

# PREPARING AND TEACHING INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDIES

## How To Teach An Inductive Bible Study

### Lesson #5

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In the previous lessons, we focused on how to write and refine inductive Bible studies. For this lesson, we will begin to focus on how to teach or lead an inductive Bible study once we have written them.

#### I. GENERAL PREPARATION FOR TEACHING AN INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

- A. Know general facts about your audience.
- B. If you are going to make handouts try to have enough.
- C. Pray before, during, and after preparing.
- D. Make sure you consider how the truth applies to your life as you are studying and how you are going to obey what you are learning.
- E. Ask about the physical layout of the study e.g., circle, podium (ask how big), music stand, overhead projector, power point projector, microphone, etc.
- F. Consider those you are teaching, their lives, struggles, temptations, objections to what you will be teaching them. Get in their head and lives so that you can customize your study so that it is relevant to their lives.

#### II. TEACHING AN INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

- A. Start and end with prayer.
- B. Give your opening statement to make them interested in what you are going to teach them from the Bible.
- C. Give them the background information to the book you are teaching from and summarize the context of the text you are teaching.

- D. Have people turn to the text to be studied and read it or have someone else read it aloud. You may read the text or you may have one or more people in the study read the text either at the beginning or if it is a larger text, a little at a time as you study your way through it.
- E. Now you're ready to take people through the study questions you have written. You can do this in a number of ways. Here are some examples:
1. You ask the questions and let anyone answer. This is a safe way to do it as people who are not prepared or who don't feel comfortable answering don't have to answer. The potential problem with this method is that certain eager beavers may try to answer every question.
  2. You can go around the group if you know that everyone feels comfortable answering questions. This way everyone gets a chance to answer.
  3. If you give homework and you know people did the homework, you can pick certain people at random who you know are comfortable answering questions and ask them directly – "Bob, what is your answer for question #8?" And intersperse direct questions with questions that anyone can answer.
  4. After a question is answered you can ask for more input if the answer to the question wasn't complete or just to have more discussion.
  5. Often, you will have to ask more questions than the questions contained in the study. Sometimes you will discover your question isn't producing the kind of answers you desire because it isn't clear or worded properly. So you may have to rephrase your question until your students are able to give a good answer.
  6. Let people have time to look at the text and think. Don't get impatient or nervous if there is a moment of silence. Remember, this may be their first time examining this text and they have to figure it out just like you did in your preparation. If the silence continues for too long, 10 to 15 seconds let's say, then you might reword the question or point them more specifically to the answer in the text, or give them hints until someone answers the question correctly.
  7. If someone gets part of the answer right, you can say, "Well, you got part of it right, the text does say . . . but what does the text say about . . ." and lead them to the part of the answer they missed. Encourage them when they get it right.
  8. As you work through the study questions people should be able to see how the answers are coming from the Bible. When you get to meaning, application, and implementation questions the text may not state these answers directly. In most cases everyone should be able to see how the text states directly or implies the truths you discussing.

### III. **WHAT TO DO WITH PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED WHEN TEACHING**

- A. **How do you deal with people who shout out every answer and feel like they have to say something for every question asked?** Pull people like this aside after class and explain to them that you really appreciate their zeal and passion for the Word and that their answers are often very good, but tell them they need to let other people who are less extroverted answer questions too. If they continue to answer every question, tell them they must not answer any more questions unless asked.
- B. **How do you deal with people who like to instruct the class rather than answer the question?** Sometimes people have their own agenda, their own pet doctrines or axes to grind and they use Bible study as a place to find a public forum to vent their lava. When this happens interrupt them nicely and say, "You're not answering the question, you're instructing the class. What answer did you get for the question?" If they continue, stop them. Remind them that if they are going to participate in the class, they need to do so according to the rules that you set. If they have problems with conforming to the rules you set, tell them you will talk to them after class.
- C. **How do you deal with those who give a wrong answer?** You might ask the question again to make sure they think their answer matches the question. Often they will correct themselves. Or you might say, "Well, not quite" or "I can see why you might think that but . . ." and ask the question in a different way or ask if someone else wants to take a try at it. When people do answer correctly, give them encouragement.
- D. **How do you deal with those who insist their wrong answer is right?** If someone gets belligerent and insists their wrong answer is right, in a kind way, hold your ground and tell them why you think their answer is wrong. If the answer is of a heretical nature i.e., something that if believed can damn someone to hell, then be very firm, but kind, and explain that such a view is heresy. Remember as a teacher you incur a stricter judgment. Never apologize for the truth or let damning doctrine go unchecked. After class, approach the person and try to correct their false doctrine or ask to get together with them at another time and bring one of the pastors or elders along with you. If there is disagreement about something less important it is okay to disagree, but you are the teacher so stick to your view with grace. If you aren't sure, then say, "I am going to study that a little more and next week I will tell you what I discovered." When you come the next week, you might have a handout, article, or study prepared to investigate the subject under discussion. Remember to use the pastors/elders of your church. They may have something already prepared or can steer you to good resources to find the answer.

