

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- C Write the Key Verse from memory.
- C Define the biographical study method.
- C Do a biographical Bible study.

KEY VERSE:

Now all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition. . . (I Corinthians 10:11)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter defines and explains the biographical method of Bible study, an example of the method is presented, and in the "For Further Study" section you are given the opportunity to do a biographical study.

THE METHOD DEFINED

A biography is the story of someone's life. The biographical method of Bible study focuses on the lives of Bible personalities. By studying the lives of Bible characters you can learn from their experiences. The Bible states:

Now all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition. (I Corinthians 10:11)

Events which happened in the lives of Bible personalities were recorded by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for your benefit. Their experiences can teach you great spiritual lessons. By observing their failures you can learn of spiritual errors to avoid. By observing their successes you can develop positive spiritual qualities in your own life.

THE METHOD EXPLAINED

STEP ONE: SELECT THE PERSON TO BE STUDIED:

You may choose a personality that is of special interest to you. You might want to choose

a person from the list in Hebrews 11, Galatians 3:7 or Luke 4:27. You might study an important person in the Bible book which you are presently reading or studying. Remember that the greatest biographical study of all is the life of Jesus Christ.

Be careful not to confuse names. For example, there are some 30 Zachariahs in the Bible, 20 Nathans, 15 Jonathans, 8 Judases, 7 Marys, 5 James, and 5 Johns. Be sure the verses you study are about the person you have selected and not another individual with the same name.

Also be alert for people who have more than one name. For example, Jacob's name was changed to Israel, Abram's name was changed to Abraham, and Saul's name was changed to the Apostle Paul.

STEP TWO: GATHER THE INFORMATION:

Gather all the information in the Bible on the person you select. If you have a concordance available, look up the name of the person and find a list of all references to him/her in the Bible. If you do not have a concordance, gather the references directly from the Bible. Most of the references concerning a selected Bible personality are found within one book or a series of consecutive books. List all the Bible references about the person you are studying, then look each one up in your Bible and read it.

STEP THREE: ANALYZE THE INFORMATION:

The following list identifies some of the information you should gather and analyze in a biographical study. The Bible may not give information on all of these items in every biography, but try to include everything it does reveal about the person you are studying.

Use the chart found at the conclusion of the "For Further Study" section of this chapter to record and analyze the information you gather.

Biographical information to obtain includes:

- Name and meaning of name.

- Relatives: Parents, brothers and sisters, ancestors, children.

- Birth: Location, importance of birth, unusual events surrounding birth.

- Childhood and early training.

- Geographical setting: Where does the story of this person's life occur?

- Friends and associates, personal relationships.

- Occupation or vocation: What position or office did they occupy? How did they earn their living?

- Physical description.

- Positive character traits.

Negative character traits.

Significant spiritual events:

First encounter with God

Conversion

Call to service

Greatest crisis or turning point in the person's life: (For example, Saul on the Damascus Road)

Death: When, where, unusual circumstances

STEP FOUR: APPLY WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED

Make personal applications from the life of the person you have studied. For example:

What were the positive character traits? Ask God to help you develop them in your own life.

What were the negative character traits? Do you see any of these in your own life? Ask God to help you overcome them.

Compose one sentence which summarizes the greatest truth you learned from this life. For example, a statement about the life of Sampson might be "Spiritual compromise results in failure."

EXAMPLE OF THE METHOD

STEP ONE: SELECT THE PERSON TO BE STUDIED:

King Saul

STEP TWO GATHER THE INFORMATION:

The story of Saul is found in I Samuel 9-31. The information on Saul was gathered from these chapters.

STEP THREE: ANALYZE THE INFORMATION:

Name and meaning of name:

Saul. Meaning "Asked of God." I Samuel 9:2

Relatives: Parents, brothers and sisters, ancestors, children:

Son of Kish who was the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of

Aphiah. Kish was a Benjamite and a mighty man of power. I Samuel 9:1

Saul had three sons: Jonathan, Ishui, and Melchishula. He had two daughters: Merab and Michal. His wife's name was Ahinoam. I Samuel 14:49-50

Birth: Location, importance of birth, unusual events surrounding birth.

The Bible does not state these facts.

Childhood and early training:

Cared for his father donkeys: I Samuel 9:3

Geographical Setting:

Judah

Friends and associates, personal relationships:

The children of Belial despised him: I Samuel 10:27. He was close to Abner, the captain of his host, who was his uncle's son: I Samuel 14:50. David became an associate of Saul. At first he was in favor, then Saul became jealous and their relationship was broken: I Samuel 18:6-9. When Saul first became king he had a band of men whose hearts God had touched. When Saul started adding "strong and valiant" men without direction from God, his problems began: I Samuel 10:26; 13:2; 14:52

Occupation or vocation:

First king of Israel.

