

Liberty University John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

**Basic Bible Interpretation: Introducing the Inductive
Bible Study Method**

A Thesis Project Report Submitted to
the Faculty of the Liberty University School of Divinity
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

by

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THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY THESIS PROJECT ABSTRACT

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There is a dire need for Christians to know a viable method of biblical interpretation. This project seeks to address that need through teaching the inductive Bible study to a group of people in a Southern Baptist congregation. The participant learning outcomes for the project were to acquire a method of biblical interpretation, develop the ability to perform a method of biblical interpretation, gain knowledge of the book of Jude, and to utilize meditation as a means to enrich spirituality. This project used action research as its primary methodology. The triangulation method of data analysis was employed by collecting data from the pre-test and post-test, focus group, and field notes. A Likert survey was used to determine the likability of the project and to determine if the project could be repeated within the local ministry context. Through the data collected the project seeks to demonstrate that the inductive Bible study method is a viable option for one's own personal Bible study method.

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Key Words: Interpretive dependence, inductive Bible study, meditation, biblical illiteracy

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Abbreviations

IBS Inductive Bible Study

BOBS Bible Only Bible Study

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter will describe the ministry context, problem statement, purpose statement, and concludes with the project's thesis statement. The historical survey covers the origins of Nazareth Baptist Church, a description of the current state of Nazareth Baptist Church including staff, current programs, and the project facilitator relationship with the church. The problem statement demonstrates that due to interpretive dependence, there is a need for a consistent and effective Bible study method to teach the skills necessary to achieve a correct interpretation of the Bible. The purpose statement indicates that the goal of the project is to appropriate an inductive Bible study method to promote the ability to perform biblical interpretation. The definition section defines important terms relevant to the project and also discusses the basic assumptions of the project facilitator concerning the intervention. Limitations and delimitations of the project are discussed next followed by the project's thesis statement.

Ministry Context

Nazareth Baptist Church is nestled in a rural area in the Deep South on top of what is known as Sand Mountain in Rainsville, Alabama. DeKalb County has a population of 71,109 people which equates to 91.5 people per square mile. DeKalb County is 84% white, with the remainder of the population made up of African American (2%) and Hispanic (14%). The average median household income is \$38,842 and the county has a poverty rate of 19.5%.¹ The median age of residents of DeKalb County is 39.² Religious affiliations within DeKalb County are mostly Protestant (36,461), with few being Catholic (2,657), and 31,739 claiming no

¹ DeKalb County Economic Development Authority, "DeKalb Demographics," <https://www.dekalbeda.com/images/PDFs/About%20Our%20Community/DeKalbDemographics.pdf> (accessed May 22, 2019).

² Data USA, "DeKalb County, Alabama," <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/dekalb-county-al> (accessed May 30, 2019), 1.

religious affiliation.³ The DeKalb County school system employs 532 teachers who serve more than 7900 students in 14 schools.⁴

Rainsville has a population of 5,011 and the average median household income in Rainsville is \$37,119.⁵ The population of Rainsville is 90.5% white, 5.41% Hispanic, and 3.55% two or more races.⁶ The median age of residents in Rainsville is 42 and the poverty rate is 25.8%.⁷ Jobs held by citizens of Rainsville are manufacturing (35%), retail trade (11%), construction (10%), agriculture (7%), utilities (7%), educational services (7%), public administration (6%). The unemployment rate is 5%.⁸ Plainview High School is the only public school in Rainsville and serves 1,183 students in grades K-12.⁹ Rainsville also has one private school, Cornerstone Christian Academy, which also serves 321 students in grades K-12.¹⁰ Rainsville is also home to the DeKalb County Technology Center that serves all of the public schools in the county by offering educational training for nursing assistants, robotics, masonry, auto mechanics, auto body repair, welding, and cosmetology. The educational background of citizens in Rainsville is a high school diploma (81%), bachelor's degree (10%), and graduate or

³ City-data.com, "Rainsville, Alabama," <http://www.city-data.com/city/Rainsville-Alabama.html> (accessed April 18, 2019), 32.

⁴ Encyclopedia of Alabama, "DeKalb County," www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-1319 (accessed May 30, 2019), 3.

⁵ City-data.com, "Rainsville," 3.

⁶ Data USA, "Rainsville, Alabama," 2.

⁷ Ibid., 1.

⁸ Ibid., 16.

⁹ Public School Review, "Plainview School Profile," <https://www.publicschoolreview.com/plainview-school-profile> (accessed June 20, 2019), 2.

¹⁰ Private School Review, "Cornerstone Christian Academy Profile," <https://privateschoolreview.com/cornerstone-christian-academy-profile/35986> (accessed June 20, 2019), 2.

professional degree (5%).¹¹ Rainsville prohibits alcohol sales within its city limits. The crime rate in Rainsville is 152.0 which is well below the national average of 266.¹²

In Rainsville on July 28, 1906, Nazareth Baptist Church was organized with fifteen people present. The newly founded church adopted the Articles of Faith of the DeKalb Baptist Association, adopted a Church Covenant, and officially became Nazareth Baptist Church.¹³ In October 1906, Nazareth Baptist Church was officially admitted into the DeKalb Baptist Association during its 69th annual session. The church met in a log cabin until 1924 when a new building was constructed. As the church grew, a wing on the west side was added along with a two-story wing on the east side that served as classroom space. This would serve as the church building until July 1978 when the church was destroyed by fire. The church continued to meet in a local school cafeteria until a new church was completed in 1979. In 1992, a new sanctuary was dedicated, and the previous church building became the education building. A two-story Family Life Center was built in 2005 which completes the present-day Nazareth campus. The Life Center contains a full-service commercial kitchen, a regulation basketball court, walking track, eight large classrooms, five offices for staff, and a conference room. Since 2009 the Life Center has served Nehemiah Teams, which is a ministry that sends college students all over the world to share the gospel by serving over 60,000 meals. Nazareth members volunteer to prepare and serve over one-hundred meals in the Nazareth Baptist Church Life Center to residents of Haymon Homes which is a halfway house for mentally challenged adults. The church also delivers meals bi-monthly to the Bread of Life Ministries, which serves indigent residents of DeKalb County.

¹¹ City-data.com, "Rainsville," 8.

¹² Ibid., 12.

¹³ The church history provided is from two unpublished documents "Nazareth History 1906-Present" and "Nazareth Baptist Church Centennial Homecoming 1906-2006."

The Life Center kitchen is also used to serve meals to Vacation Bible School attendees, parents, and leaders. The regulation basketball court is used by members of Nazareth Baptist Church and also by Plainview High School and Cornerstone Christian Academy for basketball practices, dramas, and plays. The Nazareth campus has also adjusted to the rise of violence toward people of faith. Nazareth has added security cameras that cover each area of the church campus. The church has also added a security team made up of members of Nazareth Baptist Church who patrol the campus during all activities that take place at church.

The church is one of the largest Baptist churches in the area and is considered to be traditional, conservative, and evangelical. With its budget of over a half-million dollars, Nazareth Baptist Church fully supports the DeKalb Baptist Association (\$21,250), the Alabama State Board of Missions (\$42,500), and the Southern Baptist Convention. Nazareth gives \$18,000 annually to The Summit of Fort Payne, which is a faith-based 12-month residential intensive discipleship program for women struggling with life-controlling problems.¹⁴ The Summit has space for fifteen ladies who suffer from drug and alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and other addictions. Nazareth Baptist Church also supports Cornerstone Christian Academy, which is a private school that has recently expanded to include grades pre-K-12. The church donates \$3,000 annually to support the school financially and by hosting fundraising events such as the annual Cornerstone auction, fundraising dinners, and extracurricular activities. Over the last four years, Nazareth has also supported the Long Ranch 4 Boys by donating over \$75,000 and raising other funds through fundraising dinners. The Long Ranch 4 Boys is a residential facility aimed at ministering to boys ages 5-18 who need help in difficult situations by providing at-risk boys with a solid family structure that will love them, encourage them, and equip them to be Godly men in

¹⁴ The Summit of Fort Payne, “The Summit of Fort Payne, Inc.,” <https://www.summitoffortpayne.com/> (accessed June 21, 2019).

their communities and homes.¹⁵ Nazareth Baptist Church hosts Pilgrim Ministries annually to provide funding for their ministry. Pilgrim Ministries is a 1-2 year residential ministry specializing in training men who are in bondage to drug and alcohol addictions to become disciples of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and to become productive citizens and servants in the surrounding communities.¹⁶ The church also hosts Teen Challenge annually to raise support. Teen Challenge is a ministry that seeks to empower, educate, and equip all people from life-controlling issues through the power of Jesus Christ.¹⁷

Nazareth Baptist Church has a membership of over 697 members with an average Sunday School attendance of 135 and an average Sunday morning worship attendance of 300. The average length of church membership is twenty-one years. The average attendance is made up of 30 children between the ages of newborn to 12, 25 youth ages 13-18, 35 adults ages 19-29, 150 adults ages 30-65, and 60 senior adults over the age of 65. The church is 100 percent Caucasian. It is expected of Nazareth Baptist Church members to be faithful in attendance, to be good stewards of God's blessings, pray for one another, and to love one another. According to Scan/US, there are five groups represented within the church. The largest group described is "Families in Motion" and is defined as younger, working-class adults earning moderate incomes and living in small communities.¹⁸ Second is the "Blue Sky Boomers" that is described as lower

¹⁵ Long Ranch 4 Boys, "About Long Ranch," https://longranch4boys.com/about_long_ranch_ (accessed June 21, 2019).

¹⁶ Pilgrim Ministries, "Pilgrim Ministries Mission," <https://www.pilgrim-ministries.org/our-mission> (accessed June 21, 2019).

¹⁷ Teen Challenge, "Teen Challenge Mission," <https://teenchallengeusa.org/about/mission> (accessed June 21, 2019).

¹⁸ Alabama State Board of Missions, "Nazareth Baptist Church Report," www.scanus.com/rpt/SCTR-P03 (accessed April 1, 2019).

and middle-class baby boomer aged households living in small towns. The third group is “Autumn Years” and describes those who are established as mature couples living gratifying lifestyles in older homes. Fourth is “Thriving Boomers” which is described as upper/middle-class baby boomer age couples living comfortable lifestyles. The last group identified is “Golden Year Guardians” and are described as retirees living in old homes in settled residences and communities.¹⁹ The church as a whole has a quarterly fellowship meal following Sunday morning service where members spend quality time with one another while getting to know new or potential members. The church is known for its spirit-filled worship services and for its dedication to pray for its members and community. The church utilizes a prayer chain service that notifies each member of the needs within the church and the community. The senior adult group called the PrimeTimers have activities planned each quarter. The church has an active Brotherhood that meets monthly and is also open to young boys entering the youth group. This group participates in maintaining the campus of the church and supports the community through landscaping, home projects, and building ramps for the handicapped. C3 is the college and career group, and they participate in community and international missions. The youth group is available for grades 7-12 and participates in yearly camps and retreats. The C3 group and youth group participate in foreign missions to Nicaragua led by the youth pastor and through Eric Hixon of M.U.D. Ministries. M.U.D. Ministries is committed to doing God’s word, God’s way, for God’s glory and focuses on biblical evangelism, God-honoring missions, and Christ-centered discipleship both nationally and on the international mission field.²⁰ The church choir

¹⁹ Alabama State Board of Missions, “Nazareth Baptist Church Report,” www.scanus.com/rpt/SCTR-P03 (accessed April 1, 2019).

²⁰ M.U.D. Ministries, “About M.U.D. Ministries,” <http://www.mudministries.com/> (accessed June 21, 2019).

participates in choir festivals and in revivals year-round in surrounding communities. The choir goes annually to the DeKalb County Sheriff Department to present the Christmas program and the gospel to the staff and inmates. Nazareth also has a drama team consisting of children and youth who participate in worship services through dramas, signing, and music. The church has a puppet team that performs in revivals, Vacation Bible School, and in church evangelistic programs.

Nazareth Baptist Church staff includes two full-time employees, Senior Pastor and secretary, and three bi-vocational employees, associate pastor, youth pastor, and worship pastor. The staff meets monthly to plan the activities of the church and to discuss future plans for each ministry. Nazareth Baptist Church also has thirteen active deacons who meet monthly to discuss financial issues and other important matters within the church. Currently, the church schedule includes Sunday School, morning and evening worship services on Sunday, and Wednesday night classes for all ages. Every first and third Sunday morning, there is a children's church that meets in the children's center for ages 3-8 and is led by members of the church on a rotating schedule. The children's Sunday School has seven classes and is divided by age groups. Five of the classes use LifeWay's *Explore the Bible* series, grades 5-6 use LifeWay's *Bible Studies for Life* series, and the 2-3 year-old class utilizes the *Hands On Bible Curriculum* by Group Publishing. The youth class is currently utilizing LifeWay's *The Bible Project* and is learning about the Old and New Testaments. The C3 Sunday School class is currently engaged in book studies that focus on gaining biblical knowledge and discipleship. The six adult classes include a class for women who go through topical Bible studies related to women's issues, one class that uses LifeWay's *Masterworks* series, two use LifeWay's *Explore the Bible* series, and two that teach topical studies of the Bible. Sunday night service is a traditional worship service with

singing and preaching. Wednesday night Bible study for the children consists of Mission Friends, Royal Ambassadors, and Girls in Action, taught by members of the church. The youth use Wednesday night as their primary meeting time with the youth pastor and his wife leading the group. The associate pastor leads the Wednesday night Bible study for adults, and there is also a separate ladies' Bible study that focuses on discipleship.

Because of the church's participation in mission activities, Sunday night services during the summer are suspended. Vacation Bible School is a staple at Nazareth Baptist Church and has high attendance. On average the Vacation Bible School attendance for the last five years is 225 with a high of 335 in 2014. The church also supports and hosts Nehemiah Teams, which is a sponsored International Mission Board organization created by Jess Jennings to send high school and college students all over the world to spread the gospel. Since its inception, Nazareth has played an integral part in sending over 1,400 students from 25 different states to 31 countries that have shared the gospel over 54,000 times. The 2018 Nehemiah Teams shared the gospel over 6,000 times and saw 1,300 place their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. Each year volunteers from the church use the church van and bus to transport the Nehemiah Team students to airports in Atlanta and Birmingham, to give them encouragement and to welcome them home. The church focuses on evangelism in the community through seasonal fellowships such as the annual Easter Eggstravaganza, Fall Harvest Festival, and the church Christmas Party. The Easter Eggstravaganza was recently held at the Rainsville city park and saw over 1,200 in attendance. The church also supports Samaritans Purse and organizes the items to be brought monthly with the church gathering together in October to put the shoeboxes together. The Nazareth food closet is open Monday-Friday to supply food for those in need and supplied 136 families with food in 2018. The church has a benevolent surplus fund budgeted to help those who are struggling

financially. The benevolent committee aided eighteen families in helping people pay for utilities, rent, and medications. Nazareth also has an active jail ministry team made up of men and women who visit the DeKalb County Sheriff Department every other Sunday and Thursday to encourage, strengthen, and share the life-transforming power of the gospel. Nazareth Baptist Church is known for mission activity within its own community and abroad, with many past and present leaders and members participating in these activities.

In the last ten years the church has seen a decline in membership of only 3%. The church has averaged 13 baptisms per year with the highest recorded in 2011 of 26. The music ministry has seen a steady rise during this time span, especially the last five years, with participation nearly doubling. Sunday School attendance remains steady following a steep fall in 2016, but currently exceeds previous levels. The finances of the church have remained steady throughout the ten-year span. The average giving to missions has increased steadily for the last ten years. The average Annie Armstrong offering, which supports the North American Mission Board is \$4,000 annually. The average Lottie Moon Christmas offering supporting the International Mission Board is \$15,600, with the highest coming in 2016 with a report of \$25,503. Nazareth Baptist Church also gives \$12,000 annually to Nehemiah Teams which is an organization that equips college age men and women to carry the gospel all over the world.

The church has participated in previous training that spans small group studies focused on discipleship. The church, through its training, seeks to emulate its motto of “Seeking His Will, Studying His Word, Sharing His Way.” These would include going through studies such as *Purpose-Driven Life* by Rick Warren, *Experiencing God* by Henry and Richard Blackaby, the *MasterLife* program, as well as *Radical* and *Counter Culture* by David Platt. The church has also participated in the *God Project* while the youth went through the *Bible Project* sponsored by

LifeWay Resources. With regard to evangelism, many of its members have been trained in *The Way of the Master* by Ray Comfort, *Sharing Jesus Without Fear* by William Fay, *Evangelism Explosion* by James Kennedy, and *F.A.I.T.H.* by LifeWay Resources. Studies on prayer have included *Prayer Life* by T.W. Hunt and *Praying with Paul* by D.A. Carson. Recently the church has emphasized reading and studying God's Word. The church participated in the *Cover to Cover Challenge* written by Jason Bell that provided daily commentary on the Scriptures being read each week in order to read through the Bible in one year. All the training Nazareth Baptist Church has received, equipped the church to be better servants of Christ in their community and abroad and to fulfill the mission of the church.

Nazareth Baptist Church is overall a healthy and vibrant church that loves God, one another, and the community. As expressed in this section the church is a mission-oriented church that gives, serves, and evangelizes the community and around the world. The church is doctrinally sound, follows God's Word, and the doctrine of the Southern Baptist Convention. There is also the freedom to follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit which is evident in the preaching and teaching but also in the life of its members who regularly participate in the services. Obedience to follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit is of utmost importance to its members. Nazareth Baptist Church has sound leadership through its staff and deacons, its members are loving and caring, and its outreach is strong. The church for over its 113-year history has been a staple in the community, in the DeKalb Baptist Association, and among Alabama Baptists. As the Senior Pastor and project facilitator for the current project, Nazareth Baptist Church points people toward the only beacon of hope there is – Jesus Christ.

Throughout the 113-year history of Nazareth Baptist Church, there have been 23 pastors with a few serving multiple terms in different decades. For the first 73 years, Nazareth Baptist

Church had a policy that required the pastor to resign at the end of the church year and be re-elected by the congregation at an annual business meeting. Since 1979 the church has employed a full-time pastor when it nullified the previous policy. For the last 40 years, Nazareth has had only four pastors. After previously serving as the associate/education pastor, the project facilitator is the current Senior Pastor and has been in the position since January 2015. The project facilitator was saved, married, and called to preach at Nazareth Baptist Church before leaving to serve in two other churches in the roles of youth pastor and senior pastor. His wife actively serves at the church in the role of Sunday School teacher for the three-year-old class and is currently one of the Vacation Bible School directors. His daughter and son-in-law currently attend the church, as well as his son who is active in the youth group. A debt of gratitude is owed to the members and leadership of Nazareth Baptist Church for allowing and providing the resources for the project facilitator to attend Liberty University School of Divinity and to implement the intervention project.

Problem Statement

The problem this project will address is an absence of a consistent and effective Bible study method, which has attributed to the rise of interpretive dependency among the members of Nazareth Baptist Church. Utilizing an inductive Bible study method among a small group of adults with no prior Bible study training, should provide members with the ability to interpret Scripture. The members of Nazareth Baptist church have not received proper training in a method of Bible study and this is a problem that plagues many churches. Kenneth Berding states that “it takes time and commitment to learn to interpret the Bible well. . .if there is anything worth spending time and energy learning how to do, it is growing in understanding of how to

interpret the Word of God.”²¹ There are many factors that have attributed to the members of Nazareth Baptist Church not being taught a Bible study method. The first contributing factor to not having the ability to interpret Scripture is that an interpretive method has not been taught to the members. Although reading through the Scriptures together as a church has been an emphasis in the last two years, there currently is no program that provides instruction for biblical interpretation. Second, since having a full-time pastor the last forty plus years, the members of Nazareth Baptist Church have been interpretive dependent on the pastor to interpret the Scriptures for them. Third, members are dependent on the interpretations presented in Sunday School and Discipleship Training materials and take the authors at their word, never questioning the author or their beliefs. The majority of adult members want the Scriptures interpreted for them, and do not possess the necessary skills to interpret the Bible on their own. Fourth, is that the mission focus of the church takes precedence over the study of the Scriptures, which leaves Bible study out of balance. Parrett and Kang suggest "A church that is always busy doing good—rather Martha-like in character, may need to be urged to slow down, to engage in more study or contemplation."²² Through the years, Nazareth Baptist Church has been rooted in doing good, but being on mission is not a substitute for being able to interpret Scripture for themselves. There needs to be more of a balance between serving the Savior and sitting at the Master’s feet (Luke 10:38-42). Other elements that lead to the inability to interpret Scripture are distractions, misplaced priorities, and members being too busy.

²¹ Kenneth Berding, *Bible Revival: Recommitting Ourselves to One Book* (Wooster, OH: Weaver Book Company, 2013), 59.

²² Gary A. Parrett and S. Steve Kang, *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful: A Biblical Vision for Education in the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 302.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the thesis project is to impart the ability to perform a personal inductive Bible study with the members of Nazareth Baptist Church. In order to correct the problem of interpretive dependence, an intervention consisting of a simple and consistent inductive Bible study method will be implemented with a small group of believers who belong to Nazareth Baptist Church. Teaching an inductive Bible study method can aid in developing interpretive skills and improve knowledge of Scripture. As a personal approach, the inductive Bible study can be modified for the student of Scripture wherever they are in their spiritual walk and also encourages the development of personal Bible study.²³ Adults need to be equipped and encouraged to study the Scriptures for themselves so they can perform sound biblical interpretation. Kenneth Briggs believes that one reason people do not read the Scriptures is that it is difficult to understand.²⁴ This is significant because the inductive Bible study method will help members of Nazareth Baptist Church know how to properly study and possess the ability to interpret the Bible for themselves.

Definitions

Inductive Bible Study

The method that will be used to teach biblical interpretation at Nazareth Baptist Church is the inductive Bible study method. This method is a task oriented, step-by-step process that has been widely accepted in Bible-believing circles as the most popular and most effective approach to the study of Scripture.²⁵ Those who use the inductive Bible study method describe it with

²³ Richard Alan Fuhr Jr and Andreas Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study: Observation, Interpretation, and Application Through the Lenses of History, Literature, and Theology* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2016), 43-44.

²⁴ Kenneth A. Briggs, *The Invisible Bestseller: Searching for the Bible in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2016), 57.

²⁵ Fuhr Jr. and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 20.

three steps: observation, interpretation, and application. According to Kay Arthur, the inductive Bible study method can, “Draw you into personal interaction with the Scripture and thus with the God of the Scriptures so that your beliefs are based on a prayerful understanding and legitimate interpretation of Scripture-truth that transforms you when you live by it.”²⁶ The inductive Bible study method that will be used at Nazareth Baptist Church will include a fourth step entitled “appropriation.” Appropriating Scripture is essentially determining, “What does the text mean for me?” This step will also include biblical meditation, which is defined below.

Interpretive Dependence

Interpretive dependence is defined in this project intervention as primarily concentrated on the members of Nazareth Baptist Church, in order to learn a method of biblical interpretation to acquire the skills necessary to overcome their interpretive dependence. There is not a failure of reading the Bible at Nazareth Baptist Church. From speaking with church members and the researcher’s personal observation, the problem is simply the lack of ability to interpret the Bible on their own and being dependent on others for the task. This would include the pastor, teachers, printed materials, and other means of learning interpretations of the Scriptures. The point of the project was for individual participants to gain a method of biblical interpretation so that they would not be interpretive dependent on others and would be able to discern the meaning of a text for themselves.

Biblical Meditation

One unique aspect of this inductive Bible study method is the step of appropriation. The appropriation step will include a method of prayer and meditation known as *lectio divina*. *Lectio*

²⁶ Kay Arthur, David Arthur, Pete De Lacy, *How to Study Your Bible: Discover the Life-Changing Approach to God’s Word* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2010), 11.

(Latin for “a reading”) *divina* (“divine”) literally means “divine reading” and refers to the reading of Sacred Scripture in the context of personal prayer.²⁷ One of the first uses of the term *lectio divina* is by Benedict of Nursia who developed a set of guidelines for the monastic community that revolved around reading, meditating, praying, memorizing, interpreting, and applying Scripture.²⁸ This is a process of scriptural encounter that includes a series of prayer dynamics that move the reader to a deep level of engagement with the chosen text and the Spirit, who enlivens the text.²⁹ The steps of *lectio divina* are (1) *Lectio*; (2) *Meditatio*; (3) *Oratio*; (4) *Contemplatio*; (5) *Operatio*.³⁰ This process of biblical meditation aids the interpreter to be open to the text but also to be open with themselves and with the challenges of the text.³¹ *Lectio divina* will be incorporated into the inductive Bible study method so that those who participate in the study can glean the most from the Scriptures they study.

Basic Assumptions

Foremost for the project facilitator is the belief that God exists and is expressed through the Holy Trinity found in the pages of Scripture. The project facilitator believes that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. The Bible is inerrant, inspired, and authoritative. The Holy Spirit, which inspired the text, plays a vital role in the process of Bible study as He illuminates the

²⁷ Tim Gray, *Praying Scripture for Change: An Introduction to Lectio Divina* (West Chester, PA: Ascension Press, 2009), 26.

²⁸ James C Wilhoit and Evan B. Howard, *Discovering Lectio Divina: Bringing Scripture into Ordinary Life* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 17.

²⁹ Mark A. Maddix, “Rediscovering the Formative Power of Scripture Reading for the Church,” *Christian Education Journal* Vol. 15 (2018): 34-42, accessed March 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost.*, 37.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

³¹ Judith Stack-Nelson, “Beyond Biblical Literacy: Developing Readerly Readers in Teaching Biblical Studies,” *Dialog* No. 4 (2014): 302, accessed March 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost.*

hearts and minds of believers to understand the Scriptures. All born-again believers need to have the goal of being able to study God's Word and know how to properly interpret the Bible. The benefits of possessing the capability to achieve correct biblical interpretation are paramount in the life of a born-again believer. The inductive Bible study method is one way to achieve this goal. It offers a simple and consistent method that when introduced and practiced can make Bible study and biblical interpretation rich and fulfilling. The project facilitator assumes that there will be an adequate number of participants who are interested in learning the inductive Bible study method. It is also assumed the responses to the pre-test and post-test surveys and the focus group will be valid because the participants will remain anonymous. The project conducted at Nazareth Baptist Church is significant because it addresses the problem of being interpretive dependent by introducing the inductive Bible study method. It will allow participants to accurately interpret Scripture on a personal level, fulfilling the mandate of Scripture (1 Tim. 2:15). Another possible outcome is to produce a group that will continue to employ the inductive Bible study method to discuss what they are learning together. For any future Doctor of Ministry candidates, this project may be beneficial as they face the problem of interpretive dependence or facilitate an inductive Bible study method within their own ministry context.

Limitations

This project contains limitations beyond the control of the project facilitator. While the project has an age restriction, the project facilitator has no control over any participant's prior biblical knowledge or their basic ability to read and process the material in the inductive Bible study. It is possible that participants for the inductive Bible study could serve in many roles at Nazareth Baptist Church such as, but not limited to deacons, Sunday School teachers, preachers, ministerial staff, and lay people. Even though this project is considered action research, other

methods of research will be conducive to the outcome of the project. The inherent constraints within quantitative and qualitative research will also apply to this project.

Delimitations

The project will address the problem of interpretive dependency by providing a biblical method of interpretation within the membership of Nazareth Baptist Church through the inductive Bible study method. Investigating the plethora of causes for being interpretive dependent and countless Bible study methods is too exhaustive for the scope of this project. Accessibility to the project is confined to members of Nazareth Baptist Church who have had no prior Bible study training. This project is further restricted to those over the age of 18 or defined as being out of high school. No race or gender is excluded from the project. Nazareth Baptist Church members who meet the criteria will be encouraged to participate. The day and time may limit participation in the study since the inductive Bible study training will take place on the campus of Nazareth Baptist Church on Wednesday night from 6:00 to 7:30. It will seek to teach the inductive Bible study method through the book of Jude for seven consecutive weeks. Furthermore, the inductive Bible study method being presented will only introduce basic principles of the inductive Bible study method in order for it to remain simple, and so that the participants can learn a consistent method to interpret Scripture.

Thesis Statement

In order to provide a method of biblical interpretation among the members of Nazareth Baptist Church, this project will provide insight and instruction pertaining to the inductive Bible study method that will demonstrate the principles of the inductive Bible study method and show that by instilling this study method, the proper tools of biblical interpretation can correct the problem of interpretive dependence.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework section of the thesis covers the literature review, theological foundation, and theoretical foundation of the project. The literature review consists of a topical examination of current sources that address the problem of interpretive dependency and of the project's intervention design, which is to combat interpretive dependence through the inductive Bible study method. The review of literature on the inductive Bible study method follows the proposed inductive Bible study model that will be used in the project intervention. The inductive Bible study steps of observation, interpretation, and application will be implemented in the project. A fourth step entitled appropriation, will be added to the inductive Bible study method. It will focus on meditation, in anticipation that it will aid the student of Scripture in appropriating the interpretation of Scripture to their personal life, enriching their spirituality. The theological foundation establishes a clear precedent for the importance of the Scriptures in the lives of Christians. Because Scripture is inerrant, inspired, authoritative, and illuminated for believers, the Scriptures are to play a vital role in the life of a believer. Both the Old and New Testaments demonstrate that there is a biblical basis for knowing a method of biblical interpretation. Scripture emphasizes the importance of meditation as it aids in the pursuit, comprehension, and appropriation of God's Word into the life of a believer. The theoretical foundation provides a survey of Bible engagement and how it affects Christianity in America, demonstrating the need for knowing a method of biblical interpretation. The combination of the inductive Bible study method will help believers know what the text means, and meditation will aid in appropriating its message. The theoretical foundation also investigates other project interventions that have dealt with others who are interpretively dependent, the inductive Bible study method, and meditation by exploring their strengths and weaknesses.

Review of Literature

The literature reviewed in this chapter addressed biblical illiteracy as a specific problem in the church today. The authors recommend that the remedy for biblical illiteracy is to know a personal method of biblical interpretation.³² In his book, Kenneth Berding discusses the problem of biblical illiteracy and the dangers that follow this dreadful trend.³³ He defines biblical illiteracy as Christians not failing to read the Bible but the issue is people not learning the Bible, which he states is a fundamental priority.³⁴ His primary concern is that Christianity is in need of “a revival of the Bible,” where Christians learn the fundamental themes of Scripture and are deepening their knowledge.³⁵ He also discusses the reasons why biblical illiteracy has such a grip on Christianity. Berding reflects upon distractions, misplaced priorities, and Christians being too busy to read or study Scripture. From his estimation, Christians seem to place little or no importance on the value of learning the Bible.³⁶ One of the substantial arguments Berding emphasizes is that Christians need to understand the Bible by offering principles and practical suggestions on how to begin and conduct a Bible study that will be both constructive and practical.³⁷ Knowing how to properly interpret the Bible is essential for the Christian because it

³² To demonstrate the need of a personal interpretive method for Bible study, biblical illiteracy was the focus of this portion of the literature review.

³³ Berding, *Bible Revival*.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 21-27.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 48-56. See also Michael J. Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 16. This book was written to prevent “exegetical illiteracy” or the inability to perform biblical interpretation.

can aid in alleviating the problem of biblical illiteracy for the person, and also for the future generations of the body of Christ.

Kenneth A. Briggs discusses the declining role that the Bible plays in the lives of Christians and in America. Because of its declining influence, Briggs states, “Bibleless Christianity, or something close to it, looms on the horizon . . . not only is it possible; it is already happening-yet only dimly recognized in those very churches where it has been evaporating for some time.”³⁸ Briggs agrees with Berding and describes a growing trend among Christians in which Bible reading is in sharp decline, that the Bible was relatively unknown among those who should embrace it, and that the Bible was absent in Christian life.³⁹ Briggs also discusses the importance of understanding the Scriptures in order to avert the problem of biblical illiteracy. He believes that in order for the Bible to function as authoritative in the lives of Christians today the Bible must be read and interpreted.⁴⁰ He also states that the only way to understand the Bible in its full meaning is to study it, and see it cultivated within communal settings.⁴¹ Reading and possessing a method of interpretation should not only be the intention of each body of believers, but it should be their desire to know and understand the Scriptures. While it is important to read the Scriptures, it is also vital for an individual and the body of Christ to learn a proper method of biblical interpretation so that they can arrive at a correct understanding.

³⁸ Briggs, *The Invisible Bestseller*, 58. On the state of overall religious literacy in America see Stephen Prothero, *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know and Doesn't* (NY, NY: HarperCollins, 2007).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 9, 23, 42. See also R. Albert Mohler Jr, “Why So Many Churches Hear So Little of the Bible,” *The Journal of Discipleship and Family Ministry* 4 no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2014): 158-161.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 223. The article by Andrew Jaensch gives compelling reasons for knowing a critical approach to studying Scripture. Andrew Jaensch, “God is Big Enough for Our Questions: Introducing Learners to a Critical Approach to Study the Bible,” *Lutheran Theological Journal* 48 no. 3 (Dec. 2014): 186-197. Accessed August 29, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

Woodrow Kroll states that the reason that biblical illiteracy has spread through the church is that Christians have treated God as an add-on and treat the Bible as only a minimal reference point in their lives.⁴² He lists many reasons why Christians do not study the Bible. While most echo the reasons listed in the other books, Kroll does add that some people do not know where to start, that they already hear it at church, and that they believe they could never read it all.⁴³ Kroll also agrees with Berding and Briggs in the belief that Bible reading is not enough, but that the Scriptures need to be interpreted in order to become biblically literate.⁴⁴ Kroll asserts that biblical literacy is reading, understanding, and allowing the Word of God to impact life.⁴⁵ Christians must spend time in the Scriptures, reading and learning from it in order to become literate in the Bible.⁴⁶ Kroll also offers excellent examples from Scripture of times when God's people were biblically illiterate, only to rediscover God's Word and spark a much-needed revival of the people and the land (2 Kgs. 22:1-23:25; Neh. 8:1-18).⁴⁷ He also emphasizes that the people who are in the best position to stamp out biblical illiteracy are the individual Christians who will dedicate themselves to study the Word of God.⁴⁸ The rediscovery of God's Word through reading and proper biblical interpretation should be the aim of both individuals and the body of Christ. The movement of a decline in Bible reading and possessing a proper method of

⁴² Woodrow Kroll, *Taking Back the Good Book: How America Forgot the Bible and Why it Matters to You* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007), 158.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 69-76.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 96.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 159.

interpretation did not happen overnight but began when individuals and churches discarded its importance.⁴⁹ These studies validate the need for this intervention project in the current ministry context.

Kenneth Gourlay agrees with the assessments of Berding, Briggs, and Kroll that biblical illiteracy is a major problem in churches today. In his study conducted on Southern Baptist Sunday Schools and their knowledge of the Bible, Gourlay verifies the lack of understanding of the Bible in the Southern Baptist Churches. He demonstrates that the church today is failing to transmit basic Bible knowledge to the next generation.⁵⁰ Gourlay provides ample evidence that biblical illiteracy is a problem that has severe consequences. He contends that the lack of basic Bible knowledge will lead to a diluted gospel message and would contribute to an unbiblical worldview.⁵¹ Another side effect of the lack of basic Bible knowledge is that the authority and power of the church would be lost because Christians no longer know the Word of God.⁵² In an effort to quell these consequences described by Gourlay, he suggests that leaders within the local church need to take steps in order to restore the church's biblical role in training their people, particularly through the avenue of Sunday School.⁵³ Specifically, Gourlay suggests that church members be taught basic survey courses in Old Testament and New Testament, basic Christian

⁴⁹ T.J Wray, *What the Bible Really Tells Us: The Essential Guide to Biblical Literacy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011) discusses the importance of biblical literacy and the history of biblical illiteracy before concluding with discussion on hard to understand topics such as heaven and hell, suffering, and how to connect with God.

⁵⁰ Kenneth H. Gourlay, "An Assessment of Bible Knowledge Among Southern Baptist Sunday School Participants," *Christian Education Journal* 3 Vol. 10 no. 1 (2013): 9, accessed March 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 22.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 23.

doctrines, and how to study the Bible.⁵⁴ This action would be beneficial to the body of Christ because it would teach people not only how to read their Bible, but provide them a proper method of biblical interpretation. An effort must be constructed to advance Bible reading and study in order to avert the dangers that await a Bibleless church culture.⁵⁵

George Guthrie notices a downward trend of Bible knowledge among church attendees which supports Berding, Briggs, Kroll, and Gourlay. He describes the decline of biblical literacy as “abrupt and pervasive.”⁵⁶ ⁵⁷ Guthrie relates that as far as Bible study is concerned, there is not much searching or finding being done and that Christians do not even know the grand story of the Bible.⁵⁸ He lists many reasons for the decline in Bible engagement such as technology, distractions, and overextended schedules.⁵⁹ The list that Howard and William Hendricks add is even more concerning. They state that many Christians do not believe the Bible is relevant for their lives, they do not know how to study, they cannot understand it, and that Christians are not

⁵⁴ Ibid., 25.

⁵⁵ Since Gourlay’s article the Southern Baptist Convention began the 80by20 initiative which is a strategy to get 80% of SBC members to be engaged with the Bible by 2020. The primary vehicle for this endeavor is the use of groups. 80by20, “Disciplemaking Task Force,” <http://80by20.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Disciplemaking-Task-Force-Report-Booklet-v2.pdf>.

⁵⁶ George H. Guthrie, *Read the Bible for Life* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 5-6, 11.

⁵⁷ Tanner F. Hickman and Stephen C. Smith, “Biblical Literacy: Toward a Working Definition,” *The Journal of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary 1* (2014): 41-51. Both Hickman and Smith believe the first step toward eliminating biblical illiteracy is defining biblical literacy. They believe in order to build biblical literacy that people need to be able to: (1) have an understanding of how to read Scripture well; (2) have a perspective on the Bible as a grand story God has written to the world; (3) have a grasp of the themes of Scripture; (4) have ability to soundly apply Scripture to life. See also Patrick T. Brown, *Embracing Biblical Literacy* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2019) examines the problem of biblical illiteracy and biblical literacy. It also provides a helpful guide on understanding the importance of biblical interpretation.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 7.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 8-11.

interested in studying Scripture.⁶⁰ Christians need to rise up to the challenge of reading and understanding the Word of God. J.I. Packer states that all Christians have the right and duty to interpret Scriptures for themselves.⁶¹ It is important that Christians know a method of biblical interpretation.

Mark A. Maddix proposes a way to alleviate the longstanding problem of a lack of Bible reading and study. Maddix's article weaves the issue of biblical illiteracy with the inductive method while also demonstrating the importance of learning in small groups.⁶² He proposes that reading and studying Scripture in a small group setting would mitigate many of the struggles Christians have in interpreting their Bible and also would influence the culture of the church.⁶³ This would be a notable benefit to those who have limited knowledge of the Bible and provide an opportunity for growth.⁶⁴ In beginning a small group, it would be profitable to mix mature Christians with those who are still learning, because mature believers have a strong knowledge of God's Word.⁶⁵ This will broaden the knowledge of all who participate, to hear the

⁶⁰ Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks, *Living by the Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers), 14-19.

⁶¹ J.I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1993), 6.

⁶² For the history and viability of small groups see Bill Donahue and Charles Growler, "Small Groups: The Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever?" *Christian Education Journal* 11 no. 1 (Spring 2014): 118-133. Accessed September 2, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*. See also Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006) he offers pertinent insight on the nature and development of small groups.

⁶³ Maddix, "Rediscovering", 38. See also Bob Ekblad, "Reading Scripture for Good News that Crosses Barriers of Race/Ethnicity, Class, and Culture," *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 65 no. 3 (2011): 229-248. Accessed August 29, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*. This article presents effective study and communication strategies in studying Scripture in groups in order to provide transformational encounters with God.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Robert M. West, *How to Study the Bible* (Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour Publishing Inc., 2013), 19.

perspectives of others who have studied the text. Berding demonstrates that Puritans would assemble together in groups similar to small groups today and rehash the sermon so that it could be remembered and put into practice.⁶⁶ Research on small groups has shown that spiritual transformation occurs when people talk about the Bible with other people.⁶⁷ Another advantage of introducing the inductive Bible study method through small groups is that it will provide accountability for studying the Bible.⁶⁸ Briggs relates that in order to reverse the trend of no Bible study, one pastor urged the congregation to read and discuss the Bible in small groups.⁶⁹ Maddix indicates that studying in a small group that engages the Bible, will broaden and deepen one's understanding of the Bible while guarding against misleading interpretations.⁷⁰ Beginning a small group Bible study that focuses on reading and studying God's Word, can build consistency and can be effective in eliminating the problems associated with biblical illiteracy. Maddix also recommends that the inductive approach be considered because it would allow people to hear the text and to discover God's Word for themselves.⁷¹ Oletta Wald also suggests using the inductive Bible study method in small groups as it enhances an individual's

⁶⁶ Berding, *Bible Revival*, 96. See also Joanne J. Jung, *Godly Conversation: Rediscovering the Puritan Practice of Conference* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011).

⁶⁷ Bret Mavrich, "The Word Made Fresh: As Bible Reading Falls and Biblical Illiteracy Rises, Innovators are Finding Creative Ways to Get People to Engage with Scripture," *Leadership Journal* 36 no. 3: 37, accessed March 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*. See also James C. Wilhoit and Leland Ryken, *Effective Bible Teaching* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012) is a comprehensive resource that will aid the small group leader in effective methods of teaching the Bible specifically the inductive Bible study method.

⁶⁸ Dave Veerman, *How to Apply the Bible: Discover the Truths of Scripture and Put Them into Practice* (The Livingstone Corporation, 2009), 128.

⁶⁹ Briggs, *The Invisible Bestseller*, 147.

⁷⁰ Maddix, "Rediscovering", 38.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 39.

responsibility to learn in conjunction with others.⁷² In proposing the small group model in teaching the inductive Bible study method, Hendricks encourages people to study the Bible and divide the time between the three steps of the inductive Bible study method.⁷³ Implementing the inductive Bible study as Maddix advises, will benefit individuals, the small group, and the church at-large. It would create an environment where both new and mature believers can be instructed in the inductive Bible study method, in order to arrive at a correct interpretation of the Bible.

Inductive Bible Study Method

Brief History of Inductive Bible Study

The inductive Bible study method can be traced back to William Rainey Harper and Wilbert Webster White. Harper would go on to become the first president of the University of Chicago, which is known for its distinct contributions to New Testament research through the years.⁷⁴ Wilbert Webster White is credited with developing a method of biblical interpretation that not only brings the church back to the Bible but brings the Bible back to the church.⁷⁵ The method of biblical interpretation developed by White was designed to help students study the Bible for themselves.⁷⁶ White was influenced by Harper while taking summer school classes at

⁷² Oletta Wald, *The New Joy of Discovery in Bible Study* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2002), 8.

⁷³ Hendricks and Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 374-375.

⁷⁴ William Baird, *History of New Testament Research Volume 2: From Jonathan Edwards to Rudolf Bultmann* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), 330.

⁷⁵ Charles R. Eberhardt, *The Bible in the Making of Ministers The Scriptural Basis of Theological Education: The Lifework of Wilbert Webster White* (New York, NY: Association Press, 1949), 13.

⁷⁶ Julie Gorman, "Inductive Bible Study," *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Education*, ed. Michal J. Anthony (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 358.

Morgan Park Theological Seminary.⁷⁷ Harper was impressed with White's intellectual gifts and persuaded him to leave the pastorate and pursue doctoral studies at Yale University to become an Old Testament professor.⁷⁸ It is also during his time at Yale that White became interested in the process of learning or the educational method.⁷⁹ It would later lead to a fruitful relationship with Herman Harrell Horne, the great teacher and education theorist from New York University.⁸⁰ Along with his interest in the educational method, White was enveloped in the art of developing and improving mnemonics.⁸¹ Both his pursuit of the educational process and his venture in mnemonics led White to discover the inductive method.⁸² Being heavily influenced by John Ruskin's *Essay on Composition*, White became convinced of the significance of relationships and saw them as the key to understanding anything, is to consider its major components and the way the components relate to one another.⁸³ This is what White deemed the principle of composition. In essence White was saying that the study of the Bible leads to the truth in all areas and truth in all other areas relates either directly or indirectly to the study of the Bible.⁸⁴ White also developed a specific principle of composition for individual books of the Bible to cohere. This principle demonstrates that everything within a biblical book is related directly or

⁷⁷ Seedbed, "Inductive Bible Studies: History," accessed August 30, 2019, <https://www.seedbed.com/inductive-bible-study-history/>

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ David R. Bauer, "Inductive Biblical Study: History, Character, and Prospects in a Global Environment," *Asbury Journal* 68/1 (2013): 9, accessed August 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 9.

⁸¹ Eberhardt, *Wilbert Webster White*, 48.

⁸² Ibid., 49.

⁸³ Bauer, "Inductive Biblical Study," 9.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

indirectly to everything else within the book.⁸⁵ Studying the Bible book-by-book would lead students to experience the compelling force and authenticity of the Bible thus allowing students to see that the Bible authenticates itself.⁸⁶ This would naturally lead to an appeal to the witness of the Holy Spirit as one encounters God's own revelation in the Scriptures.⁸⁷

From Harper, White also learned that the study of the Bible must center on a theologically sensitive literary analysis of the final form of the text, with an emphasis on studying the Bible in the student's vernacular language.⁸⁸ Both men believed that the study of the Bible in the vernacular would lead students to pursue enthusiastically the original languages.⁸⁹ Upon earning his Ph.D. from Yale University, White joined the faculty of Xenia Seminary where the deductive approach was practiced, where students were told what to think instead of the inductive approach, which allows students to discover biblical truth for themselves.⁹⁰ While at Xenia, White was influenced by Andrew Murray's book *With Christ in the School of Prayer*, in which White experienced a deeper intimacy with Christ and became convinced that seminary education should also foster authentic spiritual formation.⁹¹ After leaving Xenia, White briefly taught at Moody Bible College in Chicago and while there, became convinced that there was a need for a new type of seminary that would feature the inductive study of the Bible.⁹² Two things

⁸⁵ Bauer, "Inductive Biblical Study," 9.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 11.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Seedbed, "History".

⁸⁹ Eberhardt, *Wilbert Webster White*, 106.

⁹⁰ Seedbed, "History".

⁹¹ Bauer, "Inductive Biblical Study," 11.

⁹² Seedbed, "History".

led to this assumption. First, he, along with Harper, believed that theological students spent too much time studying about the Bible and not enough time studying the Bible. Second, White objected to the negative and fragmented approach of the higher criticism associated with seminaries.⁹³ Along with his brother, White traveled for the next few years overseas teaching the inductive Bible study method in India, England, Ireland, and Scotland.⁹⁴ Lord Overtoun gave White 500 pounds to establish a school in America with hopes one could also be established in London, but it never came to fruition. The school in America started as the Bible Teachers College and classes began on January 9, 1901, and in 1921 the school was renamed The Biblical Seminary in New York. The seminary reflected the emphases of Wilbert W. White and offered a biblio-centric curriculum around the inductive Bible study in the vernacular, effective educational principles and practices to help students learn, a commitment to the devotional life of prayer toward spiritual maturity, a global perspective, and a commitment to evangelical Christianity.⁹⁵ White is also credited with clarifying the first principle of interpretation in the inductive method, because a clear distinction between literary, grammatical, and historical criticism of the Bible must be understood and maintained.⁹⁶

Wilbert Webster White's adaptation of induction to the study of the Bible remains his greatest single contribution to the field of theological education.⁹⁷ White described his inductive Bible study method with four steps: exact observation, correct interpretation, rational

⁹³ David L. Thompson, *Bible Study that Works* (Anderson, IN: Francis Asbury Press, 1994), 11.

⁹⁴ Seedbed, "History".

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Eberhardt, *Wilbert Webster White*, 78.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 118.

explanation, and scientific construction.⁹⁸ It has been called the compositive method or heuristic method because it is teaching a method of investigation or teaching that leads the pupil to discover truth for themselves.⁹⁹ To demonstrate the importance of observation and right method, White introduced students at the seminary to *The Student, The Fish, and Agassiz* written by Samuel H. Scudder.¹⁰⁰ According to White, it demonstrated the right way to observe by applying the right method to observe.¹⁰¹ White also believed the aim of interpretation is recreating the author's intentions.¹⁰² White offered fourteen rules to guide the biblical interpreter to ensure correct interpretation.¹⁰³ These fourteen rules include word studies, grammatical construction, the context of the passage, comparing Scripture to Scripture, with dependence upon the Holy Spirit to illuminate the passage.^{104 105}

The inductive Bible study method has been developed and enhanced through the years after White by men such as Howard Tillman Kuist and Donald G. Miller.¹⁰⁶ Kuist would later teach at Union Theological Seminary and Princeton Theological Seminary.¹⁰⁷ Miller would also

⁹⁸ Eberhardt, *Wilbert Webster White*, 121.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 151.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 134.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 184.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 188.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 187-188.

¹⁰⁵ Frederick J. Long briefly traces the development of the distinguishing components of the inductive Bible method and offers a chart on the advancement of the inductive Bible study method. Fredrick J. Long, "Major Structural Relationships: A Survey of Origins, Development, Classifications, and Assessment," *The Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies* 1/1 (2014): 28, accessed August 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

¹⁰⁶ Seedbed, "History".

¹⁰⁷ Bauer "Inductive Biblical Study," 13.

teach at Union Theological Seminary and serve as president of Pittsburg Theological Seminary.¹⁰⁸ Kenneth Plank Wesche, George Allen Turner, and Robert A. Traina are all graduates of The Biblical Seminary and have strongly influenced the further development of the inductive Bible study method especially at Asbury Theological Seminary.¹⁰⁹ Traina taught five steps of the inductive method observation, interpretation, application, evaluation, and correlation.¹¹⁰ Howard Hendricks of Dallas Theological Seminary offers a more simplistic approach to the inductive Bible study method with four steps of observation, interpretation, application, and correlation.¹¹¹ Richard Alan Fuhr Jr and Andreas J. Köstenberger offer a more comprehensive and analytical view of the inductive Bible study, but do it through three steps of observation, interpretation, and application.¹¹² Robert West also employs the three step process of the inductive Bible study method¹¹³ as well as the popular Kay Arthur inductive Bible study method at Precept Ministries.¹¹⁴

Advocates of the inductive Bible study method are Eugene Peterson, Brevard Childs, James Luther Mays, and Patrick D. Miller Jr.¹¹⁵ Organizations such as InterVarsity Christian

¹⁰⁸ Bauer “Inductive Biblical Study,” 13.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ David L. Thompson, “My Pilgrimage in Inductive Bible Study,” *The Journal of Inductive Biblical Studies* 3/2 (2016): 165, accessed August 28, 2019. See also Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study* (New York, NY: Ganas & Harris, 1985).

¹¹¹ Tim Newcomb, “Howard Hendricks’ Four Bible Study Steps,” *Bible Study Magazine*. September 9, 2016.

¹¹² Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*.

¹¹³ West, *How to Study the Bible*.

¹¹⁴ Arthur, David Arthur, Pete De Lacy, *How to Study Your Bible*.

¹¹⁵ Seedbed, “History”.