- E. **How do you deal with people who give answers that have nothing to do with the question being asked?** Every once in a while you get someone who is losing it mentally. They give answers that have nothing to do with the question asked. When this happens, I like to ask, “So how does your answer relate to the question?” Or say, “Let’s stick to the text and study questions.” If they attempt to show how their answer relates to the text, you might just have to let them explain and when they are finished say, “No, that is not what the text is saying.” Then ask someone else to attempt a right answer to the question.
- F. **How do you deal with those who can’t understand the text, get frustrated, and keep saying, “I don’t see how you get that,” or “I don’t understand,” “I can’t figure out how you see that in the text.”** Encourage them and say, *“I can see you are frustrated about this and I wish we had more time to discuss it here, but we don’t. Bible study is often hard work and answers are often difficult. Maybe we meet and talk about it later.”* Verbally hold their hand and lead them to the answer. Also remember that if a person isn’t a believer they will often be able to make observations, but not sound interpretation, and application. If you see a pattern, get together with them, talk to them about their faith and how they came to the Lord. Be prepared to share the gospel with them if you suspect they don’t know the Lord.
- G. **How do you deal with those who don’t do the assigned homework, but want to talk through the text and do their homework during the study?** Sometimes people are given homework but don’t do it and come unprepared. They often want to use the Bible study as a forum for thinking their way through the text and doing their homework. At this point it is up to you as a teacher to decide what you will allow. Many Bible study teachers do not allow class participation if people come unprepared. The reasons for this are several:
1. You don’t want to reward unfaithfulness.
  2. If you allow people time to work through their homework in class, you often can’t finish the lesson or spend time discussing the application. There is no incentive for doing the homework beforehand if you are going to do it together in class.
  3. Those who come prepared miss out on deeper discussion and time spent talking about personal application.
- H. **What do you do with people who challenge you and bring up Scriptures that seem to contradict what you are teaching from the text?** The Bible is a big book and there are lots of Scriptures that might be brought up in the discussion of any text. When someone quotes a

Scripture that seems to contradict what you are saying, first look at the context of the Scripture they are quoting and see if they are taking it out of context. If it seems upon first glance there is a contradiction, say, *“There is an apparent contradiction here. I will study up on this further and get back to you next week.”* Then come back prepared to explain how your text and the one quoted don’t contradict each other and what each means in their context. You never want to get into a cross reference quoting war because by doing so you imply that the Bible contradicts itself.

- I. **How do you deal with people who ask hard questions?** Sometimes you have very smart, inquisitive people who are critical and ask skeptical and difficult questions. They want to know the “why” of everything. You may not have the answer to all of their questions, but write them down. Say, *“I don’t know how to answer that but I will find out.”* Or, you can place the burden on them, and tell them to study up and come to the next class letting everyone know what they found. This may help curb their habit of asking hard questions. Some people enjoy stumping other people, but don’t enjoy studying the Bible to know God and His will for their life.
- J. You have probably noticed from the answers above that Bible study problems often require you to meet with people at a different time or study more after class. Though these things take time and effort, they come with the territory of being a Bible teacher. It is part of shepherding and discipling people. Remember Pastors are a good resource for difficult questions.

#### IV. **HOMEWORK**

You receive a call from the elder overseeing the music ministry. He asks if you would be willing to teach a short study on **Col. 3:16** to the people involved in the music ministry. (If you are a woman, he asks you to teach the women in the music ministry.) He then gives you these criteria:

- A. Make sure the lesson is practical and applied to those who lead the congregation in public worship.
- B. Make sure you give them practical ways to implement the truth in their lives.
- C. Make sure your study is one page long (10 point font).
- D. Make sure you go for the “fillets” because the people in the music ministry are used to rich and wonderful teaching.
- E. You will have about 20 to 30 minutes to teach your study.