Physical description:

From his shoulders upward he was higher than any of the people: I Samuel 9:2, 10:23

He was described as "goodly" which means handsome: I Samuel 9:2

Positive character traits:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Showed concern for family | I Samuel 9:5 |
| Choice man | I Samuel 9:2; 10:24 |
| Let spirit change his heart | I Samuel 11:6; 10:6 |
| Modest: Hides among the baggage | I Samuel 10:22 |
| Refuses to execute | I Samuel 11 |
| Leadership: Rallies people | I Samuel 11 |

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Man of the spirit | I Samuel 11 |
| Originally was obedient | I Samuel 9:27 |
| Aligned himself with godly | I Samuel 11:7; 10:26 |
| Bold for God | I Samuel 10:6 |
| Originally was humble | I Samuel 9:21 |

Negative character traits:

Did what was expedient rather than obeying God: I Samuel 13:8-13

Disobeyed, lied, then refused to accept the blame: I Samuel 15

Grieved God's people: I Samuel 15:35

More concerned with what man thought than God: I Samuel 15:30

Chose strong and valiant men to be close to him rather than the band of men God had touched: I Samuel 10:26; 14:52

Fearful: I Samuel 17:11

Judged by outward appearances: I Samuel 17:33

Trusted the armor of man: I Samuel 17:38

Jealous: I Samuel 18:6-9

Evil spirit: I Samuel 18:10

Spirit of revenge: I Samuel 18:11

Plotted against God's anointed: I Samuel 18:20-30

Significant spiritual events:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| First encounter with God: | I Samuel 9:15-27 |
| Conversion: | I Samuel 10:9 |
| Call to service: | I Samuel 10:1 |
| Greatest crisis or turning point: | I Samuel 13 |

Death: When, where, unusual circumstances:

I Samuel 31: Died by his own hand. His three sons, his armor bearer, and all his men died the same day in Mt. Gilboa during a battle with the Philistines.

STEP FOUR: APPLY WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED:

Positive character traits in Saul's life which I should seek to develop in my own life:

When the Spirit of the Lord comes on me, I can be changed into "another man": I Samuel 10:6. I should seek that type of anointing from God.

Negative character traits in Saul's life which I should seek to avoid in my own life:

God desires leaders after His own heart: I Samuel 13:14. Although Saul failed in this area, I desire to be such a leader.

Disobedience: Doing what is expedient rather than what God commands. Placing blame on others for my own sin. Caring more what man thinks than what God thinks of me.

I would do well to review the entire list of Saul's negative traits and examine my own heart from time to time.

God's call was for Saul to be captain over the people: I Samuel 10:1. It was people who made him king instead. (I Samuel 12:12-15; 10:24). God was to be Israel's king. I should use caution, lest the praise of people turn me aside from God's plan.

Although God was originally with Saul (I Samuel 10:7, 9; 13:14), He later lost the kingdom. Even after his sin and the prophecy of losing the kingdom, however, God's anointing still rested on Saul (I Samuel 14:47). The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. Saul still heard God's voice (I Samuel 15:1) and worshiped Him (15:31), but he had unconfessed sin and lost the kingdom.

David recognized the danger of touching a man anointed by God as a leader. I should heed this warning.

The greatest truth learned from the life of Saul is the result of disobedience to God. It is summarized in the statement of Samuel: "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." I Samuel 15:22

The result of such disobedience is summarized in David's statement about Saul: "How the mighty are fallen." II Samuel 1:19

SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verse from memory.

2. Define the biographical method of Bible study.

3. List the four steps of the biographical method of Bible study.

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Select a Bible character and do a biographical study. Use the following chart for this and other biographical studies you will do in the future.

BIOGRAPHICAL BIBLE STUDY

STEP ONE: SELECT THE PERSON TO BE STUDIED:

STEP TWO: GATHER THE INFORMATION:

List the Bible references which record the life of this person:

STEP THREE: ANALYZE THE INFORMATION:

Name and meaning of name:

Relatives: Parents, brothers and sisters, ancestors, children:

Birth: Location, importance of birth, unusual events surrounding birth:

Childhood and early training:

Geographical setting:

Friends and associates, personal relationships:

Occupation or vocation:

Physical description:

Positive character traits:

Negative character traits:

Significant spiritual events:

First encounter with God:

Conversion:

Call to service:

Greatest crisis or turning point:

Death:

STEP FOUR: APPLY WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED:

Positive traits I could develop:

Negative traits I should avoid:

The greatest truth I learned from studying this life is. . .