Fellowship and Youth With a Mission employ the inductive Bible study method.¹¹⁶ Asbury Theological Seminary currently remains the center for serious work in the inductive Bible study method, having a department dedicated to the inductive Bible study method that has six full-time faculty members.¹¹⁷ Other schools that use the inductive Bible study method are Princeton Theological Seminary, Union Theological Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, Pittsburg Theological Seminary, Dallas Theological Seminary, Regent University, and Azusa Pacific University.¹¹⁸

Inductive Bible Study Steps

Robert A. Traina and David R. Bauer provide the definition of the inductive Bible study method. They define the inductive Bible study method as:

A comprehensive, holistic study of the Bible that takes into account every aspect of the existence of the biblical text and that it is intentional in allowing the Bible in its final canonical shape to speak to us in its own terms, thus leading to accurate, original, compelling, and profound interpretation and contemporary appropriation.¹¹⁹

Richard Alan Fuhr and Andreas Köstenberger detail the process of the inductive Bible study method in their book. The authors seek to provide an inductive Bible study method that will equip students of Scripture in interpreting the Word of God accurately.¹²⁰ In order to aid in interpreting Scripture for the individual, this book offers an extensive review of the concepts within each step. The authors regard the inductive Bible study method as beneficial because it

¹¹⁶ Seedbed, "History".

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Bauer, "Inductive Biblical Study," 7-8.

¹¹⁹ Robert A. Traina and David R. Bauer, *Inductive Bible Study: A Comprehensive Guide to the Practice of Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 17.

¹²⁰ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 21.

encourages and promotes the development of Bible study skills.¹²¹ Another advantage of the inductive Bible study method is that it can be used by serious Bible scholars, and in equipping lay persons to study the Bible for themselves.¹²² The inductive method allows the student of Scripture to compile evidence, analyze the evidence, and reach a probable conclusion.¹²³ Maddix states that the inductive approach strives to interpret the Bible honestly by examining the particulars before making conclusions.¹²⁴

West describes the inductive Bible study process as a step-by-step process that is comprised of three steps: observation, interpretation, and application.¹²⁵ The benefits of this type of study are that it reveals the author's thoughts throughout any text of Scripture and contributes to a more accurate understanding of individual verses.¹²⁶ Kay Arthur also adopts the inductive Bible study method for biblical interpretation. Arthur describes the key components of the inductive method as slowing down to really look at what Scripture is saying, using the Bible itself as the primary source of information, and being drawn into personal interaction with the Scriptures. One of the main requirements of learning to study the Bible inductively is to slow down and really look at what Scripture is saying.¹²⁷ Another key function of the inductive Bible study method is that it can be adapted to fit the student of Scripture wherever they are in their

¹²¹ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 44.

¹²² Traina and Bauer, *Practice of Hermeneutics*, 15.

¹²³ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 35.

¹²⁴ Maddix, "Rediscovering", 39. See also Thomas D. Lea, "Inductive Bible Study Methods," *Biblical Hermeneutics* ed. Bruce Corley et al. (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2002).

¹²⁵ West, *How to Study the Bible*, 40.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 61.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 10-11.

pursuit of biblical literacy.¹²⁸ Wald insists that the inductive Bible study be introduced gradually so that students of Scripture will not be frustrated or discouraged and reject the method.¹²⁹ Traina and Bauer also suggest that employing a simpler version will make it easier for the average person as they begin to study inductively.¹³⁰ This is important as it pertains to the current intervention project as the inductive Bible study method will need to be adapted for those who have never been exposed to the nuances of the inductive Bible study method or any other method of Bible study. Some of the concepts of the inductive Bible study method cannot be fully integrated into the current ministry context, as it is too exhaustive for those who have not been previously exposed to the inductive Bible study method.

One important aspect of the inductive Bible study method is the role of the interpreter. The interpreter's role is to be a mediator who bears responsibility to bring the Bible to the people and to bring the people to the Bible.¹³¹ In order for the interpreter to be able to understand the Word of God, the interpreter must have a relationship with God and believe that He speaks through His Word.¹³² The interpreter must also come to the Scriptures with a willingness to obey the message, use the appropriate methods, and rely on the illumination of the Holy Spirit.¹³³ The submissive interpreter bows to the God who reveals Himself in Scripture, and accepts whatever

¹²⁸ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Indictive Bible Study*, 43.

¹²⁹ Wald, *Joy of Discovery*, 5.

¹³⁰ Traina and Bauer, *Practice of Hermeneutics*, 20.

¹³¹ Daniel Doriani, *Putting the Truth to Work: The Theory and Practice of Biblical Application* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing Co., 2001), 97.

¹³² William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation 3rd ed.*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 202.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 202.

it says.¹³⁴ All methods of interpretation are insufficient without the illuminating of the Holy Spirit, because only He can provide believers with the ability to comprehend the significance of the text.¹³⁵ Because of the Holy Spirit, all Christians can understand the Bible for themselves, which means all of God's people have access to the truth.¹³⁶

Because the illumination of the Holy Spirit is needed by all to properly interpret Scripture, it is also imperative that the interpreter is a person of prayer. At the start of her book, Kay Arthur asks that students of Scripture take time to pray for their eyes to be opened and for the Holy Spirit to reveal Scripture to them.¹³⁷ David Thompson also encourages those studying Scripture to pray so that "the same Holy Spirit that inspired the writers of God's Word may inspire and illuminate our minds as we study, pray for a humble and teachable mind."¹³⁸

The interpreter will also come to the Bible with basic assumptions. These basic assumptions can include that the Bible is a divine and human book, that is authoritative and true, but yet fully understandable.¹³⁹ The interpreter also comes to the Bible with

¹³⁴ Doriani, *Putting the Truth to Work*, 66.

¹³⁵ Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 206-207.

¹³⁶ Nigel Beynon and Andrew Sach, *Dig Deeper: Tools for Understanding God's Word* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 22. On the role of the Holy Spirit in interpretation see also Roy B. Zuck, "The Role of the Holy Spirit in Hermeneutics," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 141 no.152 (Apr. 1984): 120-128. Accessed August 30, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*. See also Daniel P. Fuller, "The Holy Spirit's Role in Biblical Interpretation," *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 14 no. 2 (Apr.-June 1997): 91-95. Accessed September 3, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*. For a more in-depth view on the Holy Spirit see Anthony Thiselton, *The Holy Spirit: In Biblical Teaching, Through the Centuries, and Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2013).

¹³⁷ Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, 17.

¹³⁸ Thompson, *Bible Study that Works*, 20.

¹³⁹ Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 211.

preunderstandings.¹⁴⁰ Preunderstandings refers to all of our preconceived notions and understandings that we bring to the text. These have been formulated, both consciously and subconsciously, before studying the text in detail.¹⁴¹ These may include all our experiences, culture, and our prior understanding of words and ideas.¹⁴² Preunderstandings often determine what is seen in the text by either aiding the interpreter or prohibiting the interpreter from seeing the text's true meaning.¹⁴³ The role of the interpreter is vital in order to come to a correct interpretation of Scripture. The interpreter must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and be willing to submit themselves under His authority and the authority of Scripture. It is critical that the interpreter has a method of biblical interpretation, but it is even more essential that the interpreter follows the guidance of the Holy Spirit and be a person of prayer. Interpreters must also be aware of preunderstandings that may distort them from seeing the true message of the text as they seek to arrive at a correct biblical interpretation.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ Preunderstandings is defined as a belief that takes precedence over another and therefore serves a criterion for another. Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 39.

¹⁴¹ J. Scot Duval and J. Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 89.

¹⁴² Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 22.

¹⁴³ Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 228.

¹⁴⁴ Robert L. Thomas has an excellent article that will aid in avoiding the common pitfalls of allowing preunderstandings to determine the meaning of the text. Robert L. Thomas, "Biblical Hermeneutics: Foundational Considerations," *Chafer Theological Seminary Journal* 13 no. 2 (Fall 2008): 31-44. Accessed August 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*. See also Robertson McQuilkin, *Understand and Applying the Bible* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2009). Part One of the book offers a thorough analysis of preunderstandings and approaches to Scripture by naturalists and supernaturalists from modernist and postmodernist perspectives.

Observation

The first step of observation within the inductive Bible study method is the most important step of biblical interpretation. Observation seeks to establish a foundational knowledge of what the text is saying and to discern issues that may warrant further study.¹⁴⁵ In this step, the purpose is not to arrive at conclusions regarding the meaning of the passages throughout the book, but to gain some sense of the things that are present in the book and how they are arranged.¹⁴⁶ The question that observation seeks to answer is “What does the passage say?”¹⁴⁷ Before beginning the step of observation, the interpreter should pick a translation of the Bible that is suitable for the interpretive task. Veerman states that while reading and studying Scripture it would be best to have at least two translations, one formal and one functional equivalent.¹⁴⁸ Others suggest having four or five translations available, whether it be times of personal study or conducting biblical studies.¹⁴⁹ Comparing the various translations used by the interpreter can also reveal differences that can identify issues that may need further investigation.¹⁵⁰ It is important when choosing a translation that it uses modern English, it is based on standard

¹⁴⁵ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 39. See also Walter C. Kaiser, “The Devotional Use of the Bible.” *Evangelical Review of Theology* 21 no. 3 (2017): 229-235. Accessed November 15, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

¹⁴⁶ Traina and Bauer, *Practice of Hermeneutics*, 75.

¹⁴⁷ Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, 11.

¹⁴⁸ Veerman, *How to Apply the Bible*, 33. Also suggested by Dan McCartney and Charles Clayton, *Let the Reader Understand: A Guide to Interpreting and Applying the Bible* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing Co., 2002), 180.

¹⁴⁹ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 72. For further help on choosing a translation that is best for the inductive Bible study see Leland Ryken, *Choosing a Bible: Understanding Bible Translation Differences* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2005) or Gordon D. Fee and Mark L. Strauss, *How to Choose a Translation for All Its Worth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007).

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 47.

Hebrew and Greek text, and it is appropriate for the purpose that it is being used for.¹⁵¹

Thompson adds that it is important to study Scripture in the student's own language in order to appropriate its truths.¹⁵²

As highlighted by Fuhr and Köstenberger, reading the Bible intelligently is a key step in observation.¹⁵³ One of the main requirements of learning to study the Bible inductively is slowing down and really looking at what Scripture is saying.¹⁵⁴ Patience is needed both with the text and with oneself when preparing to perform biblical interpretation.¹⁵⁵ Reading is a skill that is honed and developed over time. Judith-Stack Nelson offers insights on how to read the Bible well. She believes those who study Scripture should be attentive readers. Attentive readers, according to Stack-Nelson, read the text slowly and read it multiple times in order to get the details of the passage.¹⁵⁶ Hendricks, on a similar path, invites interpreters to read acquisitively, which is reading not to perceive, but reading that seeks to receive and possess the meaning of the text.¹⁵⁷ Duval and Hays also instruct the student of Scripture to read critically and seriously in

¹⁵¹ Duval and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 170-171. See also Robert A. Bascom, "Bases and Models Revisited: The Importance of Using Different Types of Reference Translations." *The Bible Translator* Vol. 68 no. 1 (2017): 3-10. Accessed November 12, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

¹⁵² Thompson, *Bible Study that Works*, 25.

¹⁵³ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 74. For further analysis on the role of the reader in biblical interpretation see Kevin Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998).

¹⁵⁴ Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, 10. See also Dirk van der Merwe, "Reading the Bible in the 21st Century: Some Hermeneutical Principles: Parts 1&2." *Verbum Et Ecclesia* Vol. 36 no.1 (2015):1-8. Accessed November 12, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

¹⁵⁵ Hendricks and Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 92.

¹⁵⁶ Stack-Nelson, "Readerly Reader," 297. See also Bob Utley, *Paul's Letters to a Troubled Church: I and II Corinthians* (Marshall TX: Bible Lessons International, 2002), vi-vii. On these pages Utley offers four strategic reading cycles with each containing steps on how to read in order to identify genre, key terms, literary structure, and background information. Or also Kent Blevins, *How to Read the Bible Without Losing Your Mind* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2014).

¹⁵⁷ Hendricks and Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 128.

order to see the details in the Bible.¹⁵⁸ In reading the text it is also important to capture the tone. Every book or passage has a certain tone or feel, the affective or emotional sense that one gathers from reading the book or passage.¹⁵⁹

Genre also plays a crucial role in the inductive Bible study method. Each book of the Bible has a specific and primary literary genre. Knowing the literary genre is important in interpreting the text because different genres require different ways of reading them.¹⁶⁰ The genre enables the interpreter to know how the writer intended their work to be understood.¹⁶¹ Each kind of literary genre has its own frame of reference, ground rules, strategy, and purpose.¹⁶² Fuhr and Köstenberger point out that the primary literary genres have many subgenres that need to be known in order to navigate and interpret the text.¹⁶³ Many authors have compiled a list of the various genres of the Old and New Testaments in their works and often describe them with different names. The Old Testament genres are narrative, law, psalms, wisdom literature, and prophecy while the New Testament contains narratives, letters, and apocalyptic.¹⁶⁴ Wald encourages that once the literary genre is identified, the student of Scripture should note the

¹⁵⁸ Duval and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 29. An article that focuses on reading slowly akin to the reading of *lectio divina* not the process of *lectio divina*. K. Jo-Ann Badley and Ken Badley, "Slow Reading: Reading Along *Lectio* Lines," *Journal of Education and Christian Belief* 15 no. 1 (2011): 29-42. Accessed September 1, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

¹⁵⁹ Traina and Bauer, *Practice of Hermeneutics*, 120.

¹⁶⁰ McCartney and Clayton, *Let the Reader Understand*, 223.

¹⁶¹ Thompson, *Bible Study that Works*, 35.

¹⁶² Klein, Blomberg, Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 418.

¹⁶³ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 11.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 200. An excellent resource that discusses each book of the Bible in lieu of their genre with essays by various authors is Leland Ryken and Tremper Longman III, *A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993).

general tone of the passage.¹⁶⁵ Discovering the tone can help spark the imagination and emotions of what is being conveyed in the text.¹⁶⁶

Along with reading the text carefully, it is important to ask the right questions of the text. Most Bible students are already asking questions of the text, but the inductive Bible study allows the student of Scripture to methodically ask questions that will lead to a more accurate interpretation of the text.¹⁶⁷ Learning to ask the right questions is the most practical skill an interpreter can develop in order for the Bible to be better understood.¹⁶⁸ As the student of Scripture observes the Word of God, asking investigative questions such as who, what, when, where, why, and how will allow the text to speak for itself.¹⁶⁹ The questions that are asked of the text should revolve around the significance of the content within the passage, the relationship between words and phrases, the intention of the author, and the implication which will aid in the interpretive step.¹⁷⁰

One part of the process of reading the text is recognizing key terms in the text. Key terms often reveal key subjects that will also reveal the theme of the passage.¹⁷¹ One way to recognize key terms is to watch for repetition of words or phrases because these will serve as key points of

¹⁶⁵ Wald, *Joy of Discovery*, 27.

¹⁶⁶ Beynon and Sach, *Dig Deeper*, 84.

¹⁶⁷ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 98.

¹⁶⁸ Berding, *Bible Revival*, 49.

¹⁶⁹ Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, 22. See also chapter four in Ray Lubek, *Read the Bible for a Change: Understanding and Responding to God's Word* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005) for a helpful guide on asking the right questions of the text or Hans Finzel, *Unlocking the Scriptures* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2003).

¹⁷⁰ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 77.

¹⁷¹ Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, 35.

interest for the interpreter.¹⁷² Other words that are important for further study are difficult words, crucial words, theologically loaded words, and rare words.¹⁷³ In watching for repeated words and phrases it will also be important to be alert for repeated ideas or themes repeated in the text.¹⁷⁴ While searching for key words it would also benefit the interpreter to identify people, places, and events that are within the passage of Scripture.¹⁷⁵

Illustrations, also called allusions, are also important elements to look for within a passage of Scripture. Many times these are rooted in past events or people in Scripture and are given to produce the capacity for reflection, such as illustrations from ordinary life.¹⁷⁶ Old Testament quotations are also influential to the meaning of the text and should be investigated further to understand the current passage being studied.¹⁷⁷ It is always a good idea to examine the original context of a quotation in case the latter writer wants us to think, not just about a few words he copies out, but the whole of the section they were taken from.¹⁷⁸ Compare and contrast is another important feature that reveals relevant information about the text. An attentive reader should be alert to words, phrases or concepts that are being compared and contrasted within a

¹⁷² Wald, *Joy of Discovery*, 17.

¹⁷³ Klein, Blomberg, Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 333.

¹⁷⁴ Beynon and Soch, *Dig Deeper*, 91.

¹⁷⁵ Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, 28-29.

¹⁷⁶ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 136.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 137. See also Claire Matthews McGinnis, “Stumbling Over the Testaments: On Reading Patristic Exegesis and the Old Testament in Light of the New.” *Journal of Evangelical Interpretation* 1 no.4 (Spring 2010): 15-32. Accessed November 15, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

¹⁷⁸ Beynon and Soch, *Dig Deeper*, 97. An excellent resource for further study on the New Testaments use of the Old Testament is G.K Beale and D.A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007). Also see David M. Allen, “Introduction: The Study of the Use of the Old Testament in the New,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 38 no. 1 (2015): 3-16. Accessed September 2, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

passage.¹⁷⁹ Practicing the steps of observation, and knowing what to look for, will take time and effort. The more details that can be observed in the passage, the more beneficial the next step of interpretation will be.

Interpretation

The second step of the inductive Bible study method is interpretation. The observation step will provide the basic content out of which the interpreter can interpret the meaning of the text.¹⁸⁰ Interpretation is basically asking “What does the text mean?”¹⁸¹ Before beginning the process of interpretation, the interpreter must consider the barriers that must be crossed in order to arrive at the correct biblical interpretation and avoid a wrong interpretation.¹⁸² Barriers such as language, cultural, literary, geographic, and communication must be crossed to arrive at a correct interpretation.¹⁸³ The aim of any good interpretation is to get to the author’s intended meaning.¹⁸⁴ Asking what the passage meant to the author will aid in discovering the author’s intended meaning.¹⁸⁵ In order to do the step of interpretation correctly, there are many elements

¹⁷⁹ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 127.

¹⁸⁰ Hendricks and Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 230.

¹⁸¹ West, *How to Study the Bible*, 43.

¹⁸² Richard L. Mayhue, *How to Study the Bible* (Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications Ltd., 2014). Part Two of the book focuses on how to avoid the wrong interpretations by examining eight common fallacies associated with interpretation. See also David Alan Black and David S. Dockery, *Interpreting the New Testament* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishers, 2001). Part Three of the book spanning fourteen chapters discusses special interpretive issues regarding individual books of the New Testament. Each chapter is an essay written by various scholars who are experts in New Testament study.

¹⁸³ Hendricks and Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 202-204. See also Roy B. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1991) for practical helps for overcoming barriers in interpretation.

¹⁸⁴ Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible*, 22. An excellent article that discusses authorial intent written by Kenneth R. Cooper, “Harvesting the Soul: The Necessity of Hermeneutics to a Valid Theological Method,” *Journal of Dispensational Theology* 17 no. 50 (Spring 2013): 67-81.

¹⁸⁵ Wald, *Joy of Discovery*, 40. See also Cliff Allcorn, “The Skill of Interpretation Practiced Today,” *Journal of Dispensational Theology* 14 no. 42 (Aug. 2010): 7-22. Accessed August 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion*

that will need to be accomplished. There are three important steps to the process of interpretation: context, correlation, and consultation.¹⁸⁶ Examining context is one of the most important principles of interpretation because context determines the meaning of the passage.¹⁸⁷ It is imperative when considering the various contexts to begin looking for differences between the situation of the biblical audience and the interpreter's situation today.¹⁸⁸ Practicing this will aid in bridging the gaps between interpretation, application, and appropriation. This means that whatever the passage meant to the original audience is still the meaning of the passage today, and whatever the passage could not have meant back then, it cannot mean today.¹⁸⁹ The historical-cultural context functions on two distinct levels. First, there is the context of the events reflected in Scripture and second, there is the context of the text itself.¹⁹⁰ The historical-cultural context will differ from book to book, according to the time and culture of the author and his audience.¹⁹¹ This would include facts about the writer, the recipients, the date, and the culture of the audience which would include the economic, political, behavioral, and religious practices.¹⁹² For the interpretation of the passage to be valid, it must be consistent with the historical-cultural

Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost. This article aims at discovering the authorial intent and not reading meanings into the text.

¹⁸⁶ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 40.

¹⁸⁷ Duval and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 119. See also David Baker, "Interpreting the Texts in the Context of the Whole Bible," *Themelios* 5 no. 2 (Jan. 1980): 21-25.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁸⁹ Ben Witherington III, *Living Word of God: Rethinking the Theology of the Bible* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 152.

¹⁹⁰ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 185.

¹⁹¹ Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible*, 30.

¹⁹² Klein, Blomberg, Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 321-323.

context of the biblical text.¹⁹³ Canonical context means that the interpretation of any part of the Bible must be understood in the context of the Bible as a whole.¹⁹⁴ The covenantal context considers the theological covenants that regulate God's relationship to His people throughout salvation history.¹⁹⁵ This is a crucial aspect of understanding the promises and prophecies in the Old Testament prophetic books.¹⁹⁶ The literary context of any particular passage must be investigated. The literary context focuses on identifying figures of speech, word studies, and genre. Some figures of speech to pay attention to are metaphors, similes, hyperbole, and irony.¹⁹⁷ Other areas of literary context that need to be examined are the immediate context of the passage, how the passage fits within the rest of the book, other books written by the author, how the passage relates to the testament it is in, and how it relates to the Bible as a whole.¹⁹⁸

Word studies of the key words identified in the observation stage are a part of the literary context. The purpose of the word study is to try and understand, as precisely as possible, what the author was trying to convey by use of the word in its context.¹⁹⁹ Concordances, lexicons, and

¹⁹³ Duval and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 100. See also Andreas J. Köstenberger and Richard Patterson in chapter 2 of their book *For the Love of God's Word: An Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2011) offer analysis of the Old Testament, the Intertestamental period, and New Testament as it pertains to background and cultures. They also supply archaeological evidence to demonstrate important findings relating to customs in the Old and New Testaments and give general guidelines on bridging the historical-cultural gap.

¹⁹⁴ McCartney and Clayton, *Let the Reader Understand*, 171. See also Robert W. Wall, "Reading the New Testament in Canonical Contexts," *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation 2nd ed.* Joel B. Green ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010).

¹⁹⁵ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 207.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, 82-84.

¹⁹⁸ Klein, Blomberg, Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 300. See also chapter one of Grant Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010) surveys the importance of context especially historical and logical contexts.

¹⁹⁹ Duval and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 132. See also Craig L. Blomberg and Jennifer Foutz, *A Handbook of New Testament Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010). Chapter five of the book

exegetical dictionaries are excellent resources to help determine the meaning of words that the author uses in the passage.²⁰⁰ The literary genre simply refers to the different categories or types of literature found in the Old and New Testaments, with each genre having its own set of rules for interpretation.²⁰¹ Epistles, Old Testament narrative, historical, gospels, parables, law, prophets, psalms, wisdom, and apocalyptic are some of the many genres that are in the pages of Scripture.²⁰² Knowing and remembering the genre of the passage being interpreted will aid in understanding the Bible well.²⁰³ Strauss cites that identifying genre can make or break the interpretation of the biblical book or passage because it is crucial to drawing legitimate applications.²⁰⁴ Correlation is also a fundamental step within interpretation and involves comparing Scripture with Scripture. Often referenced as the analogy of Scripture, this practice is simply comparing Scripture with Scripture for the distinct purpose of informing the interpretation of a particular text based on other related texts.²⁰⁵ This practice lets the passage be interpreted by the whole of Scripture, and in turn, the whole is crucial to interpreting the part by allowing the interpreter to grasp the whole story when the parts come into sharper focus.²⁰⁶ It is beneficial when studying obscure passages to allow the passage to be interpreted according to

discusses various tools to conduct word studies and offers advice on how to avoid the common fallacies associated with Hebrew and Greek word studies.

²⁰⁰ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 251-252.

²⁰¹ Duval and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 120-121.

²⁰² Fee and Stuart, *How to Read the Bible*, 60.

²⁰³ Berding, *Bible Revival*, 50-51.

²⁰⁴ Mark L. Strauss, *How to Read the Bible in Changing Times: Understanding and Applying God's Word Today*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 39.

²⁰⁵ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 213.

²⁰⁶ Strauss, *How to Read the Bible*, 60.

clearer passages found elsewhere in Scripture.²⁰⁷ Utilizing this principle is critical to the interpretive process. The best commentary and interpreter of the Bible is the Bible, because the Bible will never contradict itself.²⁰⁸ Using a concordance will help the interpreter to find terms and concepts from one book to another.²⁰⁹ Practicing the analogy of Scripture can ensure the student of Scripture that a right interpretation can be achieved and that a faulty interpretation can be avoided.²¹⁰ McCartney and Clayton urge interpreters to discover how a particular passage points to Christ, whether it is in the Old or New Testament.²¹¹

Consultation involves the research of outside sources. Consultation involves uncovering the historical, unlocking the literary, and unveiling the theological through the use of commentaries, translations, study Bibles, Bible dictionaries, atlases, Bible introductions, and journal articles.²¹² Sources such as commentaries can be used to check what conclusions have been reached about the passage thus far.²¹³ It is recommended that the interpreter consult from three or four commentaries to enter into dialogue with others who have studied the passage.²¹⁴ This will be limited in the present project as access to resources are minimal at best for most participants. Overall, the task of biblical interpretation is to mediate an ancient authoritative

²⁰⁷ McCartney and Clayton, *Let the Reader Understand*, 170.

²⁰⁸ Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, 73.

²⁰⁹ Hendricks and Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 237.

²¹⁰ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 217.

²¹¹ McCartney and Clayton, *Let the Reader Understand*, 52.

²¹² Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 270-275, 284-288. For additional information in gathering relevant resources for consultation and how to use them see Frederick W. Danker, *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2003).

²¹³ Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, 60.

²¹⁴ Traina and Bauer, *Practice of Hermeneutics*, 194.

message to audiences having difficulties grasping Scripture's meaning and relevance.²¹⁵ Just as observation can aid in the step of interpretation, the step of interpretation will lead to having a better grasp of the passage in order to perform the next step of application.

Application

The third step of the inductive Bible study method is application, which has its basis in the correct observation and interpretation of the text.²¹⁶ In this step, principles will be extracted from the previous steps of observation and interpretation to determine how the text may be applied to the body of Christ.²¹⁷ The step of interpretation highlighted that there could only be one meaning for the text; however, in application, the one interpretation can have many applications.²¹⁸ The step of application is asking "How might this text relate to us as the people of God?"²¹⁹ Traina and Bauer observe that the Bible emphasizes the ordering of the life of God's people with the intention that through corporate life, God's people might render acceptable worship to God and mediate the saving relationship of God to the world.²²⁰ The goal of all biblical application is to walk in step with God and be the people He wants Christians to be.²²¹ Thompson observes that Scripture itself is aimed at the transformation of communities and

²¹⁵ Doriani, *Putting the Truth to Work*, 82.

²¹⁶ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 41.

²¹⁷ I. Howard Marshall, *Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006). This is an exceptional resource to aid in understanding contexts and how to derive biblical principles from the Old and New Testaments.

²¹⁸ Hendricks and Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 300.

²¹⁹ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 292. An outstanding article on Scripture's role within the context of the church for formation and transformation is written by Mark A. Maddix and Richard P. Thompson, "Scripture as Formation: The Role of Scripture in Christian Formation," *Christian Education Journal* 9 (Spring 2012): 79-93. Accessed August 30, 2019.

²²⁰ Traina and Bauer, *Practice of Hermeneutics*, 266.

²²¹ Strauss, *How to Read the Bible*, 49.

individuals as members of those communities.²²² For this to take place, the application of any passage of Scripture should be based on the historical meaning of the text in its original context, and on the broader testimony of Scripture concerning the nature and purpose of God.²²³

Application of the text must have relevance to today's audience, contain legitimate parallels to today's audience, and produce clear and concise teaching points that summarize what God's Word is teaching at any particular point in Scripture to today's audience.²²⁴ The main point in determining legitimacy in application is that there must be sensible parallels between what the text originally meant and what it means today.²²⁵ Duval and Hays offer sound help in determining application. They suggest observing how the principles in the text address the original situation, then for the interpreter to discover parallel situations in their context, and to make application to the church by creating real-world scenarios.²²⁶ The principles will connect with the passage and will be identical to the principles that were directed to the original audience.²²⁷ One author's plan for application includes what he terms as "walking around the circle."²²⁸ The circle consists of different realms such as education, ethics, science, government, law, politics, media, entertainment, medicine, and sociology to see how the passage affects these realms.²²⁹

²²² Thompson, *Bible Study that Works*, 90.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 66.

²²⁴ Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 292.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 312.

²²⁶ Duval and Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 216-218.

²²⁷ Veerman, *How to Apply the Bible*, 47.

²²⁸ Thompson, *Bible Study that Works*, 92.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

Daniel Doriani offered strategic insights into the application process. He suggests asking four questions of the text: (1) What should we do? Or what is our duty? (2) Who should we be? Or how can we become the people or obtain the character that lets us do what is right? (3) To what causes should we devote our life energy? Or what goals should we pursue? (4) How can we distinguish truth from error? Or how can we gain discernment?²³⁰ Through the application of Scripture, the body of Christ can bring glory to the name of God. The step of application will also help in appropriating what is learned through the text which is the next step.

Appropriation

Appropriation is the unique added fourth step of the project intervention to teach the inductive Bible study method. The point of an inductive study is not solely to gain more knowledge, but to appropriate it into the life of the individual and for it to be fused within the local church body. It is a subpoint in Fuhr and Köstenberger's text on the inductive Bible study method within the step of application. Arthur also urges the reader to stop for a moment and meditate on what God is showing the interpreter in the text that is being studied.²³¹

Appropriating the text is asking, "What does this text mean today for a follower of Christ?" The step of appropriation is integral to the student of God's Word because it aids in transferring what is learned through the inductive process so it can be embodied in the life of a believer.²³² The appropriation step in the inductive Bible study that will be taught for the project intervention is a modified version of *lectio divina*. Peter Toon is an advocate for both reverent academic study

²³⁰ Doriani, *Putting the Truth to Work*, 98.

²³¹ Arthur, *How to Study Your Bible*, 14.

²³² Fuhr and Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 335. See also Andrew David Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2017). Chapter 12 on Practical Theology gives ample illustrations and guidelines on applying Scripture to the individual, the church, and the world.

and meditative reading of the Scripture because it can supply an important background to meditation.²³³ J.I. Packer articulates that serious Bible study and meditation is a way to fully benefit from the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit.²³⁴ Clowney states that meditation leads believers into the holy of holies, where God can be communed with and be present with us.²³⁵ Guthrie urges meditation in order to appropriate the truths taught in Scripture and the importance of letting God's Word transform the believer.²³⁶ Wald suggests that one should meditate prayerfully on what has been discovered in the text.²³⁷ Elmer Towns argues that meditation can help a student of Scripture develop deeper communion with God and that it will produce growth in character and service.²³⁸ For Christians, meditation is being guided and inspired by the indwelling Spirit of Christ in the consideration of God's revelation.²³⁹ Reading the Bible, or studying it, is very powerful, but meditating on the Scriptures and turning to communication and dialogue with God is where hearts get touched in a powerful way.²⁴⁰ Swindoll and Zuck state from personal experience that God's blessing is promised not so much for the reading or

²³³ Peter Toon, *Meditating as a Christian: Waiting Upon God* (London, HarperCollins Publishing, 1991), 161. See also Jan Johnson, *Study & Meditation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Connect, 2019) which offers a great analysis of the importance of study and meditation in the lives of individuals and groups.

²³⁴ Packer, *Concise Theology*, 155.

²³⁵ Edmund P. Clowney, *Christian Meditation* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1979), 43.

²³⁶ Guthrie, *Read the Bible for Life*, 67-68.

²³⁷ Wald, *Joy of Discovery*, 43.

²³⁸ Elmer Towns, *Biblical Meditation for Spiritual Breakthrough: 10 Biblical Ways to Meditate and Draw Closer to the Lord* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1998).

²³⁹ Toon, *Meditating as a Christian*, 19.

²⁴⁰ Mavrich, "The Word Made Flesh," 42.

studying of the Scriptures, but for meditating on them (Ps. 1:1-2; Josh 1:6-8).²⁴¹ John Jefferson Davis, in his book on meditation, states the essence and real meaning of meditation:

When we meditate on the Scriptures in faith, we can actually experience the real presence of the triune God, who is present to us through the Word and by the Spirit...we can experience real-time communion with God, our loving heavenly Father...we can experience communion with Jesus, the eternally beloved Son of the Father...we can experience communion with the Holy Spirit, who pours the love of the Father and the Son for us into our hearts.²⁴²

By adding the practice of meditation to the inductive Bible study method, the interpreter will be led to a richer and more passionate relationship with the Word and its Author.

Brief History of *Lectio Divina*

Before discussing the steps of *lectio divina*, a brief history of *lectio divina* along with how it has been practiced until recent times will be discussed. The origin of *lectio divina* has been attributed to early Christian communities as they gathered in groups to pray, sing, and listen to readings from the gospels in silence.²⁴³ Polycarp, a follower of the apostle John, trained Origen and many authors credit Origen with the first reference to what would become known as *lectio divina*.²⁴⁴ Origen states, “applying yourself thus to the divine study, seek aright, and with unwavering trust in God, the meaning of the holy Scriptures, which so many have missed.”²⁴⁵

²⁴¹ Charles R. Swindoll and Roy B. Zuck, *Understanding Christian Theology* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2003), 134.

²⁴² John Jefferson Davis, *Meditation and Communion with God: Contemplating Scripture in an Age of Distraction* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 68. See also Robert J. Foster, *Sanctuary of the Soul: Journey into Meditative Prayer* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Press, 2011) and Robert J. Morgan, *Reclaiming the Lost Art of Biblical Meditation: Find True Peace in Jesus* (Nashville, TN: HarperCollins Publishers, 2017).

²⁴³ Dan Korn, *Lectio Divina: How to Pray Sacred Scripture* (Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 2011), Location 36, Kindle.

²⁴⁴ Chris Barbieri, *Praying the Scriptures: An Introduction to the History and Practice of Lectio Divina* (Digital Deacon Ministries, LLC, 2018), location 133, Kindle.

²⁴⁵ Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers Volume 4: Tertullian, Part Fourth; Minucius Felix; Commodian; Origen, Part First and Second* (Buffalo, NY: The Christian Literature Company, 1885), 394.

Origen taught this method to Ambrose who in turn taught it to Augustine of Hippo spreading *lectio divina* through the North African region.²⁴⁶ During the time of Augustine, individuals emerged who rejected the secular world and devoted themselves as spiritual hermits and monks in the Egyptian deserts.²⁴⁷ Eventually, forming monastic communities, these individuals became known as the Desert Fathers and Mothers whom pilgrims sought out for guidance in spiritual matters.²⁴⁸ The exercise of the spiritual discipline was further developed by Benedict of Nursia (AD 480-587) widely regarded as the father of Western Christian monasticism.²⁴⁹ He is considered to be the most responsible for shaping the monastic movement along practical lines and reconciling its ideals with the church.²⁵⁰ Benedictine monasteries operated under the motto of “pray and work” and lived ordered lives consisting of divine praise, physical work, and spiritual reading with ten hours a day spent on prayer and meditation.²⁵¹ Among the Benedictine communities the *lectio divina* was scheduled several times each day consisting of morning, noon, and night.²⁵² The *Rule of Saint Benedict* was followed by many monasteries in the west from the eighth century forward.²⁵³ In chapter 48 of the Rule Benedict says that “Idleness is the enemy of the soul; therefore the brethren ought to be employed in manual labor at certain times, at others,

²⁴⁶ Barbieri, *History and Practice*, location 143.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, location 153.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁹ Korn, *Sacred Scripture*, location 46.

²⁵⁰ Robert A. Baker and John M. Landers, *A Summary of Christian History* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2005), 88.

²⁵¹ Everett Ferguson, *Church History Volume 1 From Christ to Reformation: The Rise and Growth of the Church in its Cultural, Intellectual, and Political Context* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 317-318. See also

²⁵² Korn, *Sacred Scripture*, location 46.

²⁵³ Jonathan Hill, *Handbook to the History of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 184.

in divine reading.”²⁵⁴ The *Rule* of Benedict spread to other monasteries in Western Europe and led to the spread of *lectio divina* in these areas.²⁵⁵

Lectio divina continued to spread throughout the Middle Ages with the rise of churches and monasteries. One other breakthrough in the development of *lectio divina* was by Guigo II (1083-1136) who was a Carthusian monk in France.²⁵⁶ In his book *The Ladder of Monks*, Guigo II gives the first detailed instructions concerning *lectio divina* detailing the four rungs of *lectio*, *meditatio*, *oratio*, and *contemplatio*.²⁵⁷ Through the years others such as Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) and Julian of Norwich continued to enrich the tradition of *lectio divina* through their spirituality and writings.²⁵⁸ Bernard was an influential and dominant figure of his time teaching people to cultivate a devotional, penitential, and Christ-centered experience of piety.²⁵⁹ Bernard’s further development of *lectio divina* led to addition of the importance of prayer along with reading the Scriptures.²⁶⁰ As monasticism spread, so did the practice of *lectio divina*. John of the Cross (1542-1591) a Spanish priest, taught Guigo II’s four stages of *lectio divina* to his monks.²⁶¹ In his writings, John of the Cross wrote, “Seek in reading and you will

²⁵⁴ Benedict of Nursia, *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, trans. Anthony C. Meisel and M.L. del Mastro (Broadway, NY: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1975), 86.

²⁵⁵ Barbieri, *History and Practice*, 162.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 172.

²⁵⁷ Guigo II, *The Ladder of Monks: A Letter on the Contemplative Life and Twelve Meditations*, trans. Edmund College and James Walsh (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1978), 25-26.

²⁵⁸ Korn, *Sacred Scripture*, location 46.

²⁵⁹ Ferguson, *Church History*, 447.

²⁶⁰ Korn, *Sacred Scripture*, location 46.

²⁶¹ Barbieri, *History and Practice*, location 183.

find in meditation; knock in prayer and it will be opened to you in contemplation.”²⁶² He is most famous for his teaching on prayer leading to the goal of contemplation on union with God.²⁶³

During the times of the Reformation, the practice of *lectio divina* declined. Factors contributing to its demise included the perception that it was a Catholic practice, the rise of the historical-critical method, and the pursuit of intellectual knowledge during the Enlightenment period leaving the practice of *lectio divina* to the monasteries.²⁶⁴ With this development, other practices began to emerge such as Bible Reading and Spiritual Reading. Evan B. Howard writes that tracing the evangelical use of the formative approach to Scripture during this time through the twentieth century bears great similarity to the practice of *lectio divina*.²⁶⁵ He identifies men such as John Wesley, Charles Hodge, Charles Finney, Jonathan Edwards, and John Cotton as men who wrote about their practices of meditation, prayer, and study of God’s Word.²⁶⁶ Groups such as Reformers, Puritans, Pietists, and revivalists proposed that devotional reading of Scripture is akin to the practice of *lectio divina*.²⁶⁷ Howard's article provides convincing proof that evangelical practices of today closely resembled *lectio divina* during the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.²⁶⁸

²⁶² E.A. Peers, *The Complete Works of St. John of the Cross* (London: Burns and Oates, 1954), 79.

²⁶³ Hill, *History of Christianity*, 260.

²⁶⁴ Barbieri, *History and Practice*, location 193.

²⁶⁵ Evan B. Howard, “Lectio Divina in the Evangelical Tradition,” *Journal of Spiritual Formation & Soul Care* 5 no.1 (2012): 57, accessed March 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 59-60.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 65.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

Bible Reading was made popular during the nineteenth-century as Bible Reading taught a simple method to focus on themes of the inspired Bible requiring only the guidance of the Holy Spirit for the participant to reap its benefits.²⁶⁹ Booklets instructing readers in Bible Reading included lists of verses to meditate on to be used at home or in larger contexts.²⁷⁰ Bible Reading helped fuel the revivalism of the Second Great Awakening and the American and British revivals of the late 1850s.²⁷¹ In the end, Bible Reading cultivated personal holiness by connecting a common-sense reading of the Scripture.²⁷² Spiritual Reading is concerned with the Bible as the Word of God that calls people to God calling Christians to make a decisive response through an openness to God, humble listening, and a willingness to obey.²⁷³ According to Simon Chan, Spiritual Reading “is essentially reading in the light of the whole story and putting ourselves in it.”²⁷⁴ It contains steps on reading slowly, meditation, and memorization of the Word of God.²⁷⁵

A renewed emphasis in *Lectio divina* has been seen recently within the Catholic church and among Protestants. During the late twentieth and early twenty-first century articles, books, and other resources have begun to appear promoting the practice of *lectio divina*.²⁷⁶ Many Protestant denominations such as Presbyterians and Methodists are now actively promoting

²⁶⁹ Daved Anthony Schmidt, “Scripture Beyond Common Sense: Sentimental Bible Study and the Evangelical Practice of ‘the Bible Reading,’” *Journal of Religious History* 41 no. 1 (March 2017): 60-61, accessed March 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 78.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 61.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 75.

²⁷³ Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 159-160.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 161.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 163-165.

²⁷⁶ Barbieri, *History and Practice*, 203.

lectio divina as a spiritual practice.²⁷⁷ For the last few years, *lectio divina* has been reclaimed as a viable option to meditating on the Scriptures. This practice, coupled with the inductive Bible study method, can enrich and enlighten Christians in the word of God and lead to a more profound relationship with the Savior.

Steps of Lectio Divina

Lectio divina has many variations, with each ascribing different names and steps to the process. *Lectio* (Latin for “a reading”) *divina* (“divine”) literally means “divine reading” and refers to the reading of Sacred Scripture in the context of personal prayer.²⁷⁸ The central idea behind *lectio divina* is that God is inviting Christians into interaction and conversation as Scripture is read and interpreted.²⁷⁹ Monks practiced *lectio divina* as individuals and as members of groups to acquire only one skill which is to be like Christ.²⁸⁰ It is understood that following and imitating Christ should be the desire of every interpreter when coming to any text of Scripture. This type of meditation is a process by which the reader engages the Scriptures through prayer, allowing the Holy Spirit to help bring meaning to the text and to aid the reader in applying the Scriptures to life.²⁸¹ The most common and basic form of *lectio divina* contains the steps of reading (*lectio*), reflecting (*meditatio*), responding (*oratio*), and resting

²⁷⁷ Barbieri, *History and Practice*, 203.

²⁷⁸ Gray, *Praying Scripture*, 26.

²⁷⁹ Jan Johnson, *Meeting God in Scripture: A Hands on Guide to Lectio Divina* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 13. See also Eugene Peterson, *Eat This Book: The Holy Community at Table with the Holy Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006) is another excellent resource on spiritual reading, *lectio divina*, and living out the Scriptures.

²⁸⁰ Michael Casey, *Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lection Divina* (Liguori, MI: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995), 36.

²⁸¹ Maddix, “Rediscovering,” 35.

(*contemplatio*).²⁸² Some use six steps of *lectio divina* which are silence, reading, meditation, prayer, contemplation, and compassion.²⁸³ Gray uses five steps that he describes as *lectio*, *meditatio*, *oratio*, *contemplatio*, and *operatio*.²⁸⁴ His five steps will form the basis for the project intervention.

The first step, *lectio* or reading, is the process of reading a portion of the Scripture aloud multiple times, at a slow rate.²⁸⁵ Casey says, “Reading should be done as a disciple comes to a master being receptive, docile, and willing to be changed.”²⁸⁶ This would also involve coming to the text humbly by recognizing a deep awareness of our weakness.²⁸⁷ Gray includes in this step asking the same basic questions of the text that were asked during observation who, what, when, where, why, and how.²⁸⁸ This shows that the inductive process and meditation correspond to one another.

The second step is *meditation*, which refers to the passage. This involves imagining the passage taking place while utilizing the background information of what is known about a passage.²⁸⁹ This step will make full use of the intellect in an effort to understand God’s Word and hear God’s voice in pursuit of understanding the text.²⁹⁰ As Casey notes, even though the

²⁸² Johnson, *Meeting God*, 13.

²⁸³ Maddix, “Rediscovering,” 38.

²⁸⁴ Gray, *Praying Scripture*, 36.

²⁸⁵ Johnson, *Meeting God*, 14.

²⁸⁶ Casey, *Sacred Reading*, 6.

²⁸⁷ Wilhoit and Howard, *Discovering Lectio Divina*, 74.

²⁸⁸ Gray, *Praying Scripture*, 45.

²⁸⁹ Johnson, *Meeting God*, 14.

²⁹⁰ Gray, *Praying Scripture*, 62-63.

interpreter receives assistance with the text from the Holy Spirit, there is no excuse for failing to exercise the normal human industry and prudence in arriving at an interpretation of the text.²⁹¹ He lists skills such as understanding background and culture, understanding biblical languages, literary genre, interpretive skills, and the use of good commentaries as helpful aids in meditation.²⁹² It will be helpful to utilize what has been learned through the inductive Bible study process during this step. Rumination is also included in this step by one author, which is reading and memorizing Scripture, in order to bring it back up again in the mind until it is completely digested, and the interpreter is able to recall it back to mind.²⁹³

The third is the step of *oratio* refers to asking questions about the text and responding to what the Holy Spirit gives the interpreter.²⁹⁴ It is during this step that the interpreter prays to God about the word He has spoken in Scripture to determine how it can be applied to life.²⁹⁵ A central component of *oratio* is self-examination. It is here the Christian engages in searching the heart, where God also searches and reveals sin in the light of His presence.²⁹⁶ To aid in the process of responding and self-examination, participants can ask a set of questions referred to by Hendricks. These eight questions are designed to elicit responses to God's Word by asking is there a: (1) Example for me to follow?; (2) Sin to avoid?; (3) Promise to claim?; (4) Prayer to repeat?; (5)

²⁹¹ Casey, *Sacred Reading*, 63.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 64-67.

²⁹³ Wilhoit and Howard, *Discovering Lectio Divina*, 79, 81. See also Ryan M. McGraw "Retaining Scripture in Our Minds and Hearts," *Puritan Reformed Journal* 3 no.2 (Jul 2011): 351-360, discusses the importance of reading, meditation, and memorization of Scripture.

²⁹⁴ Johnson, *Meeting God*, 15.

²⁹⁵ Gray, *Praying Scripture*, 80. See also Andrew David Naselli, "12 Reasons You Should Pray Scripture," *Themelios* 38 no. 3 (Nov. 2013): 417-425.

²⁹⁶ Clowney, *Christian Meditation*, 66-67.

Command to obey?; (6) Condition to meet?; (7) Verse to memorize?; (8) Error to mark?.²⁹⁷ One failure in the appropriation of Scripture is the refusal of the Holy Spirit a central place in the process of Bible study.²⁹⁸ The illumination of the Holy Spirit can aid the interpreter in finding meaningful principles in the text to appropriate to one's life. As the interpreter reads and practices God's Word, the Spirit of God teaches how to think as God thinks.²⁹⁹ Some authors include praying the Scripture and repeating the promises learned back to God in the step of *oratio*.³⁰⁰

The fourth step is *contemplatio* and includes thanking, resting in, and worshipping God for what He has revealed through the process of *lectio*.³⁰¹ It is moving beyond interaction with God through His Word, to experiencing God Himself and becoming the object of God's action.³⁰² Wilhoit and Howard describe it as awareness of the presence of God and a mindfulness of His presence.³⁰³ As Gray explains, *contemplatio* cannot be attained by human effort alone, it is always a gift of grace that depends on the movement of the Holy Spirit, not by cleverness or willpower.³⁰⁴

²⁹⁷ Hendricks and Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 353.

²⁹⁸ Berding, *Bible Revival*, 72.

²⁹⁹ Kroll, *Taking Back the Good Book*, 27.

³⁰⁰ Wilhoit and Howard, *Discovering Lectio Divina*, 18.

³⁰¹ Johnson, *Meeting God*, 15.

³⁰² Gray, *Praying Scripture*, 96.

³⁰³ Wilhoit and Howard, *Discovering Lectio Divina*, 111.

³⁰⁴ Gray, *Praying Scripture*, 104.

The final step is often entitled *operatio*. In this step, the interpreter embodies the truth of the passage and begins appropriating the principles learned from the text.³⁰⁵ Gray describes this as making the Word incarnate in our lives by actually obeying Jesus and imitating Him.³⁰⁶ Toon acknowledges that meditation allows one to know the will of God and gain the desire and determination to obey it.³⁰⁷ The interpreter will not become a master of the Word until an effort is made to live out the Word in the midst of the trials of life.³⁰⁸ This step involves obeying and living out the principles learned through the text.

Interpretive dependence is rising across the landscape of Christianity and affecting local ministry contexts, it is needful that an inductive Bible study method be implemented. This can be effectively done through small groups in local ministry contexts to teach individuals how to observe, interpret, apply, and appropriate the Bible. Individuals who adhere to the inductive Bible study method will be able to appropriate it to their lives through the process of meditation. Because it will combat the culture of interpretive dependence and engage Scripture within a small group environment, using the proposed method of inductive Bible study, which will include meditation, could prove to be beneficial not only to the individual but to the church.

While the term *lectio divina* is new to many Baptists and in the present ministry context, its steps are not new to Baptists as they have been practiced through the last few centuries. In an article written in by Molly T. Marshall, shows that Baptists have started to seek monasteries, retreat centers, and spiritual directors to reclaim their spirituality.³⁰⁹ She notes that it is in these

³⁰⁵ Ibid., 108.

³⁰⁶ Gray, *Praying Scripture*, 111.

³⁰⁷ Toon, *Meditating as a Christian*, 42.

³⁰⁸ Wilhoit and Howard, *Discovering Lectio Divina*, 132.

³⁰⁹ Molly T. Marshall, "The Changing Face of Baptist Discipleship," *Review & Expositor* 95 (1998): 62.

contexts ancient practices for spiritual formation such as *lectio divina*, silence, and contemplative prayer are being encountered.³¹⁰ Even in Baptist worship services, churches have begun to incorporate periods of silence, the singing of responsorial psalms, and the public reading of Scripture.³¹¹ E. Glenn Hinson says the Baptist spiritual tradition has its roots in Puritanism, and that Puritans gleaned many of their practices from medieval contemplatives.³¹² Hinson demonstrates through the hymnody of Southern Baptists and the words of monastics, such as Bernard of Clairvaux, that Southern Baptist spirituality expresses itself or even mirrors that of medieval spirituality.³¹³ He also notes that many practiced the Puritan version of *lectio divina* which included contemplative prayer, reading Scripture morning, noon, and night, and meditation.³¹⁴ Doran McCarty states, “Baptists believe that Bible reading, and Bible study are important elements of spirituality...the Bible is the basic literary element in Southern Baptist spirituality.”³¹⁵ Hinson states that in modern times Baptists have privately meditated on the Scriptures in a manner analogous to the *lectio divina* of the medieval monks.³¹⁶ He also shows that Christians have exhibited *lectio divina* practices through the reading of Scripture at meal times often accompanied by silence as one contemplates the message or by sitting in rocking

³¹⁰ Marshall, “The Changing Face of Baptist Discipleship,” 62.

³¹¹ Ibid., 69.

³¹² E. Glenn Hinson, “Baptist Approaches to Spirituality,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 37 no. 2 (2002): 6.

³¹³ E. Glenn Hinson, “Southern Baptist and Medieval Spirituality: Surprising Similarities,” *Cistercian Studies* 20 no.3 (1985): 224.

³¹⁴ Hinson, “Baptist Approaches,” 7, 10.

