

Wednesday in the Word Bible Study

First Mount Zion Baptist Church (FMZBC), Dumfries Virginia
FMZBC Four Step Strategy - Worship/**Study of the Word**/Stewardship/Service

April 23, 2025
11:00 A.M.

Lesson Focus: How To Study the Bible: Observation-**Interpretation**-Application
Gospel of John 4:1-42 (NIV)
Presenter: Reverend Helen Parker



Introduction: Today we will conclude this month's focus on the *Study of the Word* as we continue exercising the Inductive Method of Bible study (**Observation, Interpretation and Life Application**) or **OIL**. Again, the primary goals are to observe and interpret the biblical text that the author intended to communicate, and to apply our understanding of those teachings in everyday life.

Last week during the "Observation" lesson we examined six questions that are considered when using the "Inductive Bible Study" method (What, When, Where, How, and Why). This morning we will build on what we learned last week as we *interpret* the text.

- **Shedding Light on Interpretation:**

- **Context** - Know the immediate and remote context. Know the surrounding verses. Be familiar with the "connective fiber". What comes before and after the passage. Be able to "trace the thread of thought". Any text without correct context can become a "pretext" or "proof text". Both can be problematic for "interpretation" of scripture.
- **Words have Meaning** - Words and meaning change over time. Examine how words fit together in the text. Define words' original meanings and within the context they are used.
- **Grammar** - Words are used in combination with other words. Grasping or comprehending the text means we have the same understanding of the writer's word usage and how their words relate to one another. What person, place or thing, or idea was previously mentioned in the text?

- **Background** - Understanding the lifestyle, customs, and language, helps interpret the setting and meaning of the Bible.
- **Contextualization** - Seek to interpret the scripture in light of the ethnic, cultural, and everyday situations.
- **Balance Your Interpretation** - “Scripture interprets Scripture”.

Practicing Our Interpretation Skills - John 4: 1-42

1. What is the context?

2. What do the words mean?

3. What does the grammar show?

4. What is the background?

5. What is the literal interpretation/meaning of the text?

6. Does our interpretation balance with the rest of scripture?

“As we immerse ourselves in Scripture and think Bible...Bible...Bible, we’ll soon find that its truths are recorded in our changed lives.” After interpretation, **“Application” is the third step in transformative Bible study.**

Tonight’s “Wednesday in the Word Bible Study” (7:30 pm) will focus on **“Life Application” of the sacred text.**

Heitzig, Skip. *How To study The Bible And Enjoy It*. Revised and Expanded Version. Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, Incorporated, 2002, 69-87;135-136.