

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Step One: Observation

Key Question: “What does it say?” (or) “What do I see?”

General things to ask / look for in a book

- who is the author?
- who is the audience?
- what is the purpose of the book? (why was it written?)
- what is the overarching context and background of the book?
- what genre is the book and/or passage? (poetry, history, biographical, prophecy, epistle, etc)
- is there any key words or themes that are repeated throughout the book?

Things to look for in sentences

- repetition
- contrasts
- comparisons
- lists
- cause/effect
- conjunctions (and, but, for, therefore, since, because)
- verbs
- pronouns
- grammar (noun, verb, direct objects, etc)
- figures of speech/idioms
 - ▶ English Examples: raining cats and dogs, beat around the bush, underdogs, born with a silver spoon in his mouth, he is in a jam, he’s in hot water, see the light
 - ▶ Bible Examples: lamp unto my feet, white-washed tombs, brood of vipers, broken heart, a double-edged sword, baptism of fire, be fruitful and multiply, harden your heart, heart’s desire, put your house in order, he knew her not, letter of the law

Things to look for in paragraphs

- general and specific – (I like desserts vs I like chocolate cake)
- questions/answers

- dialogue (who is speaking? to whom? anyone else in the audience?)
- purpose statements
- means (by which something is accomplished)
- conditional clauses – (a condition ... with the following result or consequence)
- actions or roles of people or God
- emotional terms
- tone (affection, chiding, discipline, instruction, reproof, correction)

What To Look For

1. Ask the six vital observation questions: What? Why? When? How? Where? Who?
2. Look for key words.
3. Look for repeated words and phrases.
4. Look for questions being asked.
5. Look for answers being given.
6. Look for commands.
7. Look for warnings.
8. Look for comparisons — things that are alike.
9. Look for contrasts — things that are different.
10. Look for illustrations.
11. Look for causes and effects and reasons for doing things.
12. Look for promises and their conditions for fulfillment.
13. Look for progression from the general to the specific.
14. Look for progression from the specific to the general.
15. Look for steps of progression in a narrative or biography.
16. Look for lists of things.
17. Look for results.
18. Look for advice, admonitions, and attitudes.
19. Look for the tone of the passage — emotional atmosphere.
20. Look for connectives, articles, and prepositions.
21. Look for explanations.
22. Look for Old Testament quotes in the New Testament.
23. Look for the literary form.
24. Look for paradoxes.
25. Look for emphasis through the use of space — proportion.
26. Look for planned exaggerations or hyperboles.
27. Look at the grammatical construction of each sentence.
28. Look for the use of the current events of the times.
29. Look for the force of the verbs.
30. Look for anything unusual or unexpected.
31. Look for anything that is emphasized
32. Look for things that are related
33. Look for things that are alike or unlike each other
34. Look for things true to life