³¹⁵ Doran McCarty, “Spirituality: A Southern Baptist Perspective,” *Review & Expositor* 79 no. 2 (1982): 307, 309.

³¹⁶ E. Glenn Hinson, “Baptists and Spirituality: A Community at Worship,” *Review & Expositor* 84 no. 4 (1987): 652.

chairs reading or listening to the Bible with eyes closed soaking in the message.³¹⁷ Marshall notes that “each individual was to study Scripture, pray, keep a diary of spiritual reading, and self-examination.”³¹⁸ Three of these are fundamental aspects of *lectio divina*. They were also to live out their discipleship practices as orderly lives in the world, bearing witness so that others would be converted.³¹⁹

As briefly demonstrated, the steps of *lectio divina* have been practiced by Baptists for centuries although not under the umbrella of the term *lectio divina*. Just as knowing a method of biblical interpretation is important, practicing *lectio divina* can be beneficial in enriching an individual’s spirituality. By introducing *lectio divina* with the inductive Bible study method, the participants of the project can begin to grow closer to God through its practice.

Theological Foundations

This portion of the paper provides the theological foundations for the project intervention. First, the inspiration of the Scriptures exhibits a viable reason for Christians to be able to correctly interpret the Word of God by using a method of biblical interpretation. Second, because the Scriptures are inerrant, Christians need to know how to interpret the Word of God to build a strong theological foundation. Third, to demonstrate that proper interpretation is necessary, it will be suggested that Scripture is authoritative for each believer. Fourth, the doctrine of illumination will be examined in order to emphasize that believers understand the vital role of the Holy Spirit in the process of biblical interpretation. These four theological concepts aid in building the foundation for why each Christian should know the Word of God,

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Marshall, “Baptist Discipleship,” 65.

³¹⁹ Ibid., 66.

and how to perform biblical interpretation. Meditation in Scripture will also be explored for it is relevant to appropriating the principles gathered from the inductive Bible study method. Ezra 7:10 and Nehemiah 8:8 from the Old Testament and Acts 17:10-15 and 2 Timothy 3:10-17 from the New Testament will demonstrate the need of having a method of biblical interpretation.

Inspiration of Scripture

The doctrine of inspiration finds support throughout Scripture. The most commonly referred to Scriptures for the doctrine of inspiration are 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and 2 Peter 1:16-21. Paul's statement in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 serves as the quintessential statement on inspiration when he writes, "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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." The word "inspiration" (*theopneustos*) means a communication that has been inspired by God.³²⁰ The passive verbal form indicates that Scripture's source is the breath of God, i.e. that Scripture is the result of that action.³²¹ Sproul states that Paul instructs Timothy that the Bible comes from God who is its ultimate author...it is His Word, it comes from Him, it carries the weight of all that He is.³²² In this passage, Paul is exhorting Timothy to continue in the teachings that he has received because they are divinely produced just as God breathed the breath of life into humanity (Gen. 2:7).³²³ Knight says that Paul appears to be saying that all scripture has as its source God's breath and that this is its

³²⁰ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 417.

³²¹ George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992), 448.

³²² R.C. Sproul, *Knowing Scripture*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 24.

³²³ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology 2nd ed.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998), 227.

essential characteristics . . . This is another way of saying that scripture is God’s word.³²⁴ The idea Knight presents is that God has breathed his character into Scripture so that it is inherently inspired. Paul was not asserting that the Scriptures are inspiring in that they breathe information about God into us, even though the statement is true . . . The Scriptures owe their origin and distinctiveness to God himself . . . This is the abiding character of Scripture.³²⁵ Paul’s affirmation of the inspiration of Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:16 is a statement of the divine origin of Scripture and is encouraging the reader to turn to Scripture with confidence that it is an inerrant guide for beliefs and practices.³²⁶

The passage in 2 Peter 1:16-21 speaks of the process of inspiration. In verse 21 Peter says “for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”³²⁷ The word “moved” (*pheromenoi*) is used to bring a thought or idea into circulation, bring, utter, make a word, speech, announcement, or charge.³²⁸ The same word is used in Acts 27:15 to describe the moving of the ship Paul was on when it ran into a fierce storm, the winds directing the ship wherever they blew.³²⁹ Ryrie asserts that the word is strong indicating complete superintending by the Spirit of all that the human authors wrote.³³⁰ Green

³²⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 447.

³²⁵ Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, vol. 34, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 236.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 240.

³²⁷ All Scripture references are from the *New King James Version*.

³²⁸ William Arndt, et al., *A Greek Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1052.

³²⁹ Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1999), 73-74.

³³⁰ Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *What You Should Know About Inerrancy* (Willow Grove, PA: Woodlawn Electronic Publishing, 1998), 45.

states that the meaning of the word suggests, “The prophets raised their sails, so to speak (they were obedient and receptive), and the Holy Spirit filled them and carried their craft along in the direction he wished . . . Men spoke: God spoke . . . any proper doctrine of Scripture will not neglect either part of this truth.”³³¹ DeYoung says that the word suggests an assured outcome, one that is carried out and guaranteed by another.³³² It also can be proved from the Old and New Testaments that the Holy Spirit is the means of all biblical inspiration. Demonstrating that the writers were receiving and proclaiming the Word of God, phrases such as “thus says the Lord”, “God said”, “the Word of the Lord came to me” are found hundreds of times in Scripture.³³³ The book of Leviticus has sixty-six occurrences of phrases like “the Lord spoke unto Moses.” Ezekiel chapter 12 alone has eleven such examples (12:1, 8, 10, 17, 19, 21, 23,25-26, 28 twice) along with Jeremiah (1:2, 4, 11, 13; 2:1, 3, 5), and Isaiah (1:1, 11, 18, 24; 2:1).³³⁴ In 2 Samuel 23:2-3 the Holy Spirit guided David as he wrote, Jesus also speaks of David writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in quoting Psalm 110 in Matthew.³³⁵ The apostles also taught that the Holy Spirit guided the writers of the Old Testament (Acts 1:16, 4:24-25, 28:25).³³⁶ Jesus told the apostles that they would be able to remember all the things He had spoken to them (John 14:26) and that they would be able to understand the words He spoke when the Holy Spirit

³³¹ Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 18, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 113.

³³² Kevin DeYoung, *Taking God at His Word, Why the Bible is Knowable, Necessary, and Enough, and What that Means for You and Me* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 37.

³³³ Norman Geisler, *Systematic Theology: In One Volume* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2011), 173.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2008), 269.

³³⁶ Ibid., 270.

enabled them to understand it (John 16:12-15).³³⁷ Even the New Testament writers recognized their writings as Scripture. In 1 Timothy 5:18 Paul quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7 recognizing them as equal in authority. In 2 Peter 3:16 Peter mentions Paul's writings and equates them with the rest of Scripture.³³⁸ From this evidence, it can be concluded that the biblical writers' uniform testimony is that the Bible originated from God and is His message to the human race.³³⁹

Many scholars hold to the plenary verbal inspiration view of the Scriptures. Plenary simply means "full, entire, complete" and denotes that God-breathed (2 Tim. 3:16) Scripture in all of its parts.³⁴⁰ Verbal is the best way to convey that the Holy Spirit so influenced the writers of Scripture that their words are to be taken in the fullest sense as the Spirit's words. The doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration asserts that in a unique and absolute way the Holy Spirit acted in relationship with the biblical writers so as to render them infallible revealers of God's truth.³⁴¹ The strongest defense for the plenary verbal inspiration of the Scriptures is the testimony of Jesus.³⁴² This view is proven by demonstrating that Jesus affirmed the inspiration of the entire Old Testament (Matt. 5:17-18; Luke 24:44), its parts (Matt. 4:4,7,10, 21:42), its words (Matt. 22:44; John 10:34), its letters (Matt. 5:18), and the inspiration of the New Testament (John 14:26, 16:12-15).³⁴³ Based on the authority of Jesus, sometimes referred to as the

³³⁷ Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, 270.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

³³⁹ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 228.

³⁴⁰ McDonald, "Authority of the Bible," 307.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 308.

³⁴² Enns, *Moody Handbook*, 168.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 165-166.

Christological approach, is to accept the divine inspiration of the Bible.³⁴⁴ Jesus authenticated the Old Testament Scriptures showing they were divinely inspired by God. This example from Matthew shows Jesus referred to events, characters, and writers of the Old Testament. Jesus referred to Moses (Matt. 8:4), Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matt. 8:11), the destruction of Sodom and Lot's wife (Matt. 10:15), Isaiah (Matt. 12:17), Jonah (Matt. 12:40), Elijah (Matt. 17:11-12), Adam and Eve (Matt. 19:3-5; Mark 10:6-8), David (Matt. 22:45), Abel and Zechariah (Matt. 23:35), Daniel (Matt. 24:15), and the flood (Matt. 24:38-39).³⁴⁵ Jesus also pre-authenticated³⁴⁶ the New Testament Scriptures when He gave the apostles the promise of the Holy Ghost to guide them "into all truth" (John 16:13).³⁴⁷ Jesus' pre-authentication of the New Testament can also be proven by the fact that Jesus claimed His words were the Father's words (John 8:26-28).³⁴⁸ The Holy Spirit guided the New Testament writers by helping them remember the facts of Christ's teachings, He enabled them to understand theologically what they were writing, and He guaranteed the completion of the entire New Testament.³⁴⁹ Geisler discloses the doctrine of inspiration when he states:

³⁴⁴ Steven B. Cowan, "Is the Bible the Word of God," *In Defense of the Bible: A Comprehensive Approach for the Authority of Scripture* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2013), 435.

³⁴⁵ Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, 98.

³⁴⁶ Pre-authentication means that Jesus was aware of and instrumental in the New Testament's production even though none of it was written while He was on earth. Rolland McCune, *A Systematic Theology of Biblical Christianity Volume 1: Prolegomena and the Doctrines of Scripture, God, and Angels* (Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, 1990), 69. John Wenham, *Christ and the Bible* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1994), 123. Wenham also states that "To Christ, His own teaching and the teaching of the His Spirit-taught apostles were true, authoritative, and inspired. To Him, what He and they said under the direction of the Holy Spirit, God said. To Him, the God of the New Testament was the living God; and in principle the teaching of the New Testament was the teaching of the living God."

³⁴⁷ Alan Cairns, *Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Greenville, SC; Ambassador Emerald International, 2002), 237.

³⁴⁸ John MacArthur and Richard Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine: A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 96.

³⁴⁹ Enns, *Moody Handbook*, 270.

The inspiration of God, then, extends to every part of Scripture, including everything God affirmed (or denied) about any topic...it is inclusive of not only what the Bible teaches but what it touches; that is to say, it includes not only what the Bible teaches explicitly but also what it teaches implicitly, covering not only spiritual matters but factual ones, the omniscient God cannot be wrong about anything He teaches or implies.³⁵⁰

The words of Scripture are self-attesting. The Bible cannot be proven to be God's Words by appealing to a higher authority because there is no higher authority.³⁵¹ If an appeal could be made to some higher authority to prove that the Bible is God's Word then the Bible would no longer be the highest or absolute authority. Some also argue that by appealing to the Bible for its authority is circular reasoning. According to Grudem, this is a kind of circular argument, but it does not make the argument invalid for all arguments for an absolute authority must ultimately appeal to that authority for proof; otherwise, the authority would not be an absolute or highest authority.³⁵²

Inerrancy of the Scriptures

It is essential for Christians to understand the doctrine of inerrancy in their study of the Word of God. There are many different ways theologians have expressed the doctrine of inerrancy. According to the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy produced by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, inerrancy is defined as "Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives."³⁵³ *The Baptist Faith and*

³⁵⁰ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, 175.

³⁵¹ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 78.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ DTS Mosher and Turpin Libraries, "Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," https://library.dts.edu/Pages/TL/Special/ICBI_1.pdf (accessed July 15, 2019), 2.

Message, a statement adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention, states “The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God’s revelation of Himself to man”³⁵⁴ Another defines inerrancy as a special activity of divine inspiration whereby the Holy Spirit superintended the scriptural writers in communicating the biblical message in ways consistent with their differing personalities, literary styles, cultural background while safeguarding them from error.³⁵⁵ Melick’s definition of inerrancy is comprehensive and concise, “God so orchestrated the circumstances of the writing of Holy Scripture that every word participates in its context to communicate exactly and accurately what God intended to say . . . Since every word comes from God and is inspired, the Bible is inerrant, it is correct in what it teaches and accurate in what it records.”³⁵⁶

The doctrine of inerrancy can be proven from what the Bible speaks about itself and from history. First, the Bible teaches its own inspiration, and this requires an understanding the Bible is inerrant (2 Tim 3:16).³⁵⁷ Second, Deuteronomy 13:1-5 and 18:20-22 demonstrate that the mark of a true prophet, when communicating a message from God, is total and absolute truthfulness. Third, from passages such as Matthew 5:17-20 and John 10:34-35 spoken by Jesus, the Bible teaches its own authority down to the smallest detail and this requires inerrancy.³⁵⁸ Fourth, the use of Scripture in other Scriptures such as the New Testament quoting the Old Testament is

³⁵⁴ Southern Baptist Convention, *The Baptist Faith and Message* (Nashville, TN: LifeWay Press, 2011), 7.

³⁵⁵ Carl F.H Henry, *God Revelation and Authority* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1999), 166.

³⁵⁶ Richard R. Melick Jr., “Can We Understand the Bible?” *In Defense of the Bible: A Comprehensive Apologetic for the Authority of Scripture* (Nashville, TN: Baker Academic, 2013), 91.

³⁵⁷ P.D. Feinberg, “Inerrancy and Infallibility of the Bible,” *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 157.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

proof of its inerrancy.³⁵⁹ Fifth, inerrancy is supported by what the Bible teaches about God's character. Geisler and Ryrie use Scripture to support their method of demonstrating inerrancy. First, is that the Bible itself claims to be the Word of God (Matt. 15:6; Rom. 3:2; Heb. 4:12; 1 Pet. 1:23) and secondly that God cannot err.³⁶⁰ By combining these two statements it can be determined that the Bible cannot err.³⁶¹ Ryrie's methodology for the support of the doctrine of inerrancy is similar to Geisler. He states that since God is true (Rom. 3:4); the Scriptures were breathed out by God (2 Tim. 3:16); therefore, the Scriptures are true since they came from the breath of God who is true.³⁶² Geisler notes five biblical affirmations to prove the inerrancy of the Bible: (1) The Bible is God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16); (2) The nature of the prophet (Deut. 18:18; 1 Pet. 1:21); (3) The divine authority of the Bible (Matt. 5:17-18); (4) The Bible is what God says (Gen. 12:1-3; Gal. 3:8); (5) The Bible is called the Word of God (2 Chron. 34:14; Zech. 7:12; John 10:35).³⁶³ The historical argument for inerrancy presents that inerrancy has been the position of the church throughout history.³⁶⁴ Augustine and the Reformers such as John Calvin and Martin Luther all bore testimony to the inerrancy of the Scriptures.³⁶⁵ Calvin states that "the Scriptures are the only records in which God has been pleased to consign his truth to perpetual remembrance, the full authority that they ought to possess with the faithful is not recognized unless they are believed to have come from heaven, as directly as if God had been heard giving

³⁵⁹ Feinberg, "Inerrancy and Infallibility of the Bible," 157.

³⁶⁰ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, 369.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Enns, *Moody Handbook*, 168.

³⁶³ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, 370.

³⁶⁴ Feinberg, "Inerrancy," 158.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

utterance to them.”³⁶⁶ Luther says, “Natural reason produces heresy and error. Faith teaches and adheres to the pure truth. He who adheres to the Scriptures will find that they do not lie or deceive.”³⁶⁷ The orthodox doctrine that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, without error in everything it affirms, in its original manuscripts has been validated since the first century.³⁶⁸

One issue related to the inerrancy of the Bible is the truthfulness of God’s Word. The Old Testament contains many references to God being truthful or to His truthfulness. God’s truthfulness is a constant attribute related to God (Ps. 108:4, 117:2; Hos. 2:20) and this guarantees His complete trustworthiness.³⁶⁹ This truthfulness as an attribute of God carries over to characterize all of His works (Ps. 57:3) and especially His word (Ps. 119:89). The Old Testament repetitively speaks of God as “not a man, that He should lie” (Num. 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Ps. 89:35). Psalm 31:5 declares that the Lord is the God of truth and Psalm 119:160 affirms that His Word is true. 2 Samuel 7:28 declares that “And now, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant.”

The New Testament also bears witness to the truthfulness of God. It describes God as being both true (John 3:33, 7:28, 8:26, 17:2; 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 John 5:20) and truthful (Rom. 3:7, 15:8).³⁷⁰ Titus 1:2 says that God “never lies.” Because God cannot speak a lie His words can always be trusted and since all of Scripture is spoken by God, all of Scripture must be true.³⁷¹

³⁶⁶ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, 227.

³⁶⁷ Martin Luther, *Sammtliche Schriften* ed. J.G. Walch, 2nd ed. (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1910), 11:162.

³⁶⁸ Bobby Hayes, “The Evangelical Doctrine of Inspiration and Inerrancy-Restated,” *Conservative Theological Journal* 1 no. 2 (August 2007): 167.

³⁶⁹ H.D. McDonald, “Authority of the Bible,” *Evangelical Dictionary of the Bible* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Academic, 2001), 154.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁷¹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 83.

Hebrews 6:18 says “it is impossible for God to lie.” It is important to note that the author does not merely say that God does not lie, but that it is impossible for God to lie.³⁷² Since the words of the Bible are God’s words, given to men, and since God cannot lie or speak falsely, it is accurate to conclude that there is no untruthfulness or error in any word of Scripture (Ps. 12:6, 119:89,160; Prov. 30:5).³⁷³

Another example of the truthfulness of God’s Word is found in John 17:17. When Jesus is praying to the Father, he says “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.” Here Jesus uses the noun form of the word *aletheia* to say that God’s Word is not simply true but rather that it is truth itself meaning that His Word is the final standard of truth.³⁷⁴ The doctrine of inspiration intertwines here with inerrancy. Inspiration guarantees the truth of all the Bible teaches, implies, or entails (2 Tim. 3:16, 2 Pet. 1:20-21).³⁷⁵ The Bible is the book of God’s truth, wholly trustworthy regarding its truth, and the divine authority in all things that pertain to life and godliness.³⁷⁶ God’s Word declares that it is inerrant (Ps. 12:6, 119:140; Prov. 30:5; John 10:35) which means it is absolutely true and trustworthy.³⁷⁷ Christians who confess Scripture and its authority should be aware of the command to understand and to interpret it.³⁷⁸ For Christians,

³⁷² Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 83.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, 174.

³⁷⁶ McDonald, “Authority of the Bible,” 154.

³⁷⁷ MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 69.

³⁷⁸ G.C. Berkouwer, *Studies in Dogmatics: Holy Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1975), 138.

knowing that the Scriptures are inerrant and truthful in their lives is important, and points toward the need of knowing a proper biblical method of interpretation.

Authority of the Scriptures

Following the inerrancy and inspiration of the Bible is the issue of the Bible's authority. These three doctrines can essentially be seen as interconnected with one another. Many of the same Scriptures that are proposed to define inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture are also used to propagate the authority of the Scriptures. Authority can be described as the inspired and inerrant Scriptures, revealing God's transcendent will in objective written form, are the rule of faith and conduct through which Christ exercises His divine authority in the lives of Christians.³⁷⁹ In other words, Scripture is authoritative because it is inspired by God.³⁸⁰ The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God's words, in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.³⁸¹ Erickson defines authority as "God himself is the ultimate authority . . . He has the right, both by virtue of who He is and what He does, to establish a standard for belief and practice . . . He has delegated this authority by creating a book, the Bible, it conveys His message and carries the same weight as God

³⁷⁹ Henry, "Authority of the Bible," 296.

³⁸⁰ F.F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018), 255-269. Bruce asserts five key questions on how the church identified which canonical books were divinely inspired and authoritative: (1) Was the book authored or sanctioned by an apostle or a prophet? (2) Was the book widely circulated? (3) Was the book Christologically centered? (4) Was the book orthodox, that is, faithful to the teachings of the apostles? (5) Did the book give internal evidence of its unique character as inspired and authoritative?

J.P. Moreland, *Scaling the Celestial City: A Defense of Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1987), 134-135. Moreland details the three-fold test to determine if a document is historically reliable: (1) The bibliographical test determines how many manuscript copies of the document and how far they are removed in time from the originals (2) The internal test demonstrates whether or not the document itself claims to be actual history written by eyewitnesses (3) The external test whether the material external to the document (archaeology or early church father writings) confirms the reliability of the document.

³⁸¹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 73.

Himself.”³⁸² God’s authority can be seen in His creation of the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1-2), His ownership of the earth with all it contains and all who dwell on it (Ps. 24:1), and in the end, God will consume it all (2 Pet. 3:10).³⁸³ The Scriptures make clear that God has the authority (Gen. 17:1; Ps. 62:11; 2 Chron. 20:6; Matt. 28:18; Rom. 13:1; Phil. 2:10; 1 Tim. 1:17; Jude 25). Thus, the precedent for the authority of Scripture is found in the One that spoke the Scriptures.

The Bible itself claims to be the Word of God and to have divine authority (Matt. 15:6, Rom. 3:2, 1 Per. 1:23, Heb. 4:12; Jam. 2:8,23).³⁸⁴ The Bible makes itself clear that it is the final authority, the court of last appeal in everything it affirms or implies (Ps. 138:2).³⁸⁵ When the Old Testament prophets said, “Thus says the Lord” they are claiming to be the messengers from the sovereign King of Israel, God Himself, and they are claiming that their words are the absolute authoritative words of God.³⁸⁶ God also spoke through the prophets (1 Kgs. 4:18, 16:12; 2 Kgs. 9:36, 14:25; Jer. 37:2; Zech. 7:7,12) thus what the prophet spoke in God’s name God spoke.³⁸⁷ The Old Testament also contains the written word of God, the most famous being the Decalogue—the covenantal testimony written by the finger of God (Ex. 31:18, 34:1), functioning as a suzerainty treaty between God the King and Israel the vassal state.³⁸⁸ 2 Timothy 3:16 confirms the authority of all of God’s Word for faith and practice. The word “Scripture” (*graphe*) in 2

³⁸² Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 271.

³⁸³ MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 101.

³⁸⁴ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, 173.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 177.

³⁸⁶ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 74.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁸ Te-Li Lau, “Knowing the Bible Is the Word of God Despite Competing Claims,” *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 990.

Timothy 3:16 refers to the Old Testament written Scripture as it does in the other fifty-one instances it is used in the New Testament.³⁸⁹ This verse demonstrates also that all of the Bible is authoritative, inerrant, and inspired by God. Peter demonstrated in 2 Peter 3:15-16 that Paul's words were on par with the Old Testament Scriptures.³⁹⁰ The divine authority of Scripture includes all the inspired written Word (2 Tim. 3:16), even the words (Matt. 22:42), the tense of verbs (Matt. 22:32), and even the smallest parts of words (Matt. 5:17-18).³⁹¹ Jesus said that the Word of God can be determined from the fact that it has divine authority (Matt. 5:17-18) and that it is to be exalted over all human authority (Matt. 15:3-6).³⁹²

Additional proof of the authority of Scripture is the fulfillment of prophecy. Lewis Sperry Chafer states, "The divine authority of the Scriptures has been demonstrated in the grand array of predictions already fulfilled."³⁹³ Isaiah 53 related, not only to Jesus, but the mode of execution He would suffer, Isaiah 44:28 with its reference to Cyrus the king of Persia who would give the order to rebuild the temple, and to Daniel's predictions of the future world kingdoms each give ample evidence that Scripture is authoritative and divinely inspired.³⁹⁴ Archaeology also aids in the endeavor of providing proof of the authority of the Bible by establishing the truthfulness of Scripture. William F. Albright says, "There can be no doubt that archaeology has confirmed the

³⁸⁹ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 74.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 76.

³⁹¹ Geisler, *Systematic Theology*, 173.

³⁹² *Ibid.*, 370.

³⁹³ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology Volume 1: Prolegomena, Bibliology, Theology Proper* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1976), 104.

³⁹⁴ MacArthur and Mayhue, *Biblical Doctrine*, 102.

substantial historicity of the Old Testament tradition.”³⁹⁵ The names of characters in the Bible, the names of non-Israelite gods, general cultural and religious background, all accord with the knowledge gained from archaeological documents.³⁹⁶ Specific examples include archaeologists finding the city of Jericho³⁹⁷ to the Tel Dan stela which mentions King David by name.³⁹⁸ In northwest Syria, at the site of ancient Ebla, fifteen thousand tablets dating from 2300 B.C. have been discovered and contain names such as Abram, Israel, Esau, David, Yahweh, and Jerusalem proving the Old Testament narratives.³⁹⁹ Boice states concerning inerrancy and inspiration, “The Bible is the inerrant, infallible Word of God . . . it is the result of divine inspiration, which produced divinely authoritative and factual accounts that are truthful in what they record.”⁴⁰⁰

Illumination of Scripture

The doctrine of illumination is essential to the life of the Christian when studying the Scriptures. This doctrine has a direct correlation with inspiration. Through inspiration, the Spirit provided Scripture truth, now by illumination the Holy Spirit interprets it for Christians.⁴⁰¹ Scripture itself is the Spirit-given truth of God, and Scripture exhorts all believers to appropriate its adequate reserves to cope with the demands of this life (2 Tim. 3:16-17).⁴⁰² Even while one is

³⁹⁵ Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), 195.

³⁹⁶ Edgar V. McKnight, *Reading the Bible Today: A 21st-Century Appreciation of Scripture* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing Co., 2003), 54.

³⁹⁷ Kathleen M. Kenyon, *Digging Up Jericho* (London: Ernest Benn, 1957), 261-262.

³⁹⁸ George Athas, *The Tel Dan Inscription: A Reappraisal and a New Interpretation* (New York, NY: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 110.

³⁹⁹ James Montgomery Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive and Readable Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 60.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 114.

⁴⁰¹ Packer, *Concise Theology*, 155.

⁴⁰² Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, 280.

applying a proper hermeneutics and methodology, there is a divine element to understanding God's truth as the Holy Spirit aids the believer in an understanding of divine truth.⁴⁰³

Illumination can be defined as the ministry of the Holy Spirit whereby He enlightens those who are in a right relationship with Him to comprehend the written Word of God (Eph. 1:17-18, 3:18-19; 2 Cor. 3:14-16, 4:6).⁴⁰⁴ Robert Reymond defines illumination as "the Holy Spirit's enabling Christians to understand, to recall to mind, and to apply the Scriptures they have studied."⁴⁰⁵

Illumination is a work within a believer that enables one to grasp and to love the revelation in the biblical text when it is heard and read.⁴⁰⁶ The ministry of illumination by the Holy Spirit is not so much as to give intellectual understanding but to give true understanding to the heart, which enables to respond to the truth.⁴⁰⁷ It is the Spirit that empowers Christians to receive and appropriate the Scriptures and promotes theological comprehension for a transformed life.⁴⁰⁸

There are two primary passages of Scripture that teach the central points of the doctrine of illumination. The first is John 14:26, which states that "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." One of the Spirit's principle tasks, after Jesus' glorification, is to remind the apostles of Jesus' teaching and thus, in the new situation after the resurrection, to help

⁴⁰³ Enns, *Moody Handbook*, 152.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 177.

⁴⁰⁵ Robert Reymond, *What About Continuing Revelations and Miracles in the Presbyterian Church Today?* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977), 28-29.

⁴⁰⁶ Packer, *Concise Theology*, 155.

⁴⁰⁷ Swindoll and Zuck, *Understanding Christian*, 130.

⁴⁰⁸ Henry, "Authority of the Bible," 273.

them grasp its significance and to teach them what it meant.⁴⁰⁹ The Spirit is the believer's resident truth teacher (1 John 2:20,27) by illuminating God's Word in order for them to understand, He thus grants Christians the knowledge of God that leads them to spiritual maturity.⁴¹⁰ Borchet comments that the Spirit's role would be more like a prompter who would bring to memory the ideas of Jesus that one should be able to recall. The task of the Holy Spirit could also be said to be one of confirming and interpreting the message proclaimed and demonstrated by Jesus.⁴¹¹ This is an important truth to know because it provides assurance from the Lord Himself that the first witnesses, whose testimony is preserved in the New Testament, would be instructed by the Spirit regarding the truths Jesus taught them.⁴¹² The Spirit's conveyance of revelation to Christians presupposes the definitive disclosure antecedently given to the inspired prophets and apostles.⁴¹³ The promise of remembrance was primarily a promise to the apostles of divine inspiration which led them with supernatural guidance and gave them an inerrant understanding of Jesus' person and teaching.⁴¹⁴

The second passage is found in John 16:13 where the Spirit is promised by Jesus to "guide them into all truth." The word "into" has relevance because it is believed to hint at the truth the disciples have not yet known while if it were translated "in all truth" it would point to

⁴⁰⁹ D.A. Carson, *John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 505.

⁴¹⁰ John MacArthur Jr., *John 12-21*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago; IL: Moody Publishers, 2008), 119.

⁴¹¹ Gerald L. Borchet *John 12-21* The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2002), 131.

⁴¹² Colin G. Kruse, *John: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentary (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 307.

⁴¹³ Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority*, 276.

⁴¹⁴ MacArthur, *John 12-21*, 120.

the truth already disclosed.⁴¹⁵ The Lord's promise that the Spirit will guide believers into all truth has primary reference to the writers of the New Testament, but it also extends in a secondary sense to the Holy Spirit's work of illumination by teaching and instructing believers from the inspired Scriptures.⁴¹⁶ The notion of guidance in all truth has nothing to do with privileged information but with understanding God as He has revealed Himself and with obeying that revelation.⁴¹⁷ Many of the psalmists longed for this type of divine guidance (Ps. 25:4-5, 43:3, 86:11, 143:10).⁴¹⁸ When indwelt by the Holy Spirit, God can be heard speaking through the Bible in ways that nourish, encourage, and give hope.⁴¹⁹ Packer concedes that the way to truly benefit from the Spirit's ministry of illumination is serious Bible study, prayer, and obedience to whatever truths that are shown.⁴²⁰

Implications of the Doctrines

The affirmation or denial of the doctrines of inspiration, inerrancy, authority, and illumination is crucial to the Christian life. One needs to be completely committed to the inerrancy of Scripture because it is the foundation that establishes the full extent of Scripture's authority.⁴²¹ The doctrines of inerrancy, authority, and illumination find their basis in the

⁴¹⁵ Carson, *John*, 539.

⁴¹⁶ MacArthur, *John 12-21*, 208.

⁴¹⁷ Carson, *John*, 539.

⁴¹⁸ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 473.

⁴¹⁹ Donald S. Whitney, *Simplify Your Spiritual Life: Spiritual Disciplines for the Overwhelmed* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2003), 32.

⁴²⁰ Packer, *Concise Theology*, 156.

⁴²¹ David S. Dockery and David P. Nelson, "Special Revelation," *A Theology for the Church*, Daniel L. Akin ed. (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2007), 173.

doctrine of inspiration. An affirmation or denial of the doctrine of inspiration will clearly define what a person believes about the other three doctrines. While some think of these doctrines purely on an academic level, an affirmation or denial of these doctrines affects the church and believers everywhere. If denied, the doctrine of inerrancy has serious ramifications for the church and believers. One of the most robust questions stemming from this would be “Can I trust God?” If God has spoken falsely to believers in even minor portions of Scripture, then we realize that God is capable of speaking falsely.⁴²² This would imply that if God were speaking falsely in minor areas then He could also be speaking falsely in major doctrines as well. In denying inerrancy believers would also imply that they know more truth and are more accurate in what they say than God.⁴²³ While the salvation of individuals is not dependent upon one's confession of inerrancy, theological method and instruction need the base of inerrancy in order to continue to maintain an orthodox confession in salvific matters.⁴²⁴

Affirming inspiration and inerrancy should be joined with an affirmation of the Bible's authority. Dockery and Nelson state, “The Bible is the primary means of God's authoritative self-disclosure for people today.”⁴²⁵ Albert Mohler believes that “The truthfulness and authority of the Holy Scriptures must also rank as a first order doctrine, for without an affirmation of the Bible as the very Word of God, we are left without any adequate authority for distinguishing truth from error.”⁴²⁶ Bobby Hayes also agrees with this sentiment as he states, “Compromising

⁴²² Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 100.

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ Dockery and Nelson, “Special Revelation,” 156.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., 172.

⁴²⁶ R. Albert Mohler, “Theological Triage,” *9Marks Journal* 5 no. 2 (March/April 2008): 20.

the full authority of Scripture eventually affects what it means to be a Christian theologically and how we live in the full spectrum of human life.”⁴²⁷ The authority of the Bible is the expression of God’s will to us, possesses the supreme right to define what we are to believe and how we are to conduct ourselves.⁴²⁸ The authority of Scripture has been demonstrated by the use of the Bible in the church and is effective for defining doctrine and ethics, the preaching of the gospel, and private devotion.⁴²⁹ The word of God is what calls people to faith and obedience, and it is His Word that directs people of faith on their earthly pilgrimage.⁴³⁰

The chief ground of the believer’s and the church’s confidence in the authority of Scripture lies in the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the Christian who is the inspirer of Scripture.⁴³¹ It is the Holy Spirit who illumines our minds and hearts to understand the biblical message, to recognize the authority of Scripture, and to respond in obedience to its message.⁴³² It has been the character of the church of Jesus Christ as a canonical community to be people of the book.⁴³³ The Spirit applies God’s revelation to the minds and hearts of His people by helping them interpret and understand God’s written Word.⁴³⁴ According to Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:9-13, without the aid of the Holy Spirit, Christians would be unable to understand

⁴²⁷ Hayes, “The Evangelical Doctrine,” 164.

⁴²⁸ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 267.

⁴²⁹ Nigel M. de S. Cameron, “Authority of the Bible,” *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House 1996), 56.

⁴³⁰ Donald G. Bloesch, *Holy Scripture: Revelation, Inspiration and Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: 1994), 152.

⁴³¹ Cameron, “Authority of the Bible,” 56.

⁴³² Dockery and Nelson, “Special Revelation,” 173.

⁴³³ Cameron, “Authority of the Bible,” 58.

⁴³⁴ Dockery and Nelson, “Special Revelation,” 121.

spiritual truth. As the Holy Spirit indwelt Jesus' disciples, He brought to their remembrance the Lord's teachings and guided them into all truth.⁴³⁵ The ministry of the Holy Spirit was not merely for the first generation of disciples, but also includes helping believers today to understand the Scriptures.⁴³⁶ When Scripture is studied, believers should pray that the Holy Spirit would give illumination and help them to understand rightly.⁴³⁷ People must not deny the continuing reality of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church providing illumination of the written Word of God.⁴³⁸ As believers, we may rely on the Holy Spirit to give us an understanding of the Word of God and to lead and guide us through life. As Bloesch states, "When confronted by the illumined text, we are at the same time meeting the risen Christ."⁴³⁹ Through the Word of God, believers are to respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit to obey its message.⁴⁴⁰ It is through this avenue that fellowship and community result in living out the right doctrine with the right practice before an unbelieving world.⁴⁴¹ Believers want to know that what they trust comes from God and contains no error. If Scripture truly originates with God and is not in error, it is authoritative in the life of each believer. As Erickson shows with respect to illumination, human beings need more than probability they need certainty, because of the eternal consequences at stake that human reason cannot provide.⁴⁴² The doctrines of inspiration, inerrancy, authority, and

⁴³⁵ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1050.

⁴³⁶ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 890.

⁴³⁷ Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 645.

⁴³⁸ Bloesch, *Holy Scripture*, 155.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, 160.

⁴⁴⁰ Dockery and Nelson, "Special Revelation," 173.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁴⁴² Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 273.

illumination are affirmed by the Word of God and through the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. These four doctrines demonstrate that it is important for believers not to be interpretive dependent, but to know how to properly interpret the Word of God for themselves.

Old Testament Scriptures

The book of Ezra details the struggles to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem under Zerubbabel (Ch.1-6) and records the coming of Ezra, a scribe and scholar, from Babylon some 60 years later who would have the task of reestablishing the Law of Moses in the land.⁴⁴³ The spiritual condition of the people was deplorable as the people were worldly and ignorant of God's Word.⁴⁴⁴ Ezra 7:6 says that Ezra was a "skilled scribe in the Law of Moses." The Hebrew word *mahir* used to describe Ezra means someone who is well-versed, experienced, or having the knowledge and skill in a subject.⁴⁴⁵ It also carries the implications of diligence to perform a task and to execute an action in a prompt and prudent manner.⁴⁴⁶ This term used in describing Ezra reveals that he was a scribe of the highest efficiency and a professional of the highest order, and most likely refers to his knowledge of the Law of Moses.⁴⁴⁷ Ezra displays not only knowledge in the law of Moses but demonstrates knowledge of the book of Jeremiah (Ez. 1:1), Psalms (Ps

⁴⁴³ Tremper Longman III, *Layman's Old Testament Bible Commentary* (Ulrichsville, OH: Barbour Publishing, 2010), 788. See also Philip Graham Ryken, "Ezra, According to the Gospel: Ezra 7:10," *Themelios* 33 no.3 (Dec. 2008): 63-68.

⁴⁴⁴ Russell T. Fuller, "Ezra: The Teacher of God's Word and Agent of Revival," *The Southern Baptist Journal* 9 no.3 (Fall 2005): 52, accessed March 28, 2019. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

⁴⁴⁵ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbour: Logos Research Systems Inc., 1997), Logos.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ F. Charles Fensham, *The Book of Ezra and Nehemiah* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982), 99.

100:5, 106:1, 107:1, 108:1, 131:1), and recounts biblical history from Genesis to his own day (Neh. 9).⁴⁴⁸

Ezra 7:10 further discloses the task and abilities of Ezra as it states, “For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.” Ezra demonstrated important precepts found in the inductive Bible study method for studying God’s Word. First, Ezra prepared his heart. Prepared (*kun*) means to devote oneself to or to eagerly give oneself to an endeavor.⁴⁴⁹ Christian people can prepare by learning an inductive Bible study method to apply to God’s Word. Second, Ezra was said to “seek the Law of the Lord.” Seek (*daras*) means to study and interpret.⁴⁵⁰ With an inductive Bible study method, the Christian can study God’s Word simply, consistently, and effectively. Third, Ezra knew to not only seek the Law of the Lord but to also “do it.” The Hebrew word *asah* translated “do it” means to behave or have conducted in a particular way.⁴⁵¹ Ezra prepared by devoting his heart to studying God’s Word, and also to obey what it said. Fourth, Ezra was devoted to “teach statutes and ordinances in Israel.” The word “teach” translates the Hebrew word *lamad* and means to instruct, train, to impart information.⁴⁵² Ezra had also devoted his heart to teach the Israelites the word of God. It is vital that Christians devote themselves to biblical interpretation in order to study the Scriptures so they can obey them and teach them to others.

⁴⁴⁸ Fuller, “Agent of Revival,” 53.

⁴⁴⁹ Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages*, Logos.

⁴⁵⁰ Ludwig Koehler, et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 233.

⁴⁵¹ Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages*, Logos.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*

Ezra 7:1-10 explained much about Ezra's role in Israel at the return from captivity as the temple was being rebuilt. After the rebuilding of the wall was completed, Nehemiah 8:1-12 follows Ezra as he instructs the people from God's Law. The audience contains people who can hear and understand the reading of God's Word (v2). While Ezra reads from the Word, the Levites go throughout the crowds explaining the text that is being read as the people who are attentive to God's Word respond with reverence and worship (v3-7). Extensive attention is shown to the Word of God in this passage. Nehemiah 8:8 explains what Ezra and the Levitical priests were doing for the people as the Scriptures were being read aloud (*qara*).⁴⁵³ The word translated "distinctly" is the Hebrew word *paras* and means to make something clear.⁴⁵⁴ Commentators suggest that this term could be defined as translating because Ezra and the Levitical priests would have to bridge the cultural gap between the 70 years in Babylon with their cultural heritage as found in Scripture.⁴⁵⁵ Ezra and the Levitical priests explained the "sense" (*sekel*) of what was being read. This word can be defined as giving an understanding of anything⁴⁵⁶ or to give meaning, interpret, such as explaining information or a set of principles.⁴⁵⁷ This task was already one for the Levitical priests to perform on behalf of the people (Deut. 33:10; 2 Chron. 17:7-9).⁴⁵⁸ When the priests faithfully proclaimed God's Word, the people were faithful to the Lord God but when they failed in their responsibility the nation suffered

⁴⁵³ Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages*, Logos.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁵ Marvin Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishers, 1993), 226.

⁴⁵⁶ Koehler, *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon*, 1330.

⁴⁵⁷ Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages*, Logos.

⁴⁵⁸ H.G.M Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah*, Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 16 (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1985), 291.

spiritually.⁴⁵⁹ The interpretation of God’s Word by Ezra and the Levitical priests would bear fruit in the Israelites. They began to obey God’s Word by keeping the Feast of Booths (Neh. 8:17), by confessing their sin (Neh.9), by supporting the worship of God (Neh. 10), and by restoring the tithe and the Sabbath (Neh. 13).⁴⁶⁰ This passage of Scripture shows the importance and the dire need for Christians to understand and be able to perform biblical interpretation. The inductive Bible study method will aid in making the Scriptures clear so that they can be understood.

New Testament Scriptures

Acts 17:1-15 presents a contrast between those who heard the word in Thessalonica (vv. 1-9) and those in Berea (vv. 10-15). While there were many who believed in Thessalonica (v. 4), Paul and Silas were expelled from the city by the Jews who did not believe (vv. 5-9). Upon arriving in Berea, as was his custom, Paul and Silas enter the synagogue to preach the gospel. Those in Berea were “fair-minded” toward the gospel. The Greek word (*eugenesteros*) originally meant someone who was well-bred⁴⁶¹ but is also defined as someone who is open and tolerant⁴⁶² or someone with the willingness to learn and evaluate fairly.⁴⁶³ Verse 11 also shows that they were doing this with all readiness. The Greek word *prothymia* means to be eager to engage in an activity⁴⁶⁴ or to be absent of prejudice.⁴⁶⁵ Their approach to Scripture was unbiased and carried no prejudice as they listened to the gospel Paul had taught them. Once they had heard the gospel

⁴⁵⁹ Fuller, “Agent of Revival,” 43.

⁴⁶⁰ Fuller, “Agent of Revival,” 59.

⁴⁶¹ Arndt, et al., *A Greek Lexicon*, 204.

⁴⁶² John B. Polhill, *Acts*, New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: B& H Publishers, 1992), 362.

⁴⁶³ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 331.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 296.

⁴⁶⁵ Arndt, et al., *A Greek Lexicon*, 870.

message Paul preached, they “searched the Scriptures daily” to see if Paul was in agreement with the Word of God. The Greek term *anakrinos* means to engage in careful study⁴⁶⁶ or to investigate.⁴⁶⁷ It can also refer to a legal process such as a trial⁴⁶⁸ while some take the term to mean a cross-examination of the Scriptures.⁴⁶⁹ The inductive Bible study method allows the student of Scripture to approach the Scriptures with an open mind, not reading into the Scriptures, but allowing the text to speak for itself. To prevent falling into the trap of being unable to interpret the Bible, Christians should be eager to study the Word of God as demonstrated by the Bereans. The inductive Bible study method will provide the Christian with a way to interpret the Bible in a simple and consistent way.

In 2 Timothy 3:14-17 Paul encourages Timothy to keep living a godly life. In this section, Paul offers the example of his own life and notes the encouragement Timothy could find in the Scriptures that he has known from his childhood (1:5, 3:14-15). Paul tells Timothy that he must “continue” in what he has learned and been assured of (v. 14). The word for “continue” is the Greek term *menō* which means to remain or to stay in place.⁴⁷⁰ For Timothy, this meant that he had to continue to study and live out the truth of Scripture that has grounded him in wisdom and enlightenment that leads to faith in Christ.⁴⁷¹ The Scriptures are seen here as being the

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid., 66.

⁴⁶⁷ Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich, and Geoffrey William Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985), 473.

⁴⁶⁸ Darrel Bock, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 556.

⁴⁶⁹ David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009), 485.

⁴⁷⁰ Kittel, *Theological Dictionary*, 581.

⁴⁷¹ Lea and Griffin, *1,2 Timothy and Titus*, 233.

“inspiration of God” (*theopneustos*) which means Scripture as a whole.⁴⁷² Because of its divine origin, Scripture is useful to Timothy for all the ministry tasks he would be engaged in such as teaching sound doctrine, exposing the errors of false teachers, correcting unethical behavior, and promoting righteous behavior.⁴⁷³ Paul also elaborates on the importance of the Scriptures in Timothy’s life by telling him that all of Scripture is “profitable.” The word “profitable” (*ophelimos*) can be defined as to derive a benefit or an advantage from something.⁴⁷⁴ The basis of the Scriptures’ usefulness is that it lies in its inspired character.⁴⁷⁵ One of the important elements here is that Scripture is applicable for “instruction in righteousness.” The “instruction” (*paideia*) Paul speaks of also means to be trained, to guide toward responsible living⁴⁷⁶ while some define it as being qualified to perform a function.⁴⁷⁷ It is the inspired Scriptures that can aid Timothy in becoming “thoroughly equipped.” The Greek term *artios* means to be in fit shape or condition.⁴⁷⁸ If Timothy would nurture his spiritual life in the Scriptures that he would use in his ministry, he would be fully qualified and prepared to undertake whatever tasks God asks.⁴⁷⁹ Timothy is taught to continually study Scripture so that he can be instructed by the Word of God in order that he can instruct others.

⁴⁷² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 447.

⁴⁷³ Douglas Mangum, *Second Timothy* (Lexham Press, 2013), np.

⁴⁷⁴ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 624.

⁴⁷⁵ Lea and Griffin, *1,2 Timothy and Titus*, 235.

⁴⁷⁶ Arndt, et al., *A Greek Lexicon*, 749.

⁴⁷⁷ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 679.

⁴⁷⁸ Lea and Griffin, *1,2 Timothy and Titus*, 237.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Meditation in Scripture

Meditation of the Scriptures is taught in both the Old and New Testaments with most of the references being found in the Old Testament. One definition of meditation is that it is an act of calling to mind some supposition, pondering upon it, and correlating it to one's own life.⁴⁸⁰ Two Hebrew root words make up the various words translated as meditation. The Hebrew word *hagah* literally means to utter in a low sound and denotes the growling of a lion (Isa. 31:4) or the cooing of a dove (Isa. 38:14) which suggests that in ancient Hebrew meditation Scripture was recited in a low murmur.⁴⁸¹ Others define *hagah* as to ponder, to imagine, to meditate,⁴⁸² or as to give serious thought and consideration to selected information while speaking in low tones.⁴⁸³ In Joshua 1:8 the Lord tells Joshua to “meditate on the book of the Law” giving careful consideration of both what the text means and how it applies.⁴⁸⁴ Psalm 1:2 says “And in His law he meditates day and night,” which demonstrates that the psalmist habitually meditated on God's law. In Psalm 63:6 the psalmist recalls all of the times the Lord had helped him. Psalms 77:12 and 143:5 show the psalmist meditating on God's works resulting in the worship of God. The second Hebrew word is *siach* and carries the basic meaning of to be occupied with or to be concerned about and elicits the repetitious going over of a matter in one's mind.⁴⁸⁵ It is also

⁴⁸⁰ LeBron Matthews, “Meditation,” *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1096.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸² James Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of Words in the Greek Testament and the Hebrew Bible* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2002), 32.

⁴⁸³ Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages*, Logos.

⁴⁸⁴ Michael Rydelnik et al., “The Psalms,” *The Moody Bible Commentary* (Chicago: IL: Moody Publishers, 2014), 759.

⁴⁸⁵ Matthews, “Meditation,” 1096.

defined to utter with the mouth, to talk to oneself especially divine things⁴⁸⁶ and as the act of giving careful undistracted thought about a subject or person.⁴⁸⁷ Psalm 119 is abounding with this Hebrew word. In verses 15, 23, and 78 the psalmist is meditating on God's Word. In verse 27 the psalmist meditates in order to understand it and in verse 48 the psalmist meditates on God's works. Verse 148 shows the psalmist staying awake at night to meditate on God's Word. Psalm 145:5 displays the psalmist meditating on God's splendor, majesty, and works.

The New Testament contains three words that relate to the practice of meditation. The Greek word *prometeiao* carries the meaning of planning ahead⁴⁸⁸ or to prepare beforehand by giving careful thought and attention.⁴⁸⁹ It is used in Luke 21:14 which says "Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer" referring to the coming persecution believers would suffer. Specifically, this is referring to the replies believers will suddenly be called on to give to hostile authorities in times of persecution.⁴⁹⁰ Darrel L. Bock shows that Jesus is telling them not to prepare anything to say for this occasion because He would be the one to give them words to say.⁴⁹¹ This word also shows that they must trust in their Master to give them the needed wisdom as they speak boldly in His name.⁴⁹² The Greek word

⁴⁸⁶ Wilhelm Gesenius and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2003), 788-789.

⁴⁸⁷ Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages*, Logos.

⁴⁸⁸ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 357.

⁴⁸⁹ Arndt, et al., *A Greek Lexicon*, 872.

⁴⁹⁰ Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 314.

⁴⁹¹ Darrell L. Bock, *Luke 9:51-24:53*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1996), 1670.

⁴⁹² Charles R. Erdman, *The Gospel of Luke: An Exposition* (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1921), 192.

logizomai means to reason about, to ponder⁴⁹³ or to keep a mental record for the sake of some future action.⁴⁹⁴ It is used in Philippians 4:8 which says “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.” The Greek word is strong and usually means to take into account or to closely scrutinize including the notion of mulling things over critically examining them.⁴⁹⁵ In this verse, it carries the connotation of reflecting carefully upon them in order that they may shape conduct.⁴⁹⁶ It may also be that Paul is listing the virtues here so believers can carefully consider their implications⁴⁹⁷ In this verse, Paul exhorts the Philippian believers to be occupied mentally with the things of God, providing the proper soil for the nurture of the soul and experience the peace of God.⁴⁹⁸ The Greek word *meletao* means to keep giving serious consideration to something⁴⁹⁹ or to improve by care or study or practice.⁵⁰⁰ 1 Timothy 4:15 says “Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all” may signify that Timothy is to study or practice the instructions Paul has

⁴⁹³ Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages*, Logos.

⁴⁹⁴ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 345.

⁴⁹⁵ Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Company, 2011), 256.

⁴⁹⁶ I-Jin Loh and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, UBS Handbook Series (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1995), 132.

⁴⁹⁷ John MacArthur, *Philippians*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2001), 284.

⁴⁹⁸ John F. Walvoord, *To Live is Christ* (Galaxie Software, 2007), 87.

⁴⁹⁹ Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 351.

⁵⁰⁰ Arndt, et al., *A Greek Lexicon*, 627.

given.⁵⁰¹ Meditation should always lead to action since the immediate goal for the people was to see Timothy's spiritual progress.⁵⁰² Meditation, as Scripture demonstrates, is a vital component for seeking, comprehending, and appropriating God's truth to a person's life.

Theoretical Foundations

The Bible is the inerrant, inspired, and authoritative source for all believers in Jesus Christ. Through Bible study, the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit will aid in teaching believers the truth of God's Word. It is because of these characteristics that Christians should study the Scripture, know it, and have a proper method of biblical interpretation in order to avoid interpretive dependency.