ANSWERS TO SELF-TESTS

CHAPTER ONE:

1. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (II Timothy 3:16-17)
2. The word "Bible" means "the books."
3. The word "Scripture" means "sacred writings."
4. Old Testament and New Testament.
5. 66.
6. Law, history, poetry, prophecy.
7. Gospels, history, letters, prophecy.
8. The word "testament" means "covenant."
9. For doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness. (II Timothy 3:16-17)
10. The Bible contains no contradictions and it is united in its major theme.
11. The Bible has variety.
12. a. T; b. T; c. F; d. F; e. F
13. Jesus. Luke 24:44-48.

CHAPTER TWO:

1. Let my cry come near before thee, O Lord; give me understanding according to thy Word. (Psalm 119:169)
2. 39

3. 27
4. If you just read a chapter here and there you fail to understand how the Bible fits together. You must read the Bible in an orderly way if you are to understand its content.
5.
 - Read daily.
 - Read selectively.
 - Read prayerfully.
 - Read systematically.

CHAPTER THREE:

1. The Lord gave the Word: great was the company of those that published it. (Psalm 68:11)
2. A version is a Bible written in a language different from the languages in which God's Word was originally written.
3. A translation is a word by word translation of the Greek, Hebrew, and Aramic words. A paraphrase does not translate word for word. It is translated thought by thought.
4. The King James version.
5. Because no two languages are exactly alike so differences occur when translation is done.
6. Hebrew, Aramic, and Greek.

CHAPTER FOUR:

1. He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. (John 8:47)
2. Because they try to read it the same way they do any other book.
3. Something you must do before you can do something else.
4. Knowing God and accepting Jesus Christ as Savior.
5. Believers who are called as teachers. The Holy Spirit.

6. The Holy Spirit.
7. The milk is the simple truths of the Word of God.
8. The meat is the deeper spiritual truths of the Bible which are not so easily understood.
9. -Desire the milk.
-Be obedient to God's Word.
-Search for the meat.
10. -Set a special time each day to study.
-Select a special place to study.
-Start each study session with prayer.

CHAPTER FIVE:

1. Thou through thy commandments has made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. (Psalm 119:98-100)
2. -To locate all the Bible references to a word.
-To locate a specific Bible text.
-To find the meaning of a word.
3. 4, 2, 6, 1, 3, 5

CHAPTER SIX:

1. Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (II Timothy 2:15)
2. It means you must understand what is being said to whom. You must also interpret and apply the meaning correctly.
3. The verbal inspiration of the Bible means every word in the original manuscripts was inspired by God.
4. The plenary inspiration of the Bible means the full inspiration of all Scripture as opposed to partial inspiration. Every portion of the Bible is inspired.
5. The rules and explanations are as follows:

1. The rule of divine authority. We accept the Bible as the final authority because it is inspired by God.
2. The rule of literal interpretation. The Bible means exactly what it says.
3. The rule of contextual consideration. Each verse must be studied in relation to its context.
4. The rule of first mention. The first time a word, phrase, object, or incident is mentioned in the Bible, it gives the key to its meaning anywhere else it is used in the Bible.
5. The rule of repetition. When something is repeated in the Bible it deserves special attention as it is very important.
6. The rule of cumulative revelation. The full truth of God's Word on any subject must not be gathered from an isolated passage. The cumulative (total) revelation of all the Bible says regarding a truth must be considered.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

1. Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever. (Psalm 119:152)
2. k, l, c, d, e, g, f, j, h, i, b, a
3. When.
4. Biblical archaeology is the study of remains found in Bible lands. It is a science which gains knowledge of Bible times from the study of existing remains of their civilizations.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

1. The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live. (Psalm 119:144)
2. The second main point should not come under point I. It should be a separate point and indicated by the Roman numerals II. Review the instructions for outlining given in this chapter.

3. Horizontally and vertically.
4. Marking is a way to emphasize key Bible passages. You underline selected verses or use symbols in the margins.

CHAPTER NINE:

1. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous thing out of thy law. (Psalm 119:18)
2. See the symbols listed in Chapter Nine.
3. See the purposes listed in Chapter Nine.
4. Everyone who claims to speak God's Word is not really doing so. There are false teachers.
5. God will add to them the plagues written in the Word. Revelation 22:18-19
6. Their part will be taken out of God's book of life and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in the Word. Revelation 22:18-19.
7. God.
8. God's words.
9. Milk and the meat.
10. Moses.

