

Oica

Biblical exegesis (from the [Greek](#) ἐξηγεῖσθαι 'to lead out') is an extensive and critical interpretation of the [Bible](#). The word exegesis means to draw the meaning out of a given text. It is sometimes contrasted with eisegesis, which means to read one's own interpretation into a given text. In general, exegesis presumes an attempt to view the text objectively, while eisegesis is more subjective.

The "OICA" Methodology of Bible Study

OICA is an acronym representing the four steps of an inductive Bible study:

- 1 - [Observation](#) - What is being said
- 2 - [Interpretation](#) - What is being meant
- 3 - [Correlation](#) - Where else is it being said and/or explained
- 4 - [Application](#) - What will I do about what is being said

One last step that I've added is Internalization (you'll notice that I don't use many notes... that's because after studying I take 2-3 days and pray through, work through, get used to, and seek to illustrate the things that I have learned. I don't want to try and preach about something that hasn't changed me or that I'm excited about.) Ultimately if it hasn't changed me or I'm not excited about God's word, you won't be either ☺

- 5 - [Internalization](#) - Keeping the Bible and what it teaches on your mind

Inductive Bible study is that Bible study which occurs when the passage being studied is allowed to speak to us, our conclusions being drawn from the passage. It is the opposite of deductive Bible study, that which forms conclusions prior to the Bible study and searches the Bible for support for these conclusions, often taking passages out of their context in the process. In performing inductive Bible study we are reading data from the passage, while in performing deductive Bible study we are reading data into the passage.

Step 1: Observation

Read the passage being studied several times in order to get a good feel for the details. Act as though you are reading this passage for the first time and observe all the facts. Ask questions of the passage:

- 1 - Who is involved?
- 2 - What are they doing?
- 3 - Where are they? Where are they going?
- 4 - When did this happen, what happened before, what will happen afterwards.
- 5 - Why is this happening, what happened to lead up to this event?
- 6 - Had this been foretold?

Some of these questions will lead to the next step of interpretation but that is not the goal during the observation step, what you are attempting here is to get a good understanding of the flow of the passage, its surrounding events, its characters – you are in short looking for every detail you can find. Take your time through this stage as it is foundational to the overall impact of the study. **Remember that context is everything! The bible works as a “whole”. Each word fits into a verse, each verse a chapter, each chapter a book, and each book a comprehensive whole. Nothing will say or mean anything that the other 65 books don’t support!**

Step 2: Interpretation

Regard the passage as though you are a detective, studying the passage for any clues that can help to answer the following questions:

- 2.1 - What does this passage mean, what is being said? Attempt to discover the actual meaning of the passage.
- 2.2 - What was the author trying to say to his original readers, how would the original readers have understood this passage?
- 2.3 - What is the author trying to say to me? Keep in mind that there is often significant distance (historical, political, societal, cultural, geographical, covenantal and positional to name just a few) between ourselves and the original readers.
- 2.4 - Why is this here, what is the theological significance of the text?

Keep in mind that: **When the plain sense of Bible makes common sense, seek no other sense, you might find nonsense.** The Bible was written for normal people to understand, not merely the super intelligent or those who (according to some cults) claim an additional knowledge not generally given to all. Don't look for hidden meanings unless you have good reason to think there is further meaning that is not obvious or indicated by the surrounding context. This means that we are not to modify the plain sense of the Bible when it contradicts our treasured beliefs but must instead modify even our treasured beliefs when the teaching of the Bible is against them. Remember also to ask questions, Christianity is not a faith for the intellectually challenged and our God is not a God who acts in a manner that is beyond our ability to understand, though He often acts in ways that are beyond our capacity to understand. We can ask questions of all that we read in the Bible and expect reasonable answers that we are able to understand and that are consistent with teachings elsewhere in the Bible.

Some general principles of interpretation are:

- 1 - Interpret the Bible by the Bible, refer to parallel passages, noting both differences and similarities
- 2 - Research the words recalling that even in English the meanings of various words will change over time. Remember, too, that different words may be used to convey similar concepts, such as our use of acquaintance, friend, intimate friend, girlfriend & boyfriend, fiancée, wife & husband, or parent & child to define various aspects of the love relationship between humans.
- 3 - Evaluate the use of grammar, why were the words put together as they have been? Would an other idea have been conveyed if the grammar had been different?
- 4 - Carefully consider the context of the verse, passage, paragraph, chapter and book. Context is either near (in the same body of text) or remote (in a removed portion of text).
- 5 - Discover what the author's intent was in writing what you are reading. For example: Paul's letters generally convey the occasion of each letter, as do some of the gospels, for other writing you may have to do some research.
- 6 - Study the background of the book of which your study passage is a part by use of Bible dictionaries, encyclopaedias, maps, etc.
- 7 - Consider the author's themes in other writings. For example: Does Revelation have anything to offer to our study of the Gospel of John.
- 8 - Evaluate how you would understand the writer if they were communicating directly with you. What would you most immediately understand him to be saying.