Meaningful Bible study is on the decline within the church. This state of affairs reveals that too many Christians have neglected their first great calling; to know their God.⁵⁰³ The American Bible Society conducts a yearly survey through Barna Research Group entitled "State of the Bible."⁵⁰⁴ The recent findings of this survey are startling and demonstrate the need for biblical engagement. People defined as Bible-centered, representing only 5% of the population, report using the Bible every day (71%) while the remainder uses it several times a week (29%). Those classified as biblically engaged represent 19% of the population with 42% using the Bible daily while 36% report using it several times a week. The Bible friendly category also represents 19% of the population with only 10% using the Bible daily, 22% use it weekly, and 42% use it

⁵⁰¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistle*, 210.

⁵⁰² William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas, TX: Incorporated, 2000), 264.

⁵⁰³ Thabiti M. Anyabwile, *What is a Healthy Church Member?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 27.

⁵⁰⁴ American Bible Society. "State of the Bible 2019." https://www.americanbible.org/uploads/content/state-of-the-bible-2019_report_041619_final.pdf (accessed July 9, 2019), 6.

less often. The Bible neutral group represents 9% of the population and reports only using the Bible once or twice a year (36%) and three to four times a year (28%).⁵⁰⁵ The final group is the biblically disengaged, and reports that 73% of those in this category never use the Bible on their own. These numbers display the tragic decline in Bible reading and study even though 84% households own a Bible.⁵⁰⁶ One of the greatest changes represented in the survey is that those who consider themselves highly knowledgeable in the Bible dropped 13% from the 2018 survey (47% to 34%).⁵⁰⁷ Only 30% of those interviewed believed the Bible to be the inspired Word and without errors and 22% believe that the Bible is the actual Word of God and should be taken literally (22%).⁵⁰⁸ These statistics portray a grim reminder of the importance of Bible reading, studying, and knowing a biblical method of interpretation. Mohler Jr. states, “Christians who lack biblical knowledge are products of churches that marginalize biblical knowledge . . . Bible teaching now often accounts only for only a diminishing fraction of the local congregation's time and attention.⁵⁰⁹ Gary Burge says, “To disregard this resource-to neglect the Bible-is to remove the chief authority on which our faith is built.”⁵¹⁰ Braddy states that in order to avert the looming

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁶ American Bible Society. “State of the Bible 2019,” 36.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., 37.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid., 41.

⁵⁰⁹ Albert Mohler, “The Scandal of Biblical Illiteracy: It’s Our Problem,” January 20, 2016 <https://albertmohler.com/2016/01/20/the-scandal-of-biblical-illiteracy-its-our-problem-4/> (accessed May 27, 2019).

⁵¹⁰ Gary M. Burge, “The Greatest Story Never Read: Recovering Biblical Literacy in the Church,” Christianity Today <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/1999/august9/9t9045.html> August 9, 1999.(accessed May 27, 2019).

disaster of a deepening trend of bible disengagement that churches should enlist its members to read the Bible daily, study together, and help others become familiar with God's Word.⁵¹¹

In order to stave off the growing trend of biblical disengagement and interpretive dependency, teaching the inductive Bible study method within a small group of believers will aid in equipping believers to engage the Bible and lead to an increase in knowledge of the Bible. To eliminate interpretive dependency, the inductive Bible study method will be implemented because of Scriptures emphasize an individual's knowing how to study and having a proper method of biblical interpretation. Ezra 7:10 teaches that Christians should be devoted to studying, interpreting, obeying, and training others to study the Bible so they can properly interpret the Bible. Nehemiah 8:8 provides an illustration for the inductive method as Ezra and the Levitical priests interpreted the Scriptures for those who were listening. Acts 17:10-15 illustrates an example of the eagerness and ability to approach the Scriptures and to let them speak for themselves. This is also one of the important aspects of the inductive Bible study method in that the student of Scripture allows the Word of God to speak for itself. Another example from Acts 17:10-15 is the Bereans who were daily investigating the Scriptures. This cross-examination of the Scriptures can be done through employing the inductive Bible study method. Finally, in 2 Timothy 3:14-17 Paul tells Timothy the benefits of knowing God's Word and that through studying the Scriptures he can become fully equipped to be a servant of God.

The importance of having a proper method of biblical interpretation for studying the Bible cannot be overstated. Lindsay regards "the nature of the crisis of Scripture in the church

⁵¹¹ Ken Braddy, "Discipling in an Age of Biblical Illiteracy," July 10, 2017 <https://factsandtrends.net/2017/07/10/discipling-in-an-age-of-biblical-illiteracy/> (accessed May 27, 2019).

today is not one of biblical literacy but one of biblical interpretation.”⁵¹² There is an ample amount of reasons to have a personal biblical interpretation method. Bible study is essential to grow toward spiritual maturity and spiritual effectiveness.⁵¹³ The Bible also offers the benefits of encouragement, motivation, guidance, and instruction in the Christian life.⁵¹⁴ The inductive Bible study method is an effective and consistent way for students of Scripture to perform biblical interpretation. It allows the interpreter to discover the Word of God and to internalize their discoveries resulting in information and transformation.⁵¹⁵ Discovering the truths of Scripture through the inductive Bible study method provides better retention for the student of Scripture as opposed to learning what others have discovered. The inductive method is evidenced-based, moves from particulars to universals, and pieces the data together to derive meaning.⁵¹⁶ The deductive method, which is assumption based, moves from universals to particulars, and begins with absolute premises and derives certain conclusions.⁵¹⁷ Inductive Bible study methods are the most suitable for Bible study because they allow the student of Scripture to compile the evidence and then, proceeding from analysis of the evidence, reach a probable, albeit at times tentative conclusion.⁵¹⁸ Another benefit of the inductive method is that it reveals the flow of the author’s thoughts throughout any text of Scripture, and contribute to a

⁵¹² Dennis R. Lindsay, “How to Read the Bible in the Twenty-first Century,” *Encounter* 64 no. 4 (Autumn 2003): 352, (accessed May 27, 2019), *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials PLUS, EBSCOhost*.

⁵¹³ Hendricks and Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, 21-24.

⁵¹⁴ Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, *Biblical Interpretation*, 571.

⁵¹⁵ Mark A. Maddix, “Rediscovering,” 39.

⁵¹⁶ Fuhr & Köstenberger, *Inductive Bible Study*, 36.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

more accurate understanding of the individual verses.⁵¹⁹ Those who engage Scripture daily with the inductive Bible study method can see that it is a reliable method of biblical interpretation. The inductive Bible study method provides many essential benefits for those who learn its principles. Within a small group environment, the inductive Bible study method can be even more invaluable. The Christian who learns the inductive Bible study method will be equipped to study the Scriptures for himself, to increase his knowledge of Scripture and of God, to discover the truth on his own, to be strengthened in his walk with the Lord, and to recognize the authority of the inerrant Word of God.⁵²⁰ Learning the inductive Bible study method can be a powerful and effective deterrent for the ongoing problem of interpretive dependency. Despite the often-heard claim that the Bible is difficult to understand, the necessity of the Scriptures in the life of all believers for spiritual health and growth suggests that every believer can understand its teachings.⁵²¹ The inductive Bible study method can produce Christians who can properly interpret the Scriptures.

Coalescing the inductive Bible study method with meditation is helpful in appropriating the truths of Scripture drawn from the inductive Bible study method. Meditation will allow for deep thinking on the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture for the purpose of understanding, application, and prayer.⁵²² As demonstrated in God's Word in verses like Psalm 1:1-3 and Joshua 1:8, meditating on the Scriptures brings blessings to the life of the student of Scripture. Both of these examples demonstrate that meditation focuses on the content of

⁵¹⁹ West, *How to Study*, 61.

⁵²⁰ Arthur, *Study Your Bible*, 11.

⁵²¹ Swindoll and Zuck, *Christian Theology*, 131.

⁵²² Whitney, *Simplify Your Spiritual Life*, 48.

Scripture, which for both the psalmist and Joshua produced obedience to God’s Word. Frequent meditation on God’s Word can continually refresh the mediator as Psalm 1:1-3 describes.⁵²³ As Swindoll and Zuck observe “Biblical meditation keeps God, His works, and His Word uppermost in our thoughts throughout the day.”⁵²⁴ Meditating on the Scriptures can provide spiritual power to keep one from sin, relates God’s expectations for life, and instill wisdom.⁵²⁵

Other Ministry Projects

Biblical Illiteracy

There have been other projects designed and implemented to solve the problem of interpretive dependency by utilizing different methods such as storytelling, preaching a sermon series, employing the grammatical-historical method of biblical interpretation, and by introducing massive open online courses through video correspondence. One ministry project, directed by the youth pastor of the church, used the art of storytelling to teens who were not engaging the Scriptures in the Old Testament.⁵²⁶ Strengths of the project were using words and pictures as the stories of the Old Testament were rehearsed which resulted in better retention.⁵²⁷ The project was reported to have been modified to teach an adult Sunday School class and could also be adapted for home use.⁵²⁸ One project undertook the issue of interpretive dependency

⁵²³ Ibid., 16.

⁵²⁴ Swindoll and Zuck, *Christian Theology*, 1022.

⁵²⁵ Towns, *Biblical Meditation*, 120-121.

⁵²⁶ Jaclynn Krum Frisch, “Storytelling: A Source for Reducing Biblical Illiteracy” (DMin. Thesis, Winebrenner Theological Seminary, 2010). Accessed May 22, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Jaclynn was the youth pastor at Calvary Bible Chapel in Ohio who noticed a decline in bible knowledge of her students. She created a story-telling curriculum based on Deuteronomy 6:6-7, 11:18-19 to address biblical illiteracy among her youth group.

⁵²⁷ Ibid., 87.

⁵²⁸ Ibid., 130.

among youth by teaching principles from the grammatical-historical method supported for eight weeks with six sermons to illustrate the principles with positive results.⁵²⁹ The project facilitator reported several weaknesses such as excessiveness of material, inconvenient meeting times, and that lecture as a teaching format was insufficient.⁵³⁰ There were a number of reported strengths for the project. Students enjoyed the studies, the textbook, and the study was presented clearly.⁵³¹ The project facilitator also discovered that the project would be easily repeatable and could be easily transferred to teach adults.⁵³² One Senior Pastor preached an eight-week sermon series to address interpretive dependency in the church and learned that sermons are a viable option to address the issue.⁵³³ The strengths of this project included that it was easily implemented, aided in the pastor's sermon preparation, and challenged the participants to become biblically literate.⁵³⁴ Weaknesses recorded that participants did not hear all of the messages, the participants lacked comprehensiveness, and that the order of the messages affected the scores of the participants.⁵³⁵ Another pastor used the grammatical-historical method to address interpretive

⁵²⁹ Lyndell P. Worthen Jr., "Helping High School Youth to Use the Bible Through a Study of its Origin and the Application of Basic Hermeneutical Principles" (DMin. Thesis, Southwestern Theological Seminary, 1994). Accessed March 28, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Worthen Jr. was the Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church Springfield, Missouri when this project was implemented. He taught hermeneutical principles using the grammatical-historical method to high school students so students could apply what was learned to their lives.

⁵³⁰ Ibid., 65-66.

⁵³¹ Worthen Jr., "Helping High School Youth to Use the Bible Through a Study of its Origin and the Application of Basic Hermeneutical Principles," 67-74.

⁵³² Ibid., 73-74.

⁵³³ Robert W. Page, "Increasing the Biblical Literacy of the Members of Sharon Baptist Church, Charlotte, North Carolina through Expository Preaching" (DMin. Thesis, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017). Accessed May 26, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Page is the Senior Pastor of Sharon Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. His expository preaching series project reported significant improvement in addressing the problem of biblical illiteracy.

⁵³⁴ Ibid., 96-97.

⁵³⁵ Ibid., 98-99.

dependence among Sunday School teachers so they would have a method of biblical interpretation.⁵³⁶ The strengths of this project include those who participated appreciated the background study on the books of the Bible, which left them as better interpreters of the Bible.⁵³⁷ The project also resulted in creating a pool of potential Sunday School teachers within the church.⁵³⁸ The only weaknesses reported were administrative elements such as having sheets on hand and on the projector and that there should have been a greater emphasis on completing the course evaluations.⁵³⁹ In order to teach biblical interpretation, one researcher, who was a deacon in the church, used the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to combat interpretive dependence by providing the group a method of biblical interpretation.⁵⁴⁰ The project facilitator reported that the course was applicable, reliable, credible, and sustainable in equipping participants with hermeneutical principles.⁵⁴¹ Weaknesses of this study were the technology used to teach the MOOC and that participants wanted all of the videos and materials to study on their

⁵³⁶ Darin L. Kress, "On Target: An Adult Teacher Training Course on the Principles of Biblical Interpretation" (DMin. Thesis, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997). Accessed May 26, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Kress was the Senior Pastor of Virginia Avenue Baptist Church in Bristol, Tennessee. His main objective was to teach current and prospective Sunday School teachers with basic hermeneutical principles in order to apply them to the text being studied.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁵³⁸ Kress, "On Target: An Adult Teacher Training Course on the Principles of Biblical Interpretation," 100.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁵⁴⁰ Howard Dale Tyron, Jr., "Leveraging a Massive Open Online Course in the Local Church to Teach Hermeneutics" (DMin., Thesis, Liberty University School of Divinity, 2018). Accessed March 28, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Tyron was a deacon at Calvary Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia. He taught hermeneutical methods through MOOC in order to enrich personal Bible study and prepare participants to teach the Bible.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 94-101.

own.⁵⁴² Another weakness of this study was that there were only three participants so the viability of the study may be inconclusive.⁵⁴³

Inductive Bible Study

The inductive Bible study method has been advanced to not only handle interpretive dependence but to address issues such as revitalizing the church, to teach college-age students to lead an inductive study, and to teach congregations a biblical interpretation method. Through teaching a 13-week session on Galatians, the inductive Bible study method was utilized to revitalize and bring about a season of renewal.⁵⁴⁴ This project led to a renewal of the church and strengthened the participants' commitment to Jesus Christ.⁵⁴⁵ Through lessons designed from 1 Thessalonians, the inductive Bible study method was taught in small groups to teach college students how to lead an inductive Bible study group.⁵⁴⁶ The campus minister who led the group reported that participants were encouraged by the study and learned how to understand the text, grasp its meaning for application, and were more open to the Holy Spirit.⁵⁴⁷ The inductive Bible study method was taught by the pastor to directly address interpretive dependence through a six-

⁵⁴² Ibid., 91.

⁵⁴³ Ibid., 59-60.

⁵⁴⁴ Philip Barr, "Teaching for Renewal Through an Inductive Bible Study Course on Galatians at Allensville Mennonite Church" (DMin. Thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1995). Accessed May 26, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Barr was the Senior Pastor of Allensville Mennonite Church in Allensville, Pennsylvania. He taught his church the inductive Bible study method through the book of Galatians in order to bring renewal and revitalization to the church. His goal was to teach members the inductive Bible study method so they could apply Scripture to life situations.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid., 2.

⁵⁴⁶ Larry Gene Boyer, "A Curriculum for Training the College Student to Lead Inductive Bible Studies" (DMin. Diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 1997). Accessed May 26, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Boyer was campus minister at Hutchinson Community College in Hutchinson, Kansas. He taught the inductive Bible study method through seven lessons on 1 Thessalonians to college students so they could lead inductive Bible study groups on campus.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid., 90.

week course on the Gospel of John that produced successful results.⁵⁴⁸ Participants reported a greater appreciation of the structure of the Bible and were encouraged to read the Bible on their own.⁵⁴⁹ Weaknesses described by the pastor were inaccurate questions and members being uncomfortable in practicing the principles of biblical interpretation on their own.⁵⁵⁰ To teach proper biblical interpretation methods one researcher employed the inductive Bible study model through a thirteen-week curriculum within a small group setting and received positive results.⁵⁵¹ The strengths of the project were homework examples, in-class discussion, and group exercises.⁵⁵² The project facilitator also reported a change in individual's personal Bible study and that the class could be implemented for other classes in the church.⁵⁵³ Another pastor found that teaching the inductive Bible study method helpful in teaching biblical interpretive principles.⁵⁵⁴ Through this fourteen-week study, the project facilitator reported that the strengths of the project were the small group format and the homework assignments.⁵⁵⁵ Weaknesses

⁵⁴⁸ Kevin Bryan Barnes, "A Bible Study About Studying the Bible: An Introduction to Inductive Bible Study" (DMin. Diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2018). Accessed April 26, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Barnes is the Senior Pastor of Wesley Way UMC located in McDonough, Georgia. He taught the inductive Bible study through seven lessons with six focused on the Gospel of John.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., 127.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., 126, 110.

⁵⁵¹ Gene Alan Cassady, "Developing a Course to Teach Congregations to Interpret Scripture" (DMin. Thesis, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2012). Accessed May 26, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Cassady was the Senior Pastor of Woodbine UMC in Pace, Florida when the project was completed. He used the inductive Bible study to teach congregants to read, study, interpret, and apply Scripture to their lives through a 13-week program.

⁵⁵² Ibid., 123.

⁵⁵³ Ibid., 125-130.

⁵⁵⁴ Austin McCaskill Jr., "Experiencing Scripture: A Qualitative Study of the Impact of a Twelve Week Course on the Science and Art of Biblical Interpretation" (DMin. Thesis, Covenant Theological Seminary, 2000). Accessed May 26, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. McCaskill Jr. does not mention the church by name but does mention that he is the pastor. He led his church through *Experiencing God* in order to teach them the inductive Bible study.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., 127-130.

include the students had a hard time remembering the principles of interpretation and that there was no teaching on the importance of the role of the Holy Spirit in interpretation.⁵⁵⁶

Meditation

The practice of meditation was used by an associate pastor to lead people to more authentic worship of God.⁵⁵⁷ One major strength of his study was that the participants requested further study on the subject and practice of meditation.⁵⁵⁸ Weaknesses were that there was too much information given for the four week instruction period and that it was too in-depth for the participants.⁵⁵⁹ Another project facilitator used meditation to build intimacy with God within their ministry context.⁵⁶⁰ Strengths of this method were building spiritual growth, prayer became more meaningful, and participants reported a greater worship experience.⁵⁶¹ In one of the projects, the pastor implemented the spiritual disciplines of Bible study, meditation, and prayer through seven sermons and a three-day conference focusing on the three spiritual disciplines.⁵⁶²

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid., 136.

⁵⁵⁷ Christopher Ellis Osterbrock, "Teaching Biblical Meditation at Mount Washington Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio" (D.Ed. Diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018). Accessed May 26, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Osterbrock was the Associate Pastor at Mount Washington Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio when the project was implemented. He taught meditation to members of the church to grow and develop spiritual transformation so the people could grow in their faith.

⁵⁵⁸ Osterbrock, "Teaching Biblical Meditation at Mount Washington Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio," 127.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., 125-126.

⁵⁶⁰ Gloria Jean Westerfield, "Lectio Divina: A Contemplative Approach to Intimacy with God" (DMin. Thesis, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2014). Accessed July 10, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Westerfield was a member of First Baptist Church Cleveland, Tennessee during the implantation of her project. She taught *lectio divina* at her church through a six-week study.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., 5, 70-72.

⁵⁶² J. Derek Westmoreland, "Implementing Spiritual Principles for Spiritual Progress at Hopewell Baptist Church" (DMin. Diss., Union University School of Theology and Missions, 2014). Accessed May 26, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Westmoreland is the Senior Pastor of Hopewell Baptist Church in Savannah, Tennessee. His project consisted of preaching sermons and one-day conferences which taught the importance of Bible study, meditation, and prayer.

He believed using small groups hindered participation and that the questions on the test could have been better.⁵⁶³ Another project facilitator taught meditation in their ministry context.⁵⁶⁴ The project facilitator reported that people gained insights about themselves and felt closer to God.⁵⁶⁵ He also reported that the project could be easily replicated in another context.⁵⁶⁶ One last project is pertinent to the present project intervention. The project facilitator combined meditation with the inductive Bible study, reordering the steps of the inductive Bible study.⁵⁶⁷ This fifteen-week study led participants into spiritual growth, comprehension of the Biblical text, and gave principles that could aid in application.⁵⁶⁸ The weaknesses of this project were that people were unfamiliar with the Bible and found meditation challenging.⁵⁶⁹

Conclusion

The previously mentioned projects have contributed to the design of the current ministry project. Through the introduction of concepts to eradicate recognized problems in their current ministry, the project facilitators designed specific projects for their ministry contexts. As the current project facilitator seeks to eliminate the problem of interpretive dependency, this project

⁵⁶³ Ibid., 114, 121.

⁵⁶⁴ Thomas Patrick Kerr, "Journey Home: Christian Meditation for a Deeper Experience of God" (DMin. Thesis, United Theological Seminary, 2005). Accessed July 10, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Kerr was the Senior Pastor of Saint Paul UMC in Oakland, Maryland at the time of the project. He taught meditative principles to the church for six-weeks.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid., 65.

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid., 66.

⁵⁶⁷ Jin Su Choi, Training Older Adults for Personal Bible Study at First Virginia Baptist Church, Springfield, Virginia" (DMin. Thesis, The Southern Theological Seminary, 2011). Accessed May 26, 2019. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. Choi's project is centered on the Senior adult ministry at First Virginia Baptist Church in Springfield, Virginia. His project focused on introducing the inductive Bible study and meditation through a method he entitled Quiet Time (QT).

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., 85.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid., 88.

corresponds with these respective projects. The project facilitator has taken note of the strengths and weaknesses of these projects mentioned to build this project for the local ministry context. Most of these ministry projects used the pre-test/post-test method to gauge gain analysis that is adopted in this project. Field notes were also adopted to demonstrate progress of the participants during the duration of the project. Focus groups were used many waiting one month to conduct them which was also adopted by this project.

As revealed by these projects, an intervention was designed to deal with a ministry context issue by introducing a solution into a group setting across various demographics of the church. Some of the projects presented sought to engage participants with the Bible and to teach a method of interpretation to engage biblical illiteracy. While each used a different method to address the issue, the effort was made by the project facilitators to teach a method of biblical interpretation. Other projects introduced the inductive Bible study method into their ministry contexts in order to teach a method of biblical interpretation. As mentioned earlier in this thesis the inductive Bible study method can be designed to fit the needs of an individual or group. What led to the addition of the unique fourth step of this project entitled appropriation, was the expressed desire in some of the inductive Bible study projects to further investigate the aspect of the role of the Holy Spirit in interpretation. With that the project facilitator investigated projects that sought to teach meditation principles in their ministry contexts. With some reporting success with *lectio divina* process of meditation the project facilitator added this to the appropriation step of this project. With this in mind, the project facilitator created the current inductive Bible study method for his ministry context.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter describes how the designed intervention will address the problem defined in Chapter 1 and reflect the theological and theoretical foundations established in Chapter 2. To alleviate the problem of interpretive dependence, this chapter will describe the design of the project intervention within the context of the Nazareth Baptist Church community who possesses no reliable method of biblical interpretation. The methodology section will also illustrate the implementation of the intervention design at Nazareth Baptist Church. The implementation of the intervention design includes information on the pilot study and its participants along with details of how the qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed and retrieved. The section closes with the details of the seven sessions of the Bible Only Bible Study and the focus group session.

Intervention Design

The intervention design will consist of teaching the inductive Bible study method at Nazareth Baptist Church by addressing the longstanding problem of the members not possessing a viable method of biblical interpretation which has led to interpretive dependence. The project will reflect the importance of knowing God's Word because it is inerrant, inspired, and authoritative in a Christian's life. The project also seeks to enhance the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit in the role of biblical interpretation through the process of meditation. Biblical interpretation is of vital importance in the life of the Christian. Obtaining, knowing, and implementing a method of biblical interpretation is depicted in Scripture using the examples of Ezra 7:10, Nehemiah 8, Acts 17:10-15, and 2 Timothy 3:14-17. The intervention design will also

enable participants to become independent learners who are able to discover knowledge for themselves.⁵⁷⁰

Method

The research method used for the project is action research. Action research as defined by Michael Patton “aims at solving specific problems within a program, organization, or community...action research explicitly and purposefully becomes part of the change process by engaging the people in the program or organization in studying their own problems in order to solve the problems.”⁵⁷¹ Ernest T. Stringer states the primary goal of action research is, “to provide the means for people to engage in systematic inquiry and investigation to design an appropriate way of accomplishing the desired goal and to evaluate its effectiveness.”⁵⁷² In action research, the project facilitator becomes a co-participant with the community in the process of gathering and interpreting data to enable new and transformative modes of action.⁵⁷³ Using action research as the method of analysis has two advantages. First, action research aids the congregation in developing skills that enable it to influence its own future.⁵⁷⁴ Second, action research provides the minister an opportunity to impart pastoral leadership that implements the

⁵⁷⁰ Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), xxi.

⁵⁷¹ Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002), 185.

⁵⁷² Ernest T. Stringer, *Action Research 4th ed.* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc., 2014), 6.

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 229.

desired change.⁵⁷⁵ As with any action research project, change is the intended outcome that brings about the development of new programs or modifications to existing procedures.⁵⁷⁶

Project Conceptualization

An inductive Bible study was developed by the project facilitator to address the problem of interpretive dependency at Nazareth Baptist Church through modeling the steps of the inductive Bible study method. The project facilitator created this inductive Bible study for the members of Nazareth Baptist Church who chose to participate. The book of Jude was selected because it is a short letter and is more conducive to use in facilitating the principles of the inductive Bible study method being taught to the members of Nazareth Baptist Church. The title of the inductive Bible study on the book of Jude is “The Bible Only Bible Study.” The title is derived from teaching the participants the ability to observe, interpret, apply, and appropriate the principles of the inductive Bible study with limited (or without) outside consultation. The guide also includes sections covering the biblical reasons Bible study is important, why the inductive Bible study was chosen, an emphasis on the importance of prayer, and the role of the Holy Spirit in Bible study. There is a brief but relevant section on the different types of Bible translations that include a spectrum of the available translations that are useful to those who participate in the study. The inductive Bible study method was taught using four steps consisting of observation, interpretation, application, and appropriation. The first three weeks of the class focus on the observation of the text followed by one week of interpretation, one week of application, and two weeks of appropriation.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid., 63.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid., 59.

To observe the text correctly, the observation step teaches the participants how to pick the right Bible translation(s) for the inductive Bible study. The NKJV and NLT were provided to the participants. Techniques were examined on how to read the Bible well and on how to analyze the details of a passage. A basic guide to identifying genre was discussed along with the basic genres found within the Old and New Testaments. Capturing the tone of the passage was also conveyed to the participants because it helps the reader capture the emotions of the passage. One of the most critical aspects of the inductive Bible study method is to learn how to ask the right questions of the passage. Asking the right questions will aid in determining the right meaning of the passage and will allow the participants to discover for themselves the truths of Scripture. Identification of key words is important in the step of observation. These would include repeated words, difficult words, or words unique to the reader. The participants were also taught the importance of recognizing illustrations or allusions in the text because these will help in the interpretation process. Old Testament quotations are important to identify in the passage. These, like illustrations, lend help when interpreting the passage of Scripture and help to reveal the meaning of the passage. The process of observation covered the first three sessions of the Bible Only Bible Study as this step is foundational and pivotal in studying the Bible inductively.

In the step of interpretation, the participants learn the barriers to interpreting the passage. The barriers discussed include language, culture, literary, and geographic barriers that must be crossed in order to arrive at a correct interpretation of the text. The project facilitator discusses the author's intended meaning. The three important elements of interpretation consist of context, correlation, and consultation and each element were conveyed to the participants. Context, the most important for the step of interpretation, includes an examination of the context of the original audience, the canonical context, the covenantal context, and the literary context. Word

studies of the key terms found during the observation step are defined during the interpretation step. During the interpretation step, the word studies of the key terms found during the observation step are defined. For correlation, the participants are trained on the analogy of Scripture and cross-referencing Scriptures in the margins of some Bible translations. This aspect of the training is important because it will aid the participants to correctly interpret the passage. The final element of interpretation discussed is consultation. Participants were shown a variety of outside sources that could aid in interpretation. While these sources were not used by the participants of the Bible Only Bible Study, the project facilitator displayed commentaries, study Bibles, Bible dictionaries, Bible atlases, Bible introductions, and lexicons for possible use in the future. The participants were instructed that during the step of interpretation, consulting outside sources, could be lengthy and may be investigated as deeply as the participants desire. With the steps of observation and interpretation completed, the step of application would become much clearer and easier to accomplish.

Outside resources are beneficial to interpretation. The resources mentioned above supply valuable information to help clarify the meaning of words, verses, and chapters. These resources are especially helpful when studying books of the Bible for background information about the author, date, provenance, cultural, and historical information. Each of these resources can deepen one's study of any book of the Bible. It cannot be overstated that these tools can aid tremendously in clarifying a passage so it can be more easily understood, especially when performing the inductive Bible study method. While they are not essential to get some timeless truths out of the Scriptures, they nevertheless will provide helpful information and will be of benefit to those who opt to use them in their study of Scripture.

The step of application is designed to determine the principles from the text that could be applied to the body of Christ. The project facilitator emphasized the importance of determining what the meaning of the passage is for the body of Christ as a whole because it would help aid in transforming communities of believers into what Christ wants them to be. Application to the body of Christ today must remain true to the author's intent for the original audience. Making sensible parallels from the original audience to the audience of today is critical to this step. This is why it is important that during the steps of observation and interpretation the participants perform the tasks well, in order that application principles would not be misinterpreted. During this step, important questions are asked to aid in arriving at the proper principles of application.

The final step in the process is appropriation. During this step, the participants are taught how to take the truths learned through the previous three steps and apply them to their personal life. In order to aid in this endeavor, meditating on the Scripture through a modified *lectio divina* process was designed. Scripture provides the basis for the practice of meditation (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2-3; 19:14; 49:3; 63:5-6; 77:6, 10-12; 104:34; 119:15, 23, 48, 78, 97-99, 148; 143:5; 145:5; Phil. 4:8; 1 Tim. 4:15). For participants in the inductive Bible study, the steps taught during this process reflect the *lectio divina* process but were modified to make the terms more relevant. The first step involves reading the text slowly, consecutive times, in order to grasp the meaning that has already been derived from the text. Second, reflect on the passage by utilizing what has been learned through the inductive process, asking the Holy Spirit for help. Third, respond to what the Holy Spirit gives the interpreter by praying and asking the Holy Spirit how the passage should be appropriated into their life. The fourth step is resting and involves thanking God for what the Holy Spirit has shown the participant through meditating on the Scripture. The final step of

reacting is when the interpreter fully embraces the truth taught to them through the inductive Bible study process, and allowing the Holy Spirit to fully appropriate this truth into their life.

Permissions

The project facilitator obtained IRB certification to perform the study through CITI training on the IRB website. Through the IRB provided template, the project facilitator received permission from the deacon board of Nazareth Baptist Church to implement the project. On a Sunday evening, the letter was formally read and approved at the annual business meeting at Nazareth Baptist Church. The church voted unanimously to give permission to the project facilitator to proceed with the project once Liberty IRB approval was received.⁵⁷⁷ After the successful completion of the Liberty University IRB application, the project facilitator received consent to proceed with the project intervention at Nazareth Baptist Church.⁵⁷⁸ Individual consent was obtained on the first night of class through the consent form located in the notebook.⁵⁷⁹ Informed consent involves a set of practices designed to give everyone connected to the project the information they need to decide whether to participate in the project.⁵⁸⁰

Participant Learning Outcomes

The purpose of the project is to directly target the problem of interpretive dependence by equipping the members of Nazareth Baptist Church with a personal method of biblical interpretation. Direct benefits projected from the study include an increase in biblical knowledge, the acquisition of skills necessary to perform an inductive Bible study, and suggestions to outside sources for deeper study. Goals for the project are measurable and consist of the following:

⁵⁷⁷ See Appendix A for Nazareth Baptist Church permission letter.

⁵⁷⁸ See Appendix J for IRB approval letter.

⁵⁷⁹ See Appendix B for consent form.

⁵⁸⁰ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 34.

1. Acquire a method of biblical interpretation.
2. Develop an ability to perform the inductive Bible study.
3. Gain knowledge of the book of Jude through the inductive Bible study method.
4. The enrichment of spirituality through meditation

Course Materials

The project facilitator developed the course materials used for the inductive Bible study. Through the source material investigated in the literature review, the project facilitator prepared the Bible study on the inductive Bible study method. The notebook given to the participants at Nazareth Baptist Church included The Bible Only Bible Study guide, consent form, pre-test, bookmark, unique number card, pencil, and pen for their own personal use during the study. See Appendix C for The Bible Only Bible Study guide that also includes a bibliography of the sources used to construct the study. The guide was prepared by the project facilitator by performing his own inductive Bible study on the book of Jude and progressing through the four steps of the inductive Bible study method. The creation of the Bible Only Bible Study guide was a formidable task that took approximately three months to complete and prepare for printing. The printing was done on the campus of Nazareth Baptist Church with the aid of two volunteers who placed all the content into the notebooks for study.

Promotion and Recruitment

Once permission was obtained from the IRB, Liberty IRB board, and Nazareth Baptist Church, the promotion of the program proceeded. Maximizing the resources available on the Liberty IRB web page, the project facilitator began promoting the program on a church-wide basis. The program was promoted through the church bulletin for several weeks. The church phone tree was utilized to enlist proposed volunteers for the program. Two weeks before the

program began, announcements by the project facilitator from the pulpit significantly enhanced volunteer recruitment. Feedback throughout the advertisement was positive as many elected to participate in the program or expressed positive interest through email, text, or phone calls.

Logistics

The Bible Only Bible Study taught the inductive Bible study through the book of Jude, took place in the sanctuary of Nazareth Baptist Church. The sessions took place on consecutive Wednesday evenings spanning from September 4, 2019 to October 16, 2019, during the already scheduled Bible study meeting time. On November 20, 2019, a focus group session was held with ten participants from the inductive Bible study. These dates were chosen after the associate pastor completed his Wednesday night study series, providing the opportunity to start the program. Wednesday night was chosen because it was the normal night for Bible study to take place on the campus at Nazareth. The time frame of 6:00-7:30 pm coincided with the already established time for Bible study, with an additional thirty minutes added to the allotted time. The sanctuary was chosen because it provided sufficient room and the technology necessary to record each session of the program. A sound technician was secured for each night of the seven weeks of the program to regulate the microphone and record each session.

Participants

Through promotion and recruitment, volunteers were enlisted to complete the Bible Only Bible Study. The inductive Bible study only included members of Nazareth Baptist Church above the age of eighteen. Their participation was contingent on properly filling out the consent form that provides them the right to discontinue their participation in the study. They were asked to fully commit to attending seven sessions lasting approximately ninety minutes each and be taught a method of biblical interpretation. The participants included preachers, deacons, Sunday

School teachers, other leaders within the church, and lay people of Nazareth Baptist Church. The demographics analyzed spanned gender, age, education, years as a member at Nazareth Baptist Church, and the number of inductive Bible studies participants. The class was made available to all members of Nazareth Baptist Church, but only those who had never participated in a Bible study method were analyzed. There were 63 participants in the program with 40 having no prior training in a method of biblical interpretation. Only the 40 who had no previous training were included in the study data.

The project facilitator is the Senior Pastor at Nazareth Baptist Church and each participant is a member. The project facilitator is responsible for providing a sufficient portion of their spiritual nurturing and maturation and takes the responsibility to provide Bible instruction seriously. Since the project facilitator is the Senior Pastor, the participant's trust is hopefully already earned, eliminating the need to build rapport so that they can be fully vested from the beginning. The participants trust in the Senior Pastor (project facilitator), to provide them a solid foundation so that they can be sound biblical interpreters on their own.

Implementation of the Intervention Design

The following section provides a detailed account of the project intervention design and implementation. A pilot study was conducted to measure the feasibility of the pre-test and post-test instruments for the project intervention. This included the procedures for analyzing and gathering the data. The triangulation method was used to gather qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was gathered by utilizing a focus group and field notes. Quantitative data was gathered by employing a pre-test and post-test method of design. This section also includes a description of each of the seven Bible Only Bible Study sessions, and the details of the focus group that met one month after the conclusion of the Bible Only Bible Study.

Pilot Study

Before the initial project intervention began, a pilot study was conducted. Pilot studies test the feasibility of an approach that will later be used in a larger study and are usually used in qualitative or quantitative research.⁵⁸¹ Pilot studies can be useful for providing justification or testing procedures in preparation for a larger study and also benefits researchers by providing a dress rehearsal that saves time and avoids problems in the later study.⁵⁸² After IRB approval was received on August 26, 2019, the pilot study was conducted on August 28, 2019. The pilot study revealed a wide range of answers. The pilot group range of answers was from .2038-.5 with an average of the one tail t-test of .2165. These results show the feasibility of the pre-test and post-test, thus validating the need for an intervention project for a method of Bible study for the members of Nazareth Baptist Church. A five-point Likert scale test was given to the participants of the pilot study to establish face validity. Face validity tests for internal validity and answers the question, “On the face of things, do the investigators reach the correct conclusions?”⁵⁸³ Validity is determined by testing (questions of validity) research observations against what is already known in the world, giving the phenomenon that researchers are analyzing the chance to prove them wrong.⁵⁸⁴

⁵⁸¹ Tonya Rutherford-Hemming, “Pilot Studies,” *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation*, ed. Bruce F. Frey (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2018), 1253.

⁵⁸² Ibid.

⁵⁸³ John Gaber, “Face Validity,” *Encyclopedia of Research Design*, ed. Neil J. Salkind (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2012), 471.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid., 471.

Participants for the Pilot Study

Participants for the pilot study were recruited from the membership of Nazareth Baptist Church who were ineligible to participate in the Bible Only Bible Study. The participants were members of Nazareth Baptist Church who work with children and youth on Wednesday night at the same time the Bible Only Bible Study would be conducted. The project facilitator contacted each participant by phone and asked if they would volunteer to participate in a pilot study for the project facilitator's doctoral work at Liberty University. Thirteen people were contacted, and ten people participated in the pilot study. None of the participants had participated in a previous course in a method of biblical interpretation. The project facilitator secured a room after classes were over on August 28, 2019 to administer the pilot study to the participants. Each pilot study test was numbered one through ten and placed face down on the table. The participants were given thirty minutes to take the test and when finished placed the test in a covered box with one slot in the lid. The project facilitator did not know which participant took which test. The project facilitator thanked each member for participating and aiding him in his doctoral work.

Analyzing Data

The triangulation method was used for cross-checking the accuracy of the data that is collected. Triangulation involves cross-checking the existence of certain phenomena and the veracity of individual accounts by gathering data from a number of informants and a number of sources and subsequently comparing and contrasting one account with another in order to produce as full and balanced a study as possible.⁵⁸⁵ Using the triangulation method enhances the

⁵⁸⁵ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 72, 220.

trustworthiness and credibility of the research and provides a thicker interpretation.⁵⁸⁶ For this project intervention, the field notes and focus group were used to collect qualitative data and a pre-test/post-test was used to collect quantitative data. All of the data collected was used to measure the effectiveness of the Bible Only Bible Study in teaching a method of biblical interpretation.

Qualitative Data

Field notes and a focus group are utilized to collect qualitative data from the participants. Qualitative research produces culturally specific and contextually rich data critical for the design, evaluation, and ongoing health of institutions like churches.⁵⁸⁷ The project facilitator kept field notes to record his observations. The field notes contain running descriptions of settings, people, activities, and sounds with the intent of collecting data that will aid in writing a descriptive narrative of a given experience.⁵⁸⁸ Field notes are also an effective technique that allows the project facilitator to pull back from being too fully enveloped in the participation of the project.⁵⁸⁹ The field notes were written during each session, followed by a brief writing time at the conclusion of each session in the project facilitator's office. The project facilitator also listened to the recordings of each session to listen to any feedback that may have been missed. Two additional outside observers trained in the inductive Bible study method, also collected observational data during the training sessions to analyze their immediate impressions of what

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid., 72. “Thick” is defined as taking the data you have collected and giving a detailed interpretation of the data collected and gives a detailed interpretation of the data through the three angles of evaluation allowing the reader into the setting described.

⁵⁸⁷ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 58.

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid., 182.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., 95.

takes place. After each session, there was a meeting between the project facilitator and the two observers to collect notes and share observations. After compiling the data, the following morning the project facilitator typed out the outcome from each session.

Focus groups collect data and insights through group interaction, focusing on particular themes imposed by the researcher, which are enriched by the groups interaction.⁵⁹⁰ This data was synthesized and coded to find themes by using the verbatim principle,⁵⁹¹ in order to capture the meanings inherent in people's responses⁵⁹² within participants' answers, to gauge the effectiveness of the inductive Bible study. The focus group provides richer data than standalone interviews because one person's response may modify or prompt responses from other individuals.⁵⁹³ This allows for different views from each participant's personal experiences, and it allows for a variety of responses from different demographic backgrounds.⁵⁹⁴ The focus group consisted of ten volunteers who participated from the Bible Only Bible Study, the project facilitator acting as moderator, and one person in the role of note-taker. The focus group met one month after the Bible Only Bible Study for ninety minutes to discuss seven questions created by the project facilitator. Both the project facilitator and note-taker took notes and the project facilitator led the discussion of the seven questions. The seven questions were created to encourage responses to the inductive Bible study method, the book of Jude, meditation, and the performance of the project facilitator. The participants were asked not to share details discussed

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., 120.

⁵⁹¹ Stringer, *Action Research*, 140. The verbatim principle is defined as using terms and concepts drawn from the words of the participants.

⁵⁹² Ibid., 140.

⁵⁹³ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 120.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid.

during the focus group meeting, especially what other participants in the group shared. The participants were instructed not to interrupt one another in order to show respect to others in the group, in order for each participant to have enough time to respond to the questions.

Quantitative Data

Quantitative data collected during the intervention project consisted of a pre-test and post-test. In this single group pre-test/post-test design, the dependent variable or variables are measured before the intervention (pre-test) and after the intervention (post-test).⁵⁹⁵ The pre-test/post-test design is used in educational research to determine the effectiveness of an educational intervention program.⁵⁹⁶ The pre-test/post-test assessed the participants' knowledge of the book of Jude, the inductive Bible study method, and meditation. The pre-test and post-test both contained the same twenty questions, probing the participants' knowledge of the inductive Bible study, the book of Jude, and meditation. The pre-test also asked general demographic information that included age, gender, education level, and years of membership at Nazareth Baptist Church. The post-test included five Likert scale questions and two open-ended questions concerning the likability of the study and improvements that could be made. The Likert scale is commonly used for measuring self-reported attitudes or beliefs about something (idea or product), and allows for more varied levels of agreement than standard yes or no type responses.⁵⁹⁷ The results were analyzed through Excel by an independent contractor skilled in analyzing statistical data to determine gain scores. Gain analysis is used to determine the effect

⁵⁹⁵ Daniel Tan-lei Shek and Xiaoqin Zhu, "Pretest-Posttest Designs," *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation*, ed. Bruce F. Frey (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2018), 1292.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1292.

⁵⁹⁷ S. Jeanne Horst and Elisabeth M. Pyburn, "Likert Scaling," *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation*, ed. Bruce B. Frey (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2018), 974.

of a treatment on the difference between pre-test and post-test scores.⁵⁹⁸ This design gives the researcher the ability to assess whether a protocol or method improves performance compared to the *status quo*.⁵⁹⁹ The process for analyzing the data began immediately after the Bible Only Bible Study by the independently contracted data analyzer. Once the data was retrieved, the project facilitator began to assess the data and reach conclusions regarding the Bible Only Bible Study. All gathered and analyzed data will be securely located in the project facilitator's office, locked behind two doors with only the project facilitator having access. Computerized data will be protected by a password-protected computer. At the end of the inductive Bible study training, the collected data will be analyzed, and the results placed in charts to be illustrated. Federal law maintains that the data collected be kept for three years. After three years, the data will be destroyed.

Session One

The first Bible Only Bible Study class convened on Wednesday, September 4, 2019, in the Nazareth Baptist Church sanctuary at 6:00 PM. The prior promotion of the event helped to enlist 62 volunteers to participate in the class, of which 40 had no prior Bible study training, based on the demographic results of the administered pre-test. The project facilitator welcomed everyone and thanked them for participating. After the introduction, it took approximately ten minutes for the project facilitator to carefully read the consent form and answer questions related to the consent form. The project facilitator explained to the class that their responses to the pre-test and post-test would remain anonymous through a numbering system. Each participant would

⁵⁹⁸ Immanuel Williams and Steven Andrew Culpepper, "Analysis of Gain Scores," *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation*, ed. Bruce B. Frey (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2018), 715.

⁵⁹⁹ Williams and Culpepper, "Analysis of Gain Scores," 715.

have their own unique number assigned to them to use on the pre and post-test. The project facilitator warned the participants not to put their names on the pre or post-test when administered, because this would eliminate them from the study.

Next, the project facilitator explained the pre-test. He explained the reasoning behind the demographic questions and explained that the rest of the test was to discern their knowledge of the book of Jude, the steps of the inductive Bible study method, and meditation. There are ten questions concerning the book of Jude, eight questions on the inductive Bible study method, and two questions related to meditation. The project facilitator explained that the participants may not currently know many of the questions, but after taking the class, they would know more of the answers. The project facilitator also reiterated at this time that no one would know which test belonged to whom because of the unique numbering system. The project facilitator explained the procedures for the test. Notebooks were to be closed and the participants would have thirty minutes to complete the test. Prior to the session, the project facilitator prepared two sealed boxes with one open slot in each, for the participants to drop their tests and consent forms in as they finished. He explained that the boxes would remain behind two locked doors in his office and that no one would have access to them until the data was entered into the project facilitator's password-protected computer and locked when he was away from his office. The participants finished the tests before the thirty-minute time limit, dropped them in the sealed boxes, and were ready to resume the class.

The project facilitator opened the class with prayer and instructed the class to turn to page four in the notebook. He explained the importance of studying the Bible highlighting instruction found in 2 Timothy 3:14-17, the barriers to biblical interpretation, and the principles of interpretation. After this brief instruction, the project facilitator explained what inductive Bible

study is and why the inductive Bible study method was the preferred method of Bible study. Before further explaining the four steps, the project facilitator explained the importance of praying before Bible study and the role of the Holy Spirit in Bible study. After this, the project facilitator gave a brief synopsis of the different types of Bible translations and which were preferred for use with the inductive Bible study method. He explained the differences between formal, functional, and free translations and why the NKJV and NLT translations were both included in the study. Next, the project facilitator explained the outline of the seven-week plan, what would be accomplished each week, and that the result would be that each participant would know how to discover truth for themselves.

The remaining class time was dedicated to explaining the first step of the inductive Bible study method of observation. The design of the class was a brief introduction to observation by going through the first four verses of Jude. The project facilitator explained that this is essentially asking “What do I see?” or “What do I want to know about the verses?” The project facilitator explained two keys to observation. First, read slowly and read the verses multiple times. Second, ask the right questions of the text. The project facilitator explained to the participants several things to look for in verses. Key words entail words that are repeated, unique, and those you may be difficult to understand. Illustrations (allusions) were explained along with watching for Old Testament quotations and their importance. Compare and contrast is another consideration, especially in the book of Jude. After this, the project facilitator asked the class to take a few minutes and read the verses for themselves and then there would be a class discussion. After the class discussion, the project facilitator closed the session in prayer. The project facilitator gathered all of the data and locked them in his office closet and also locked his office door.

Overall, participants were excited about the project and the project facilitator was amazed at the number of people attending the class. Participation in the class discussion on the first four verses was phenomenal. Many expressed what they wanted to know about words, phrases, and Jude himself. Participants even complimented each other on questions that were being asked, and each expressed a desire to want to know more about the verses and the inductive Bible study method. Some participants spoke to the project facilitator afterward and revealed that no one had ever shown them how to study their Bible before.

Session Two

Session two began at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, September 11, 2019 in the Nazareth Baptist Church sanctuary and opened with a word of prayer. This week's assignments were to continue in observation of Jude 5-16. In order to better observe and to enhance focus on the verses, the verses were divided up into segments of verses 5-8, 9-11, 12-13, and verses 14-16. The class continued to observe the text for key words, repeated words, unique words, illustrations, Old Testament quotes, and compare and contrast. Now that the consent form and pre-test had been administered, this session was primarily focused on class discussion. Jude 5-8 provided substantial discussion as the class discussed what the illustrations in those verses related to. Most of the discussion centered on where the illustrations could be found in the Old Testament. At one point, the project facilitator stopped the discussion to explain that once the inductive Bible study is assimilated into a person's life, then observation and interpretation are constantly woven together because of the interpreter's prior knowledge. He also explained that when someone observes something they know, similar to knowing where to turn for the illustrations, they should turn there and read the verses while it is still fresh on their mind. This prompted even more class discussion on verses 5-8 as people began to recite verses that could

provide clues for interpreting verses 5-8 in Jude. One person commented that the three examples Jude gives here are loaded with meaning.

Class discussion on verses 9-11 also prompted much discussion. Many of the participants wanted to know what verse 9 alluded to in Jude and where it could be found. This led to the project facilitator explaining that Jude quoted those verses from a book that is not part of any Bible. The project facilitator planned for this discussion to take place, because he knew that this might cause an issue for some of the participants. He explained the origin of the verse and that Jude did not claim that the book he quoted from was Scripture, but only that it did state a fact of what took place. This seemed to relieve many in the class and satisfied those who were curious about the matter. The class discussion continued with many participants calling out words they would like to know the meaning. One even noticed that Jude seems to give examples in sets of threes with Jude 5-8, and Jude 11 with Cain, Balaam, and Korah.

The project facilitator noted that the discussion on Jude 12-13 proved difficult because many were confused over the language used. He took the time to carefully go through the verses and to determine the figures of speech. The project facilitator took this opportunity to explain one of the greatest resources' interpreters have at their disposal: common sense. The project facilitator also explained that verses like Jude 12-13 demonstrate the need to perform good word studies because they hold the key to interpreting difficult verses. To help derive the meaning of a word, he further explained the benefits of using a concordance for the study of words because the concordance will show where else in Scripture the word is used.

Jude 14-16 provided a lengthy class discussion akin to the discussion on Jude 9-11. The project facilitator explained that Jude 9 and Jude 14 share the same characteristics. Jude quoted an outside source to state a fact, and not to show that those books were canon and should be

included in our Protestant Bible. The class discussed where to find the story of Enoch and the coming of Christ, and the judgment to come. The project facilitator explained that all of those verses would help in interpreting the verses in Jude. At the conclusion of the second session, the project facilitator urged the participants to work ahead in observation on Jude 17-25, and be prepared for class discussion because the observation step would be completed the next week. The project facilitator closed the session with prayer.

The participants were clearly engaged in the inductive Bible study method. Quite a few were working on it outside of class which was encouraging to the project facilitator. The class exceeded the project facilitator's expectations not only in number but in how they participated and are learned the book of Jude. The project facilitator believes that the briefness of the book of Jude lends to this. While studying Scripture is intimidating to the beginner, the book of Jude is easier to study because it can be read in just a few minutes and does not require ardent study or an abundance of homework. The participants seemed genuinely excited and ready to engage in Scripture.

Session Three

Session three began at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, September 18, 2019 in the Nazareth Baptist Church sanctuary with a word of prayer. The project facilitator gave a brief recap of the observation step and allowed participants adequate time to discuss any new findings from the previous weeks' study on Jude 5-16. Quite a few participants found more words that they would like to study from the previous weeks' verses. Many had looked up some of the references given from the previous week and discussed what they found there. Many participants were fascinated that there were so many Scriptures that are associated with what Jude was teaching in his letter.

