



## A Good Method to use...

- When you want to discuss the Bible spontaneously.
- When you don't have time to prepare.
- When you study with friends who have little or no experience with in-depth Bible study.



### Light Bulb:

- What important or main ideas stand out in this passage?
- What illuminating themes are presented in this passage?
- What important characters, setting, plot, themes stand out?
- What stands out in general in this passage?



### Question Mark:

- Is there something difficult to understand in this passage?
- Does this passage generate questions you would like to understand?
- What question would you ask the author if you had the opportunity?



### Arrow:

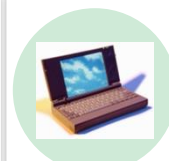
- What can you do after reading this passage?
- How can you apply principles of this passage to your personal life?
- What personal application can you derive from this passage?



## SWEDISH METHOD



**"One to One Bible Reading,"**  
by David Helm  
This book includes excellent description of both Swedish & COMA methods with suggested questions and passages.



### Swedish Method Description:

<http://bit.ly/SWmeth>



### Swedish Method Template:

<http://bit.ly/SWtemp>

[More Resources](#)

## COMA METHOD

### Context

- Who is the original author and what was his intent in writing?
- What is the historical background and context for this passage?
- Who was the original audience and why was this written specifically to them?
- What type of literature is this section? (Historical, Narrative, Epistle, Gospel, Poetry, Psalm (Song), Prophetic, Apocalyptic, etc.)
- Who was the intended audience or recipient of the letter?

### Observation

- What key words do you observe? Are there any repeated words?
- What are the grammatical features of the passage? What are the verbs of the passage? Nouns?
- What are the descriptive words (adjectives, adverbs)? What pictures do these words bring to mind?
- Are there instances of figurative language like similes (comparisons using like or as) or metaphors (direct comparisons)?
- Are there any connecting or transitional words (example: therefore, but, etc.)?

### Learning

- What do specific words mean? (Several Bible study aids are available to help readers with original meaning of words in Hebrew & Greek.)
- How do key words relate to the overall theme of the Bible (the Gospel)?
- What is the overall meaning or theme of this particular passage, book?
- Are there any allusions (references to people, events, or things outside the context of the passage that enhance meaning)?
- What does the passage teach about God? Man?
- How does this passage fit into the overall book and the Bible as a whole?

### Application

- How does this passage address what you think, say and do?
- Does this passage either challenge or support your current lifestyle?
- What areas of your life need change as a result of information in this passage?

## A Good Method to use...

- When you have time to prepare.
- When you want to dig more deeply into a text to discover context, word meanings and more.
- When you want to have a 4-step framework for understanding the deeper meaning of a text.

### More Resources



All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.  
(2 Timothy 3:16-17 ESV)



## A Good Method to use...

- When you want to capture the main principles (and check them with trusted resources) within the method.
- When you want to study the steps of interpretation in the order in which you encounter them in study.



"Getting the Message," by Daniel Doriani This book presents THIS unique method of study developed by Daniel Doriani and presents both specific helps for exegeses and hermeneutics. Contains relevant exercises.



"C.A.P.T.O.R."

How to Study The Bible using the CAPTOR method (A Study on Philipians)

<http://bit.ly/htCAPTOR>

More Resources

The ideas presented in method form are provided with suggested resources to both give proper credit where due, and to provide additional and more detailed resources where desired.

## CAPTOR METHOD <sup>1</sup>

- C**ontext
  - Who is the original author? What is his purpose in writing?
  - What is the historical background of this passage? (Culture, Language, Customs, Religion, Beliefs)
  - What is the literary context: How does this verse relate to the verses, chapters and book? Is there a theme to this passage?
- A**nalysis
  - What is the flow of events in a story (narrative)?
  - What is the flow of ideas in a teaching (discourse)?
  - Narrative* – observe the literary flow carefully...what is the beginning, middle, end (the plotline)? What are the problems (plot)? Theme? What does the narrative reveal about God? Man?
  - Discourse* – observe the intent and specific principles & precepts. Look for logical flow and connected ideas.
- P**roblems
  - What are the words, customs, phrases or names you don't understand?
  - Identify both overt and hidden problems. Ask questions!
  - Many factual problems can be investigated using a good Bible Encyclopedia or Dictionary.
- T**hemes
  - Identify the topics of the passage, the time of the passage and the overarching message of the text and surrounding texts.
  - Ask questions, study, and search information based on surrounding texts and related texts. Use Bible Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Concordances, Biblical Theology Handbooks.
  - Based on this text, surrounding text & related cross references, what is the theme?
- O**bligations
  - Does this passage require that you do something. If so, what?
  - If the passage does not specifically state what you should do, what does the theme, message or story present and teach, i.e., how does this message relate to you?
- R**eflection
  - How does the passage reflect upon the condition of fallen man?
  - How does the passage reflect the redemptive plan of the Gospel through Christ?

