

BT1000: Bible Study Methods - Syllabus

This course will help you learn the inductive method of Bible study. The student will develop skills in rightly observing, interpreting and applying a given biblical text to his or her life.

Description:

In many ways, building a relationship with God is just like building a relationship with friend or loved one. It takes communication that is personal and intimate. Communication with friends is accomplished by writing, e-mailing, talking face to face, or talking on the phone.

Communication with God is accomplished through Bible study and prayer. The Bible is God's message to us, and closeness to Him is accomplished through prayerful study of Scripture.

The intent of this class is to provide the student with the fundamentals necessary to strengthen their communication with God by strengthening their ability to study the Bible. Prayerfully, this will result in closer fellowship with God.

Required Book:

Leroy Harrison - *Connected: Closeness to Christ through Bible Study* and *The Connected Workbook*.

Schedule and Expectations:

Students are expected to attend class and participate in class study sessions and discussions and complete any required homework. Much of the work will be completed during class, so it is essential that students begin on time. Contact the instructor if you will be absent or late.

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Week	Topic
1	Bible study format, introduction to study materials, book introductions
2	Bible study fundamentals and Bible study methods, Bible study practice
3	Bible study practice
4	Bible study practice
5	Bible study practice
6	Bible study practice
7	Bible study practice
8	Bible study practice
9	Topical study
10	Topical study

BSM General Course Expectations

Learning Bible Study Methods is not difficult, but it will require effort. True bible study is time consuming, and the best way to teach the method in a classroom environment is to have every student participating in the discussions and projects. Most discussions will be in small groups, so if you are uncomfortable speaking publicly, this format might make your class time easier.

Attendance to the class is mandatory. Passing this class depends on it. You can only miss two classes and pass this course. If you miss more than two, you will be required to re-take the class. Ministry absences are excused. If your ministry requires you to miss a class you will receive credit for attendance, as long as you inform me the week before you are scheduled for your ministry obligation. The only other way you can fail this class is by not making the required effort. I do not usually fail a student, but I reserve the right to do so if I believe they are not making a sincere effort to learn the material.

The weekly and semester homework assignments are to be completed thoroughly with effort that reflects your own work. You may certainly work with your classmates when working on your assignments, but you are not allowed to use commentaries or any other resource that will provide you an interpretation of the passage you are studying. You are, however, encouraged to use other tools that will shed light on some of the ancillary issues that will help you understand more about the passage you are studying.

If you require help at any time, feel free to contact me. My contact information is on page one of this syllabus. Please understand that due to the nature of my work, I am separated from my phone during the day. Please don't be offended if I don't respond to you until the evening of the day you contact me.

Expectations for Homework Assignments

The homework assignments in this class are top-heavy. In other words, most of them occur during the first half of the semester. Some are optional and some are required. In either case, they will not usually be collected, but they will sometimes be discussed in class. Your input in the class discussions will reveal your effort on the assignment. Two things to remember about your homework assignments. First, there are no wrong answers. Your answers might be incomplete, but that is because Bible study takes time and you will not usually get a complete understanding of a passage until you go through it several times. The reason the class discussions are so important is because they will help you see what others see that you missed, and let them see what you saw that they missed. Second, remember from chapter two of your text that Bible study is worship. Always spend time in prayer before beginning your assignment.

Assignment 1: Repetition Exercise, due week 3

You will be given a choice of passages that contain words that are repeated throughout. Your task is to list the words, determine their meaning, and use them to help determine the point the author of the passage is trying to make.

Assignment 2: Imaginative (Moses), due week 4

You will study the account of Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush. Use your imagination to discover what some of the details of that conversation *might* be. Answer the questions that are given to the best of your ability.

Assignment 3: Selectively, due week 5

This assignment is straightforward. You will be given a passage to study and a list of questions to answer. The point of this exercise is to get you to ask questions that are not obvious. It should help you see more details in a passage than what is on the surface. This exercise will help you learn how to kick start a study that might be moving slowly.

Assignment 4: Contrast, due week 6

This assignment will be reviewed in class. It will have you study the parable of the Good Samaritan to see how the differences between the main characters help Jesus teach the lesson He wants us to learn.

Expectations for the Psalm 19 Semester Assignment

The Psalm 19 passage is a semester long assignment that has a twofold design. First, it should test your ability to find a few of the elements of Bible study that we will discuss in class. Second, after your analysis you should have a good idea of the effect Scripture has on the child of God and the impact it can have on his or her life. We will review this assignment several times through the semester in order to make sure you are on track with your analysis. You are expected to keep up with the assignment, use your study tools to help discover details, and to refrain from using commentaries to study this (or any) passage. I can usually spot material that comes from a commentary. If I discover that you have been using one, you will not receive credit for this assignment. However, you are allowed to work together through the semester, if you wish.

This assignment should either be handwritten, typed on the form I provided in the introductory e-mail, or e-mailed to me. It is due at the beginning of the 9th class.

Expectations for the Topical Study

The topical study will teach you how to get information from Scripture about any topic that you need to know more about. However, I do not care about the information you dig from your study; after all, this is a Bible study *methods* class, not a Bible study. What I am expecting is that

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you become familiar with the process of completing a topical study. This exercise will ask you to perform the steps of a topical study and list them. As long as you can show me that you understand the process of doing this type of study, I will accept it. If you can do the process, you will be able to get any kind of information you need or want from the Bible.

Like the assignment in the previous section, this assignment should either be handwritten, typed on the form I provided in the introductory e-mail, or e-mailed to me. It is due at the beginning of the 10th class.

Personal Book Study

This is an optional assignment, but it might help you in case of unexpected absences. Using the process learned in class, study a book of your choice outside of the classroom. Make sure all the steps of the process are written. At my discretion, if you encounter an absence due to an emergency, I may give you credit for attendance if I see your work. Many times during a semester, students will need to travel for an unexpected family or work issue. If I see you have been working on a study of your own and it reflects your familiarity for the process (at least as much as we have studied up to that point) I will very likely give you credit for your absence. This policy may or may not extend to absences for business reasons. Again, that decision remains solely at my discretion.

Goals for this Class

The primary goal of this course is to increase and strengthen your relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. This point will be driven home during your time in this class. I am not concerned with how much you know as much as I am with how much you grow. You will learn how to gather facts from Scripture in this class, but that is not the primary motive. The process you will learn of how to gather those facts will help bring you closer to the Lord.

The secondary goal of this course is for you to be able to reproduce this process in others. Take what you learn and teach it to your spouses, children, neighbors, and co-workers. My prayer is that this course will fortify your relationship to the Lord and motivate you to teach others how to transform their own relationship to Him.