The session this week was focused on Jude 17-25. It was broken up into segments covering verses 17-19, 20-23, and 25-25. The class continued to observe the text for key words, repeated words, unique words, illustrations, Old Testament quotes, and compare and contrast. Jude 17-19 provided a fruitful discussion on previous warnings provided by the Lord and the apostles concerning false teachers. Many participants referenced Scriptures that pointed out the personality and the teachings of false teachers. It also prompted many to ask questions concerning false doctrine and how to recognize that something is false. This discussion gave the project facilitator an opportunity to speak on the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit, not only as it pertains to the Word, but to those who claim to preach or teach the Word. The project facilitator also pointed out the warning from Scripture about adding to or taking from God's Word. The danger of false teachers and false doctrine expresses the need for believers to know the Word of God and how to interpret it for themselves. There was ample discussion on the three characteristics of false teachers listed in Jude 19, especially related to them not having the Holy Spirit.

Jude 20-23 raised much discussion on the role a believer plays by how they live their life. The participants noticed that the last two sets of verses seemed to demonstrate a change of direction in how Jude was speaking to them. The project facilitator pointed out here the differences between the NKJV and the NLT. In the simplest terms possible, he explained that the Greek here is hard to decipher and that translators have a difficult time translating verses 22-23. The NLT may lend a hand in interpreting the verses and to whom Jude is referencing in the verses. The participants did grasp the concept as explained by the project facilitator. The group's conclusion was that Jude is instructing the believers in how to respond to the false teachers and

those who are under their influence. There was little time spent on Jude 24-25. Many wanted to know the meaning of a few words, and some even understood that Jude 24-25 was a doxology.

After doing his own inductive study, the project facilitator noticed that there may be a considerable amount of time left at the end of the observation step. The observation steps of the previous week's sessions caused quite a bit of discussion that primarily focused on interpretation. Knowing this, the project facilitator began the step of interpretation with the class on Jude 1-4. This allowed the project facilitator to go over pages 28-29 in the notebook concerning the step of interpretation, and explain its three components of context, correlation, and consultation. He explained that the interpretation step could be taken as deep as they wanted to go, especially in the component of consultation. Then the project facilitator explained the component of context, specifically the genre and the immediate contexts of the book of Jude including the importance of words, verses, passages, chapters, other books by the author, testament, and Bible. Correlation took quite a bit of time to explain the importance of word studies and cross-referencing Scriptures. The project facilitator brought examples for explaining consultation. Commentaries, one-volume commentaries, study Bibles, atlases, dictionaries, and a Bible introduction book were brought to demonstrate the depth a participant could go in studying any book of the Bible. Many of the participants asked questions about which books the project facilitator recommended.

Once the discussion ended on the components of consultation, the project facilitator answered questions concerning what sources were best for consultation discussion on interpreting Jude 1-4. The interpretation step focused on interpreting what was observed through the text in the previous three weeks. Participants who chose to seek out the further meaning for words, the project facilitator pointed out that on pages 43-56 in the back of the notebook were 151 words in the book of Jude, in the original Greek and their definitions. This was a tremendous

help to the participants in interpretation because most did not have the resources to consult for this endeavor, but it was only optional to do this as these tools would be introduced at a later time. The project facilitator relayed that the main goal of interpretation is to find a theme for each set of verses that will aid in the latter steps of application and appropriation. There was a discussion on the meanings of the words from what was seen in the observation stage. The participants came to the conclusion that the theme of Jude 1-4 was that Jude wanted believers to make every effort to know and defend their beliefs. The class ended with a discussion on apologetics after a participant asked a question concerning the subject. Before closing the third session with prayer, the project facilitator informed the participants that it was optional to work through the word meanings in the back of the BOBS notebook and write down what they believed to be the theme for the segment of verses in Jude 5-25.

The participants appeared to be more engaged with the study than the previous week. It was interesting to see that so many of the participants were inclined to keep studying away from the class, and to search out Jude even further. Each seemed eager for the next class, not only for what they were learning, but also for what they could learn from others. Class participation was high and most, if not all, had participated in the discussion the previous three weeks. The project facilitator was encouraged by the sheer number of participants and the interest of the participants on the book of Jude and the inductive Bible study method.

Session Four

Session four began at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, September 25, 2019 in the Nazareth Baptist Church sanctuary and opened with a word of prayer. This week's assignment was to continue in the interpretation of Jude 5-25 and to find a theme for the segments that were observed in previous weeks' sessions. Many of the participants worked ahead and provided

substantial feedback on what they believed the theme should be for verses 5-8. These verses, just as with observation, provided countless discussions. Participants pointed out that each illustration pertained to a specific sin that Jude was demonstrating that the false teachers were guilty of. The project facilitator pointed out that the conclusions reached were correct, but also added that all three illustrations were guilty of all three sins. Many themes were offered for this segment by the participants which gave a wide variety of meanings.

Jude 9-11 prompted an extensive discussion on Michael the archangel, and the three illustrations in Jude 11 of Cain, Balaam, and Korah. One participant had looked up all the verses pertaining to Michael and explained the meaning of the word “prince” found in Daniel and alluded to the fact that Michael is also pictured in Revelation as fighting with the devil there as well. After discussing what the stories of the Old Testament examples of Cain, Balaam, and Korah taught, the project facilitator asked what they had in common with the examples from Jude 5-8. Some noticed that Jude 5-8 and Jude 11 share the same sin(s). This demonstrated to the project facilitator that the participants were thinking deeply about the book of Jude and applying their research to reach conclusions. Again, many themes were offered on Jude 9-11 and the class moved on to Jude 12-13. Since participants had access to the Greek word meanings, this section was easier to discern. It helped them discover the meaning and rather quickly find a theme that was satisfying to the group.

Jude 14-16 provided much discussion on the background of Enoch and the coming of Christ. The project facilitator provided some answers to questions people had about the book of Enoch concerning its origination and subject matter. Some wanted to know why the book of Enoch and the Assumption of Moses were not a part of Scripture. Through previous research, the project facilitator provided them a sufficient answer to their questions. Most of the discussion

time was centered on the coming of Christ. Many of the participants had studied references to Christ's coming and were intrigued by their study to research more at a later time. A theme was rather easy to discern for the participants in Jude 14-16 and discussion turned toward Jude 17-19.

Discussion on Jude 17-19 revolved around the previous warnings of false teachers by Jesus and the apostles and Jude 19. Most of the participants could cite verses about false teachers and it helped them decide on a theme for the verses. Some researched Jude 19 farther than the project facilitator expected and offered verses and insights on the discussion of worldly people, causing divisions, and not having the Holy Spirit. The theme of these verses was easily comprehended by the participants and the discussion moved on toward Jude 20-23. Discussion on Jude 20-23 primarily focused on how, as believers, we are to deal with people caught up in false teaching and how to avoid it for themselves. The participants quickly turned the discussion toward doctrines we know to be wrong, and how people could get involved in them. The participants were intrigued by how people could get brainwashed into believing something far from the truth, failing to see the truth. One participant mentioned Paul's description of how people drift away from God in Romans 1. Quite a few themes were offered by the participants that were relevant to Jude. Jude 24-25 was quickly discussed, especially the word meanings, and a theme was easily decided by the participants. The project facilitator closed session four in prayer.

Class participation continues to excel even in the more complicated step of interpretation. After going through three weeks of observation, the participants were ready to begin interpretation, as many of them were already explaining the meanings or studying them at home after class. This session went over the allotted time limit by ten minutes, but the participants did not seem to mind as many were inclined to continue to discuss themes already discussed. The

project facilitator was relieved and continually encouraged by the response to the book of Jude and the inductive Bible study method. He observed the people continually immersing themselves in the book of Jude by using the inductive Bible study.

Session Five

Session five began at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, October 2, 2019 in the Nazareth Baptist Church sanctuary and opened with a word of prayer. This week's session was to focus on the third step of the inductive Bible study method, the application of Jude. From the previous weeks of study, the project facilitator did a brief summary of the steps of observation and interpretation. Next, the steps of the application process were explained to the participants by examining Jude 1-4 to provide an example of what would take place for each of the segments of the book of Jude. The project facilitator reminded the participants that application is for applying the message of Jude to the church at-large. To help make the process of finding principles of application easier, the participants were led in a class discussion on the likeness and difference between the original audience and the church today. Reviewing themes from the previous week would aid in determining a proper application for the modern church. Next, the project facilitator explained to the participants the difference between a knowing text, which simply provides information, and a doing text, where the author gives instruction to the audience. After producing some application principles from Jude 1-4, the class gave modern examples of how the application principles could be applied. The project facilitator then led a class discussion on how Jude 1-4 points to Christ. Next, he explained that all of Scripture has Christ at its center and that all Scripture points to Christ.

Going through the application process, the class studied consecutively through Jude in segments of the previous week's models: 5-8, 9-11, 12-13, 14-16, 17-19, 20-23, and 24-25. The

segments of verses that provided much of the thoughtful discussion from earlier weeks, produced a considerable amount of application principles. The participants could clearly see that keen observation and thoughtful interpretation, led to an ample amount of application principles to be applied to the church. By catching on quickly and easily to the application process, the project facilitator only supervised the discussion and answered questions concerning the texts. Once the participants reviewed their notes from the observation and interpretation steps, the application step was uncomplicated and straightforward. At many points in the discussion, the project facilitator had to stop the discussion on some verses in order to be able to proceed with the class and meet the target goal of finishing the application step of the book of Jude before the allotted time was completed. The project facilitator did explain to the participants that after completing the steps of observation, interpretation, and application, it would be possible to compile a list of themes from the book. In order to demonstrate the ability to compile a list from the book of Jude, the project facilitator presented participants with a list that contained eighteen characteristics of false teachers and seven commands to believers. The participants were able to define the primary theme from the book of Jude and locate it within the text. The class finished ten minutes early and the project facilitator closed the fifth session with prayer.

Overall, the class exceeded the expectation of the project facilitator. The participants only seemed to have difficulty with the interpretation step; however, much of this could be because they lack the training to delve deeply into the background of the book. Providing them with the word studies helped with the interpretive process. As we went through the application process, the class discussion was amplified and rivaled the discussion held during the steps of observation. Most of the class participated and offered their insights on how the book of Jude could be applied to the church at-large. The project facilitator was astonished to see that in order

to be able to provide lengthy class discussions, the participants were doing an extensive amount of work away from the class. The project facilitator anticipated that the class time would get shorter after the fourth week of interpretation, but with the generous amount of discussion from the class, the classes were still lasting between eighty to ninety minutes. The project facilitator presumes that the participants were learning more from one another than previously anticipated and are passionate about having the inductive Bible study as their own personal biblical interpretive method. The project facilitator anticipates that many of those who took part in the class will no longer be dependent on others to provide the meaning for biblical texts.

Session Six

Session six began at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, October 9, 2019 in the Nazareth Baptist Church sanctuary with a word of prayer. The session for this week focused on the last step of the inductive method which is appropriation. The project facilitator explained the importance of observation, interpretation, and application, as it pertained to the step of appropriation. He explained that the more thorough and in-depth the previous three steps were developed, the easier the step of appropriation would be. Next, the project facilitator explained that the previous three steps would greatly aid in arriving at what the text means for the individual, which is the main point of the step of appropriation. The processes of the step of appropriation were explained thoroughly by the project facilitator, beginning with a personal assessment. The first step of appropriation was performing an open and honest personal assessment of the individual's life. This is done in order to determine where the individual stands in their relationship with God and what the passage in Jude is saying. This phase of appropriation, as explained by the project facilitator, requires a humble attitude and the participants placing themselves under the Word of God in order to be submissive to its teaching.

Next, the project facilitator explained meditation. Using biblical principles from the Old and New Testaments found in the Psalms, 1 Timothy 4:13, and Philippians 4:8, the importance of meditating on God's Word was conveyed to the participants. During this time, the project facilitator carefully explained the Hebrew and Greek meanings of the words that are translated as "meditation" so that the participants could understand biblical meditation. The project facilitator then proceeded to explain the five steps of meditating on the text. First, is simply reading the text aloud. Second, is reflecting on the text, which is thinking deeply about the verse or verses being studied. It is also during this phase that the participant may also commit a verse to memory. Third, is responding, which is a time the participant would respond with thanks for God's Word. Fourth, is resting. During this step, the participant would stop and rest before God, receiving what the Holy Spirit teaches. The final step is reacting and involves putting into practice what is learned through the Word of God. The project facilitator explained that according to James 1:22 all believers are to submit and appropriate God's Word into their lives. At this point, the project facilitator gave eight questions that aid in the appropriation process. These would aid the participants in finding and defining principles for appropriation that could be applied to their lives as individuals, and thus enable them to practice them. After going over the eight questions, the project facilitator returned to the book of Jude and gave examples from each set of verses to demonstrate the step of appropriation.

The participants grasped the step of appropriation easily. Finding principles of appropriation in some sets of verses was challenging, but overall there were many principles shared by those participating in the class. Jude 17-19, 20-23, and 24-25 garnered much of the discussion because of the work done previously through the steps of observation, interpretation, and application. Acquiring appropriation principles in these verses was easier, because Jude is

speaking directly to the believers about how they could dispel and deal with those propagating false doctrine. The project facilitator gave the class an assignment at the end of class, to take the next week and go through the step of appropriation. The purpose was to see if they could discern principles with the aid of the Holy Spirit. The project facilitator explained that next week would be the last class. The participants could provide what they had learned in the coming week from the book of Jude and be prepared to take the post-test before leaving. The project facilitator also explained that next week's class would be shorter than the previous classes, so they could focus on the text. The class ended a few minutes early and was closed in prayer.

The project facilitator continued to be overwhelmed by the participants and their willingness to learn a method of biblical interpretation. The participants in the class enjoyed discussing the steps of the inductive Bible study and the book of Jude. Many of the participants shared their desires privately with the project facilitator to do another class similar to the one on Jude. The participants were grasping the inductive Bible study method, and gained new knowledge about the book of Jude. The participation for the step of appropriation was on par with the steps of observation and application. Most of the participants had principles to offer, and the project facilitator noticed most were writing down others' responses. All seem eager to take the post-test to see what they have learned and know.

Session Seven

Session seven began at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, October 16, 2019 in the Nazareth Baptist Church sanctuary with a word of prayer. This session was primarily designed for the participants to share what they had learned through using the appropriation step the past week on their own. Participation was low when the project facilitator asked if any participant had anything new to add from what they had learned on their own the past week. While there were only a few

responses, the appropriation principles they shared were new and inspiring. After this, the project facilitator briefly explained the appropriation step again. The project facilitator asked the participants if anyone had any questions. Most of the participants wanted to know when they were taking the test. The project facilitator explained the post-test. He explained that the reasoning behind the post-test was to gauge their knowledge of the book of Jude, the inductive Bible study method, and meditation. He then explained that the same twenty questions on the pre-test would be on the post-test, which are ten questions concerning the book of Jude, eight questions on the inductive Bible study method, and two questions related to meditation. It was also explained that there would be seven additional questions on the test that would survey how they liked the class, and the inductive Bible study method. The project facilitator reiterated at this time that no one would know which test belonged to whom, because of the unique numbering system. The project facilitator explained the procedures for the test. Notebooks were to be closed and the participants would have thirty minutes to complete the test. Prior to the session, the project facilitator prepared two sealed boxes with one open slot in each, for the participants to drop their tests in as they finished. He explained that the boxes would remain behind two locked doors in his office and that no one would have access to them until the data was entered into the project facilitators password-protected computer, and locked when he was away from his office. Before the tests were administered, the project facilitator explained to the participants that once they dropped their test in the boxes, they were free to leave. The project facilitator reminded the participants not to forget to write their unique number at the top of their test. At this time the project facilitator asked for ten volunteers to participate in the focus group to discuss the Bible Only Bible Study, as part of fulfilling his requirements for the project intervention. Ten people responded to the request and would participate in the focus group in one

month. He also thanked all who participated in the class and wished them well on the test, prayed, and passed the tests out. Most of the participants finished the test quickly, dropping them in the allotted boxes. The project facilitator gathered the data and locked them in his closet and locked his office. With this, the final session of the Bible Only Bible Study was completed.

Focus Group

The focus group met on November 20, 2019 in the Nazareth Family Life Center conference room from 6:00-7:30 PM. The project facilitator for the Bible Only Bible Study acted as moderator and was also accompanied by a volunteer note-taker. The ten participants arrived on time and the focus group started at 6:00 PM. The participants were reminded not to discuss the details of the focus group, as this should remain confidential. Earlier the moderator planned to establish a system where he would ask questions and give every individual an opportunity to respond if they chose to do so. The questions were to solicit responses concerning the inductive Bible study method and their use of it since the study concluded, suggestions on improving the study, aspects of what they learned during the study, meditation, and on the project facilitators leadership during the study. The questions asked in the focus group were:

1. Have you used the inductive Bible study method for your personal Bible study?
2. What would you suggest to improve the inductive Bible study training?
3. After completion of this training, can you state how the context influences interpretation of the passage?
4. After completion of this training, are you able to show how a passage is focused on or fulfilled in Jesus?
5. Did meditation aid in understanding the book of Jude?
6. Did the inductive Bible study help you learn how to study the Bible?

7. Did the leader facilitate helpful class interaction? Please give an example.

Each participant gave answers that varied in length and depth and were talkative. No participant became overtly aggressive by speaking too long or interrupting another while they were speaking. The discussion remained dignified and respectful throughout. Even those that were typically shy in front of others, felt comfortable enough to share in the discussion. Because the project facilitator allowed the participants to share what was on their minds, the focus group session exceeded the allotted time by fifteen minutes. The moderator closed the session in prayer and thanked the participants for taking the time to be a part of the Bible Only Bible Study and the focus group.

Chapter 4: Results

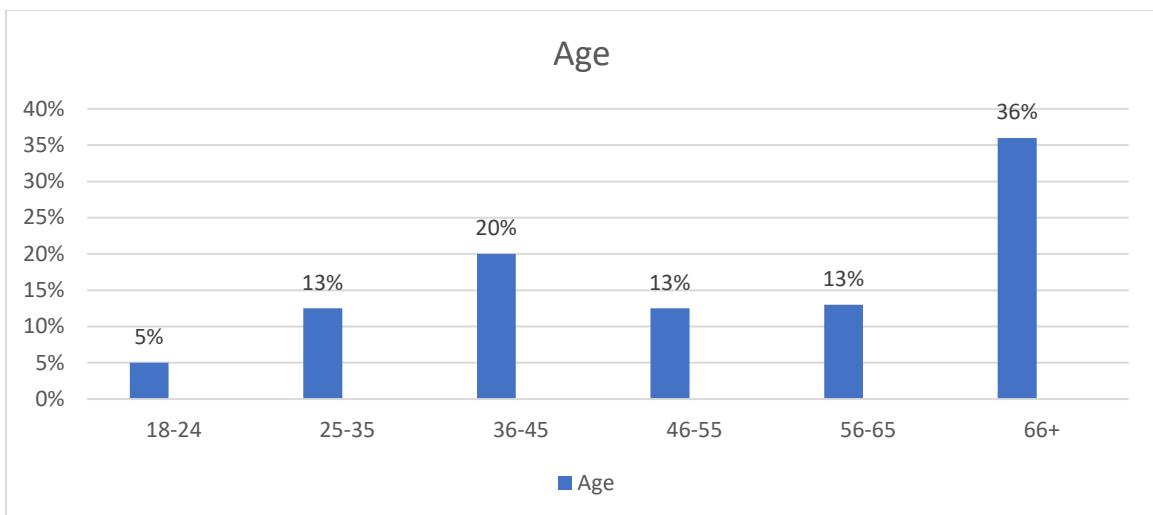
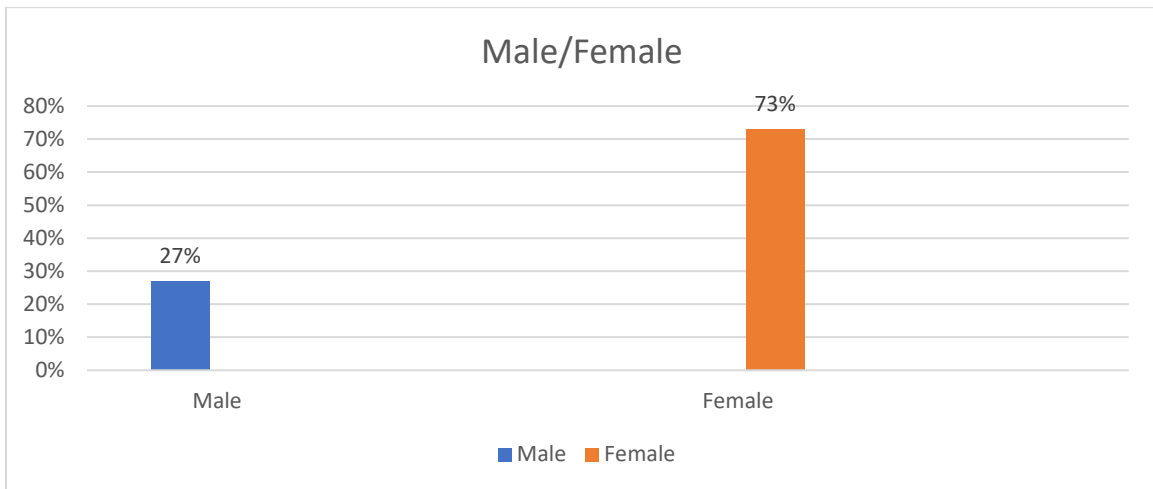
Based on the theological and theoretical foundations formulated in Chapter 2 and the implementation of the project outlined in Chapter 3, this chapter provides the results of the project intervention. The pilot study results determined the reliability of the pre-test and post-test. The face validity of the pre-test and post-test was determined by a Likert scale test on the participants of the pilot study. This is followed by the demographics of the group that made up the Bible Only Bible Study (BOBS) class from members of Nazareth Baptist Church. The results of the project intervention are reported by the desired outcomes recited in Chapter 3 of the thesis. The desired outcomes are the goals that were set for the project intervention. The first goal was for the participants to acquire a method of biblical interpretation directly focused on the inductive Bible study method. The second goal was for the participants to know a method of biblical interpretation and to be able to perform it on their own. The third goal was that through the inductive Bible study method the participants would gain knowledge of the book of Jude. The final goal was for the participants to utilize meditation within the inductive Bible study to enrich their spirituality. The triangulation of data consisted of pre-test and post-test, focus group survey, and field notes. This data is synthesized under each goal in order to determine if the goals were met.

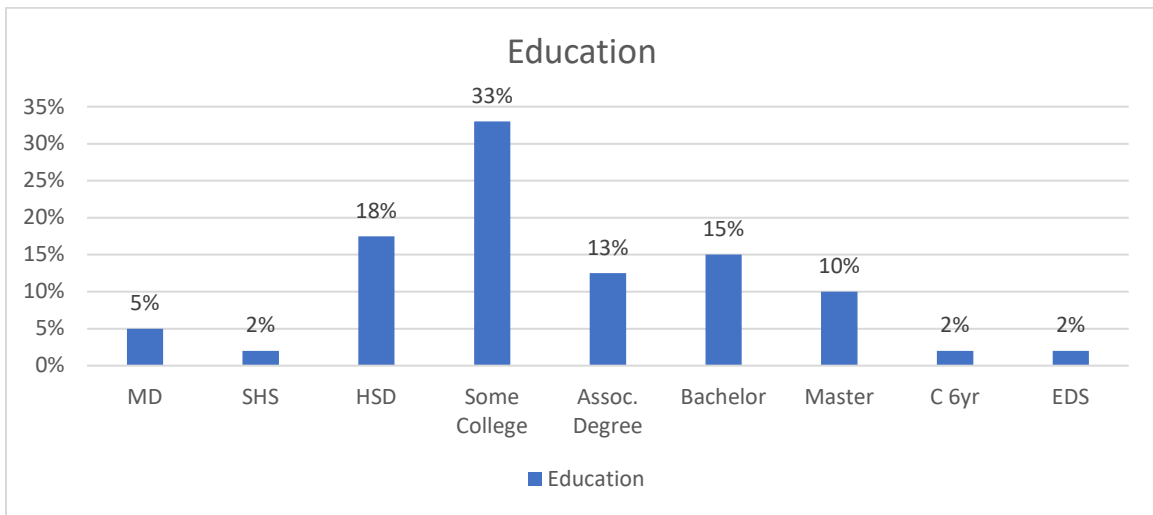
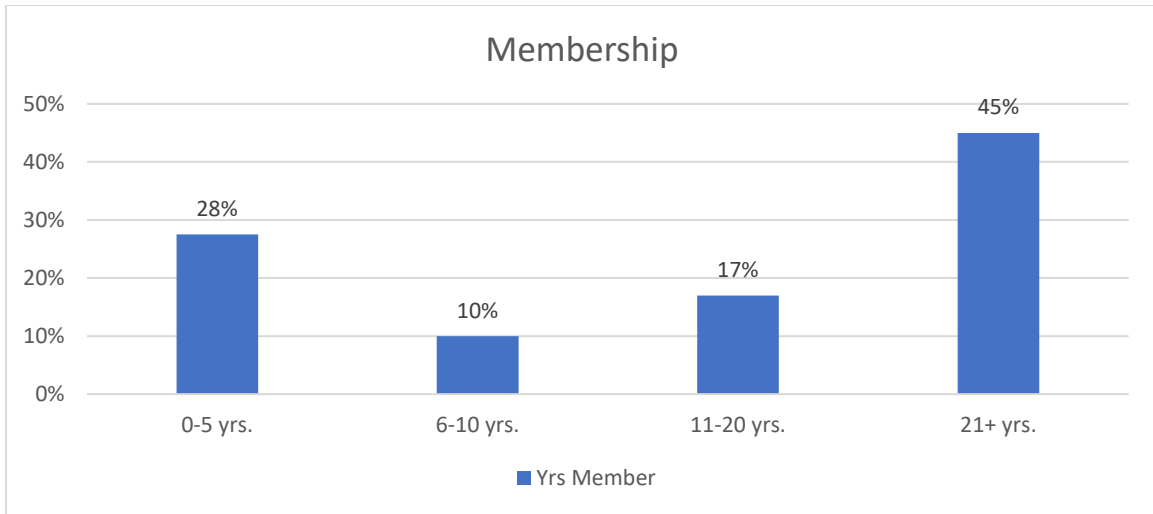
Demographics

The participants were asked five demographical questions on the pre-test featured during the first session of the Bible Only Bible Study. The participants were 27% male and 73% female. The ages of the participants ranged across the spectrum. The largest group represented was 66 plus in age (36%) followed by those aged 36-45 (20%). The 25-35 age range represented 13% along with the 46-55 and 56-65 age groups, followed by the 18-24 at 5%. The highest number

according to years of membership at Nazareth was represented by those 21 plus years (45%).

The 0-5 years group was the next highest with 28% followed by the 11-20 group (17%) and 6-10 years (10%). The largest group in the education demographic has completed some college at 33% followed by those who have a high school diploma (18%). Those with a bachelor's degree were next with 15% and an Associate degree (13%) were closely represented. Those who attained a master's degree represented 10% followed by the middle school diploma (5%). Some high school, 6-year degree, and EDS were represented by 2% of the class each.





Calculation of Improvement Scores

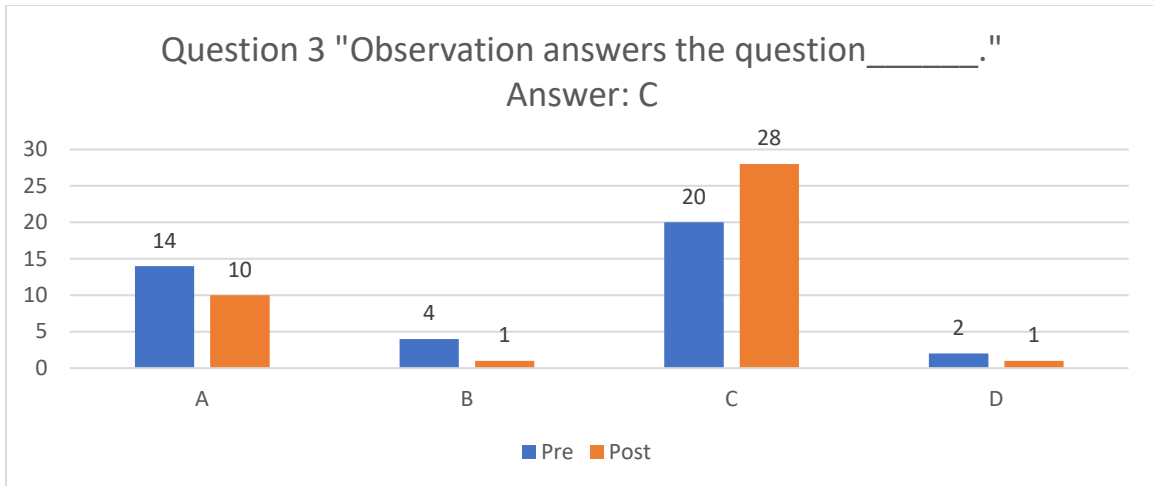
The improvement scores were calculated by percentage between the pre-test and post-test scores. Percent change is the extent to which variables gain or lose value and is a valuable tool when quantifying and analyzing change. The value of percent change is calculated by first determining the difference, increase or decrease, between the two numbers being evaluated. In the case of this study, the pre-test score is the “original number” and the post-test score is the “new number” (increase=new number-original number). The next step in determining percent change is to divide the “increase” by the “original number” and finally to multiply the answer by

100 to arrive at percent change. An example of this calculation would be if the pre-test score= 50% (original number), post-test score= 75% (new number), step one would be to determine the increase or decrease 75% (new number) minus 50% (original number), a 25% increase. Step two would be to determine percent change by dividing increase by original number. 25% (increase) divided by 50% (original number) equals $.50 \times 100$ which is a 50% increase. In this example, the absolute increase is clearly 25 points. The absolute change is useful to determine the direction of improvement or decline from the pre-test to the post-test score. Percent change, in this case, expresses the absolute change as a percentage of the initial pre-test score. Expression of the change between two values as percent change is useful when analyzing data, because the change is expressed as an amount relative to the initial score.

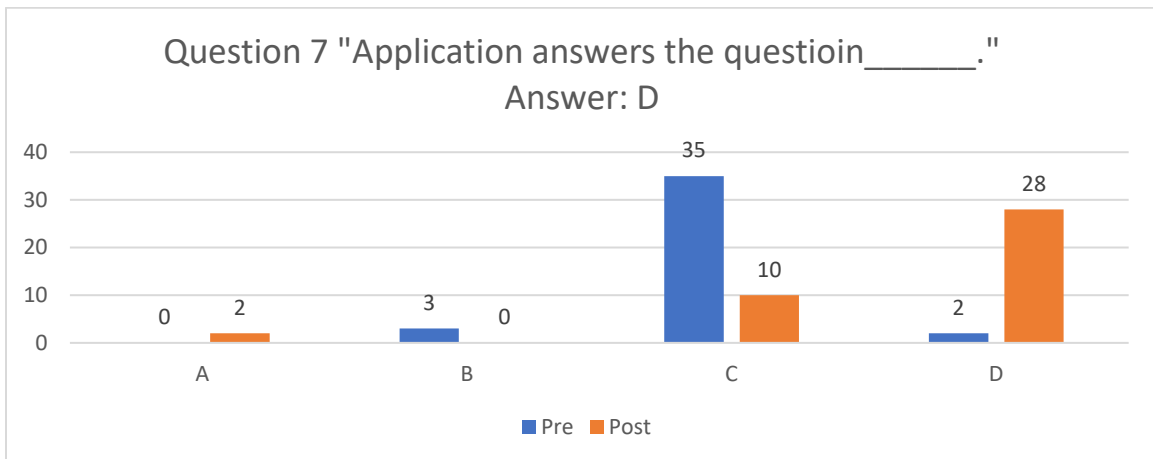
Goal 1: Acquire a Method of Biblical Interpretation

The participants were not expected to know any of the inductive Bible study questions (IBS), since those participating had no previous inductive Bible study experience. The questions were designed for the IBS portion to be simple, as this would be the participants' first experience with this biblical method of interpretation. Pre-test and post-test Questions 3, 7, 11, and 15 were concerned with the basic steps of the IBS method of biblical interpretation, while focus group question 6 also pertained to the IBS method of biblical interpretation. Along with field notes, this data will be coalesced to show that the participants of the BOBS know a method of interpretation.

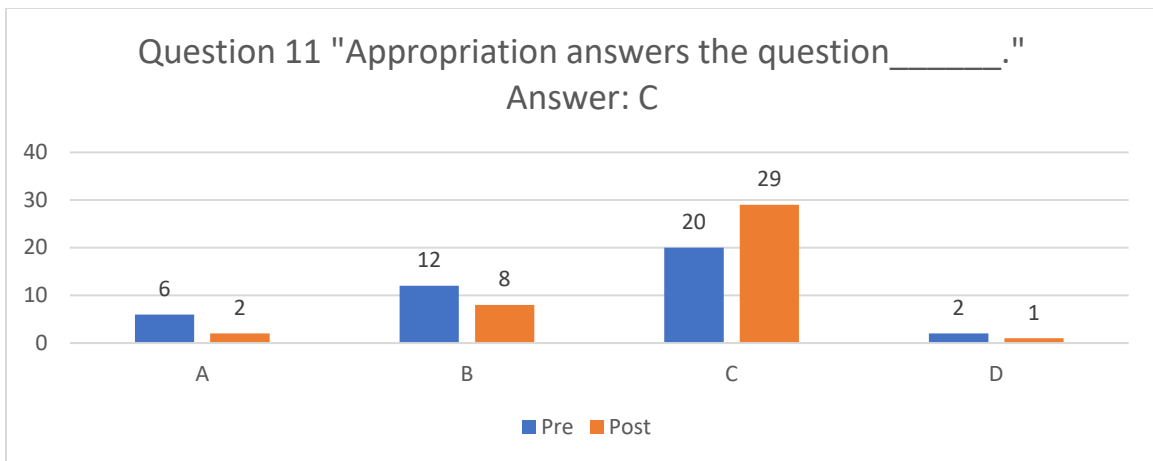
Specific questions from the pre-test and post-test also indicate that the participants of the BOBS know a method of biblical interpretation. Question 3, 7, 11, and 15 tested the basic knowledge of the four steps of the IBS.



Question 3 asked the participants of the Bible Only Bible Study (BOBS), “Observation answers the question_____.” While 50% of the participants answered correctly on the pre-test 70% answered correctly on the post-test. The first two sessions of the BOBS covered the observation step which is the first step of IBS. Field notes reveal that the project facilitator discussed that observation is asking the question “What do I see?” Most of the incorrect answers for this question revolve around answer “A” which is “What am I reading?” Field notes and audio recordings reveal that the project facilitator mentioned many times that observation includes reading the text slowly multiple times. This is possibly the reason many people chose “A” on the pre-test and post-test. Despite the participants' possible misunderstanding of the question, there was still an improvement of 40%.

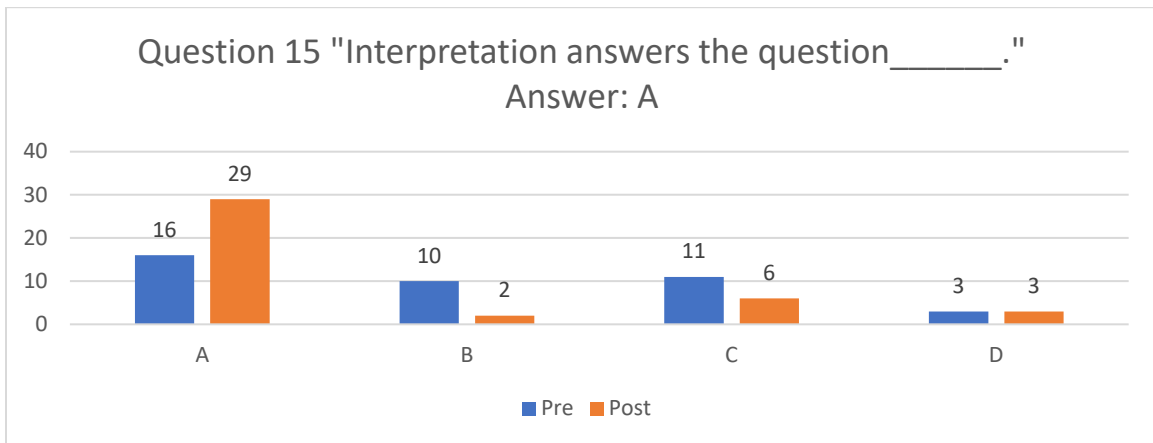


Question 7 asked the participants, “Application answers the question _____.” Only 5% of the participants answered this question correctly on the pre-test, while 70% correctly answered it on the post-test. Again, this is because none of the participants had taken any course in IBS previously and were not familiar with the terminology of the IBS method of biblical interpretation. According to filed notes, this question was also discussed in session five of the BOBS. One of the weaknesses in presenting the application step was that it only lasted one week. More time was spent on the book of Jude finding application principles, than discussing the actual step of application as in previous steps. However, this question represents the biggest percentage of improvement of all the questions from pre-test to post-test (1300%) and shows that the participants were learning the IBS method of biblical interpretation.



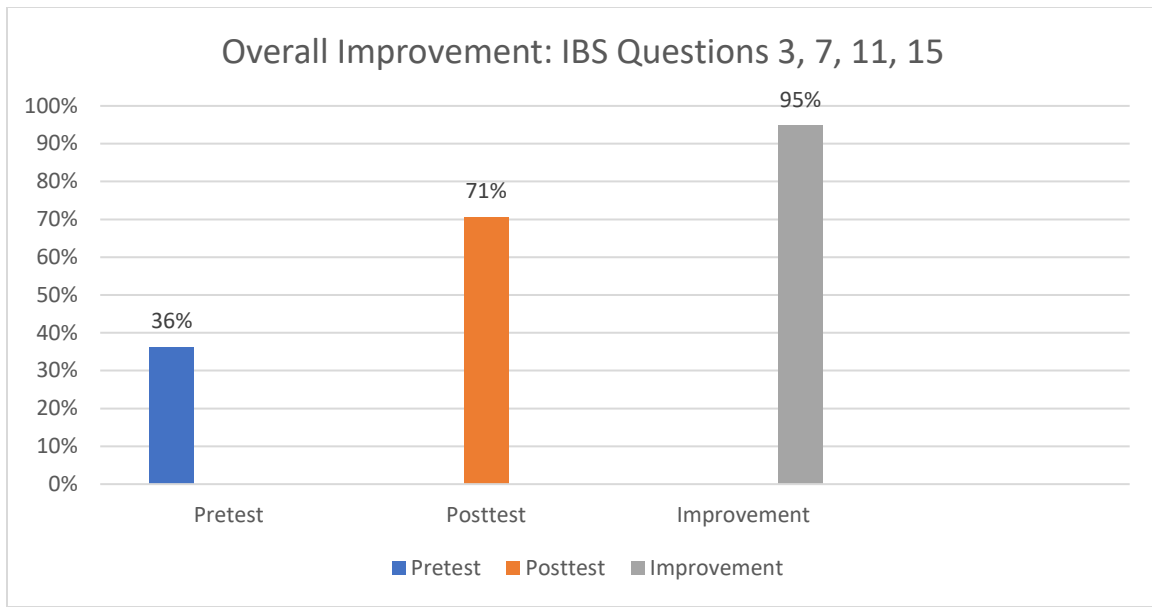
Question 11 asked the participants, “Appropriation answers the question _____.” The pre-test reveals that 50% of the participants correctly answered the question on the pre-test while 73% answered correctly on the post-test. Field notes collected from sessions six and seven reveal from some of the answers the participants gave during these sessions, that some of the participants may have confused the step of application and appropriation. A few of the participants, as well as the project facilitator, used the phrase “apply it to my life.” This may have caused some of the participants to answer “B” instead of “C”, which is the correct answer.

Overall there was a 45% improvement on this question that demonstrates that participants were learning the IBS method of biblical interpretation from the BOBS.



Question 15 asked the participants, “Interpretation answers the question_____.” On the pre-test, 40% of the participants answered correctly and, on the post-test, 73% answered correctly. The step of interpretation was addressed during sessions three and four. The project facilitator and the participants discussed the interpretive question in the class sessions. It is possible this caused “C” to be chosen on the post-test, because people confused the steps of the IBS. After completing the BOBS, there was an improvement of 81%. Again, this shows that participants were learning a method of biblical interpretation, which they could use as their own personal Bible study method.

The pre-test and post-test results show that overall, the BOBS participants know a method of biblical interpretation upon completion of the training. For the overall class, the average pre-test score for IBS questions was 36% with an average post-test score of 71%. Once the BOBS was completed, an average improvement of 95% is shown as the graph below indicates.



The demographic analysis also shows that the participants are familiar with a method of Bible interpretation.⁶⁰⁰ When the scores are analyzed by age, the highest rate of improvement was in the 18-24 group with 80%, while the lowest was 32% among the 56-65 age group. All groups displayed significant improvement from pre-test to post-test scores. Among the education levels, those with some high school and 6-year degree groups, showed a 150% improvement in scores. By church membership, the largest improvement was by those who were members of Nazareth Baptist Church for 21 plus years, with an improved score of 63%. Improvement was the same among gender as both males and females had an average improvement of 50%.

The focus group data also demonstrates that the participants of the BOBS know a method of biblical interpretation. Focus group question 6 asked, “Did the inductive Bible study help you learn how to study the Bible?” There was meaningful and helpful interaction from the focus group when the question was posed. One respondent said, “The inductive Bible study helped me to learn how to study the Bible better...the four steps of observation, interpretation, application,

⁶⁰⁰ See Appendix G for overall demographic scores concerning IBS.

and appropriation helped me to better understand Scripture.” Another participant said, “Knowing the basics of the inductive Bible study took my studying to a deeper level.” It was encouraging for the project facilitator to see the BOBS positively impacting the participants. While many participants were there to support their Senior Pastor with the project intervention, the participants kept returning each week to learn a method of biblical interpretation and demonstrate their knowledge learned. Throughout the seven sessions of the BOBS, the participants asked questions concerning the IBS method. During each week the participants wanted to be sure they were doing the tasks of each step correctly, and from questions fielded and discussed, the participants were learning the IBS method of biblical interpretation.

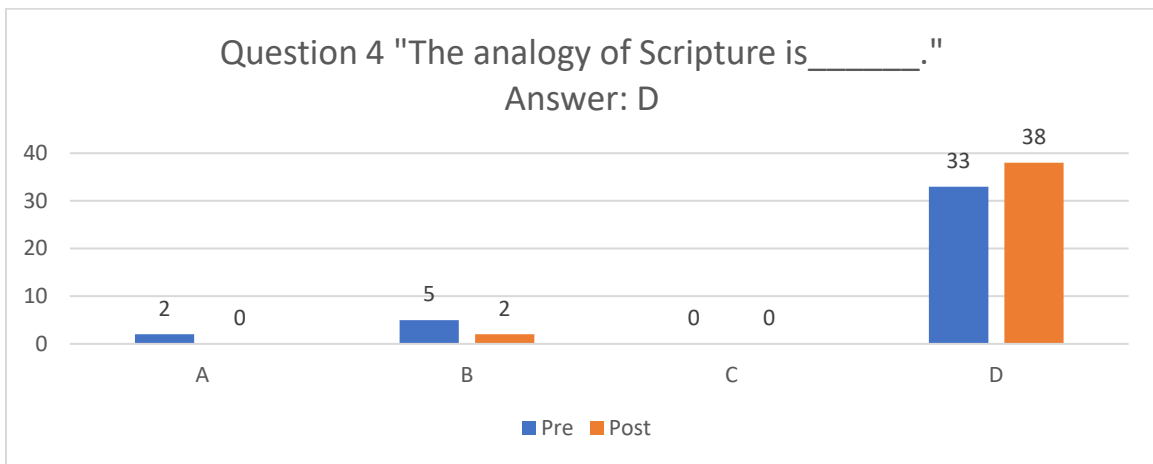
Improvements on the pre-test to the post-test, the focus group analysis, and field notes, all indicate that the participants of the BOBS learned a method of biblical interpretation. This directly addresses the problem that exists in the ministry context of members not knowing a method of biblical interpretation for themselves. The project facilitator is confident that many of the participants understand the IBS method as taught in the BOBS and will continue to use it as their own personal method of biblical interpretation.

Goal 2: Develop an Ability to Perform IBS

The participants were not expected to know any of the inductive Bible study questions (IBS), since those participating had no previous inductive Bible study experience. The questions were designed for the IBS portion to be simple as this would be the participants' first experience with this biblical method of interpretation. Pre-test and post-test Questions 4, 10, 16, and 17 were concerned with the ability to perform IBS by displaying knowledge of the intricacies of the basic steps of the IBS method of biblical interpretation. Focus group questions 1 and 3, 4 also pertained to the ability to perform the IBS method of biblical interpretation. The post-test

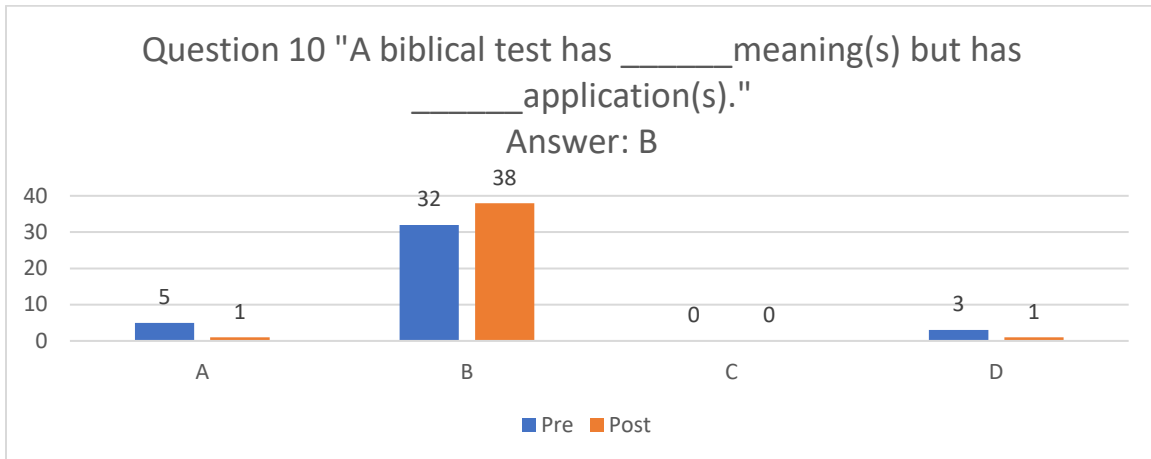
included a Likert scale test, and questions 22 and 24-25 aided in determining if the participants had the ability to perform the IBS method of interpretation. Data from the field notes are also synthesized with this to demonstrate that the BOBS participants have the ability to perform the IBS.

Specific questions from the pre-test and post-test also indicate that the participants of the BOBS have the ability to perform IBS. Questions 4, 10, 16, and 17 tested the ability to perform IBS by asking in-depth questions concerning the methods four steps. These questions are examined individually in the following graphs and analysis.



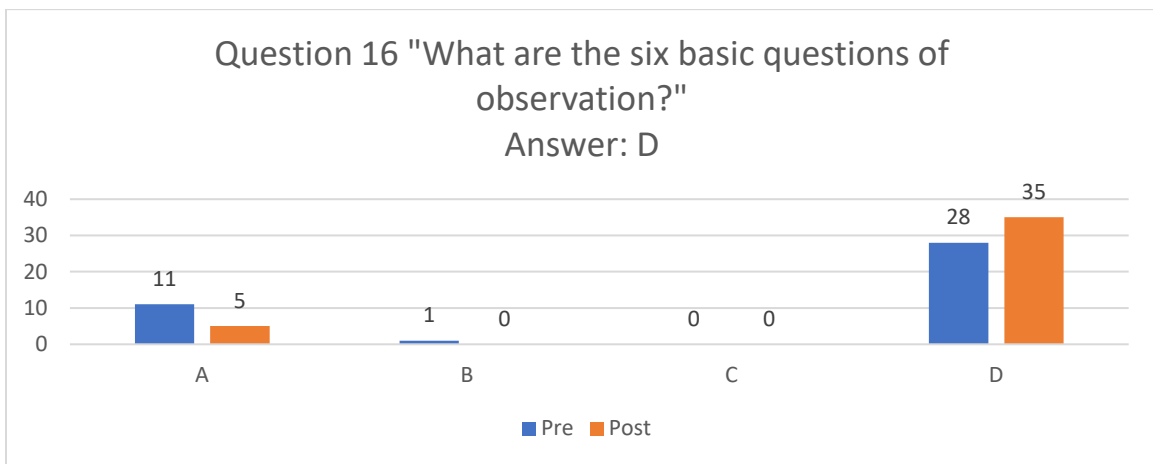
Question 4 asked the participants, “The analogy of Scripture is _____.” On the pre-test, 83% of the participants answered the question correctly. From the answers provided, the answer to this question may have been too obvious while some expressed that they perform cross-referencing when they study the Bible. The post-test revealed that an even higher percentage of participants correctly answered the question on the post-test (95%). The analogy of Scripture was discussed at the close of session three of the BOBS as the project facilitator explained its meaning and importance. It could be that there was not a sufficient amount of time given for the whole class. However, the participants displayed a high level of interest in this part of the interpretive step and many volunteered to cross-reference verses in Jude. Even though a

significant number of participants correctly answered this question on the pre-test, there was still an improvement of 15% on the post-test. This demonstrates that participants were gaining the ability to perform the IBS method of biblical interpretation.

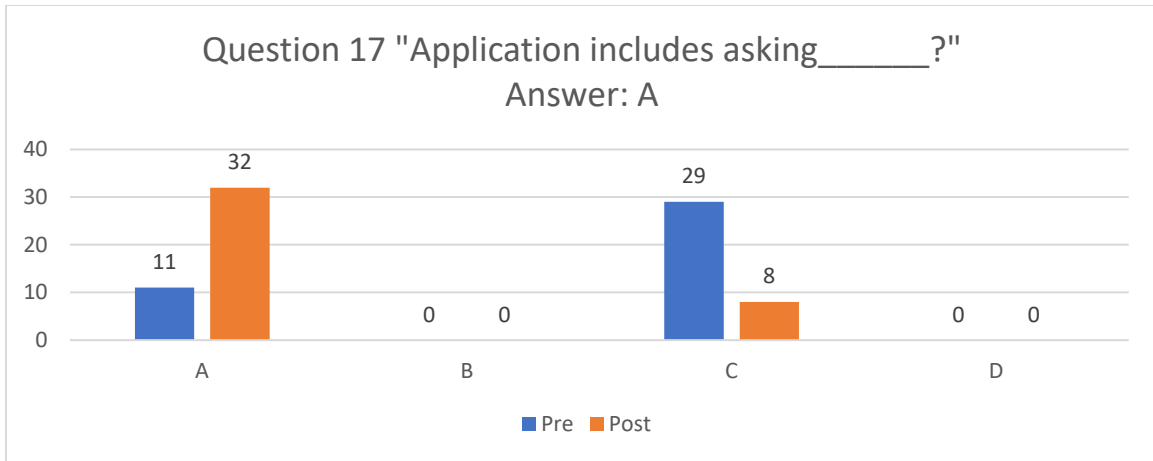


Question 10 asked the participants, “A biblical text has _____ meaning(s) but has _____ application (s).” The pre-test shows that 80% of the participants answered this correctly and the post-test showed 95% of the participants answered the question correctly. From pre-test to post-test, there was a 19% increase in the test scores. The answer to this question was aided by the project facilitator in his role as Senior Pastor and teacher of the congregation. This principle had been stated frequently in his teaching and preaching, to help members of Nazareth Baptist Church understand the Bible. This principle was discussed during sessions three and four of the BOBS. It gave the project facilitator an opportunity to explain the difference between the meaning of a passage and the application of the passage. The participants took part in the discussion and many understood the difference as shown by the post-test score. The focus group also answered a question concerning this topic. Question 3 of the focus group asked the participants, “After completion of this training, can you state how the context influences the interpretation of the passage?” The participants were able to recall the importance of knowing the context of the passage in order to determine its meaning before extracting biblical

applications. Every focus group participant knew that context affects the meaning and application of the passage. One focus group participant said, “The historical, cultural, and situational setting or contexts would be pertinent to a full understanding of the meaning, relevance, and application of a passage.” Another participant in the focus group added, “Knowing the context helps determine the one meaning of the passage in order to produce applications for the church and for my life...understanding this step is important to interpretation.”