CHAPTER TEN:

1. Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy Word. (Psalm 119:148)
2. This method emphasizes application of knowledge to life and ministry. It results in increased devotion to God.
3.

| | |
|---|--|
| -Record passage information -Identify the key verse -Meditate | -Identify the subject -Summarize -Make application |
|---|--|

4. It is not enough just to hear the Word. You must also apply the Word in your life.
James 1:22-25
5. Satan fights the use of this method because he is concerned when Bible study results in application which brings positive change in spiritual life.

CHAPTER ELEVEN:

1. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word. (Psalm 119:9)
2. 2, 1
3.
 - Do an initial survey
 - Create a book study chart
 - Create an outline
4.
 - Title of the book
 - Theme
 - Author
 - To whom the book was written
 - Purpose
 - Basic life and ministry principle

CHAPTER TWELVE:

1. Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. (Psalm 119:11)
2. Study of the Bible by chapters.
3.
 - Select a chapter title.
 - Mark paragraph divisions.
 - Create a chapter study chart.
 - Create a chapter outline.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

1. The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. (Psalm 119:130)
2.
 - Do a chapter study
 - Observe details of the paragraph

- Create a paragraph study chart
- Create a paragraph study outline

3. 3, 2, 4, 1
4. 4, 5, 1, 2, 3
5. 3, 2, 4, 1

CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

1. My tongue shall speak of thy Word: for all thy commandments are righteousness. (Psalm 119:172)
2. Context.
3.
 - Study the verse within its context
 - Study related verses
 - Create a verse study chart
 - Create a verse study outline

CHAPTER FIFTEEN:

1. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (Matthew 5:18)
2.
 - Select the word.
 - Study the word within its context.
 - Determine the meaning.
 - Summarize your study.
3. A key word is one which is basic to the meaning of the verse. It is an important word. Sometimes it is a word difficult to understand or it is repeated for special emphasis.
4. The word "temperance" would be a good subject for word study. The other words are not key words.
5. A concordance and Bible word study book.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN:

1. Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore I

esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.
(Psalm 119:127-128)

2. The topical method focuses on a selected subject. The goal of the study is to discover all the Bible teaches on the subject.
3.
 - Select a topic.
 - Select the portion of Scripture.
 - Gather the information.
 - Summarize the information.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN :

1. Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition . . .(I Corinthians 10:11)
2. The biographical method focuses on the lives of Bible personalities. By studying their lives we learn from their experiences.
3.
 - Select the person to be studied.
 - Gather the information.
 - Analyze The Information.
 - Apply What You Have Learned.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN:

1. 7, 8, 5, 3, 4, 2, 1, 6, 9, 10
2. Thy testimonies are wonderful; therefore doth my soul keep them. (Psalm 119:129)
3. The theological method is the study of basic Bible doctrines about God. The method includes collecting, comparing, and organizing doctrinal statements.
4.
 - Select the topic of study.
 - Define the doctrine selected.
 - Select the Bible portion to be studied.
 - Gather information on the doctrine.
 - Summarize the information you gather.
5. A "doctrine" is a group of teachings about a certain subject. It contains all the Bible teaches on a selected subject.

CHAPTER NINETEEN:

1. Seven times a day do I praise thee because of thy righteous judgments. (Psalm 119:164)
2. b, c, a
3. c, a, b, d
4. Synonymous.
5. Antithetic.
6. Synthetic.
7. Emblematic.

CHAPTER TWENTY:

1. And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me. (Luke 24:44)
2.
 - To authenticate God's message.
 - To confirm God's messenger.
 - To instruct believers.
3. All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for study. Prophecy presents a proper perspective of past, present, and future events in the plan of God. Understanding God's future plan prevents deception by Satan. A special blessing is pronounced on those who study it.
4.
 - Recognize Jesus is the basic theme of prophecy.
 - Realize that in many cases the Bible interprets itself.
 - Understand the rule of double reference.
 - Understand prophetic perspective.
 - Realize that prophecy is conditional in nature.
5. God.
6. Prophecy means to speak forth under the inspiration of God.

7. -A message of inspiration from God.
 -Prediction of future events in God's plan.
 -An interpretation for man of the acts of God.
8. The spoken word and acted prophecy.
9. Genesis 3:15. It is the promise of a Messiah.
10. See the ways of identifying false prophets discussed in Chapter Twenty.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE:

1. For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. (Hebrews 10:1)
2. The typological method is the study of a person, place, event, or thing as a type of something else. Types give an advance view of what is to come in God's future plan. Although the type is important in itself, it has an even greater significance in the future person or event which it represents.
3. Shadow, figure, pattern.
4. -Persons
 -Places
 -Events
 -Material things
5. Joseph.
6. Jesus Christ.