<sup>1</sup> CAPTOR Method: Doriani, Daniel, *Getting the Message*.

## SOAP METHOD

- S**cripture
  - Choose a passage of scripture.
  - Read through the passage carefully. Re-read it.
  - Journal. Write the scripture(s) down.
- O**bservation
  - Write observations about the scripture down in your journal.
  - Feel free to read observation questions from other methods to record your thoughts.
- A**pplication
  - Record how you can respond to this passage today – how does this passage effect what you think, say, do?
  - How does this passage address any current struggles?
- P**rayer
  - Pray through the scripture – asking God to help you to continue to learn from his word, and to apply his Word.
  - Feel free to journal your responses.

## A Good Method to use...

- When you teach children a simple acronym, or want to remember this simple acronym for your own studies.
- When you have more time than a spontaneous study, but not enough time to study in depth.
- When you want to journal sections of scripture during quiet times.

More Resources

Website:  
[soap.com](http://soapstudy.com/)  
<http://soapstudy.com/>



YouTube.com   
 A kindergarten demonstrates SOAP:  
<http://bit.ly/YTsoap>



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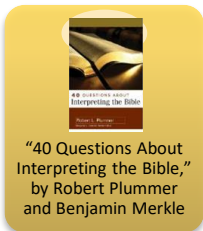
- When you want a simple construct to create your own questions for a given passage, chapter, book.
- When you want to remember three simple steps and you have the time to study in depth.
- When you want to proceed logically through a series of related questions within 3 broad categories (listed below).

## OBSERVATION

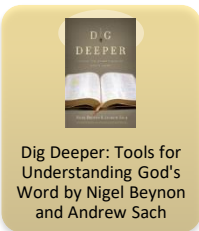
What does it say?

## INTERPETATION

What does it mean?



"40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible," by Robert Plummer and Benjamin Merkle



Dig Deeper: Tools for Understanding God's Word by Nigel Beynon and Andrew Sach

More on Interpretation

## APPLICATION

How do I apply it?  
What do I do?

More Information: A very thorough set of inductive Bible study questions:  
<http://bit.ly/inducstudy>

# INDUCTIVE METHOD

Answer the 5 W's" & How:

- WHO:**  
Who was the passage written by (author)?  
Who was the passage written to (audience)?
- WHAT:**  
What is the overall context?  
What historical circumstances preceded or took place during the writing?  
What problems existed during this time period and how are these problems addressed?  
What type of literature or literary genre is the passage?  
What grammatical features point to further illumination in the passage (repeated phrases, key words, figurative language (similes, metaphors, etc.)? What is the plot (for a narrative)? What are the key points (for an epistle)? What is the goal (for wisdom literature)?  
What is the overarching theme or the repeated principle (also called "the melodic line")?
- WHEN**  
When was the passage written?  
When does this fall in the biblical timeline in terms of Christ being foretold, revealed or remembered?
- WHERE**  
Where was this written?  
Where are the places referred to (if any) in the passage and how are they relevant?
- WHY**  
Why did the author write this passage? Why does the Lord want this communicated today (to you)?  
Why did the author place this passage just where it is?
- HOW**  
How is the GOSPEL revealed?  
How does the passage present God? Man?  
How does the text relate to the passages & chapters before and after?  
How does the passage begin and end?
- What does the passage mean (to answer this question, you need to have already observed well). What was the author's original intent? Why was this written? Thus, the question isn't, "What does this mean to me?" Instead, the question is, "What does this mean?"
- Does the passage have any typological references (Is there a type, model or pattern represented in the OT which is overtly explained or understood or even fulfilled with a higher purpose in the NT? Example: OT: sacrifices, NT: Jesus as the final sacrifice.)
- How can I apply hermeneutical principles (research needed) to properly understand the meaning of this passage?
- How can I currently apply what I have read?
- Is there any area that I should change the way I am currently thinking?
- Is there any area that I can change what I am saying?
- Is there any area that I can change what I am doing?
- Is there any current area of temptation that I can overcome?
- Are there evidences of grace (areas I have seen change) that I can appreciate more fully as a result of studying this passage?

*Inductive reasoning, also known as induction or informally "bottom-up" logic, is a kind of reasoning that constructs or evaluates general propositions that are derived from specific examples."*  
-Wikipedia

Each method listed provides a framework for study. Every method employs some means of analysis, determining meaning and application. **The method one uses to study is not as important as following proper rules of interpretation, also called "hermeneutics."** More on hermeneutics from Monergism.com:  
<http://bit.ly/hermmon>