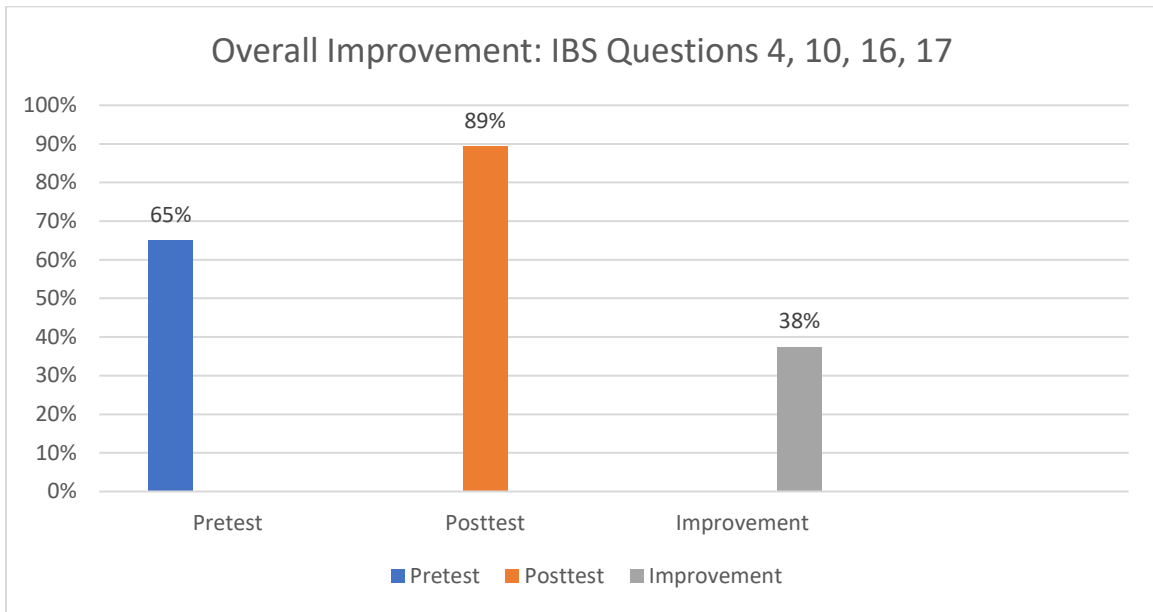


Question 16 of the BOBS asked the participants, “What are the six basic questions of observation?” The pre-test results show 70% of the participants answered the question correctly. This question may have been obvious to some as these questions are asked in many fields where investigative principles are at work. The post-test demonstrates that 88% percent answered correctly on the post-test. Sessions one and two discussed the observation step and repetitively asked these questions for each of the passages in the book of Jude. Field notes show that the project facilitator went through the importance of asking the right questions thoroughly because it is important to the step of observation in IBS. Even though many answered the question correctly on the pre-test, this question saw a 25% improvement on the post-test.



Question 17 asked the participants, “Application includes asking_____.” Only 28% of the class answered this correctly on the pre-test. The post-test reveals that 80% of the participants were able to answer the question correctly. This question showed an improvement of 191% between the pre-test and post-test. From field notes collected, session five includes a thorough discussion on how each passage in the book of Jude may point to Christ. The project facilitator discussed the importance of knowing that Scripture is Christ-centered. While most of the class knew this, it does point toward the necessity of knowing a method of interpretation and having the ability to perform it. Question 4 of the focus group centered on this topic. The question was asked, “After completion of this training, are you able to show how a passage is focused on or fulfilled in Christ?” All noted that they believed Scripture is Christ-centered. One commented that being able to see Scripture in this light allows one to see “the thread of redemption that runs through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.” Another participant in the focus group responded, “The training has helped me learn how to have a deeper study and better understand how a passage points to Christ.” The answers given for this question from the post-test and the focus group, provide evidence that the participants of the BOBS can perform the IBS method of biblical interpretation.

The pre-test and post-test results show that overall the BOBS participants can perform the IBS method of biblical interpretation. For the overall class, the average pre-test score for IBS questions was 65% with an average post-test score of 89%. As shown by the graphs, this is an average improvement of 38% once the BOBS was completed.



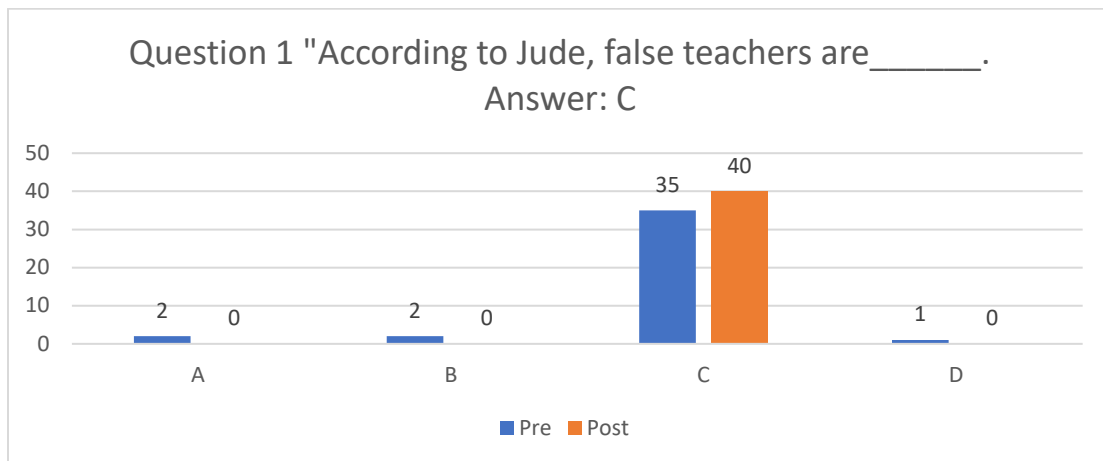
The focus group answered another relevant question pertaining to the ability to perform the IBS method of biblical interpretation. Question 1 of the focus groups asked, “Have you used the inductive Bible study method for your personal Bible study?” Seven of the focus group members responded that they had been using the IBS biblical interpretation method as taught in the BOBS for their own personal method of interpretation. A member of the focus group said, “This was the first time I had been introduced to this method and I am excited to implement it in my future Bible studies.” Another participant responded, “Yes, and I especially liked the meditation component of the inductive Bible study method.”

As stated previously, the improvements made on the pre-test to the post-test, the focus group analysis, and field notes validate that the participants of the BOBS developed the ability to perform the IBS method of biblical interpretation. This directly addresses the problem that exists

in the ministry context of members lacking a method of biblical interpretation for themselves. The data provided does show that goal number two was met, and the participants of the BOBS know the IBS method of biblical interpretation in order to address the problem of interpretive dependence within the ministry context.

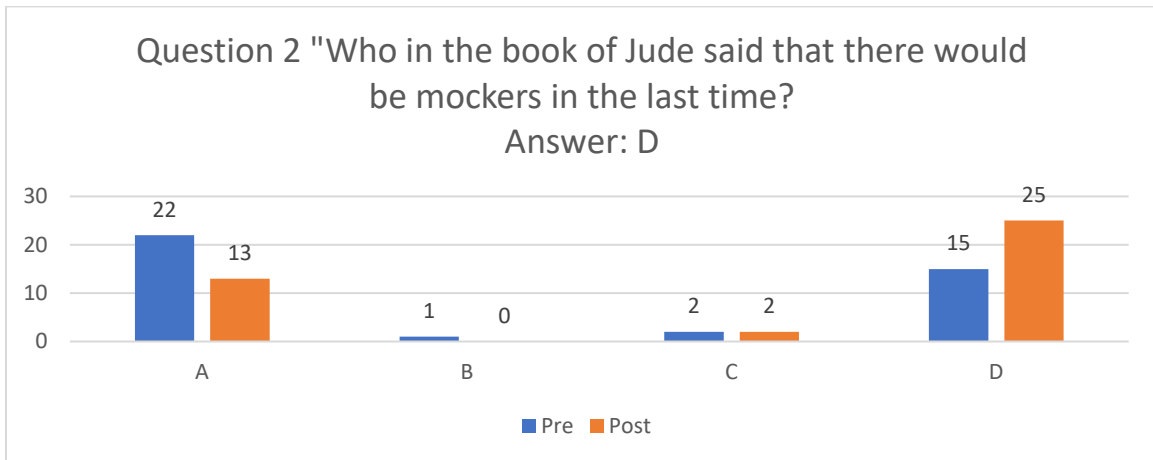
Goal 3: Gain Knowledge of the Book of Jude

The participants knew that the BOBS would focus on the book of Jude and learning the IBS method. With weeks to prepare, the participants had ample time to read and review the book of Jude before taking the pre-test. Since Jude is a short book, it was anticipated that the pre-test scores would be significantly higher on the Jude portion of the test than on the IBS portion. Pre-test and post-test questions 1-2, 6, 8-9, 12-14, and 19-20 were concerned with gaining knowledge of the book of Jude. Although the field notes do provide data for conversing with the participants concerning using the IBS method to learn more about the book of Jude, the data for gaining knowledge of the book of Jude is predominately measured by the pre-test and post-test scores.

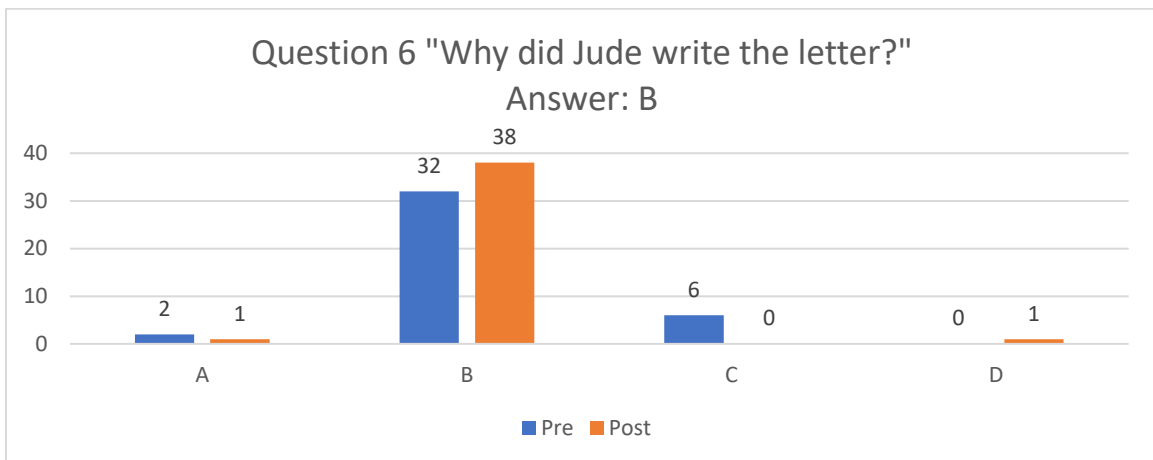


Question 1 asked the participants, “According to Jude, false teachers are_____.” Most of the participants were able to answer this question correctly on the pre-test (88%) and all participants answered correctly on the post-test. While a high percentage of participants knew the correct answer on the pre-test, the results do show that the BOBS aided in knowledge of the book

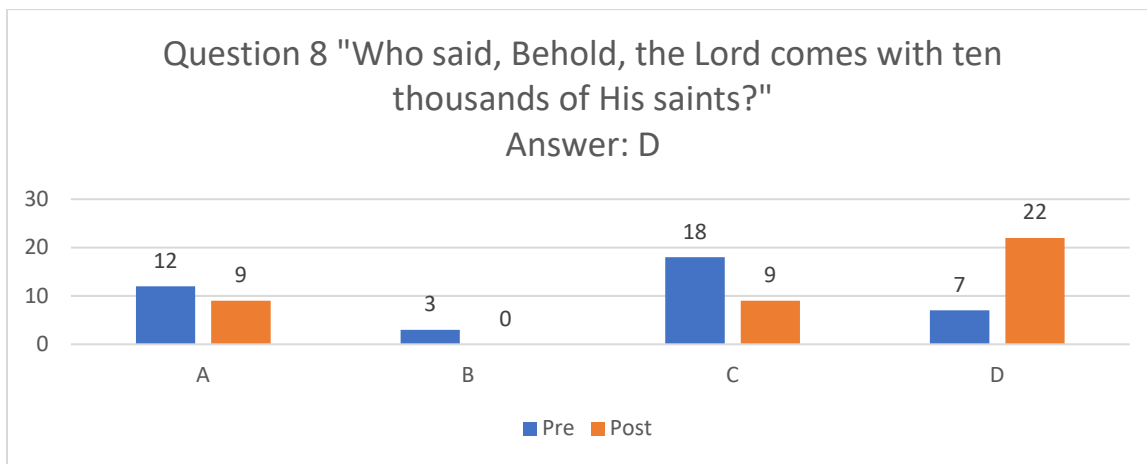
of Jude. This is shown by the improvement score between the pre-test and post-test (14%). This question was discussed in session one of the BOBS as an introduction to observation. Many of the participants were able to pick this out from the verse in Jude and acknowledge that Jude was describing the characteristics of false teachers.



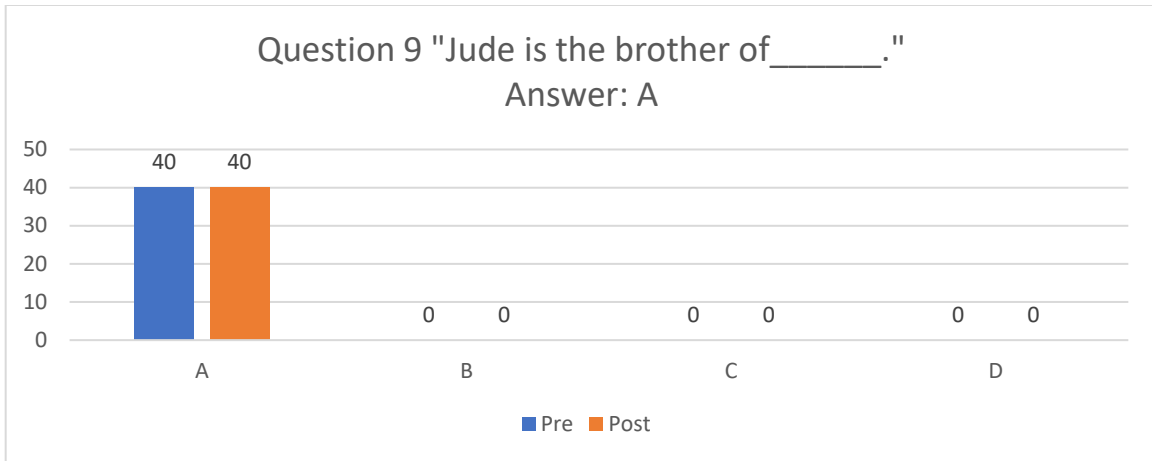
Question 2 asked the participants, “Who in the book of Jude said that there would be mockers in the last time?” On the pre-test, only 38% were able to answer this question correctly. The post-test shows 63% answered the question correctly, which is a 67% improvement. Answer “A” was the most common chosen answer for the pre-test and post-test. Since Jude is the writer of the book, it is understandable that people would choose Jude for a pre-test answer, the project facilitator did warn that there were no “tricky” type questions on the test.



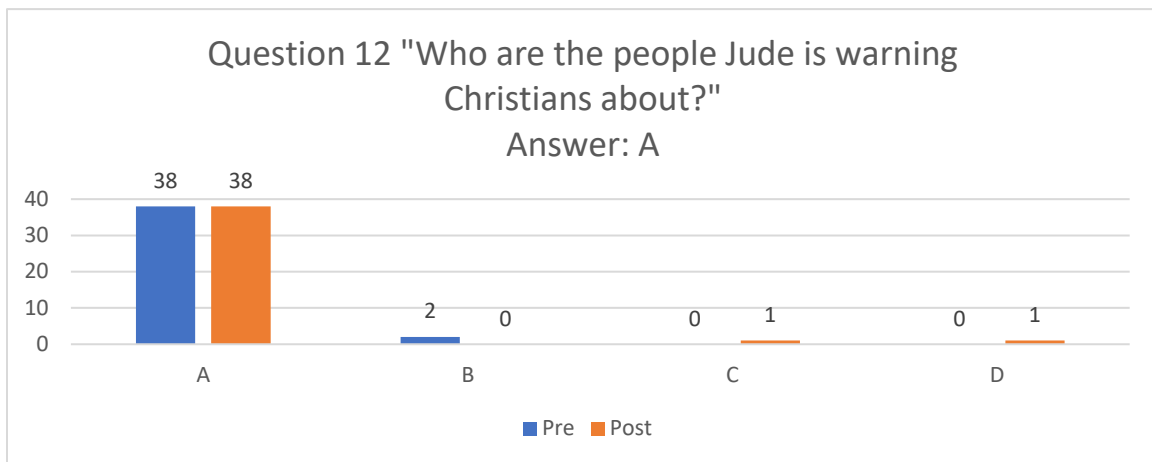
Question 6 asked the participants of the BOBS, “Why did Jude write the letter?” Most of the participants were able to answer the question correctly on the pre-test (80%). Even though most answered correctly on the pre-test, there was still an improvement on the post-test (95%) with an improvement of 19%. The project facilitator answered this question with class participation during session one of the BOBS. It prompted many questions about false teachers and their characteristics that are described throughout Scripture, and especially in the book of Jude.



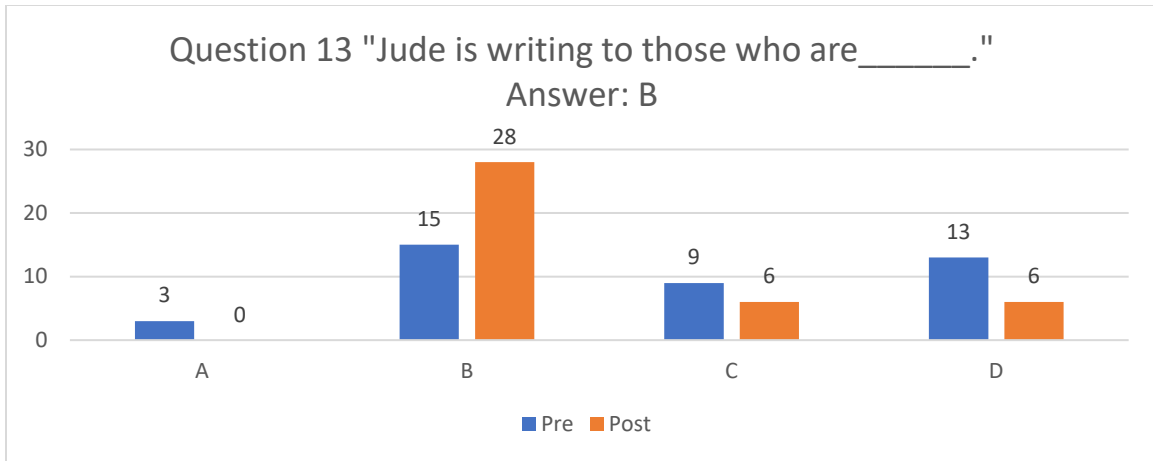
Question 8 of the BOBS asked the participants, “Who said, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints?” Only 18% correctly answered this question on the pre-test but on the post-test, 55% answered correctly. The field notes show that the discussion surrounding Enoch prompted an intense discussion, especially as it concerned where the quote came from. The project facilitator anticipated that the participants would remember the answer to this question because of the discussion that followed. The improvement of 214% from pre-test to post-test is the largest improvement on the Jude portion of the test.



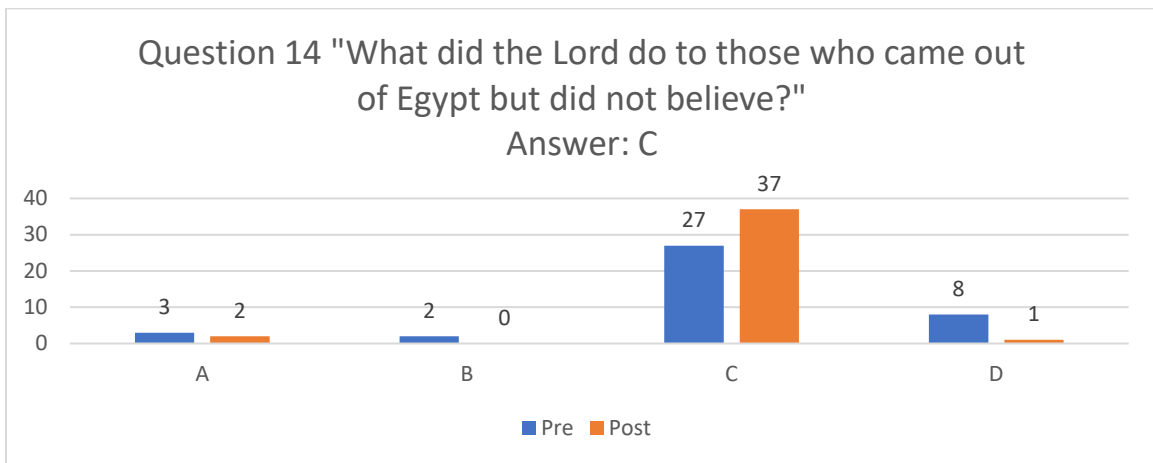
Question 9 of the pre-test and post-test asked the participants, “Jude is the brother of _____.” All participants answered this correctly on the pre-test and post-test (100%). This is a commonly asked and known question about the book of Jude and may have been too simple to include in the BOBS. Since all participants answered correctly on both tests, there was no improvement to be recorded.



Question 12 asked the participants, “Who are the people Jude is warning Christians about?” Like question 9, 95% answered correctly on the pre-test and post-test and there is no improvement to be recorded. Again, this probably is too simple a question as the answer is inherent in other questions on the test.

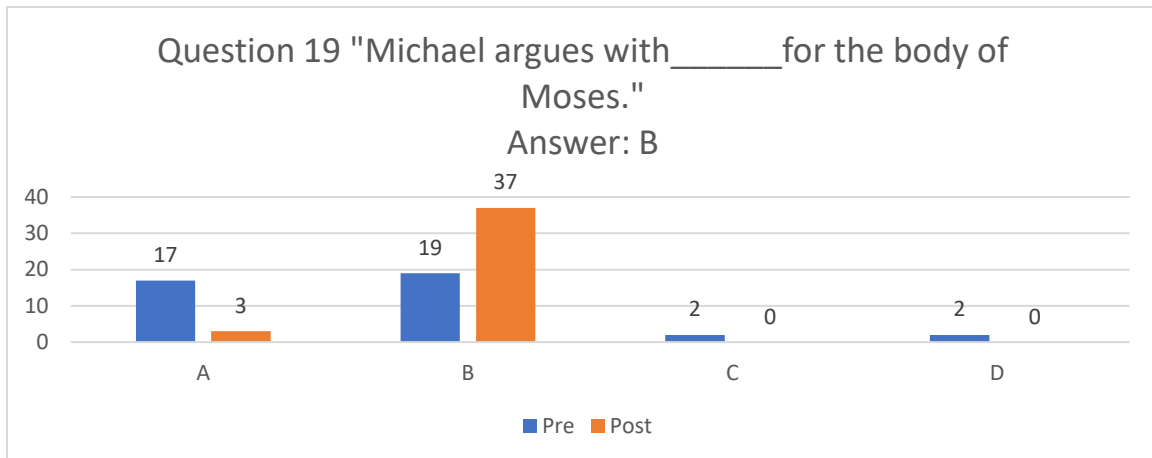


Question 13 asked the BOBS participants, “Jude is writing to those who are _____.” Only 38% of the participants were able to answer correctly on the pre-test. The post-test shows an improvement of 87%, as 70% were able to answer correctly on the post-test. This was discussed in session one of the BOBS as part of the introduction to the book of Jude. The importance of the three terms in the verses was discussed in class and many of the participants discussed the relevance of the three terms.

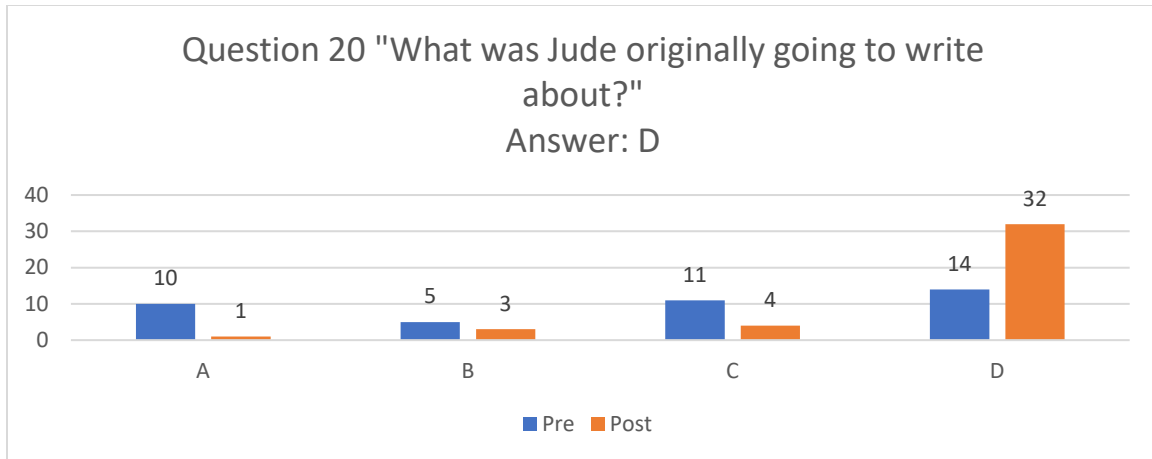


Question 14 of the BOBS asked the participants, “What did the Lord do to those who came out of Egypt but did not believe?” The pre-test shows that 68% correctly answered the question while the post-test reveals 93% answered correctly. This represents an improvement of 38%. This was discussed in session two of the BOBS as the project facilitator led the participants

to look back to the Old Testament, to understand the background of the examples Jude was using for the false teachers. Class participation was high when this portion of the book of Jude was discussed. Again, improvement shows that the BOBS aided in the participants' knowledge of the book of Jude through the use of the IBS method of biblical interpretation.



Question 19 asked the participants of the BOBS, “Michael argues with _____ for the body of Moses.” Only 48% answered this question correctly on the pre-test. The post-test reveals that 93% answered correctly, representing a 95% increase between the pre-test and post-test scores. Field notes suggest that the improvement could be attributed to the class discussion on where the quote came from. Most of the class was intrigued by the background surrounding this verse, since it comes from a source outside of Scripture. The project facilitator took a sufficient amount of time to explain this verse. The participants examined the Scriptures over the issue of Moses’ body.

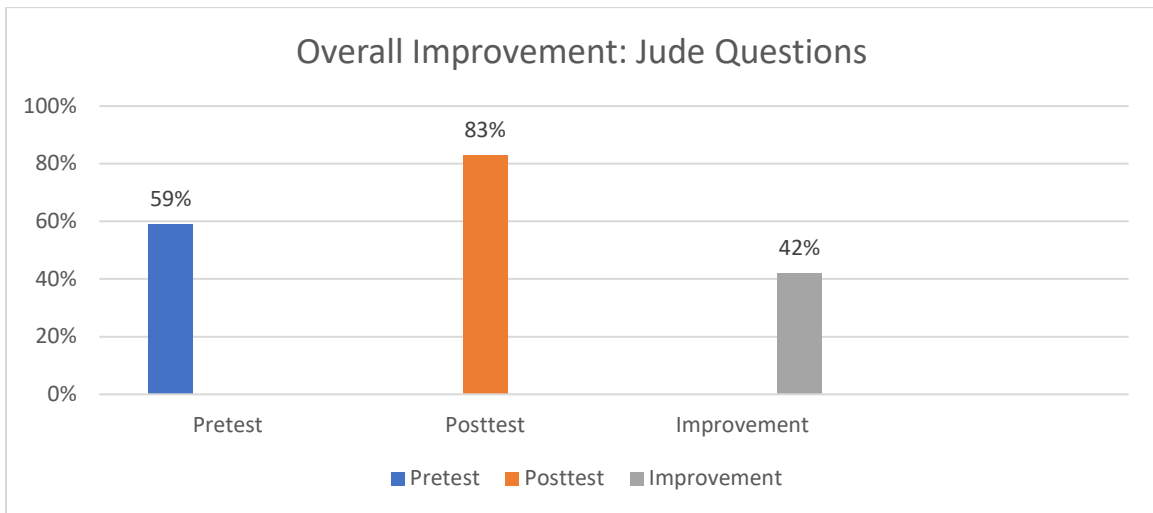


Question 20 asked the participants, “What was Jude originally going to write about?” The pre-test demonstrates that only 35% answered the question correctly, but on the post-test, 80% answered correctly. According to the field notes most of the class participants did not understand that Jude intended to write about salvation. The rate of improvement was 129% between pre-test and post-test scores. It does demonstrate that participants were gaining biblical knowledge through the BOBS and the IBS method of biblical interpretation.

Many of the questions were pulled from content that was explained in the earlier weeks of the study. This was done to show the ability to recall what was taught earlier in the class. While some of the questions were too simplistic, the improvement does show that knowledge of the book of Jude was gained through the IBS method of biblical interpretation. As established in the graph below there was a significant improvement for knowledge gained through the IBS method of biblical interpretation. The data provided does show that goal number three was met and the participants of the BOBS gained knowledge of the book of Jude by using the IBS method of biblical interpretation through the BOBS.⁶⁰¹ The average overall class pre-test score for

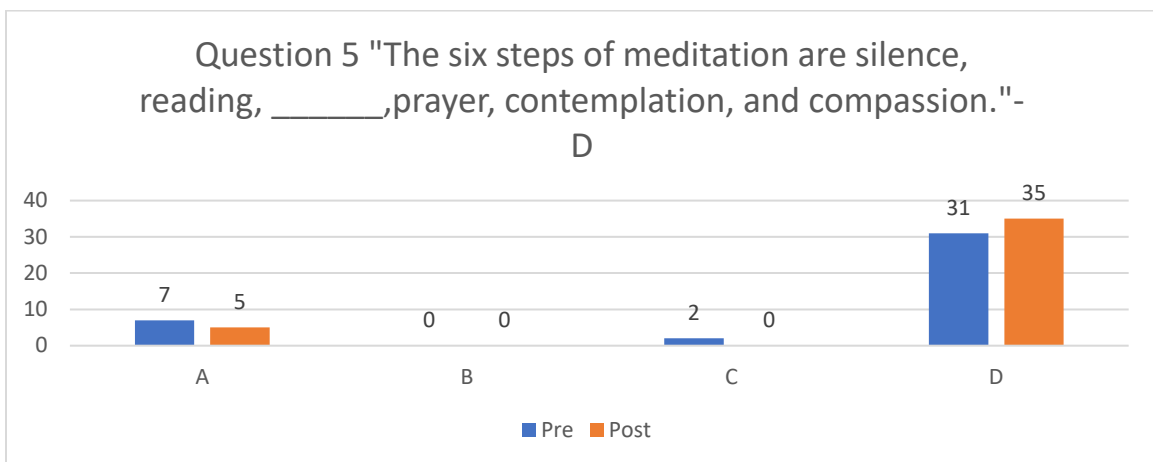
⁶⁰¹ See Appendix H for demographic graphs concerning Jude scores.

questions concerning the book of Jude was 59%, with an average post-test score of 83%. This is an average improvement of 42% once the BOBS was completed, as the graph below shows.

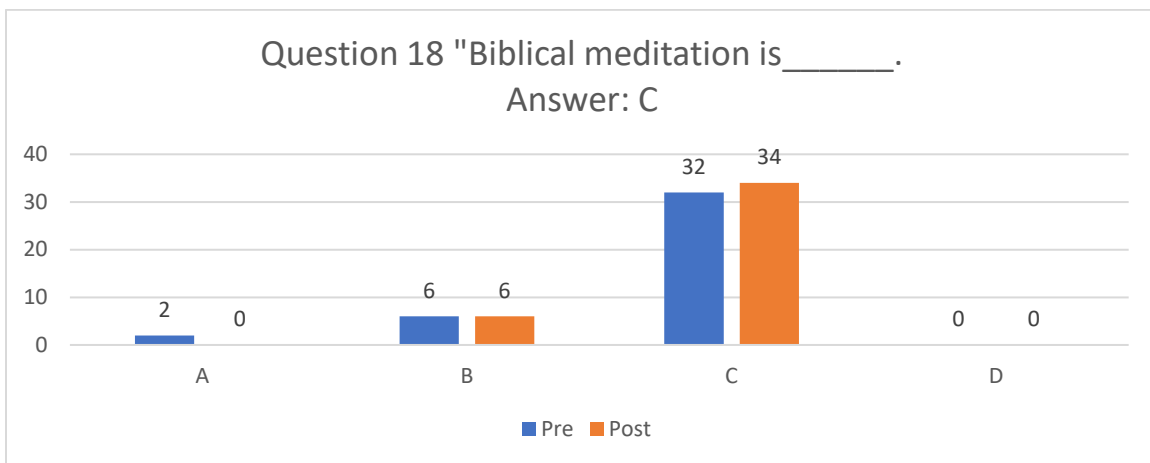


Goal 4: The Enrichment of Spirituality Through Meditation

There were only two meditation questions on the pre-test and post-test, as the project facilitator knew that the concept of meditation would be new to the participants. Focus group question five also focused on the concept of meditation. These two questions were designed for the participants to be able to recall the basics of what meditation is, and to know the five steps of meditation.



Question 5 asked the participants, “The six steps of *lectio divina* are silence, reading, _____, prayer, contemplation, and compassion.” To the amazement of the project facilitator, 78% answered the question correctly on the pre-test. The reason why there was such a high correct response on the pre-test score, is that the question and answers were too simplistic, and it would be easy to eliminate obvious wrong answers. While the aim of the questions was to make them easy, this question was too easy. Even though the question was formed in this way, there was an improvement of 13% on the post-test as 88% answered this correctly.

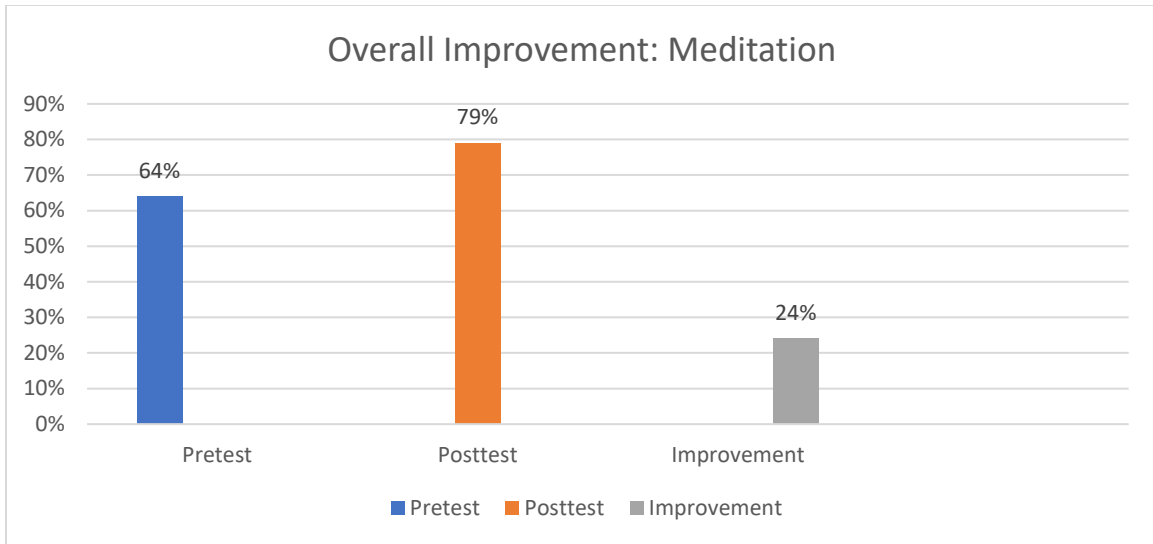


Question 18 of the BOBS asked the participants, “Biblical meditation is _____.” The pre-test demonstrates that 80% answered the question correctly on the pre-test, and 85% answered correctly on the post-test representing an improvement of just 6%. As demonstrated by the previous question, the questions and answers were too simplistic, and it was easy to eliminate obvious wrong answers. Both questions were discussed in sessions six and seven of the BOBS. While the meditative principles were derived from Scripture, some of the participants seemed disinterested in the meditative technique according to field notes taken. This was primarily due to the technical terminology used by the project facilitator in the class. The Latin terms of the five steps, confused and caused disinterest among the participants. Although these were changed,

many of the participants were already indifferent toward the meditative process.⁶⁰² In session six, the project facilitator asked the class to meditate on the book of Jude, and to be prepared to discuss any new appropriation principles with the class. Upon returning for the seventh week, only a few shared any appropriation principles. The focus group did yield some positive results for meditation. Focus group question five asked, “Did meditation aid in understanding the book of Jude?” Half of the focus group participants were positive when commenting about the process of meditation. One participant said, “Yes, it allows for a quiet time to reflect on the Scriptures studied and to seek guidance from the Holy Spirit.” Another commented that meditation “did aid in understanding the book of Jude.” One of the best comments by the participants said, “Praying, reading, and ruminating over God’s Word, allows Him to speak to us, relate His message, as well as giving fresh insight to us.” The project facilitator proposes that he did not ask enough questions on the pre-test and post-test to gather enough information concerning meditation. Although the focus group yielded many positive answers, this portion of the BOBS has insufficient information to make a judgment on whether the fourth goal was met with confidence. The overall scores for meditation were 64% on the pre-test, 79% on the post-test, and shows a 24% improvement.⁶⁰³

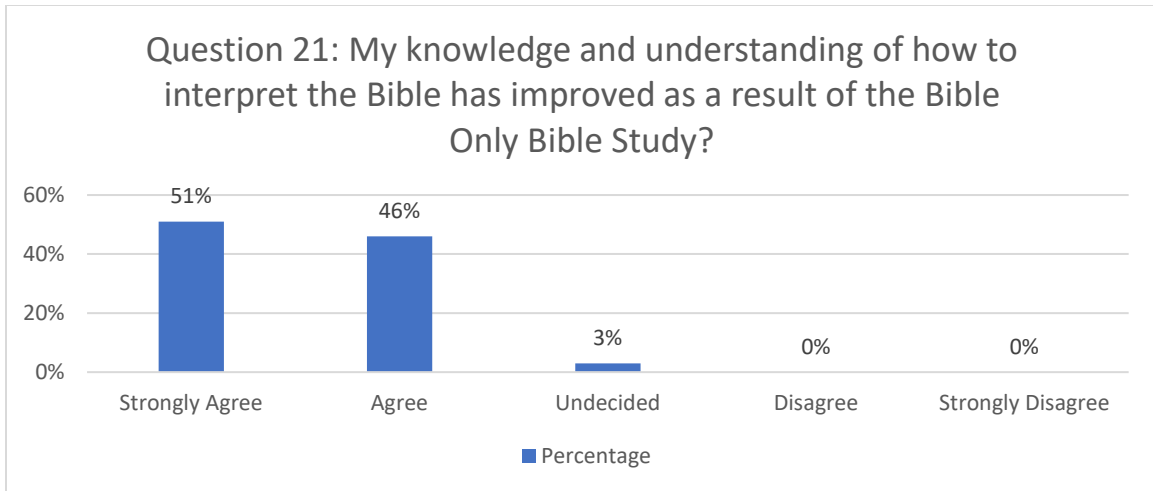
⁶⁰² The five steps of *lectio divina* were changed from: (1) *lectio* to reading; (2) *meditatio* to reflecting; (3) *oratio* to responding; (4) *contemplatio* to resting; (5) *operatio* to reacting.

⁶⁰³ See Appendix I for demographic graphs concerning meditation.

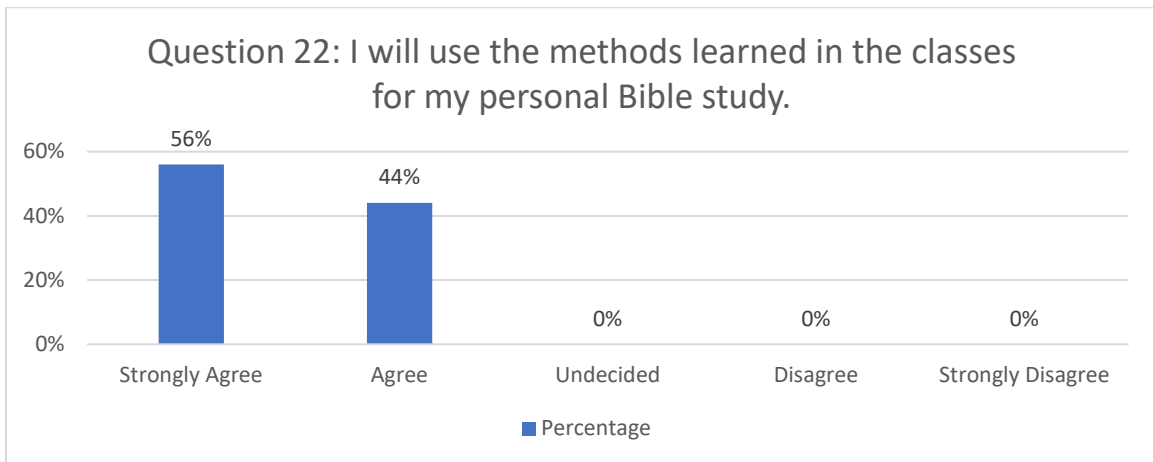


Likert Scale

The Likert scale survey given at the end of the post-test was only used to determine the likeability of the BOBS. Upon further consideration and analysis, the Likert survey does support the first two goals by giving evidence that the participants learned a method of biblical interpretation after completing the BOBS. Out of the forty participants, thirty-nine answered the Likert scale survey. Question 21 stated, “My knowledge and understanding of how to interpret the Bible has improved as a result of the Bible Only Bible Study.” As the following graph displays, 51% strongly agree with the statement and 46% agree that their knowledge and understanding of how to interpret the Bible improved as a result of the study. This supports goal one and the conclusions reached through analysis of the pre-test and post-test, focus group, and field notes, that the participants know a method of biblical interpretation.

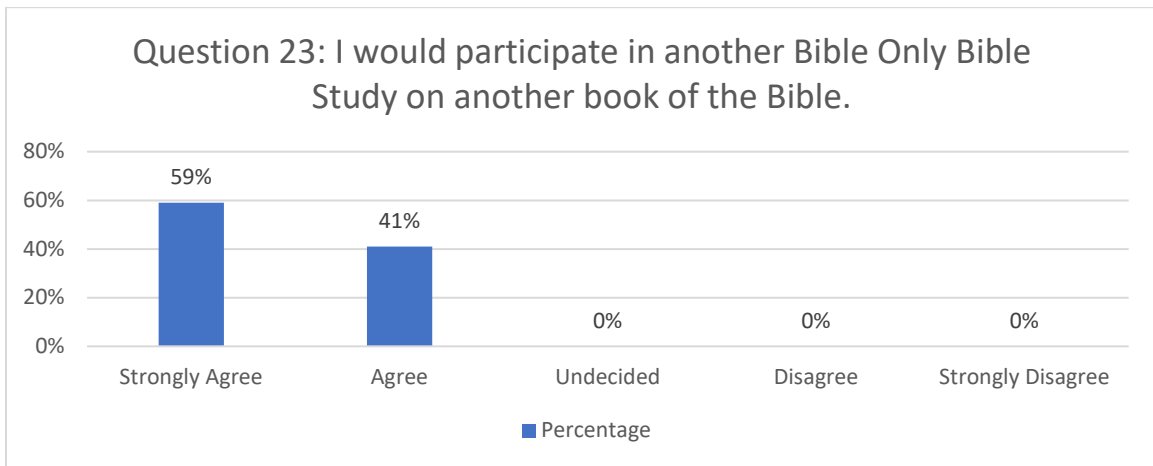


Likert scale question 22 demonstrates support for the second goal of the BOBS for the participants to gain the ability to perform the IBS method of biblical interpretation. This question asked, “I will use the methods learned in the classes for my personal study.” As depicted in the graph below, 56% strongly agree with this statement and 44% agree.

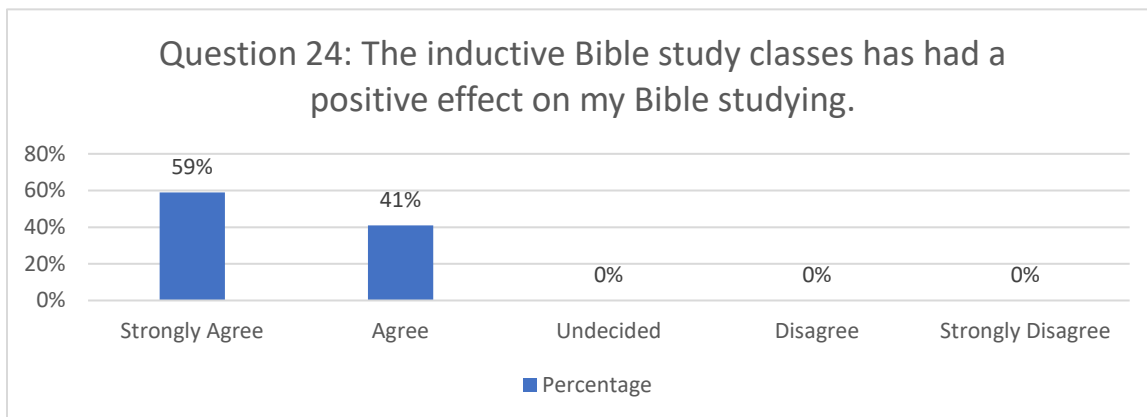


Question 23 asked the participants, “I would participate in another Bible Only Bible Study on another book of the Bible.” While this question indicates that the BOBS would be repeatable in the ministry context, it also shows that if participants did not fully understand the IBS as it was taught in class, that given another opportunity, they would enroll in the class to continue to learn the method of biblical interpretation taught in the BOBS. This supports goal one of the project intervention. As the graph below demonstrates, 59% strongly agree and 41%

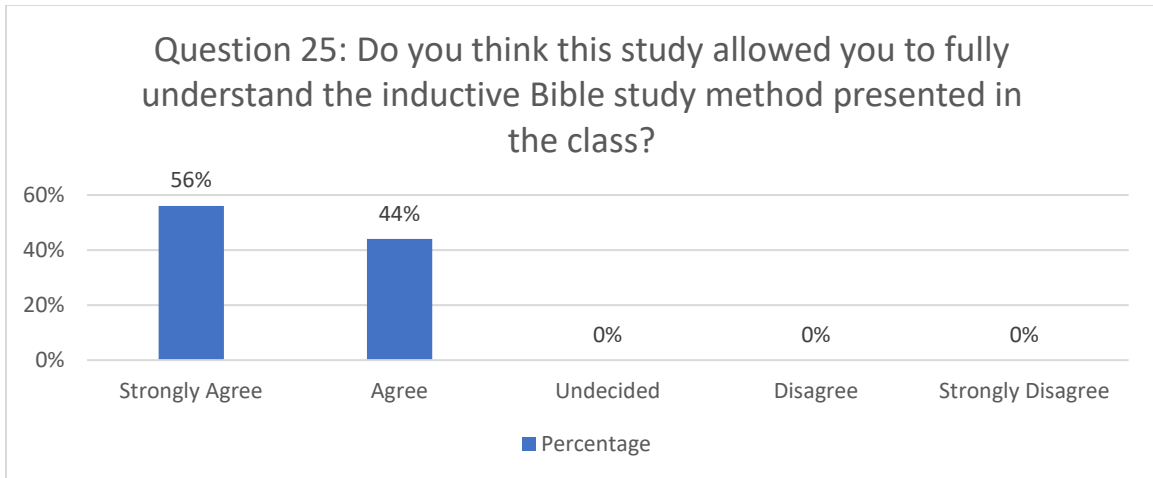
agree with the statement that they would continue to learn the IBS method of biblical interpretation.



Likert question 24 lends support to goal number two. This statement determines if the participants can say, “The inductive Bible study classes have had a positive effect on my Bible studying.” From the answers provided by the participants of the BOBS, 59% strongly agree and 41% agree that the BOBS has had a positive effect on their Bible study.



Likert question 25 also supports goal two by asking the participants, “Do you think this study allowed you to fully understand the inductive Bible study method presented in the class?” Respondents to the survey answered 56% strongly agree with the statement, 44% agree, and 5% were undecided.



Participants’ Evaluation of the Class

The post-test concluded with two open-ended questions concerning the overall perception of the class. Question 26 asked, “What did you like about the study?” Many themes emerged from the answers to the question, which were also shared by the focus group study. One theme mentioned by the participants was understanding. Many commented that the BOBS aided in their understanding of God’s Word. One person commented, “It helped me to look at and understand Scripture in more detail and to gain a better understanding.” Another participant on the post-test said the class was important to them because it meant, “Learning how to fully understand the Bible without a Bible study guide or book, telling me what to look for.” This was also a common theme throughout the focus group. One focus group participant stated, “The classes have been beneficial to me...I found the class to be easy to follow and understand and very useful for my own personal Bible study, now that the class is over.”

Another theme that emerged was deeper Bible study or in-depth Bible study associated with the BOBS. One participant answered the question on the post-test, “The methods that were taught are practical and allow for the level of in-depth Bible study time.” A host of other

comments on the post-test included, “Looks deeply into Scripture,” “In-depth,” “We dug into the Word for meaning,” and “We dug into Scripture using Scripture.” One focus group participant shared, “It is a thorough and methodical approach to studying God’s Word...one can go as in-depth as one chooses.” Another focus group participant responded, “I thought I knew the basics, but this study took my understanding to a deeper level.”

One last theme to discuss is that of adoption. Many of the post-test answers displayed the notion that they would be adopting the IBS learned through the BOBS, as their preferred method of biblical interpretation. One participant noted, “I think I am learning how to study the Bible.” Another said, “I like this method of Bible study and plan to implement it for my own personal Bible study.” Many in the focus group talked about adopting the IBS. One participant stated, “This was the first time I had been introduced to this method, and I am excited to implement it into my future Bible studies.” Another commented, “It gave them a whole new understanding of the book of Jude, and I will be using this method in the future.”

