

Do you long for a relationship with God, but feel lost when you open your Bible, not even knowing where to begin? ... Or do you read passages of Scripture and find that only moments later you can't even remember what you just read? Are you frustrated that there are so many different opinions about what the Bible says on a given subject and you wonder which one is true?

If any or all of these questions describe you, then take heart, beloved, for you are about to embark on a journey called "Inductive Bible Study" (IBS), one that has the potential to radically transform your life as you study God's Word in a way you heretofore never thought possible. Inductive Bible Study will expose you to an approach that can be applied to any Scripture, any time, any place, by any one. All that is required is the Holy Book, the Holy Spirit and a humble, teachable heart.

As you begin this journey, remember that the Bible will be your primary resource "for no (spoken) word from God (is) void of power (a more literal rendering of Luke 1:37 ASV than other translations) and "His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness (read that phrase again - do you believe this is true?), through the true knowledge of Him (found in His Word) Who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these (His "glory and excellence") He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them (we) might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2Pe 1:3,4-notes)

Allow the Author to speak directly, personally and powerfully to your mind but also to your heart. Remember that the Bible is the only book whose Author is always present when it is read.

**Knowing the Incarnate Word  
is the key to understanding the written Word  
And in growing in grace and knowledge  
of the Incarnate Word**

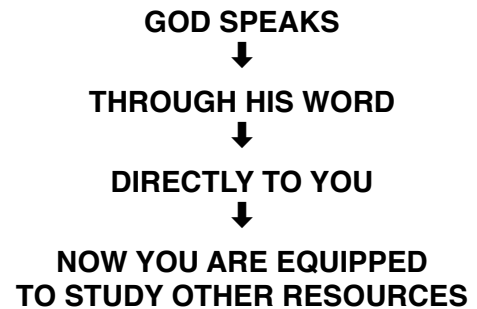
Beloved, many saints are sitting under the Word today in Bible believing churches, but they are not in the Word for themselves. As a corollary, many saints read the Word but fail to study the Word.

IBS is not a method to fill our head with Biblical facts and make us "smarter sinners". The ultimate goal of all IBS is the transformation of our lives from glory to

glory, daily becoming more like our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Are you ready to get into the Word so that the Word can get into you in a way you never previously thought possible? Then, my friend, get ready for the joy and adventure of Inductive Bible Study.

## YOUR PRIMARY SOURCE: THE BIBLE



After observing the schematic, you still may not appreciate the basic premise of Inductive Bible Study so let's illustrate two different approaches to Bible study using the life of a frog as our subject of study.

If you wanted to learn about frogs, you could go to the library and check out a book entitled "The Life of Frogs" (or in today's web savvy world you might "Google" the term "frog's life"). But how would you know that the so-called frog expert had really given you an accurate interpretation of a frog's life? You wouldn't if you relied solely upon that one source. On the other hand you could go to a nearby pond, sit by the water's edge and begin to observe and write down what you observed about the local frogs - how they gathered food, what they liked to eat and not eat, where they liked to sit, how they mated, where, when and how they laid their eggs, what transpired when the eggs hatched, and how long it took tadpoles to grow into adult frogs. Then you could take one of the slimy green creatures back home (not to your kitchen though), dissect him and observe how he was constructed in great detail, even observing the interrelationships of the innermost parts under a dissecting microscope. (cf. interrogation of the Bible with the 5W/H questions)

Now, let's be honest. Reading a reference by a "frog expert" is easier and more aesthetically pleasing than sitting by a pond and (heaven forbid) even touching one of the little green critters. And besides,

you could glean the salient frog facts in a fraction of the time it would take you to perform your own observations of the frog's life cycle. So what's the point? In the first method, you might remember what you read for a few days, but with the second method you would likely be able to recall your observations months, even years later. And which method provides the potential for the joy of self discovery? Which method "costs" the most (in time and effort)? I'm sure you can see the clear distinctions between these two methods.

In Bible study, you can study someone's else's study or you can study the Scripture for yourself. The inductive method provides you with the skills and familiarity with the tools which make it possible for even beginning students (as well as children) to confidently study the Scriptures without being forced to depend on secondary sources.

From the frog illustration, you can easily see that the key difference in the inductive approach is personal, active involvement in the process. As someone has said...

"I hear and I forget"  
"I see and I remember"  
"I do and I understand"

Instead of studying resources about the Bible, inductive study focuses first upon the Bible. You need to be willing to lay aside your preconceived notions, "pet" interpretations, ready references, study notes (yes, you heard correctly - even your study Bible - at least avoid looking at the notes on the Word prior to looking at the Word yourself!), sermon tapes or mp3's, etc, coming to the Scriptures as for the first time. Your primary resource is to be God's Word, and then other secondary resources.

The key to effective, fruitful inductive Bible study is personal involvement and learning how to carefully, prayerfully observe... not sitting by a pond, but sitting at the feet of Jesus, allowing the Spirit of Christ to lead you into all truth (cp Lk 10:38, 39, 40, 41, 42).

We do well to remember that Satan's initial attack was to undermine the truth of the Word of God by creating doubt...

*Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" (Ge 3:1, 2, 3, 4, 5)*

To create doubt about the value and veracity of the Word of God is still one of Satan's most effective weapons in his incessant war against God and His children. Therefore it behooves us to know the Word, lest we fall for the lie.

Never let good books take the place of the Bible. Drink from the Well, not from the streams that flow from the Well.

There is no greater privilege or joy than studying the Word of God. When we realize that God loved us enough not only to send His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, but also cared enough for us to give us His revealed truths to challenge and guide our lives, we are amazed at how little we deserve and yet how much He has done for us! There is only one set of final truths in this world, not mathematics or science (for all physical laws are invalid in a quasar or a black hole), but only the Word of God. In this the eternal principles intended to direct us through this life are truly found. Therefore it is both a privilege and a responsibility to study God's Word as carefully as possible.

To fail as a Christian to study God's inspired revelation is tantamount to refusing to know the laws of the country we live in and breaking those laws with impunity. It is a failure that can and will have catastrophic results, for it means we do not care about the rules we have promised to obey by virtue of being citizens of our country—whether that be the USA or Britain or heaven (cf. Php 3:20, 21-note).

May the Spirit of the Living God give all of His children a burning desire to diligently study His Living Word inductively that He might make each of us into oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, (Why? What should be the final goal of all serious Bible study? Smarter sinners? No! Sinners more like their Savior...) that He may be glorified." (Isaiah 61:3) (cp Ps 1:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 - notes Ps 1:1; 1:2; 1:3; 1:4; 1:5; 1:6)