Step 3: Correlation

Correlation can actually be part of interpretation and is frequently done simultaneously. When you correlate, you are bringing up sections from other parts of the chapter, book, or entire Bible that help you to understand the section you are studying and are operating on the principle that: The Bible is its own best interpreter. An example of correlation would be to refer to parallel passages in the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) during a study of the gospel of John. A concordance, cross reference system or study Bible (such as the Thompson Chain Reference Bible) will be especially valuable at this stage. **Other useful practices in correlation are: paraphrasing the passage, summarizing the passage, outlining the passage, and making charts that relate concepts and ideas in the passage to each other and to other passages dealing with similar ideas. Various of these devices will appear in some form or another in the following section on the Bible study methods. The internet has provided a great tool for not buying numerous books... use it but be very careful about whose words you're trusting... the internet has allowed everyone to be published and look like a scholar ☺**

Step 4: Application

Application begins during your study but continues on into your day-to-day living. Bible study without application becomes a stale, intellectual exercise, like sitting in a car without fuel you will not go anywhere. Your spiritual growth will not occur by merely reading the Bible, its truths must be acted out. Do not rush into application until you are sure what the passage says and means, then adjust your life accordingly. Take steps also to measure your application, evaluate your progress and make the necessary changes in your application. If you are unable to apply the passage, try asking yourself these questions: **This is where you do the fun stuff (illustrations, funny stories, anecdotes... only after you've done the hard digging!)**

- 1 - Is there a command for me to obey?
- 2 - Is there a good example for me to follow?
- 3 - Is there a sin here for me to avoid?
- 4 - Is there something here I want to thank God for?
- 5- Is there a promise I can call my own?
- 6 - Is there a blessing I can enjoy?
- 7 - Is there a failure from which I can learn?
- 8 - Is there a victory for me to win?
- 9 - Is there a new thought about God, the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Satan, man?

10 - Is there a truth in this passage that has greatly affected me?

Remember during your study the words of Jesus:

Matthew 7:24-27 - 24 "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

This is a clear warning to all who would learn the Bible that its teaching is for application into one's life in order that that life may be build upon the Solid Rock. It is important to allow change to occur as we read the Bible else we become like the man who built his house on the sand, we hear the words of God but fail to take heed of them and so our life is lost in the storm. Some of the study methods that follow will give you opportunity to note various applications and provide for you to be able to evaluate you application after a certain period of time. **If you will follow those prompts you will be able to allow God to change your life through you times of fellowship with Him in the study of His word and then he will use you to touch others. All of this seems like a lot at first and a lot of pressure and it should (James 3:1) but over time you begin to understand context, history, and cultural values so you don't need to do as much digging... comes with experience.**

Remember that if you plan to teach God will ask that you have integrity first. When God comes to change us He is asking that we eliminate all within us that is contrary to His will, not merely the worst of it.

Step 5: Internalization

We live in an age where entertainment of various types is widely available and it is quite possible to fill all of one's uncommitted time with the enjoyment of these entertainments. While entertainment in and of itself is not a bad thing entertainment becomes bad when it consumes all of our time and it becomes especially bad when it takes from our time with God. You may well ask "How much of my time belongs to God?" The answer is all of it. Every second that you "own" is given to you by God and is His to command. Any activity that takes our time from God is

harmful. The Israelites were commanded by God at Mount Sinai to meditate upon the scripture at every opportunity.

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 - 6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Colossians 3:16 - 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Too often we avoid Scripture memory, thinking that it is too hard, that we are too old to being to memorize Scripture, or that with all the resources around today we do not need to memorize the word of God. The verse quoted above from Deuteronomy does not exempt the aged from contemplation of the word of God, nor does it suggest that having a book handy is sufficient to obey the command. **If you don't have a great memory (like me) get really good at knowing chapters in the bible where things are located... that way you don't need to know the exact verse and with a bible always with you, can find and recite what you're looking for!**

Common Errors

[Closing the Mind](#)

[Cultural Redefinition](#)

[Deductive vs. Inductive Bible Study](#)

[Getting Lost in the Details](#)

[Giving Up](#)

[Ignoring Clarification](#)

[Indecisiveness](#)

[Missing the Obvious](#)

[Overlooking Context](#)

[Seeing only the Spectacular](#)

[Selective Interpretation](#)

Communication Pattern

Don't simply exegete and then speak... remember that you need people to "realize there's a problem that needs solving before you go at solving it"

A good plan of attack:

1. Share your personal problem or question
2. Share how "we all" share that same problem or question
3. Share God's truth and answer about it
4. Share how awesome it would be if "we all" chose to do it God's way

Example

Me

I struggled in 8th grade with lust at middle school when....

We

We all remember looking at someone and thinking...

You guys know you do it

You girls know you feel like a piece of meat sometimes

God

God says don't even ponder it (eph 5)

God says we can do it when married (1 cor 7)

God says focus on him (1 John 1)

Me/We

Imagine what our lives would look like if we lifted each other up all the time