Question 27 on the post-test asked the participants, “What suggestions do you have on improving the study?” There was a wide variety of responses to this question with most being positive on how to improve the BOBS. Most of the respondents to the question had no recommendations for improvement, but some did offer helpful suggestions. Some believed that the class should have lasted longer in order to slow down and practice cross-referencing, using a concordance, and a Bible dictionary. One felt that the BOBS should have lasted two to three more weeks in order to grasp the principles better. Those in the focus group had more time to respond to the question and give a more in-depth analysis of improvement. One noted, “It might be most effectively taught in a classroom setting with smaller groups of people.” Quite a few of the focus group acknowledged that the project facilitator should go through the New Testament

using this method. Most of the focus group participants did mention spending more time on the steps of the IBS in order to gain a better understanding.

The BOBS employed the inductive Bible study method in order to teach those who have no method of biblical interpretation, a method that could be assimilated as their own personal Bible study. While this thesis endorses the inductive Bible study method, there are other methods that can enhance Bible study. As noted in Chapter 2 in the Other Ministry Projects section, many project facilitators have found positive results from providing other methods. Methods such as storytelling and the grammatical-historical method, offer an efficient and structured method that can be adopted as a personal method of biblical interpretation. With these methods, one can do a topical study on a subject, a character study, or systematically study books of the Bible, at their own leisure. But it is pertinent that each believer has a Bible study method in order to discover truth on their own, and to not be overly dependent on others for interpretation. Discovering the truth of Scripture through one's own personal method of Bible interpretation, no matter which is chosen, is better than not having one at all.

Participants Evaluation of the Project Facilitator

This question was not on the pre-test or post-test and was only asked in front of the focus group, knowing that they would have more time to respond and could provide a deeper analysis. Question 7 in the focus group asked, "Did the leader facilitate helpful class interaction?" Each responded positively to the question. One commented, "The leader managed the interaction well, allowing for input and questions from participants." Another stated, "He didn't always teach, he encouraged class interaction by asking questions." The focus group may have been influenced by some of the answers, because the project facilitator was also their Senior Pastor and they did not want to speak negatively. Other responses included the project facilitator's guidance on

understanding the IBS. One participant said, “Brother Jason did an excellent job of providing clear and concise study materials, as well as asking open-ended questions during the class that facilitated participation by the students.” One commented on the project facilitator's ability to stay on point by saying, “The leader was very good with helping to make sure that class participation and interaction stayed on point and moved at a good pace, and keeping the class engaged.” Many noted that the project facilitators probing questions produced class discussion that they enjoyed. This participant said, “The questions he asked enhanced the Bible study...I enjoyed hearing the other participants' interaction with the Scripture and the questions they asked.”

Conclusion

The project facilitator believes that teaching the IBS method of biblical interpretation through the BOBS was a success. This was proven through examining the inductive Bible study, the book of Jude, and meditation through the triangulation method and analyzing the results for each part. The results from the analysis of the data, do show the participants learned the method of biblical interpretation as taught in the BOBS, and that the participants can perform IBS on their own. The pre-test, post-test, focus group, and field notes, all show significant improvement as the result of the seven sessions of the BOBS, satisfying goals number one and two of the project intervention. Through analyzing the pre-test and post-test, there was a significant improvement in knowledge of the book of Jude, by utilizing the IBS method taught in the BOBS. The data shows that goal three was completed as participants gained new knowledge. Because of an insufficient amount of questions being asked on the pre-test and post-test, the data for meditation is believed to be insufficient. One indication that the BOBS is beneficial, is that the focus group responses demonstrated that meditation had a positive impact on the participants. It

cannot be said for certain that goal four was met. Overall, the project facilitator believes that the BOBS was a success in reversing the trend of members not having a method of biblical interpretation.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Summary of Analysis

The purpose of the project intervention was to impart the ability to perform a personal inductive Bible study within the local ministry. The project facilitator designed and implemented the project in order to correct the problem of interpretive dependence within his ministry context. The Bible Only Bible Study (BOBS) consisted of seven consecutive sessions on the inductive Bible study method (IBS), and the book of Jude between September 4, 2019 until October 16, 2019, with a focus group conducted one month later, November 20, 2019. At the completion of the intervention, the project facilitator assessed the effectiveness of the program using qualitative and quantitative data derived from pre-test and post-test, a focus group, and field notes. The four goals that were set for the project intervention were measured by this data to determine its effect on the participants of the BOBS. The four goals established to measure effectiveness of the BOBS for the participants were as follows: (1) Acquire a method of interpretation; (2) Develop an ability to perform inductive Bible study; (3) Gain knowledge of the book of Jude through the inductive Bible study; (4) The enrichment of spirituality through meditation.

From the analysis conducted in chapter four, the program was successful in meeting goal one. The improvement scores on the pre-test and post-test of 38%, show that the project intervention was effective in teaching the participants a method of biblical interpretation, as 20% of the questions referred to this goal. Many of the participants in the BOBS were able to define the four basic steps of the IBS. The answers from the focus group that concerned goal number one, also confirmed that the program was a success. Field notes taken also demonstrate that the participants of the BOBS were engaged and proactive in learning the IBS method of biblical interpretation, through interaction with classmates and the project facilitator.

The data revealed that goal two was met. The participants of the BOBS not only learned a method of interpretation but developed the ability to perform it. This was seen in the pre-test and post-test analysis as 20% of the questions concerned this goal. There was a 42% improvement in the questions that supported this goal. Three of the focus group questions were concentrated on this particular goal, and also proved that the BOBS gave the participants the ability to perform the IBS method of biblical interpretation. Field notes taken throughout the sessions also validate that goal two was successful. At the beginning of sessions two through seven, many in the class had already begun some of the work, and as the sessions progressed, more participants were replicating the process.

Goal three was achieved as seen through the analysis of successful data. The pre-test and post-test were designed to obtain information concerning gaining knowledge in the book of Jude, as 50% of the questions concerned this topic. Field notes were taken on the class discussions from each session, as the pre-test and post-test scores indicate, the participants learned more each week about the book Jude. The BOBS participants acquired a method of biblical interpretation, developed the ability to perform it, and gained knowledge of the book of Jude.

Goal four is deemed inconclusive. The pre-test and post-test did not contain enough questions concerning the meditative principles taught in the class. This oversight lies with the project facilitator who designed the tests. Even the questions that were on the test were too simplistic, because no confirming evidence emerged from this analysis, even though there was slight improvement (24%). One positive result that can be reported pertaining to goal four, was that the focus group respondents reacted positively to the question concerning meditation as many indicated, they have been using the meditative principles that were instructed in the BOBS.

The Likert Scale survey was originally used to determine the likability of the BOBS but even this survey gave support that the first two goals of the project intervention were achieved.

Applicability

The project intervention was created to address interpretive dependency within the local ministry context of the project facilitator. Comparable project interventions discussed in the theoretical portion of the thesis, show that it is possible to address interpretive dependence through many types of interventions. Some chose to address it through storytelling, preaching a sermon series, employing the grammatical-historical method, and by introducing massive open online courses to teach hermeneutics. The strengths and weaknesses of these projects were considered when compiling the BOBS. Other projects were considered that taught the inductive Bible study and meditation as interventions for different problems in their respective ministry contexts. Upon evaluating these projects, the current project facilitator created his own inductive Bible study that included meditation, to address the problem of interpretive dependence in his own ministry context. After observing the current ministry context and noticing the inability to personally interpret Scripture, the BOBS was created.

The delimitations outline further narrowed down the participants of the ministry context that could participate in the BOBS. Sensing does note that conditions within a particular context will not be duplicated in another context, there still can be degrees of similarity in them.⁶⁰⁴ The material produced agrees with Southern Baptist doctrine and is sufficient for teaching the IBS method and for gaining knowledge of the book being studied. The participants in the BOBS whose data was analyzed, had no previous training in a method of biblical interpretation and were members of the church where the study took place. Even this was further narrowed down to

⁶⁰⁴ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 215.

only include ages 18 and over. The BOBS participants were asked to be fully committed to seven consecutive weeks, with each session lasting ninety minutes. This requirement resulted in some members not participating. The night sessions were held during the normal Bible study time, which helped attendance. There were instances where the normal night of Bible study, Wednesday, was not conducive to members of the church who wanted to participate. Even the book of the Bible explored through the BOBS, may have caused some not to participate in the project. Despite these limitations and delimitations, the BOBS could be applicable to any ministry context where interpretive dependence may be an issue. Furthermore, as this thesis outlines in the literature review and theoretical section, every believer should know a method of biblical interpretation in order to effectively live the Christian life. The class can be taught on any night of the week, in a large classroom, or in a small group environment. The only prerequisite is that the facilitator of the class has experience and knowledge of the IBS method of biblical interpretation.

Reliability

The project intervention designed by the project facilitator is reliable. As stated earlier, the project intervention can practically be replicated in any ministry context where there is a desire to learn a method of biblical interpretation, or where the problem of interpretive dependence exists. While another project facilitator can enhance the project and adapt it to their ministry context, it is believed that the results produced by this intervention can be produced in other contexts. The project facilitator, and creator of the materials, attempted to ensure that the project was simple enough that people who had no prior training in any biblical method of interpretation could follow along. From analyzing the data at the conclusion of the project, it can be deemed that the program can achieve the stated goals of the project facilitator, but even these

goals can be adjusted by adding or subtracting from them. For instance, someone may choose to replicate the project and only seek to learn the IBS method, or use it solely to gain more knowledge of what book is being studied.

Credibility

The project intervention described in this study is credible. Credibility, as defined by Sensing, “is related to the degree of confidence that others can have in the findings of a particular project.”⁶⁰⁵ Credibility was established in the project intervention by employing the triangulation method. Triangulation is a method-appropriate strategy of finding credibility and trustworthiness.⁶⁰⁶ The methods employed in this project intervention were the pre-test and post-test for quantitative data, a focus group with a representative number from the BOBS, and field notes for qualitative data. Each of these methods within triangulation, produced data that determined the outcome of the project intervention that shows goals one through three were successful. Goal four had insufficient data to make a strong determination in favor of meditation. The quantitative data gleaned from the pre-test and post-test data, was taken directly from the participants' scores, and analyzed. The focus group also adds to the credibility of the project intervention, since it took place one month after the conclusion of the BOBS. This gave time for the participants to gauge for themselves the effectiveness of the program. Since participants are one angle of the triangulation process, Sensing states, “The synergy of the group will provide richer data than if each person in the group were interviewed separately.”⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁵ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 219.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., 220.

⁶⁰⁷ Sensing, *Qualitative Research*, 120.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity concerns how the project facilitator's presence influenced the results. The basic assumptions outlined in chapter one, clearly demonstrates the theological perspectives of the project facilitator that may have influenced the project. The project facilitator believes that the Bible is inspired by God, is inerrant, and is authoritative for believers. The illuminating power of the Holy Spirit enlightens believers' hearts to understand the Scriptures. The project facilitator also believes that every born-again believer should know a method of biblical interpretation, since the Bible instructs each believer on the essentials of life. He also believes that the IBS method presented in this project, is simple to understand and sufficient for the task of biblical interpretation. This method can allow participants to accurately interpret Scripture on a personal level.

Since the project facilitator is the Senior Pastor, the results of the project were influenced in many ways. First, the project facilitator believes this is why there were many participants in the BOBS. They trust the Senior Pastor to preach, teach, and to teach them a method of biblical interpretation that will help them attain principles from the Word of God. Many of the participants enjoy the teaching of the project facilitator and were interested in the project since its announcement; this is also the reason the participants made every effort to learn the IBS method and to do well on the tests. The participants of the BOBS also wanted to help the project facilitator in any way possible to achieve his doctoral degree. While none of these examples are surprising to the project facilitator, there were a few surprises during the BOBS. The project facilitator was amazed at the sheer number of volunteers at the onset of the project. Sixty-three people attended the first night of the BOBS, fifty-one finished the BOBS, and forty people who had no previous training, endured the seven ninety-minute sessions for consecutive weeks, to

finish the project. He was also surprised at the improvement shown on the test scores. Many of the participants had an improvement of 80% or higher from the pre-test to post-test. This was encouraging and overwhelming.

A few things stood out during the sessions of the BOBS. The participants' ability to ask thought-provoking questions that displayed their ability to perform IBS and gain knowledge of the book of Jude each week was moving. During each session, participants were excited to learn more and were willing to be taught something new. As the Senior Pastor, this was exciting to see and made each session special to share with the participants, as they began to grasp the IBS method of biblical interpretation. People who normally were quiet, were searching for Scripture, asking questions, and participating in class discussions.

No project facilitator can completely remove themselves from their roles within the ministry context and the emotions they feel for their people. The desires as project facilitator were the same desires any Senior Pastor would have for their participants. He wanted them to learn a method of biblical interpretation through the BOBS. While the feelings of the project facilitator did not affect the pre-test or post-test scores, it would be essential to watch for bias when interpreting the focus group or field notes. It would be tempting for any Senior Pastor to only remember or record the positive and neglect the negative, but the answers must be found, not the answers desired. The project facilitator attempted each session to remain the project facilitator during the project and when the results were analyzed. The close relationship the project facilitator has with the participants did cause the project facilitator to concentrate more on communicating the IBS method. Because of this, each session rejuvenated the project facilitator and gave him a renewed focus and determination in order for the participants to succeed. From the experience of the project facilitator and the field notes that were recorded by himself and the

two outside observers, one recognizes that the project intervention can produce lasting change within the ministry context. It allowed for serious reflection on what it meant to the participants, the church, and the impact it could have on the community in the future.

Sustainability

This section addresses the sustainability of the project over time within the ministry context. There must be plans to ensure that the changes brought about by the project intervention, last. The project intervention that consisted of teaching the IBS method of biblical interpretation will continue as most participants want to do another BOBS. Plans are already made to teach a BOBS in the near future and go through another book of the Bible. It will follow the same procedures as the first, with added improvements for the ministry context. The BOBS needs to be sustained, as it keeps people in the Word of God. A continued emphasis on the Word of God using the BOBS can benefit Christians now, and will be beneficial for generations of new Christians to come. Participants of the BOBS can ensure that the changes last by continuing in the IBS method of biblical interpretation as their own method of interpretation. They can also testify that the IBS method of biblical interpretation can aid in learning the correct interpretations of the biblical text. Continuing to emphasize the BOBS within the ministry context can also help to ensure the changes last. This would allow new participants and future generations to know how to interpret the Bible properly.

The BOBS will face obstacles that could hinder the future success of the project, that will need to be overcome. First, the principles of meditation must be modified so that they will be easier to grasp. This will ensure the participants do not get discouraged with the IBS meditative process, because seeking the help of the Holy Spirit is vital to understanding Scripture. Second, participants must continue to grow and encourage others to take the BOBS, so they can learn a

method of biblical interpretation through the BOBS. Failure to do so could greatly damage the progress that has been made. Third, a hierarchy of classes needs to be developed in order for the participants to progress through the IBS method. The project facilitator could develop basic, intermediate, and master level classes for the IBS method through the BOBS. This would allow for the further development of the participants to be able to learn more principles of IBS in the future. The last hindrance that could possibly occur, is for the project facilitator to be moved to another context before another suitable teacher could be trained in the IBS method, as this may negate the progress of the BOBS.

The changes that have occurred since the conclusion of the BOBS on the church at large have been moderate. Because of the participants' evaluation of the BOBS, many who did not participate have expressed interest in participating in the BOBS in the future. The project facilitator is continually asked when the next study will occur. Just the overall success of the program has piqued the interest of others within the ministry context, even by some who were skeptical of the project and did not enroll in the class. The success of the class can be attributed to many factors. First, the simplicity of the IBS method taught in the BOBS played a significant role, as most of the participants were able to finish the project. The willingness of the participants to learn the IBS also played a significant role in the project intervention. The day, time, and brevity of the study also made an impact for the BOBS to succeed.

Personal Significance

The project facilitator has grown in many ways as a result of the project intervention. It has enabled the project facilitator to grow spiritually and mentally as the project intervention was prepared and implemented. The process has enlarged the capacity of the project facilitator for future personal growth. Being able to participate in the doctoral classes which led up to the

project, learning from the professors, learning the action research method, and compiling the research into a thesis has made the project facilitator a better man, student, husband, pastor, and believer. The process has taught the project facilitator to continue growing in the Lord and to seek His guidance. The project facilitator has also learned that he can continue to learn academically and biblically. Through the planning, researching, writing of the project intervention, implementation of the project intervention, and writing of the thesis, the project facilitator has learned more about his own shortcomings and failures. Action research is hard work, but it can be accomplished. The project facilitator also learned important principles that can be accessed to address other problems that may arise in the future in the ministry context. A problem can be addressed, and a solution identified with the help of trusted participants. From preparing sermons, developing lessons, and teaching materials in the past, the project facilitator gained a renewed appreciation for those who continually engage problems in ministry contexts in order to provide solutions. The project facilitator is thankful and humbled for what he has been able to accomplish through the Doctor of Ministry program and through the project intervention.

The project intervention has led to the project facilitator having a greater relationship with the participants. It has brought a deeper love and affection for the participants in the study. The hard work, determination, and perseverance of the participants made the project intervention possible. Through class interactions, the relationships have grown stronger and there is a renewed focus on the study of God's Word for the participants and the project facilitator. It is believed that the participants have a deeper love and appreciation for the time and effort of the project facilitator, for his research, planning, and teaching of the BOBS class.

Ecclesial Significance

The project intervention also had ecclesial significance for the participants of the BOBS. Those who participated are devout Christians who are devoted to God's Word and have a desire to learn more about Him. Each participant displayed a yearning to develop sound Bible study habits by learning the IBS method of biblical interpretation through the BOBS. Those who are committed to becoming better disciples of Christ, seek His guidance daily through Scripture and prayer. Since many of the ministry context leaders were involved in the BOBS, it has caused a resurgence within the ministry context to reevaluate the Sunday School program and the classes it offers, the Discipleship Training program, and what is taught to the children concerning the Scriptures. The BOBS opened doors of opportunities for the church as a whole to be excited and pursue knowing a method of biblical interpretation. Those who participated in the BOBS have a greater understanding of what the church means to the community, and that each of them has a distinct role in it. Although Jude is most known for his teaching about false teachers, Jude has taught the participants that they must be active against false doctrine and false teachers by knowing the truth, by working while waiting on the Lord's return, and by actively evangelizing in the community. The BOBS on the book of Jude can build believers who are mission-minded, fervent evangelists, and sound interpreters.

The skills acquired from the BOBS can enrich the life of the church for the present day and for the future life of the church. Being able to interpret God's Word is important, if not the most important skill that can be utilized for an individual and in the life of the church. The tools provided by the IBS through the BOBS can benefit the participants and the church as the members collectively desire to know Scripture. It will allow them to know and perform a method of biblical interpretation, gain knowledge of Scripture, and be able to teach it to others.

Theological Significance

The theological section of the project discussed four of the main doctrines concerning the project intervention. God's Word is inspired, inerrant, and authoritative in the life of a believer. Illumination is a key doctrine, as it shows that the Holy Spirit plays the role of teacher and guider as Scripture is studied. The project facilitator's stance on these key doctrines has not wavered. If anything, through the research and writing of the thesis, the theological beliefs has only deepened. The project facilitator's mentor played a significant role in this endeavor. He aided the project facilitator to go more in-depth and probe deeper matters over the four doctrines. Gaining more knowledge and perspectives of these doctrines was beneficial to the project facilitator. Since these developments, the project facilitator has decided to spend more time teaching the doctrines to his ministry context. It is vital that believers know the doctrines of the faith from a biblical perspective. As Senior Pastor, the church will also continue to place a high emphasis on the reading, study, and interpreting of God's Word. Every pastor and church should place this type of emphasis and focus on Scripture. This project intervention has shown that believers have a desire to know, understand, and to be able to interpret God's Word.

Future Considerations

Since the conclusion of the BOBS, the project facilitator has considered the future implications of the project for the ministry context, ways to improve the BOBS, additional ideas to be investigated, and possible further research regarding the problem of interpretive dependency. Most of the future considerations regarding the BOBS and the current ministry context, have already been discussed in the prior sections of chapter five. In the future, there will be a continued emphasis on reading, studying, and interpreting God's Word, especially through future installments of the BOBS. Utilizing BOBS can produce endless possibilities in the future

for the ministry context. These will be explored in conjunction with the leadership of the church, as we seek how to move forward with aid from the project intervention.

There are significant improvements that could be made to the BOBS. Participants in the study and the focus group were given the opportunity to provide feedback for these areas. Most of the responses did entail spending more time each week on the steps of the IBS method of biblical interpretation. It would be beneficial to add more weeks to the BOBS, especially as it concerns the steps of interpretation and appropriation. Some wanted to spend more time on cross-referencing, learning how to use a concordance, or on using a Bible dictionary. Using smaller groups could also potentially lead to participants being able to grasp the IBS method by better utilizing the time with the individual participants. All the suggestions will be considered for future sessions of the BOBS. Pertaining to the project intervention process, there are some issues that need improvement. For the pre-test and post-test, more questions need to be asked in regard to meditation. The project facilitator recommends asking ten questions across the topics of IBS, Jude, and meditation, for thirty total questions. Focus group questions would increase from seven to twelve to give ample attention to IBS, Jude, and meditation as well. Doing this would allow for additional investigation for meditation. The data on meditation was insufficient because there were not enough questions asked on the pre-test and post-test.

Although there was sufficient data regarding the overall success of the project intervention, especially the IBS method in combating interpretive dependence, there is much to be determined for other methods that can address the issue. Other methods to address the problem of interpretive dependence, such as those in the theoretical section of the paper, can aid in reversing the problem. Interpretive dependence can be reversed by offering a Bible reading program and measuring the results over a year. One could use only the IBS method alone,

without the meditative principles. One way to avoid the problem of interpretive dependence, is by taking preventative measures so the problem does not arise. Beginning any of these programs before the problem is out of hand would be the best solution. One thing is certain, interpretive dependence is a real problem that is affecting churches, and believers need to address the problem, because knowing God through His Word is essential to the Christian life.

Appendix A: Permission Letter

June 10, 2019

Deacon Board

Nazareth Baptist Church
800 County Road 72
Rainsville, Al. 35986

Dear Deacon Board:

As a graduate student in the Biblical Studies department of the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Ministry degree. The title of my research project is Building Biblical Literacy: Introducing the Inductive Bible Study Method and the purpose of my research is to teach the inductive Bible study method in order to obtain a correct method of biblical interpretation.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at Nazareth Baptist Church and for the members of Nazareth Baptist Church to be able to participate.

Participants will be asked to complete two surveys and participate in the Bible Only Bible Study for 7 weeks. The data will be used to prove that the inductive Bible study method is a viable method of biblical interpretation. Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on official letterhead indicating your approval. A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Jason Bell
Senior Pastor Nazareth Baptist Church



June 25, 2019

Pastor Jason Bell

Nazareth Baptist Church
800 County Road 72
Rainsville, AL 35986

Dear Pastor Jason:

As elected and ordained Deacons of Nazareth Baptist Church, we unanimously support your graduate studies in the Biblical Studies department of the School of Divinity at Liberty University. We appreciate your explanation of the research project Building Biblical Literacy: Introducing the Inductive Bible Study Method at Nazareth Baptist Church, and grant permission for the class.

As a whole, we approve your planned method, site, and participant involvement in the research project.

Appendix B: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

**Building Biblical Literacy: Introducing the Inductive
Bible Study Method
Jason L. Bell
Liberty University
School of Divinity**

You are invited to participate in a research study on building biblical literacy through learning the Inductive Bible Study method. You were selected as a possible participant because you are 18 years of age or older and a member of Nazareth Baptist Church. Please read this form and ask questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Jason L. Bell, a doctoral candidate in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to develop and implement a simple and consistent Inductive Bible Study method to teach each participant the skills necessary to achieve a correct interpretation of the Bible.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Complete a Pre-test Survey which should take approximately 30 minutes.
2. Complete the Bible Only Bible Study which should take 90 minutes each week and last approximately 7 weeks.
3. Complete a Post-test Survey which should take approximately 30 minutes.
4. Five volunteers from those participating in the Bible study will complete a focus group study which should take approximately 90 minutes.

Risks: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life. The researcher is a mandatory reporter and is required to disclose violations of Alabama State law and Federal law to appropriate authorities. This includes the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of children, adults, elderly, and disabled persons.

Benefits: The direct benefit participants should expect to receive from taking part in this study is to understand how to correctly interpret and apply God's Word to their life.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Participants will be assigned a number only known to them. The focus group will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.

- The focus group will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password protected computer maintained in the researcher's locked office. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

- All statistical hard copy data will be stored in a locked file in the locked office of the researcher. Electronic data will be stored on a password locked computer. After three years, all electronic data will be deleted.
- I may share the data I collect from you for use in future research studies or with other researchers; if I share the data that I collect about you, I will remove any information that could identify you, if applicable, before I share the data.
- I cannot assure participants that other members of the focus group will not share what was discussed with persons outside of the group.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or Nazareth Baptist Church. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, apart from focus group data, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study. Focus group data will not be destroyed, but your contributions to the focus group will not be included in the study if you choose to withdraw.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Jason L. Bell. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at 256-630-5705 or email him at nbcpastorjason@farmerstel.com. You may also contact the researcher’s faculty chair, Dr. Benjamin Laird at bplaird@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd. Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as a part of my participation in this study.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

Appendix C: Bible Only Bible Study

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Why Study the Bible?

God's Word is authoritative and eternally relevant (Ps. 119:89)

God's Word is infallible (Ps. 19:7)

God's Word meets our needs (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

God's Word will accomplish what it says (Isa. 55:11)

God's Word provides assurance of salvation (John 8:47, 1 John 5:13)

God's Word can prevent sin (Ps. 119:9,11)

God's Word can guide our path (Ps. 119:105)

God's Word can bring quality of life and a long life (Prov. 3:1-2)

God's Word answers life's toughest questions (1 Pet. 3:15)

God's Word discerns our motives (Heb. 4:12)

God's Word aids in spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:18)

God's Word can set you free (John 8:32)

God's Word brings blessing to those who read and heed it (Rev. 1:3, John 13:37)

God's Word bears witness to Jesus (John 5:39-40)

God's Word God's Word brings spiritual maturity (1 Pet. 2:1-2)

God's Word provides our daily bread (Matt. 4:1-4)

God's Word revive the soul and gives wisdom (Ps. 19:7)

God's Word brings rejoicing to the heart (Ps. 19:8)

God's Word gives understanding (Ps. 19:8)

God's Word is true and righteous (Ps. 19:9)

God's Word brings warning (Ps. 19:11)

God's Word brings great reward (Ps. 19:11)

God's Word contains eternal life (John 6:68)

God's Word gives instruction (Rom. 15:4)

Importance of Bible Study

2 Tim. 3:14-17

“But you must continue **(Stays with Me)** in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation **(Saves Me)** through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable **(Benefits Me)** for doctrine **(Teaches Me)**, for reproof **(Convicts Me)**, for correction **(Restores Me)**, for instruction **(Trains Me)** in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete **(Completes Me)**, thoroughly equipped **(Equips Me)** for every good work.”

The purpose of this study is to provide you (yes, you) with the tools to observe the Scriptures, interpret their meaning, apply them to the church at-large, and ultimately to appropriate them into your own life.

Barriers to Overcome

1. Historical Gap- Refers to the time between the original audience and our time today.
2. Cultural Gap- Refers to the cultures in the Bible are different than ours today.
3. Geographical Gap-6,465 miles from Rainsville to Jerusalem to be exact!
4. Language Gap- Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek are nowhere close to English.

Principles of Interpretation

1. **Literal Principle**- States that Scripture should be taken literally. This will keep us from reading into the text something that is not there.
2. **Context Principle**- States that we should always understand a text within its own context.
3. **One-Meaning Principle**- Demonstrates that there is only one interpretation that can have many applications.
4. **Progressive Principle** Shows that later revelation may clarify and complete earlier revelation.
5. **Analogy Principle** States that Scripture will interpret Scripture. The Bible will agree with itself.

Why Inductive Bible Study?

1. Inductive study allows you to examine the evidence in the Scriptures, seeing the truth for yourself.
2. Inductive study allows you to put the evidence together to discover meaning.
3. Inductive study produces accurate and reliable results.
4. Inductive study allows for you to move between the steps as you observe new information from the Scriptures.
5. Inductive study allows us to apply the principle of head, heart, hands. We use our mind (head) to observe and interpret Scripture which allows the Holy Spirit to change our heart and instruct us on how to minister to others (hands).
6. Inductive study allows you to personally encounter the Scriptures to determine God's will for your life.
7. Inductive study is practical and can be easily adapted into your personal Bible study time.
8. Inductive study is beneficial. Not only will you develop your own Bible study skills, but being in a group with others can be valuable in aiding you to learn new truths others have learned about Scripture.
9. Inductive study enables you to grow spiritually and become more like Christ.
10. Inductive study will equip you to minister within the body of Christ.
11. Inductive study allows you to grow closer to God.
12. Inductive study will strengthen your faith.

Before We Get Started

Emphasis on Prayer

Acts 6 is probably best known for where we see the appointment of the first deacons. Most people would simply pass over the verse I am referencing because when we read this passage, we are looking for something else, most notably the qualifications for becoming a deacon or leader in the church. In verse 4 there is a gem that is discovered within the words of the Twelve. They say, “but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” If we are going to study God’s Word, it is important that we be people of prayer before we open it. Prayer and Bible study go hand in hand. Sort of like peanut butter and jelly, or like my favorite peanut butter and chocolate! Just as the psalmist wrote we should pray that God would open our eyes and reveal His truth to us (Ps. 119:18). James instructs us to ask for wisdom when we need it (1:5). There is no better time to ask for it than before we study God’s Word.

Emphasis on Holy Spirit

John 14-16 contains some of the most in-depth teachings on the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit plays a vital role in not only the writing of Scripture (2 Pet. 1:16-21), but in our understanding of the truth of Scripture. Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the “Spirit of truth” in John 14:17. Here are some key roles that the Holy Spirit has as we interpret Scripture.

1. Holy Spirit teaches (John 14:26, 1 John 2:27)
 - a. Jesus told the disciples that the Spirit would teach them about what Jesus had said
 - b. The Holy Spirit is the greatest teacher you will ever have
 - c. The implication is that we, as believers, will be reading and studying Scripture
2. Holy Spirit reminds (John 14:26)
 - a. An example of teaching and reminding can be found in John 2:19-22
 - b. The Holy Spirit can remind us as we study of what we already know from other Scriptures to help put the pieces of the puzzle together
3. Holy Spirit guides (John 16:13)
 - a. In this verse the Spirit guides to the truth because He is the Spirit of truth (John 14:17)
 - b. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 “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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”
4. Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus (John 16:14)
 - a. In this verse the Spirit glorifies Jesus by declaring what Jesus had already said and done
 - b. Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus by teaching, reminding, and guiding us as we study the Scriptures so our lives can glorify Jesus by studying the Scriptures

Seven Week Plan

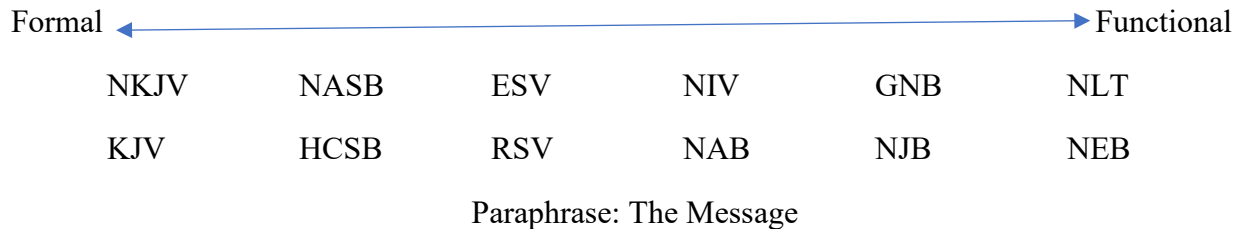
- Week 1 Overview of the 4 steps
 What to look for in observation: “What do I see?”
 Observation Jude 1-4
- Week 2 Observation Jude 5-16
- Week 3 Observation Jude 17-25
- Week 4 Interpretation: “What does it mean?”
- Week 5 Application: “What does it mean for the church?”
- Week 6 Appropriation: “What does this mean for me?”
 Meditation (Read, Reflecting, Responding, Resting, Reacting)
- Week 7 Appropriation: “What does this mean for me?”
 Follow-up

Translations

There are three main types of translations of the Bible

1. Formal
 - a. Attempts to stay close to the “form” of the Hebrew and Greek in both words and grammar as can be translated into English
 - b. Sometimes called a “word for word” or “literal” translation
 - c. NKJV
2. Functional
 - a. Attempts to keep the meaning of the Hebrew and Greek, but puts words and idioms into what would be a normal way of saying it in English
 - b. Sometimes called a “thought for thought” translation
 - c. NLT
3. Free
 - a. Attempts to translate the ideas from one language to another with less concern about using the exact words of the original
 - b. The Message

Spectrum of Translations



Jude

Jude is the half-brother of Jesus and wrote this epistle around 65-70 AD. It is very similar to 2 Peter in its content; however, Peter writes in future tense and Jude writes of false teachers who are already present. Other purposes of the book are to warn of judgment against those who rebel against God and to engage Christians to be active in sharing their faith. Believers today must heed the warning of Jude, as well as Paul (Acts 20:28-30) and Jesus (Matt. 7:15-20) about false teachers.

While no specific audience is mentioned, many believe Jude was writing to a group of believers made up primarily of Jews because of how often he alludes to the Old Testament and quotes literature outside of the Bible familiar to the Jews.

Observation

Discovering Truths for Yourself

Before you read and begin to observe, it is important to pray. Prayer will open our eyes and heart so that the Holy Spirit can lead and guide. In the step of observation, we simply read the text, allowing it to speak for itself. Good observation is key to the inductive Bible study method.

Before we are done observing, we want to discover all the pieces so we can put the puzzle together in the end. Two steps are important to observation. First is reading the Scripture. It is important that we read the Scripture slowly, patiently, and multiple times. We may think we are familiar with a text, but often times we find that there is some new discovery waiting to be found that we may have “missed” from previous study. Second, asking the right questions is key to observation. Who, what, when, where, why, and how, are the foundation for this part of the process. It is at this point we should expect to see new details in the text. Here is a list of some things to look for when you are familiar with the text:

“What do I see?”

Context- author, date, reason for writing, author’s tone

Genre-occasional letter- written for specific purpose, for specific people, at a specific time

People, Place, Events

Key words (repeated, obscure, verbs-action)

Compare/Contrast, Illustrations, OT quotations

Jude 1-4

NKJV

¹ Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: ² Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. ³ Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴ For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude 1-4

NLT

¹ This letter is from Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James. I am writing to all who have been called by God the Father, who loves you and keeps you safe in the care of Jesus Christ. ² May God give you more and more mercy, peace, and love. ³ Dear friends, I had been eagerly planning to write to you about the salvation we all share. But now I find that I must write about something else, urging you to defend the faith that God has entrusted once for all time to his holy people. ⁴ I say this because some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches, saying that God's marvelous grace allows us to live immoral lives. The condemnation of such people was recorded long ago, for they have denied our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Jude 1-4

Observation:

Who	What
Where	When
Why	How

Author/Audience:

Key Words:

Repeated Words:

Illustrations:

OT/NT Quotes:

Compare/Contrasts:

Interpretation:

Theme:

Application:

Principles for the church:

Knowing Text or Doing Text:

How does this point to Christ?

Appropriation:

Principles for me:

Jude 5-8

NKJV

⁵ But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶ And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; ⁷ as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. ⁸ Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.

Jude 5-8

NLT

⁵ So I want to remind you, though you already know these things, that Jesus first rescued the nation of Israel from Egypt, but later he destroyed those who did not remain faithful. ⁶ And I remind you of the angels who did not stay within the limits of authority God gave them but left the place where they belonged. God has kept them securely chained in prisons of darkness, waiting for the great day of judgment. ⁷ And don't forget Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring towns, which were filled with immorality and every kind of sexual perversion. Those cities were destroyed by fire and serve as a warning of the eternal fire of God's judgment. ⁸ In the same way, these people—who claim authority from their dreams—live immoral lives, defy authority, and scoff at supernatural beings.

Jude 5-8

Observation:

Who	What
Where	When
Why	How

Author/Audience:

Key Words:

Repeated Words:

Illustrations:

OT/NT Quotes:

Compare/Contrasts:

Interpretation:

Theme:

Application:

Principles for the church:

Knowing Text or Doing Text:

How does this point to Christ?

Appropriation:

Principles for me:

Jude 9-11

NKJV

⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" ¹⁰ But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. ¹¹ Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

Jude 9-11

NLT

⁹ But even Michael, one of the mightiest of the angels, did not dare accuse the devil of blasphemy, but simply said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (This took place when Michael was arguing with the devil about Moses' body.) ¹⁰ But these people scoff at things they do not understand. Like unthinking animals, they do whatever their instincts tell them, and so they bring about their own destruction. ¹¹ What sorrow awaits them! For they follow in the footsteps of Cain, who killed his brother. Like Balaam, they deceive people for money. And like Korah, they perish in their rebellion.

Jude 9-11

Observation:

Who	What
Where	When
Why	How

Author/Audience:

Key Words:

Repeated Words:

Illustrations:

OT/NT Quotes:

Compare/Contrasts:

Interpretation:

Theme:

Application:

Principles for the church:

Knowing Text or Doing Text:

How does this point to Christ?

Appropriation:

Principles for me:

Jude 12-13

NKJV

¹² These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving *only* themselves. *They are* clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; ¹³ raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Jude 12-13

NLT

¹² When these people eat with you in your fellowship meals commemorating the Lord's love, they are like dangerous reefs that can shipwreck you. They are like shameless shepherds who care only for themselves. They are like clouds blowing over the land without giving any rain. They are like trees in autumn that are doubly dead, for they bear no fruit and have been pulled up by the roots. ¹³ They are like wild waves of the sea, churning up the foam of their shameful deeds. They are like wandering stars, doomed forever to blackest darkness.

Jude 12-13

Observation:

Who	What
Where	When
Why	How

Author/Audience:

Key Words:

Repeated Words:

Illustrations:

OT/NT Quotes:

Compare/Contrasts:

Interpretation:

Theme:

Application:

Principles for the church:

Knowing Text or Doing Text:

How does this point to Christ?

Appropriation:

Principles for me:

Jude 14-16

NKJV

¹⁴ Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” ¹⁶ These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling *words*, flattering people to gain advantage.

Jude 14-16

NLT

¹⁴ Enoch, who lived in the seventh generation after Adam, prophesied about these people. He said, “Listen! The Lord is coming with countless thousands of his holy ones ¹⁵ to execute judgment on the people of the world. He will convict every person of all the ungodly things they have done and for all the insults that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” ¹⁶ These people are grumblers and complainers, living only to satisfy their desires. They brag loudly about themselves, and they flatter others to get what they want.

Jude 14-16

Observation:

Who	What
Where	When
Why	How

Author/Audience:

Key Words:

Repeated Words:

Illustrations:

OT/NT Quotes:

Compare/Contrasts:

Interpretation:

Theme:

Application:

Principles for the church:

Knowing Text or Doing Text:

How does this point to Christ?

Appropriation:

Principles for me:

Jude 17-19

NKJV

¹⁷ But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: ¹⁸ how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. ¹⁹ These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.

Jude 17-19

NLT

¹⁷ But you, my dear friends, must remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ predicted. ¹⁸ They told you that in the last times there would be scoffers whose purpose in life is to satisfy their ungodly desires. ¹⁹ These people are the ones who are creating divisions among you. They follow their natural instincts because they do not have God's Spirit in them.

Jude 17-19

Observation:

Who	What
Where	When
Why	How

Author/Audience:

Key Words:

Repeated Words:

Illustrations:

OT/NT Quotes:

Compare/Contrasts:

Interpretation:

Theme:

Application:

Principles for the church:

Knowing Text or Doing Text:

How does this point to Christ?

Appropriation:

Principles for me:

Jude 20-23

NKJV

²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,
²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal
life. ²² And on some have compassion, making a distinction; ²³ but others save with fear, pulling
them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

Jude 20-23

NLT

²⁰ But you, dear friends, must build each other up in your most holy faith, pray in the power of
the Holy Spirit, ^[g] ²¹ and await the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will bring you eternal life.
In this way, you will keep yourselves safe in God's love. ²² And you must show mercy to ^[h] those
whose faith is wavering. ²³ Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment. Show
mercy to still others, but do so with great caution, hating the sins that contaminate their lives.

Jude 20-23

Observation:

Who	What
Where	When
Why	How

Author/Audience:

Key Words:

Repeated Words:

Illustrations:

OT/NT Quotes:

Compare/Contrasts:

Interpretation:

Theme:

Application:

Principles for the church:

Knowing Text or Doing Text:

How does this point to Christ?

Appropriation:

Principles for me:

Jude 24-25

NKJV

²⁴ Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, ²⁵ To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, *Be* glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.

Jude 24-25

NLT

²⁴ Now all glory to God, who is able to keep you from falling away and will bring you with great joy into his glorious presence without a single fault. ²⁵ All glory to him who alone is God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord. All glory, majesty, power, and authority are his before all time, and in the present, and beyond all time! Amen.

Jude 24-25

Observation:

Who	What
Where	When
Why	How

Author/Audience:

Key Words:

Repeated Words:

Illustrations:

OT/NT Quotes:

Compare/Contrasts:

Interpretation:

Theme:

Application:

Principles for the church:

Knowing Text or Doing Text:

How does this point to Christ?

Appropriation:

Principles for me:

Interpretation: What does it mean?

Interpretation is where we begin to seek the meaning of the text. It is here we will begin to see what the author was saying to the original audience. Interpretation cannot be done until the process of observation has been completed. There is only one meaning of the text. The text cannot mean something different for the original audience than it does for us today although it will have many applications. You will likely go back and forth between observation and interpretation.

Components of Interpretation

Context

1. History
 - a. Geopolitical-history, political, geography
 - b. Situational-Author and audience, what was purpose of it being written?
 - c. Cultural-Culture of the author and people written to
2. Literary
 - a. Surrounding (words, sentences, verses, passages, chapter, book)
 - b. Genre-what type of literature is it?
 - c. Canon-Does it have a relationship with other books in the Bible?
3. Theological
 - a. Thematic-are themes found elsewhere in Scripture?
 - b. Covenantal-what covenant does the book refer to?
 - c. Revelation/Historical-where does it fit in God's progressive revelation?

Correlation

1. Word Studies
 - a. Concordance will allow those with a limited understanding of Hebrew and Greek to discover the underlying meaning of Hebrew and Greek words that correspond to English words within a translation
 - b. Exhaustive Hebrew/Greek Concordances and Lexicons
 - c. Provide an example
2. Cross Referencing
 - a. Practice of comparing Scripture with Scripture for the purpose of interpreting the parts in light of the whole
 - b. Analogy of Scripture prevents faulty interpretation
 - c. Analogy of Scripture aids in interpreting the passage being studied
 - d. Are there other Scriptures that will prove our interpretation correct?
 - e. How to cross reference:
 - i. List each cross reference
 - ii. Study the context of the cross reference
 - iii. Consider making a note in the margin of your Bible when the cross-reference illuminates the scripture you are studying.
 - iv. You may notice that some cross-references do not pertain to the subject being studied.

Consultation

1. Scholarly Commentaries
 - a. New American Commentary
 - b. IVP New Testament Commentary
 - c. NIV Application Commentary
2. Study Bibles-A good study Bible will provide useful information about the background of books before you do an inductive study.
3. Bible Dictionaries
 - a. Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary
 - b. Dictionary for Theological Interpretation
4. Bible Atlas
 - a. Holman Bible Atlas
 - b. Zondervan Atlas of the Bible
5. Bible Introductions-These deal with historical, literary, and theological backgrounds of books of the Bible.

Application

In application we take the message of the original audience and begin to apply it to our modern context. “What does this passage (letter) mean to the church today?” What relevant principles can we take from it? In this important step we go from “then and there” to the “here and now.” Good observation leads to good interpretation, and good interpretation will lead to good application. In these steps we will find parallels from the original audience to our time today.

1. Know what the author intended for the original audience. How are we the same? How are we different?
2. Is it a “knowing” or “doing” text?
 - a. Knowing texts are informational
 - b. Doing texts are instructions that are ethical or practical
3. What are some principles for the church?
4. Establish boundaries: What can the text mean today? What the text cannot mean today?
5. What scenarios can the text be applied to today?
6. How does this passage point to Christ?

Appropriation

Appropriation is finding out what the passage (letter) means for me. It is at this point where we will (as we have each week) seek the help of the Holy Spirit to apply Scripture to our life as individuals who are a part of the body of Christ. Transformation is the goal of appropriation.

1. Personal Assessment
 - a. An open, honest, and humble assessment of where you are today
 - b. Search within yourself and know where you stand in what the passage teaches
 - c. Gal. 6:4 “But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”
2. Reflective meditation
 - a. Goal of reflective meditation is to hear what God is saying through the text on a personal and intimate level
 - b. Meditation is mentioned in both the OT and NT
 - c. Ps. 1:2 “But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.”
 - i. *hagah* to give serious thought and consideration, to speak in low tones as you consider (reading, reflecting responding)
 - d. Ps. 119:97 “Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.”
 - i. *siyach* act of giving consideration to a thought about a person or subject with a focus on responding properly
 - e. 1 Tim. 4:13 “Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”
 - i. *meletao* means to keep giving serious attention to something, to improve by care or study
 - f. Phil. 4:8 “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.”
 - i. *logizomai* to give careful thought to, let the mind dwell on
3. Appropriate
 - a. James 1:22 “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”
 - b. Appropriation is putting yourself submissively under the Word of God in order to be transformed by it
 - c. Some suggest you form the principle(s) for me statements with “I will...”
4. Principles for Appropriation
 - a. Is there an example to follow?
 - b. Is there a sin to avoid?
 - c. Is there a principle to claim?
 - d. Is there a prayer to repeat?
 - e. Is there a command to obey?
 - f. Is there a condition to meet?
 - g. Is there a verse to memorize?
 - h. Is there an error to mark?

Meditation

Meditation is a spiritual encounter that includes prayer. It will lead the reader to a deeper level of engagement with the text and with God. In this inductive method this will be done after observation, interpretation, and application.

1. Reading-Read the text aloud.
2. Reflecting-Think deeply about what has been studied and commit a verse to memory.
3. Responding-Respond with thanks to God for His Word.
4. Resting-Stop and rest silently before God, receiving what He teaches you.
5. Reacting-Involves action by putting into practice what is learned through Scripture.

Appendix 1: Deeper Observation

Other things that you will discover with a deeper study of Scripture

1. Simile
 - a. Comparative figure of speech in which one thing resembles another through the use of like or as.
 - b. Ps. 1:4 “The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away.”
2. Metaphor
 - a. Comparative figure of speech in which resemblance is implied
 - b. Ps. 31:3 “For You are my rock and my fortress; Therefore, for Your name’s sake, lead me and guide me.”
3. Hyperbole
 - a. A deliberate exaggeration to prove a point
 - b. Matt. 23:24 “Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!”
4. Sarcasm
 - a. An indirect form of a ridicule expressed as a compliment
 - b. 1 Cor. 4:8 “You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us—and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you!”
5. Cause and effect-Rom. 6:23 “For the wages of sin (cause) is death (effect)…”
6. Lists-Gal. 5:22-23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”
7. Conjunctions
 - a. Identify their purpose and function
 - b. And, for, but, therefore, since, because, so
8. Verbs
 - a. Communicate action in the verse
 - b. Past, present, future
 - c. Active verbs (Bobby hit the ball)
 - d. Passive verbs (Bobby was hit by the ball)
9. Pronouns-Always pay attention to who or what they are referring to
10. Questions and answers
 - a. Reveal important details about subjects
 - b. Paul does this throughout Romans (ex. Rom. 6:1-2)
 - c. Mark 2:1-3:6 and 11:27-12:40 is built upon five questions each between Jesus and the Pharisees
11. Dialogue
 - a. Pay attention to who is speaking and to whom they are speaking to
 - b. Jesus could be speaking to the Father, Pharisees, crowds, or the disciples
12. Purpose statements
 - a. Are phrases or sentences that describe the reason, result, or the consequence of some action

- b. That, in order that, so that
 - c. Deut. 6:3 “Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey **so that** it may go well with you and **that** you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey.”
13. Means
- a. Something that brings about the action, result, or purpose
 - b. Ps. 119:9 “How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.”
14. Conditional clauses
- a. Present the conditions whereby some action, consequence, reality, or result will happen
 - b. If/then clauses
 - c. 1 John 1:6 “**If** we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.”
15. Emotional terms
- a. Words that convey feeling and emotion
 - b. Used more in the OT than the NT
 - c. Gal. 4:12-16 is loaded with emotional terms (plead, brothers, illness, contempt, scorn, welcomed, joy, torn out your eyes, enemy)
16. Tone
- a. Emotional terms can help identify this
 - b. Read Col. 3:1-4 and compare it to Gal. 3:1-4

Appendix 2: Deeper Interpretation

Bible Study Resources

BibleGateway.com

Crosswalk.com

StudyLight.com

E-Sword.net

BlueLetterBible.com

Bible Study Software

Logos Bible Software

Word Search

Illumina

Quick Verse

BibleSoft PC Study Bible

Bible Works

Bible Concordances

The NIV Exhaustive Concordance

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

New American Standard Concordance

Bible Dictionaries

The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament by Spiros Zodhiates

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

Holman Bible Dictionary

Bible Commentaries One Volume

The Moody Bible Commentary

John MacArthur Commentary

Life Application NT Commentary

The Bible Knowledge Commentary

Other Commentaries

Baker Exegetical NT Commentary

IVP New Testament Commentary

NIV Application Commentary

New American Commentary

The Bible Exposition Commentary

Tyndale New Testament Commentary

Appendix 3: Deeper Application/Appropriation Questions

1. What should we/I do? What is our/my duty
 - a. Duties are moral obligations that provide structure for human relationship.
Duties tell us what we owe God and others
2. Who should we/I be? How can we/I become the people/person or obtain the character that lets us/me do what is right?
 - a. Character is the distinguishing nature or essence of a person...character is about the work God does, reviving the heart and fashioning a new nature within us...character stresses who we ought to be...connects who we are with what we do
3. To what causes should we/I devote our life energy to? What goals should we/I pursue?
 - a. Goals are the causes and aspirations that direct our choices...when we know our goals we know where we are going and why
4. How can we/I distinguish truth from error? How can we/I gain discernment?
 - a. Discernment is insight, understanding, the perception to see things as they are from God's perspective

Appendix 4: Jude Summary

Jude

The book of Jude is described by some as the most neglected book of today. This may be because of its brevity, or its particular place within the Bible, considering it is right before the popular book of Revelation. One thing that needs to be noted is that the book of Jude is relevant because of the current times. Jude wrote his book to believers to aid them in defending their faith (v1-4). In identifying false teachers, Jude uses 18 different words to describe the devilish characteristics of these false teachers (v5-19). False teachers and false doctrines that were common in Jude's day are alive and well today. Jesus warned of false teachers in his day (Matt. 7:15-20) as did Paul (Acts 20:28-31). Jude encourages believers as to how to deal with the false teachers within their midst (v17-23). Jude closes out his letter by pointing them, and us, to Christ "who is able to keep you from stumbling" (v24-25). This doxology is fitting because it points people away from false teachers and to the Savior who can deliver them from the seductive teachers and their dooming doctrines.

