

Topical Study

due at the beginning of the week 10 class

As mentioned in your text, a topical study is used to gather information about a certain topic you need information about. The focus of a topical study is different than the focus of a book study; consequently, the method of a topical study will differ from a book study. Chapter 5 of *Connected* describes the process of completing a topical study. Read through it before beginning this exercise to gain a general understanding of the process.

This study is due the 10th week of class, but we will find time to work on this from time to time during the semester. In addition, there will be a class topical study that will be completed during class. The class will be divided into groups and each group will choose a topic and study it.

Connected explains that there are two types of topical studies: personal and academic. Academic studies will be too broad for you to complete, and since most of you are not trying to preach a series of sermons on Sunday mornings, the personal study will be more useful. It also allows you to narrow your focus so that you can complete it in less time. This exercise will help you gain a broad, or general understanding of the topic you've chosen, but after doing that you will need to choose one thing to focus on in order to make your study more manageable and more useful. For example, suppose you are studying trials and you learn that they are sent by God to develop our strengths in certain areas of our lives. How can you narrow the focus of this topic so that it is useful for your specific situation? Maybe you have been in a trial for some time with no idea if you're handling it correctly. You might not need to know all the details about trials. You just want to know how to make it go away. The focus of your study will be to determine how to successfully end your trial.

There are some suggested topics you can use for this study. These topics can easily be narrowed so that the study is more personal than academic. Please use one of these suggested topics. If you would rather study a topic of your own, you will need to speak to me about it first. The goal of this exercise is not to see what information you can get from Scripture, but to see how well you follow the process. Remember, this class is designed to teach you the *method* of Bible study, and that is what I will be grading. I will want to know that you understand the *process* of performing a topical study.

Here are the suggested topics:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| ✓ The role of the Holy Spirit in our life | ✓ Driving |
| ✓ Mercy | ✓ Talking to people |
| ✓ Grace | ✓ Working |
| ✓ Drinking | ✓ Being a good neighbor |

Step1: Brainstorming

Identify key: words, people, passages, situations, phrases, scriptures, or places that remind you of your topic.

List them here

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Step 2: Find Key Information

Use your study tools, such as a concordance, topical Bible, cross references, etc., to get the key information you need to begin your study. Your goal in this step is to develop a list of scriptures to study that will teach you about your topic.

List them here

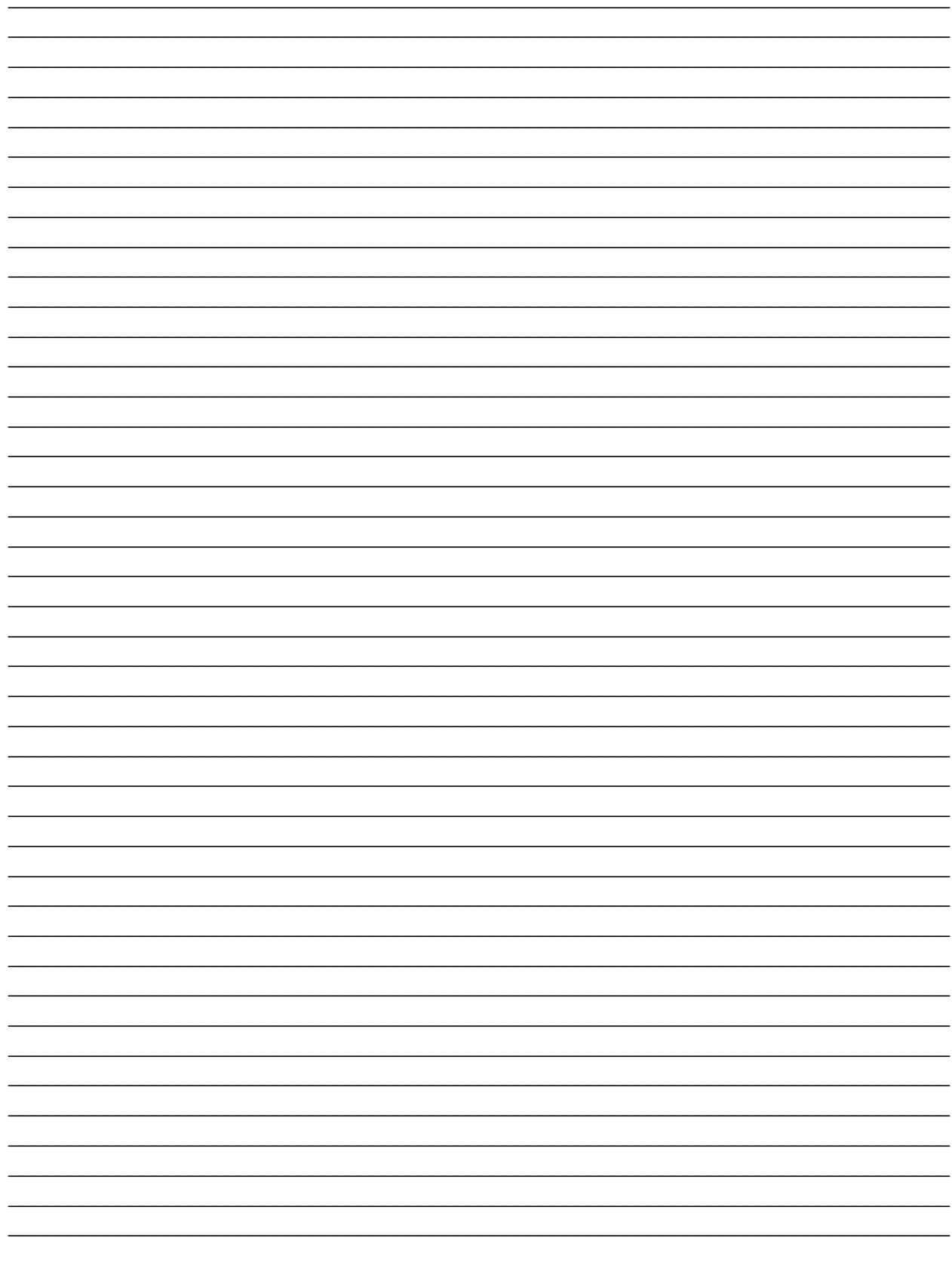
This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Step 3: Gather Information

This is the step where you begin studying the list of scriptures you found. It will be a challenge to keep the study of your scriptures in context, but you must make every effort to do this so that the information you retrieve is accurate. There are two dynamics of context in topical studies: local and broad. The local context is found in the passage of scripture you are studying. Review chapter 5 of *Connected* to see an example of this. The broad context is found throughout all the passages you are studying. The way you achieve this is to compare what you see in one passage to what you find in other similar passages. They should match. If you're studying the topic of "What Color is the Sky?", and five passages teach you that the sky is blue, and you come across one passage that says the sky is red, then that contradiction should cause concern. You will need to be very careful to make sure you understand the contradictory passage. The way you would do that is to study it in more detail in its local context.

Gather your information and make notes here

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Step 4: Find a Narrow Focus

Decide which aspect of your topic you want to give the most attention. Briefly give a broad analysis of your chosen topic, then tell which part of the topic you will focus on.

State your analysis here

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Step 5: Conclude Your Study

After you have decided on a narrow focus in the above step, you can use the information you have gathered in step 3 to make a conclusion about your topic. Sometimes, after narrowing the focus of your topic, you will need to find more passages and do more study to come to a proper conclusion.

Describe your conclusions here

[illegible]