including the women who had followed Him from Galilee	stood at a distance, watching these things		
8.			“Father, into Your hands, I commit My Spirit.”

LESSON 10 STUDY PRINCIPLES ON A NEW TESTAMENT PARABLE

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Studying the Bible is never to be an end in itself, but the means by which you grow in faith and knowledge of God through Jesus Christ.

The Bible is a record of God's revelation of Himself to men through Jesus Christ and of man's response to this revelation. Its purpose is to enable men to come to know this revelation and respond in faith.

- B. Review of past passages studied :

Matt. 6:25-34 : Focus on our response to the Kingdom of God in contrast to our response to the "things" of life.

1 Cor. 13 : Focus is on our response in personal relationships.

Luke 23:32-49 : Focus is on our response to Jesus and His Cross.

Today's passage, **Matt. 13:1-9; 18-23**, focus on man's response to the Word of God itself.

II. OBSERVE THE DETAILS

- A. Read **Matt. 13:1-3**.

1. Note the who, where, when, what of the introduction.
2. Verbs are your clues as to what Jesus did.

- B. Read **Matt. 13:4-9**.

Use the 5-guide words for insight into the details :

1. WHO : The sower and the seed.
2. WHERE : Note the kinds of soil on which the seed fell.
3. WHAT : Note what happens to the seed in each illustration.
4. HOW : Note how the illustration ends in each case in terms of growth of the seed.
5. WHY : Note that in some illustrations Jesus gives a reason (v. 5b).

- C. Read **Matt. 13:18-23**.

1. Read this section and underline what seem to be some of the key words. Select four key words.

2. Make a special study of Jesus' interpretation of each of the illustrations. With each of the illustration do the following:

WHO : The who in each illustration is anyone or he.
Note how he responds to the Word.

WHAT : Note what happens to the Word that is sown.

HOW : Note how the illustration ends.

WHY : Note if there are any reasons for the illustration ending as it does.

3. Record your observations using the following patterns:

WHO	WHAT	HOW	WHY
(response to the Word)	(happens to the Word)	(the illustration ends)	(not always given)

III. SEEK TO KNOW MEANINGS

- A. Ask questions for understanding.

1. Definitions.

What is the meaning of some of the key words: hear, word, understand, unfruitful, bear fruit, good soil, etc.

2. Relationships.

What is the relationship between hearing and understanding?

What is the relationship between the things that hindered or helped in the growth and the results of the growth?

- B. Interpret your questions.

1. Use cross-references: **Mark 4:14-20; Luke 8:11-15.**

Note the additional information and the different ways the ideas are stated in other passages of scripture on this same account.

2. Compare translations: Read **Matt. 13:18-23** and **Luke 8:11-15** in some other translations to gain further insight.

3. Define words and wrestle with meanings:

What does it mean to hear? To understand?

What is the relationship between hearing and understanding? Not understanding?

What is the meaning of unfruitful? To bear fruit?

IV. PERSONALIZE BIBLICAL TEACHINGS

- A. Summary.

1. There are at least four ways to respond to the Word of God.
2. There are a variety of things which can hinder the response to and the growth of the Word in our hearts.

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3. There are a variety of outcomes.
4. The degree of receptivity seems to determine the kind of response.
5. Anyone of us can respond in one of these four ways at different times in our lives.
6. There is a progression in the illustrations, from no response to a great deal of response. We all face many hindrances which can erode our faith, but the difference between the good soil and the other soils has to do with perseverance, hanging on, holding fast.

The person with the good soil is one that holds fast to the promises of God no matter what the problems or difficulties are.

B. Ways to apply and actualize.

1. Paraphrase the interpretation of this parable in terms of your own experiences.
2. Complete these statements:
 - a. Learning how to study the Bible should help me in understanding.....
 - b. What I receive in this study will depend on.....
 - c. Some hindrances which will prevent the Word of God growing in my life are.....
 - d. The Good News I find in this parable is.....
3. Pray your responses to the Word.

Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23

WHO	WHAT	HOW	WHY
1. besides the road; along the path	hears but does not believe	evil one snatches away	did not understand
2. rocky places	hears and receives immediately with joy,	no depth in soil; scorched; withers away	no firm root; no "hanging on" in the face of persecution and affliction
3. thorns	hears, but choked by worry and riches	unfruitful	choked by worry of this world; deceitfulness of riches, no growth/no perseverance
4. good	hears, understands.	bears fruits (100 fold, 60 fold, 30 fold)	multiply because held fast to the word and persevered