Verses 1-4

In verse 1, Jude introduces himself in the letter by describing himself as the "bondservant of Jesus." The term *doulos* means to be in someone's total control, being bound by duty to the master. Moses (2 Kgs. 18:12), Joshua (Josh. 24:29), Paul (Rom. 1:1), James (James 1:1) and Peter (2 Pet. 1:1) are all referred to as being slaves to God or to Christ. By referring to himself this way, Jude is saying that he is a slave of Jesus and that he is totally committed to His cause. Next Jude gives us the identification of those to whom he is writing. Jude says that they are "called" which is a term (*kletos*) used for those who have been called to salvation. They are also "sanctified." *Hagiazo* refers to something that has been set aside for special use, or something that is dedicated. "Preserved" means to "guard" or "keep", but primarily here it refers to protecting or preserving. These three terms together combine to show that Jude is writing to a group of believers. In verse 2, Jude greets them with mercy, peace, and love. Each of these are in what is called the passive voice, and they each demonstrate that it is God who is the one granting them mercy, peace, and love. The word "multiplied" means to become full and then abound. Our word overflow would capture the full meaning of the term. Jude gives us the purpose of writing the letter in verse 3. Jude addresses the recipients of the letter as "beloved" three times (v3,17,20). This was also a common way a father would address a child. Jude shows that he was going to write them a letter about their "common salvation" (the faith they shared in Christ) but instead wrote for them to "contend earnestly for the faith." Jude wants them to defend and fight for the truth of the gospel (1 Tim. 6:12; 1 Pet. 3:15). The word "necessary" also reveals that Jude felt a burden and was under obligation to take action. Why were they to do this? It is because "certain men" have come into the church and were teaching false doctrine. He describes that they have "crept in" which means to "slip in or to join with evil intent." Another term he uses is "ungodly." The word Jude uses here describes someone who lives without regard for religious belief or practice. The early church fathers used this to describe atheists and heretics. What were

they doing? They were turning God's grace into lewdness. *Aselgeia* (lewdness) means someone with a lack of self-control whose conduct violates what is socially acceptable. These false teachers also "deny the only Lord God." Jude uses the term *despotes* here for Lord. It is seldom used in Scripture but is better translated as Master.

Verses 5-8

In verses 5-7, Jude is reminding them, by presenting three significant Old Testament examples, that he will relate to the false teachers in verse 8. In verse 5, Jude describes those who were delivered from Egypt by God's power. Even though they were delivered, many did not believe. Numbers 14:11-12 says, "Then the Lord said unto Moses: How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they." Numbers 14:26-38 also provides a summary of this event. The primary sin here is unbelief, but there is evidence that those who rebelled in the wilderness were also guilty of the sins of rebellion and immorality. Verse 6 discusses the fallen angels. Most commentators refer to Genesis 6:1-4 for this event described here by Jude. Isaiah 14:12 also shows the rebellion of another fallen angel, Lucifer, otherwise known as Satan. This led to the whole earth being corrupted by sin.

The primary sin here is rebellion, but as with those in the wilderness, these are also guilty of unbelief and immorality. Verse 7 is the example of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18:16-19:29). These are primarily guilty of sexual immorality, but it can be said that the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah are also guilty of unbelief and rebellion. "Strange flesh" is homosexuality (Gen. 19:5; Lev. 18:22, 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:9-10). While this is an abomination to God, it is a sin that can be forgiven. Jude also adds that what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah is an example of the final judgment of hell. In verse 8, Jude uses the word "these" for the first time (v8,10,12,16,19). Each time he uses the word he is connecting the example with the false teachers in the current setting. Jude will describe the false teachers with three terms. The term "dreamers" may refer to the false revelations that the false teachers pretend to receive for the false doctrine they teach. First is they "defile the flesh". The word defile (*mainio*) refers to something being ritually impure or to be violated by immoral behavior. Jude has already described them as participating in immorality. Second, they "reject authority". The word "reject" means to regard something as nothing. This probably describes their behavior toward the leaders of the church. Third, they "speak evil of dignitaries." This probably describes their treatment and disdain for God and all heavenly beings. "Speak evil" is *blasphemeo* and means to speak profanely and disrespectfully.

Verses 9-10

In verse 9, Jude gives an example from outside of Scripture. Here he quotes a story from the Assumption of Moses. Paul quoted from sources outside the Bible as well to prove his points (Acts 17:28; 1 Cor. 15:33; Titus 1:12). Jude is not saying the Assumption of Moses is Scripture,

or on par with Scripture. He is simply stating a fact from an outside source. If Jude is led by the Holy Spirit to write it, then it must be true because the Holy Spirit cannot lie. The only reference in Scripture to this is found in Deuteronomy 34:5-6, which demonstrates that no one knew where Moses' grave was.

Why would Satan and Michael argue over the body of Moses? Scripture does not say, but it may be that if Satan knew where Moses' body was, he could have led people to worship Moses instead of God. You can also read Zechariah 3:1-5 where the Lord and Satan argue over Joshua the high priest. We know from Scripture that Michael is the protector of Israel (Dan. 10:13,21; 12:1). Jude is perhaps using this example to show that unlike the angels who fell, Michael kept his proper place by depending on the Lord to rebuke Satan. This also demonstrates that it is the Lord who has all authority (Matt. 28:18).

There is another "these" in verse 10 so Jude is speaking about the false teachers. He states that they blaspheme "what they do not know." What is it they do not know? Verse 19 may offer a clue. It says that they do not have the Spirit. If they do not have the Spirit, they do not have a relationship with God (Rom.8:9). It may be that he is saying these false teachers blaspheme God. "Know naturally" has the sense of knowing something by instinct (*physikos*). What do all people know by instinct? How to sin! So, in their sin they are like "brute beasts." "Brute" (*alogos*) is someone without the ability to reason or to think properly. He is giving us a picture of people who are like wild animals who live a lifestyle of sin. The word "corrupt" (*ptheiro*) means to destroy, to cause harm, and to deteriorate the inner life. These false teachers Jude describes are shaking their fist at God and ruining their lives and the lives of others.

Verses 11-13

In verse 11, Jude offers three more Old Testament examples to compare to the false teachers. Before doing so, Jude pronounces a woe upon the false teachers. "Woe" (*ouai*) is an interjection of pain and displeasure, or a state of intense stress and hardship. Jude then describes how the false teachers emulate three Old Testament people. First is "they have gone in the way of Cain." Cain (Gen. 4) is best known for murdering his brother Abel after bringing a bloodless and faithless sacrifice to God. Cain also illustrates man-made religion, believing he could make his own way to God. Second is the example of Balaam (Num. 22:5-7, 25:1-9; 26:9-11; 27:3). Overcome by his greedy passions, Balaam led others into sin for his own personal gain. Third is the rebellion of Korah (Num. 16). Korah led others to reject the authority of Moses and tried to assume power for themselves. Numbers 16:41-50 shows that 14,700 Israelites died because of Korah's rebellion. In verse 12, Jude again describes the false teachers. "Spots in your love feasts" is a unique phrase. The word for spots (*spilas*) is also used of hidden reefs under the water that destroyed approaching ships. The love feasts were a time the early church enjoyed fellowship meals akin to our modern-day church dinners. It was also a time when they celebrated the Lord's Supper. The false teachers are portrayed here as hiding out in the church in plain sight waiting to destroy their fellowship. The word for "serving" is the word *poimaino* which means to

shepherd or watch over. They are false shepherds who only care about taking care of themselves and feeding their lustful appetites.

Ezekiel had much to say about the false shepherds of Israel in his day as they also shepherded Israel in a state of unbelief, rebellion, and immorality (34:2,8-10,18-19). “Clouds without water” speaks of their uselessness. They offer nothing of value. Proverbs 25:14 says “Whoever falsely boasts of giving is like clouds and wind without rain.” Ephesians 4:14 says “That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.” As for the next phrase, late autumn was a time of harvest so fruit would have been expected. There is no fruit because they are not rooted in the ground. Jude describes them as “twice dead” because no fruit plus no root equals a twice dead tree. They are spiritually lifeless. “Raging waves of the sea” is the evil deeds of the false teachers. They have so many evil deeds that when they foam up it only produces shame. The wicked are shown to be like the sea in the Old Testament (Isa. 57:20-21).

The phrase “wandering stars” can refer to many things. It may be a picture of a shooting star that shines brightly, but soon vanishes. It could refer to planets out of orbit that are no good to guide travelers, or one that draws other planets out of orbit. The point is they do not even know where they are going so you should not follow them. Jude says that these false teachers are “reserved” to be in blackness and darkness forever. The Greek word used in verse 1 to describe believers and being “preserved in Jesus Christ” is the same word used here for the false teachers, referring to their confinement in hell.

Verses 14-16

The main subjects in these verses is the assurance of the coming of the Lord (v14), the judgment of the ungodly (v15), and Jude’s description of the false teachers (v16). Jude again quotes from a source outside of the Bible, this time concerning a prophecy of Enoch (Gen. 5:18-24). Just as in verse 9, Jude is not saying Enoch is Scripture or on par with Scripture. He is simply stating a fact from an outside source. If Jude is led by the Holy Spirit to write it, then it must be true because the Holy Spirit cannot lie.

The second coming of Christ is prophesied throughout Scripture. In 2 Peter 3:1-9, Peter deals with those who are denying the return of Christ. Jude could be dealing with a similar situation considering 2 Peter and Jude share some of the same content. Why is Jesus coming? Jude states in verse 15 that He is coming to “execute judgment.” This judgment will be for the “ungodly” (used 4x) false teachers. The word “convict” (*exelencho*) means to expose someone’s errors in a devastating fashion. Notice in this verse they will be judged based upon their “ungodly deeds” and “all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” The word “harsh” (*skelros*) can denote someone who shows no mercy.

Notice the word “these” again in verse 16 so we know he is going to say something about the false teachers. First, he says they are “grumblers.” The word here is used to describe someone who has a habit of grumbling or complaining. The Israelites were known for their grumbling against God as they roamed through the wilderness (Ex. 16:7-12; Num. 17:5-10).

Second, they are also “complainers.” *Mempsimoiros* describes someone who constantly complains about their lot in life. It also describes someone who continually finds fault in others. It is someone who finds faults in the lives of others because they are so dissatisfied with their own. Third, they “walk according to their own lusts.” Walk means someone’s way of life or how they conduct themselves. The term for “lust” (*epithymia*) describes someone who has a great desire for something forbidden. When this word is used in Scripture, its object is usually food or sex. The false teacher’s way of life is to be sexually immoral. With their mouth they speak “great swelling words.” “Swelling” describes speech that is boastful and arrogant. The false teachers do this to “flatter” the people so they can “gain advantage” over them. The word “gain” shows that there is an underlying purpose for them to speak in this manner.

Verses 17-19

Beginning in verse 17, Jude begins to address the group of believers to whom he is writing. The first thing he wants them to do is remember the words of the apostles and the Lord concerning false teachers (Matt. 7:15-20; Col. 2:16-19; 1 Thess. 2:14-16; 2 Thess. 2:3-12; 1 Tim. 4:1-3, 6:20-21; 2 Tim. 2:17-19, 3:1-5, 4:1-3). The word “remember” (*mimneskomai*) does not only mean to recall from memory, but to give careful consideration to the words. In verses 18-19 Jude gives some final descriptions of the false teachers who are polluting the church with their false doctrine. “Mockers” (*empaiktes*) are those who make fun of something. In verse 19, he says the false teachers are “sensual persons.” Sensual (*psychikos*) describes someone who is worldly or unspiritual (1 Cor. 2:14). They also “cause divisions” or, in other words, they insert their false doctrines and lustful lifestyle in order to cause division among the church. Lastly, Jude describes them as “not having the Spirit.” It is clear they are not believers (Rom. 8:9).

Verses 20-21

Jude offers some personal advice in verses 20-21. Once again referring to them as the “beloved”, (v3,17,20) he instructs them to do four things in these two verses. First, they are to “build themselves up.” They are to keep building upon the foundation of their faith in Christ (2 Tim. 2:15). This is written as a present active participle, demonstrating that this is not an option. It is something they must do in order to contend for the faith and to not be deceived by false teaching. Second, they are to “pray in the Holy Spirit.” You could say the need to be praying in the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:15-16, 26-27). Paul encouraged the Roman Christians to “strive” with him in prayer in Romans 15:30. The term “strive” is where we get our word agony. Third, Jude instructs them in verse 21 to “keep yourselves in the love of God.” Keeping yourselves in the love of God may mean to keep being faithful to the Lord. This would also mean obeying His commands (John 15:10). Fourth, they are to be “looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” The word for “looking” means to look forward to or to wait for. It could be that Jude is wanting them to remain focused on the return of Christ (1 Thess. 1:9-10).

Verses 22-23

In verses 22-23, Jude turns his focus from instructing the Christians on how to live by their faith to providing them instruction on how to handle those who are being deceived by the false teachers. From reading many commentaries, these two verses in the Greek are some of the hardest to interpret as to exactly what Jude is meaning. The principles Jude gives here affirm the instructions given in James 5:19-20 which states, “Brethren, if any among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.” Verse 22 may be referring to those who are wavering between sound/false doctrine. Jude instructs the believers to have “compassion” on them. The word for compassion means to show concern for someone in serious need. The word “distinction” means to evaluate by paying attention to them. The believer is to have compassion for those who are struggling with what to believe. In verse 23 “but others save with fear” could refer to a second group that includes the false teachers who may be unsaved. It is those who have fully bought in to the false teaching or are teaching it themselves. Most take “save with fear” as a reference for believers to watch out for themselves while trying to persuade this group because they could get drawn into their teaching and lifestyle. Jude describes this action as “pulling them out of the fire.” “Pulling” is the word *harpazo* and describes a violent seize of force in order to gain control. Believers are to be on a rescue mission to save people from the false teacher’s doctrine and lifestyle.

Verses 24-25

Jude closes out his letter with a doxology to the Lord. In verse 24, he states that the Lord can “keep you from stumbling.” It is the Lord who can protect them and keep them from falling into sin. The Lord is also able to “present them faultless.” “Faultless” is to be blameless or to have no spot or blemish. One day each believer will appear before the Lord in a sinless state. In verse 25, “to God our Savior” should read “the only God and Savior.” Savior (*soter*) means deliverer or preserver (John 14:6). God’s glory describes who He is and that He is worthy of honor. God’s majesty describes His greatness or that He is wonderful. God’s dominion describes His strength and might or His sovereignty. “Dominion” (*kratos*) is never used of human power in the New Testament. God’s power is His absolute power to rule over creation. In spite of the false teachers, our Savior is still the only one worthy of our praise.

Appendix 5: Jude Grammar/Word Study

Verse 1

Jude^{noun}, a^{adjective} bondservant^{noun} of^{preposition} Jesus^{noun} Christ^{noun},
and^{conjunction} brother^{noun} of^{preposition} James^{noun}, to^{prep} those^{pronoun} who^{pronoun}
are called^{verb}, sanctified^{verb} by^{prep} God^{noun} the^{adjective} Father^{noun}, and^{conj.} preserved^{verb}
in^{preposition} Jesus^{noun} Christ^{noun}.

1. Bondservant
 - a. *doulos* to be under someone's total control, one who is committed to another
 - b. Slaves are duty bound only to their owners and masters
2. Called
 - a. *kletos* primarily refers to the calling of salvation
 - b. Jude is writing to those who are "called" or those who belong to Christ
3. Sanctified
 - a. *hagiazō* set aside something, consecrate, dedicate, treat as holy, reverence
4. Preserved
 - a. *tereo* to guard, keep or retain, also carries the sense of protecting and preserving

Verse 2

Mercy^{noun}, peace^{noun}, and^{conjunction} love^{noun} be^{verb} multiplied^{verb} to^{preposition} you^{pronoun}.

5. Mercy
 - a. *eleos* kindness shown in mutual relationships, includes lovingkindness and also pity
 - b. We define this as not getting what you do deserve
6. Peace
 - a. *eirene* a state of peace and harmony
 - b. Is related to Hebrew *shalom* that includes peace and well-being of the whole person
7. Love
 - a. *agape* have interest in another, special devotion, sacrificial, a willing love
8. Multiply
 - a. *plethyno* to become full then abound (overflowing)

Verse 3

Beloved^{noun}, while^{adverb} I^{pronoun} was^{verb} very^{adverb} diligent^{adjective} to^{preposition} write^{verb} to^{preposition} you^{pronoun} concerning^{adverb} our^{adjective} common^{adjective} salvation^{noun}, I^{pronoun} found^{verb} it^{pronoun} necessary^{adverb} to^{preposition} write^{verb} to^{preposition} you^{pronoun} exhorting^{verb} you^{pronoun} to^{preposition} contend^{verb} earnestly^{adverb} for^{preposition} the^{adjective} faith^{noun} which^{pronoun} was^{verb} once^{adverb} for^{preposition} all^{pronoun} delivered^{verb} to^{preposition} the^{adjective} saints^{noun}.

9. Beloved

- a. *agapatos* having a special relationship with another, only beloved, prized, valued

10. Diligent

- a. *spoude* swiftness in movement, earnest commitment to discharge of an obligation, eagerness to do something that requires energy and effort

11. Write

- a. *poieo* to produce, manufacture, undertake or do something that brings about a certain condition

12. Concerning

- a. *peri* on account of, on behalf of, intercede

13. Common

- a. *koinos* common ownership, participate

14. Salvation

- a. *soteria* to deliver, preservation, salvation

15. Necessary

- a. *ananke* necessity or constraint, state of distress or trouble, compulsion

16. Exhorting

- a. *parakaleo* to ask to come and be present, summon to aid, call on for help, urge and encourage, win over

17. Contend

- a. *epagonizomai* to exert intense effort on behalf of something, to struggle for

18. Faith

- a. *pistis* that which is believed, body of faith/belief/teaching, orthodox doctrine

19. Once for all

- a. *hapax ha pox* single occurrence that is decisively unique

20. Delivered

- a. *paradidomi* to convey something in which one has strong personal interest, to entrust for care or preservation

21. Saints

- a. *hagios* quality possessed by things to approach the divine, someone dedicated to or consecrated to the service of God

Verse 4

For^{preposition} certain^{adjective} men^{noun} have^{verb} crept^{verb} in^{adverb} unnoticed^{adjective}, who^{pronoun} long^{adjective} ago^{adverb} were^{verb} marked^{verb} out^{adverb} for^{preposition} this^{adjective} condemnation^{noun}, ungodly^{adjective} men^{noun}, who^{pronoun} turn^{verb} the^{adjective} grace^{noun} of^{preposition} our^{adjective} God^{noun} into^{preposition} lewdness^{noun} and^{conjunction} deny^{verb} the^{adjective} only^{adjective} Lord^{noun} God^{noun} and^{conjunction} our^{adjective} Lord^{noun} Jesus^{noun} Christ^{noun}.

22. Certain

- a. *tis* refer to someone of prominence, a person of importance (good or bad)

23. Crept

- a. *paresduo* to slip in, sneak in, to join with evil intent, unnoticed

24. Marked out

- a. *prographo* write beforehand

25. Condemnation

- a. *krima* legal decision rendered by a judge, includes action, sentence, and condemnation

26. Ungodly

- a. *asebes* living without regard for religious belief or practice

27. Turn

- a. *metatithemi* put in another place, effect change or a condition, change of mind in allegiance, desert

28. Grace

- a. *charis* that which one grants to another, application of goodwill
- b. We define this as getting what you do not deserve

29. Lewdness

- a. *aselgeia* licentiousness, debauchery, lack of self-constraint which involves conduct that violates all bounds of what is socially acceptable, self-abandonment

30. Deny

- a. *arneomai* to refuse consent to something, disclaim association with

31. Lord God

- a. *despotes* master, ruler, one who has legal authority over another

Verse 5

But ^{conjunction} I ^{pronoun} want ^{verb} to ^{preposition} remind ^{verb} you ^{pronoun} , though ^{supportive conjunction} you ^{pronoun} once ^{adverb} knew ^{verb} this ^{pronoun} , that ^{conjunction} the ^{adjective} Lord ^{noun} , having ^{verb} saved ^{verb} the ^{adjective} people ^{noun} out ^{adverb} of ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} land ^{noun} of ^{preposition} Egypt ^{noun} , afterward ^{adverb} destroyed ^{verb} those ^{pronoun} who ^{pronoun} did ^{verb} not ^{adverb} believe ^{verb} .

32. Remind

- a. *hypomimnesko* to put another in mind, call to mind, bring up

33. Knew

- a. *oida* to have information about, to be intimately acquainted with, to know and understand

34. Saved

- a. *soza* to preserve or rescue from natural dangers and afflictions, keep from harm, save from death, bring out safely

35. Destroyed

- a. *apollymi* to cause or experience destruction, ruin

36. Believe

- a. *pisteuo* to consider something to be true and worthy of trust, to entrust oneself in complete confidence

Verse 6

And ^{conjunction} the ^{adjective} angels ^{noun} who ^{pronoun} did ^{verb} not ^{adverb} keep ^{verb} their ^{adjective} proper ^{adjective} domain ^{noun} , but ^{conjunction} left ^{verb} their ^{adjective} own ^{adjective} abode ^{noun} , He ^{pronoun} has ^{verb} reserved ^{verb} in ^{preposition} everlasting ^{adjective} chains ^{noun} under ^{preposition} darkness ^{noun} for ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} judgment ^{noun} of ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} great ^{adjective} day ^{noun} ;

37. Proper

- a. *arche* sphere of one's official activity, rule, office
- b. Also carries the meaning of power and dominion, primacy

38. Domain

- a. *oiketerion* a place of living, habitation, dwelling place

39. Left

- a. *apoleipo* to depart from a place with finality, to leave it to someone to do something while distancing oneself from it

40. Reserved

- a. *tereo* to retain in custody, keep watch over, keep in view, to note, to retain

41. Chains
 a. *desmos* imprisonment
42. Under
 a. *hupo* position below an object, marker of that which is in a controlling position, under obligation to
43. Darkness
 a. *zophos* darkness of the nether regions, gloom, darkness associated with feelings of despair
44. Judgment
 a. *krisis* legal process of judgment, judgment against a person

Verse 7

as^{preposition} Sodom^{noun} and^{conjunction} Gomorrah^{noun}, and^{conjunction} the^{adjective} cities^{noun}
 around^{preposition} them^{pronoun} in^{preposition} a^{adjective} similar^{adjective} manner^{noun} to^{preposition}
 these^{pronoun}, having^{verb} given^{verb} themselves^{pronoun} over^{adverb} to^{preposition} sexual
 adjective immorality^{noun} and^{conjunction} gone^{verb} after^{preposition} strange^{adjective} flesh^{noun},
 are^{verb} set^{verb} forth^{adverb} as^{preposition} an^{adjective} example^{noun}, suffering^{verb} the^{adjective}
 vengeance^{noun} of^{preposition} eternal^{adjective} fire^{noun}.

45. Similar manner
 a. *tropos* The way in which a person behaves or lives
46. Given themselves over to sexual immorality
 a. *ekporneuo* indulge in sexual immorality of any kind
47. Gone
 a. *aperchomai* discontinue a state of condition, abandon association with someone
48. Strange
 a. *heteros* another, different
49. Flesh
 a. *sarx* human existence
50. Set forth
 a. *prokeimai* to open to public view, exposed, to be present before, displayed
51. Example
 a. *deigma* indicator, proof, make known, usually used for what should be avoided
52. Suffering
 a. *hypecho* undergo punishment
53. Vengeance
 a. *dike* punishment given out as a legal penalty
 b. Only three times in NT retributive justice

Verse 8

Likewise^{adverb} also^{adverb} these^{adjective} dreamers^{noun} defile^{verb} the^{adjective} flesh^{noun},
reject^{verb} authority^{noun}, and^{conjunction} speak^{verb} evil^{noun} of^{preposition} dignitaries^{noun}.

54. Likewise

- a. *homoos* to be similar in some respect to

55. Dreamers

- a. *enypniazomai* to experience dreams or visions
- b. The sense Jude uses it they are blind to the truth

56. Defile

- a. *miaino* to cause something to be ritually impure, stain, to be violated by immoral behavior

57. Flesh

- a. *sarx* human existence

58. Reject

- a. *atheteo* to reject as invalid, to regard as nothing

59. Authority

- a. *kyriotes* majestic power the Lord wields, ruling power, lordship, power and position as lord

60. Speak evil

- a. *blasphemeo* to speak profanely, disrespectfully

61. Dignitaries

- a. *doxa* transcendent being deserving of honor

Verse 9

Yet^{adverb} Michael^{noun} the^{adjective} archangel^{noun}, in^{preposition} contending^{noun} with
preposition the^{adjective} devil^{noun}, when^{adverb} he^{pronoun} disputed^{verb} about^{preposition} the
adjective body^{noun} of^{preposition} Moses^{noun}, dared^{verb} not^{adverb} bring^{verb} against^{preposition}
him^{pronoun} a^{adjective} reviling^{adjective} accusation^{noun}, but^{conjunction} said^{verb}, “The^{adjective}
Lord^{noun} rebuke^{verb} you^{pronoun!}”

62. Archangel

- a. *archangelos* higher rank of celestial being, chief angel
- b. Daniel 10:13, 12:1

63. Contending

- a. *diakrino* to be at variance with someone, dispute, stronger word than *krino* meaning to distinguish between persons

64. Disputed

- a. *dialegomai* to instruct about something, inform, argue about differences of opinions

65. Dared not

- a. *tolmao* to show boldness or resolution in the face of danger, to be bold as to challenge or defy opposition

66. Reviling

- a. *blasphemia* speech that defames, disrespect, slander

67. Accusation

- a. *krisis* the process of judgment including evaluation

68. Rebuke

- a. *epitimaō* to express strong disapproval of someone, to punish

Verse 10

But conjunction these pronoun speak verb evil noun of preposition whatever noun they pronoun do verb not adverb know verb; and conjunction whatever noun they pronoun know verb naturally adverb, like preposition brute adjective beasts, in preposition these adjective things noun they pronoun corrupt verb themselves pronoun.

69. Speak evil

- a. *blasphemeo* to speak profanely, disrespectfully

70. Do not know

- a. *oida* to have information about, to be intimately acquainted with, to know and understand

71. Know

- a. *epistamai* gain a firm mental grasp, acquire information

72. Naturally

- a. *physikos* know by instinct, natural

73. Brute beasts

- a. *alogos* without reason, lack of capacity to reason or think properly, dumb

74. Corrupt

- a. *phtheiro* to destroy, cause harm to in a physical manner, deteriorate the inner life, ruin, inflict punishment

Verse 11

Woe noun to preposition them pronoun! For preposition they pronoun have verb gone verb in preposition the adjective way noun of preposition Cain noun, have verb run verb greedily adverb in preposition the adjective error noun of preposition Balaam noun for preposition profit noun, and conjunction perished verb in preposition the adjective rebellion noun of preposition Korah noun.

75. Woe

- a. *ouai* interjection of pain and displeasure, state of intense hardship or distress

76. Way of Cain

- a. *hodos* course of behavior, way of life, can also simply mean road or way

77. Greedily

- a. *ekcheo* to give oneself to in commitment, dedicate oneself, to lavish

78. Profit

- a. *misthos* repay based upon what a person has earned and deserves either positive or negative

79. Perished

- a. *apollymi* to cause or experience destruction, ruin

80. Rebellion

- a. *antilogia* contradiction, hostility

Verse 12

These ^{pronoun} are ^{verb} spots ^{noun} in ^{preposition} your ^{adjective} love ^{adjective} feasts ^{noun}, while
adverb they ^{pronoun} feast ^{verb} with ^{preposition} you ^{pronoun} without ^{preposition} fear ^{noun},
serving ^{verb} only ^{adjective} themselves ^{pronoun}. They ^{pronoun} are ^{verb} clouds ^{noun} without
preposition water ^{noun}, carried ^{verb} about ^{adverb} by ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} winds ^{noun}; late ^{adjective}
autumn ^{adjective} trees ^{noun} without ^{preposition} fruit ^{noun}, twice ^{adverb} dead ^{adjective}, pulled ^{verb}
up ^{adverb} by ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} roots ^{noun};

81. Spots

- a. *spilas* rocky hazard hidden by waves, hidden reef dangerous to a ship, to stain

82. Feasts

- a. *syneuochemoai* to feast together

83. Without fear

- a. *aphobos* fearlessly, not afraid

84. Serving

- a. *poimaino* to shepherd, to tend, watch over people

85. Without water

- a. *anhydrous* waterless, dry, absence of moisture

86. Carried about

- a. *periphero* to carry around from one place to another

87. Late autumn

- a. *phthinoporinos* late Autumn-no fruit at the time of harvest, not produced fruit

88. Dead

- a. *apothnesko* to cease to have vital functions

89. Pulled

- a. *ekrizo* pull up or out by the roots, to destroy from the bottom up

Verse 13

raging^{adjective} waves^{noun} of^{preposition} the^{adjective} sea^{noun}, foaming^{verb} up^{adverb} their^{adjective} own^{adjective} shame^{noun}; wandering^{adjective} stars^{noun} for^{preposition} whom^{pronoun} is^{verb} reserved^{verb} the^{adjective} blackness^{noun} of^{preposition} darkness^{noun} forever^{adverb}.

90. Raging

- a. *agriōs* being untamed or running one's own course

91. Foaming

- a. *epaphrizo* causing to foam up, froth
- b. Taken by some to also be a sign of anger

92. Shame

- a. *aischyne* possibility of dishonor, a painful feeling due to the consciousness of having done or experienced something disgraceful

93. Wandering

- a. *planetes* wanderer or roamer, unstable, restless

94. Reserved

- a. *tereo* to guard, keep or retain, also carries the sense of protecting and preserving

95. Blackness

- a. *zophos* darkness of the nether regions, gloom, darkness associated with feelings of despair

96. Darkness

- a. *skotos* state of spiritual or moral darkness, darkness that can hamper movement and cause anxiety

Verse 14

Now^{adverb/conjunction} Enoch^{noun}, the^{adjective} seventh^{noun} from^{preposition} Adam^{noun}, prophesied^{verb} about^{preposition} these^{adjective} men^{noun} also^{adverb}, saying^{verb}, "Behold^{verb}, the^{adjective} Lord^{noun} comes^{verb} with^{preposition} ten^{adjective} thousands^{noun} of^{preposition} His^{adjective} saints^{noun},

97. Prophesied

- a. *propheteuo* to proclaim an inspired revelation, foretell

98. Comes

- a. *erchomai* move from one point to another, to change place or position

99. Saints

- a. *hagios* quality possessed by things to approach the divine, someone dedicated to or consecrated to the service of God

Verse 15

to^{preposition} execute^{verb} judgment^{noun} on^{preposition} all^{pronoun}, to^{preposition} convict^{verb} all^{pronoun} who^{pronoun} are^{verb} ungodly^{adjective} among^{preposition} them^{pronoun} of^{preposition} all^{adjective} their^{adjective} ungodly^{adjective} deeds^{noun} which^{adjective} they^{pronoun} have^{verb} committed^{verb} in^{preposition} an^{adjective} ungodly^{adjective} way^{noun}, and^{conjunction} of^{preposition} all^{adjective} the^{adjective} harsh^{adjective} things^{noun} which^{adjective} ungodly^{adjective} sinners^{noun} have^{verb} spoken^{verb} against^{preposition} Him^{pronoun} .”

100. Execute

- a. *poieo* to undertake or do something that brings about an event, carry out an obligation of a moral or social nature

101. Judgement

- a. *krisis* legal process of judgment, judgment against a person

102. Convict

- a. *exelencho* to expose someone's errors in devastating fashion, to refute

103. Ungodly

- a. *asebeia* lack of reverence for deity, institutions, words and deeds

104. Committed

- a. *asebeo* to violate the norms of a proper or professed relation to deity

105. Harsh

- a. *skleros* being externally hard or rough, to cause an adverse reaction because of being harsh, merciless

106. Ungodly

- a. *asebes* living without regard for religious belief or practice

107. Sinners

- a. *hamartolos* behavior or activity that does not measure up to a standard of expectation

108. Spoken

- a. *laleo* to make a sound, imitate child-like babbling, sound of not meaning of words

Verse 16

These^{pronoun} are^{verb} grumblers^{noun}, complainers^{noun}, walking^{verb} according^{adverb} to^{preposition} their^{adjective} own^{adjective} lusts^{noun}, and^{conjunction} they^{pronoun} mouth^{verb} great^{adjective} swelling^{adjective} words^{noun}, flattering^{verb} people^{noun} to^{preposition} gain^{verb} advantage^{noun}.

109. Grumblers

- a. *gongystes* habit of complaining or grumbling

110. Complainers

- a. *mempsimoiros* complain about one's lot in life, discontent

111. Walking

- a. *poreuomai* to conduct oneself, live, walk-seldom used in NT for religious walk

112. Lusts

- a. *epithymia* have a great desire for something especially for something forbidden, craving, usually used for food or sex

113. Swelling

- a. *hyperonkos* haughty, pompous, excessive boasting

114. Flattering

- a. *thaumazo* to be impressed or disturbed by something, wonder, be amazed

115. Gain

- a. *charin* for the sake of, marker of reason with an underlying purpose

116. Advantage

- a. *ophelia* the state of having acquired an advantage or benefit, to use

Verse 17

But ^{conjunction} you ^{pronoun}, beloved ^{noun}, remember ^{verb} the ^{adjective} words ^{noun} which ^{pronoun} were ^{verb} spoken ^{verb} before ^{adverb} by ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} apostles ^{noun} of ^{preposition} our ^{adjective} Lord ^{noun} Jesus ^{noun} Christ ^{noun}:

117. Beloved

- a. *agapatos* having a special relationship with another, only beloved, prized, valued

118. Remember

- a. *mimneskomai* recall from memory, call attention to, give careful consideration

119. Words

- a. *rhema* single saying, groups of sayings, spoken word

120. Apostles

- a. *apostolos* delegate, envoy, messenger, sent with full authority to represent the person who sent them, bearing a message

Verse 18

how ^{adverb} they ^{pronoun} told ^{verb} you ^{pronoun} that ^{pronoun} there ^{noun} would ^{verb} be ^{verb} mockers ^{noun} in ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} last ^{adjective} time ^{noun} who ^{pronoun} would ^{verb} walk ^{verb} according ^{adverb} to ^{preposition} their ^{adjective} own ^{adjective} ungodly ^{adjective} lusts ^{noun}.

121. Mockers

- a. *empaiktes* one who makes fun of, only used in Jude 18 and 2 Peter 3:3

122. Walk

- a. *poreuomai* to conduct oneself, live, walk-seldom used in NT for religious walk

123. Ungodly

- a. *asebeia* lack of reverence for deity, institutions, words and deeds

124. Lusts

- a. *epithymia* have a great desire for something especially for something forbidden, craving, usually used for food or sex

Verse 19

These ^{pronoun} are ^{verb} sensual ^{adjective} persons ^{noun}, who ^{pronoun} cause ^{verb} divisions ^{noun},
not ^{adverb} having ^{verb} the ^{adjective} Spirit ^{noun}.

125. Sensual

- a. *psychikos* life in the natural world, unspiritual, worldly

126. Cause divisions

- a. *apodiorizo* to cause or instigate divisions between people

Verse 20

But ^{conjunction} you ^{pronoun}, beloved ^{noun}, building ^{verb} yourselves ^{pronoun} up ^{adverb} on
^{preposition} your ^{adjective} most ^{adjective} holy ^{adjective} faith ^{noun}, praying ^{verb} in ^{preposition} the
^{adjective} Holy Spirit ^{noun},

127. Beloved

- a. *agapatos* having a special relationship with another, only beloved, prized, valued

128. Building

- a. *epoikodomeo* to engage in a building process of personal and corporate development, edify

129. Praying

- a. *proseuchomai* calling on God, common term for prayer

Verse 21

keep ^{verb} yourselves ^{pronoun} in ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} love ^{noun} of ^{preposition} God ^{noun}, looking
^{verb} for ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} mercy ^{noun} of ^{preposition} our ^{adjective} Lord Jesus Christ ^{noun}
unto ^{preposition} eternal ^{adjective} life ^{noun}.

130. Keep

- a. *tereo* to retain in custody, keep watch over, keep in view, to note, to retain

131. Looking

- a. *prosddechomai* to receive favorable, welcome, to look forward to, wait for

132. Mercy

- a. *eleos* kindness shown in mutual relationships, includes lovingkindness and also includes pity
- b. We define this as not getting what you do deserve

Verse 22

And ^{conjunction} on ^{preposition} some ^{pronoun} have ^{verb} compassion ^{noun}, making ^{verb} a ^{adjective} distinction ^{noun};

133. Compassion

- a. *eleao* to show kindness or concern for someone in serious need

134. Making a distinction

- a. *diakrino* to differentiate by separation concluding there is a difference, evaluate by paying attention to

Verse 23

but ^{conjunction} others ^{pronoun} save ^{verb} with ^{preposition} fear ^{noun}, pulling ^{verb} them ^{pronoun} out ^{adverb} of ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} fire ^{noun}, hating ^{verb} even ^{adverb} the ^{adjective} garment ^{noun} defiled ^{adjective} by ^{preposition} the ^{adjective} flesh ^{noun}.

135. Fear

- a. *phobos* intimidating, terror, fright, alarm

136. Pulling

- a. *harpazo* to grab or seize with violent force as to remove or gain control

137. Hating

- a. *miseo* to have a strong aversion, to strongly hate

138. Garment

- a. *chiton* inner garment

139. Defiled

- a. *spiloo* to cause a spot or stain

140. Flesh

- a. *sarx* human existence polluted by sin

Verse 24

Now ^{adverb} to ^{preposition} Him ^{pronoun} who ^{pronoun} is ^{verb} able ^{adjective} to ^{preposition} keep ^{verb} you ^{pronoun} from ^{preposition} stumbling ^{noun}, and ^{conjunction} to ^{preposition} present ^{verb} you ^{pronoun} faultless ^{adjective} Before ^{adverb} the ^{adjective} presence ^{noun} of ^{preposition} His ^{adjective} glory ^{noun} with ^{preposition} exceeding ^{adjective} joy ^{noun},

141. Keep

- a. *tereo* to retain in custody, keep watch over, keep in view, to note, to retain

142. Stumbling

- a. *aptaistos* keep free from falling, free from sinning

143. Present

- a. *histemi* to cause to be in a place or position, place on a scale, to weigh

144. Faultless

- a. *amomos* being without defect or blemish, morally blameless

145. Before the presence

- a. *katenopion* to be in a position before an object

146. Exceeding joy

- a. *agalliasis* exulting in God's acts, usually eschatological joy

Verse 25

To^{preposition} God^{noun} our^{adjective} Savior^{noun}, Who^{pronoun} alone^{adjective} is^{verb} wise^{adjective},
Be^{verb} glory^{noun} and^{conjunction} majesty^{noun}, Dominion^{noun} and^{conjunction} power^{noun},
Both^{pronoun} now^{noun} and^{conjunction} forever^{noun}. Amen^{interjection}.

147. Wise

- a. *sophos* to understand something that results in wise attitudes and conduct
- b. Perception, understanding, skill-action is the main point

148. Glory

- a. *doxa* condition of being bright or shiny, visible manifestation

149. Majesty

- a. *megalosyne* state of greatness or preeminence, characterized as being truly great or wonderful

150. Dominion

- a. *kratos* express strength, exercise ruling ability, power, humans in the NT never have this power

151. Power

- a. *exousia* state of control over something, capability, might, the right to control, absolute power

Appendix 6: Bookmark for Bible Only Bible Study

Front

1. Observation “What do I see?”
 - a. People, places, and events
 - b. Key words (repeated, obscure, verbs-action)
 - c. Dialogue who is speaking? Who are they speaking to?
 - d. OT/NT quotes
 - e. Illustrations
 - f. Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
2. Interpretation “What does it mean?”
 - a. One meaning, many applications
 - b. Context:
 - i. Immediate (words, verses, chapter)
 - ii. Book
 - iii. Author
 - iv. Testament
 - v. Bible
 - c. Correlation
 - i. Scripture interprets Scripture
 - ii. Word studies
 - d. Consultation
 - i. Consult outside sources
 - ii. Observe/Interpret

Bookmark for Bible Only Bible Study

Back

3. Application “What does it mean for the church?”
 - a. Original context/Today’s context
 - b. Knowing or doing text?
 - c. Similar/Dissimilar
 - d. Hear as original audience heard it
 - e. Hear it addressed to the church today
 - f. Apply original meaning to context today
 - g. Principles for the church
 - h. How does the passage point to Christ?
4. Appropriation “What does it mean for me?”
 - a. Personal assessment
 - i. Search self
 - b. Reflective meditation
 - i. Hear what God is saying
 - ii. Read, reflect, respond, rest, react
 - c. Appropriate
 - i. Be transformed by the Word of God
 - ii. Is there an example for me to follow?
 - iii. Is there a sin to avoid?
 - iv. Is there a principle to claim?
 - v. Is there a prayer to repeat?
 - vi. Is there a command to obey?
 - vii. Is there a condition to meet?
 - viii. Is there a verse to memorize?
 - ix. Is there an error to mark?

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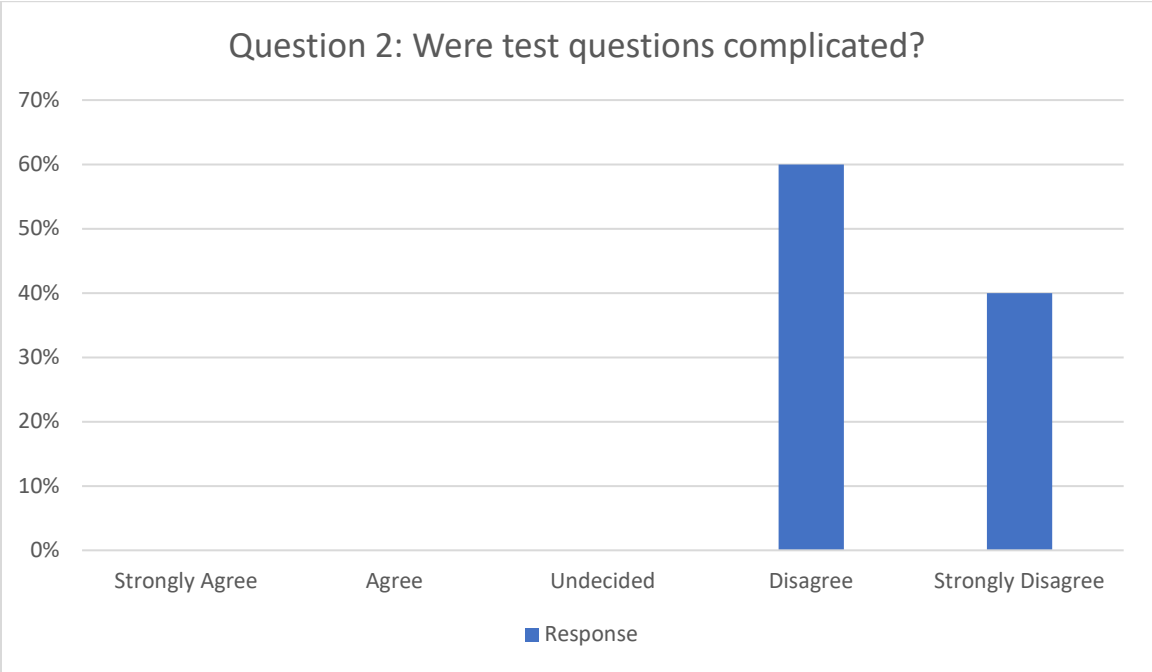
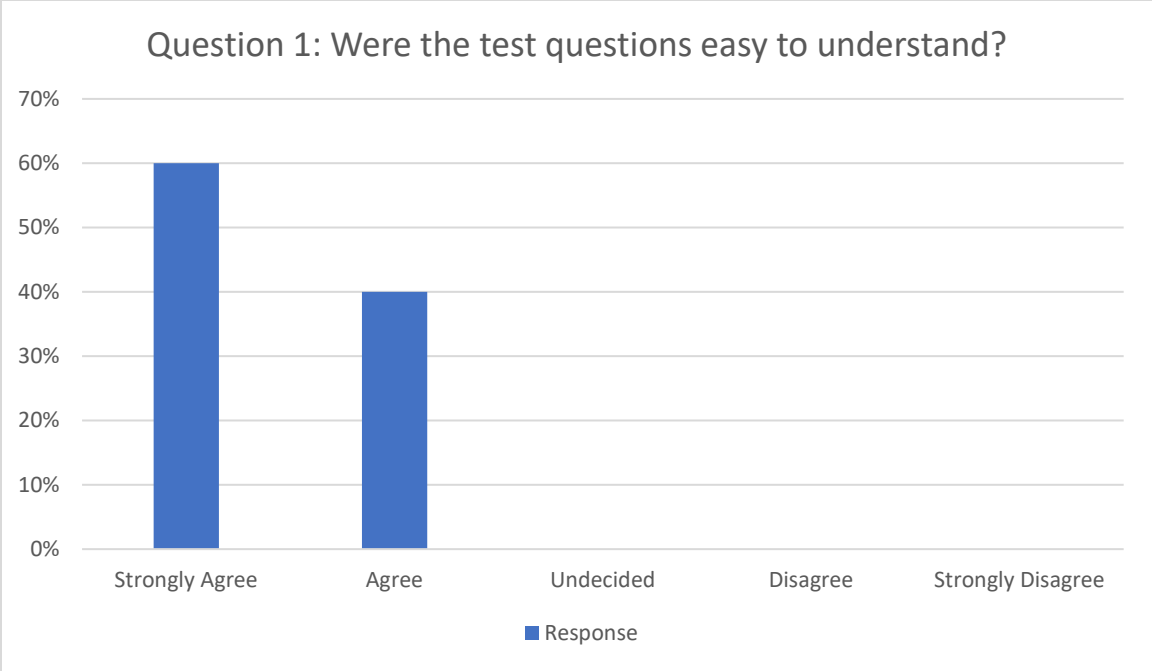
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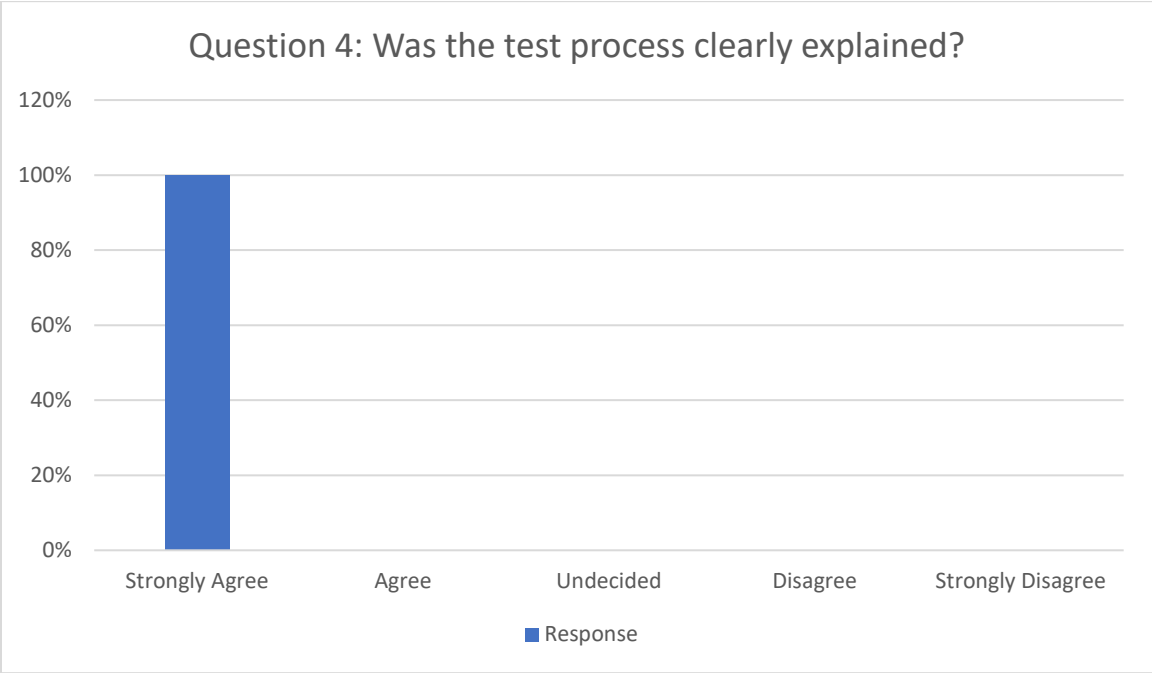
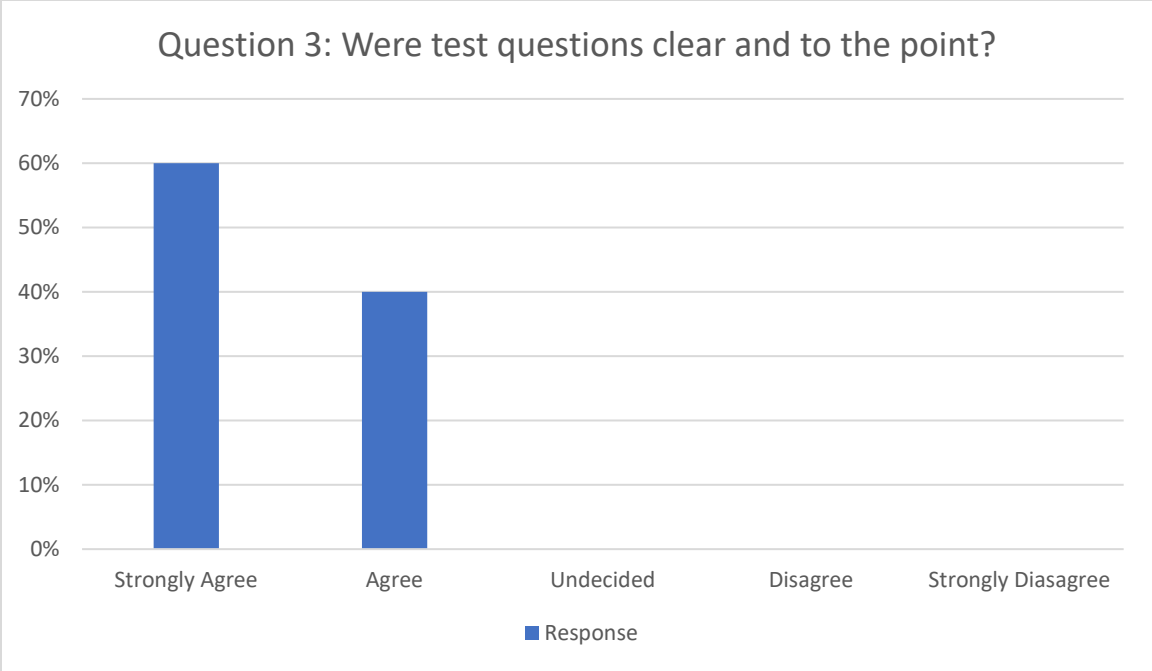
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Appendix D: Face Validity Test for Pilot Study/Results

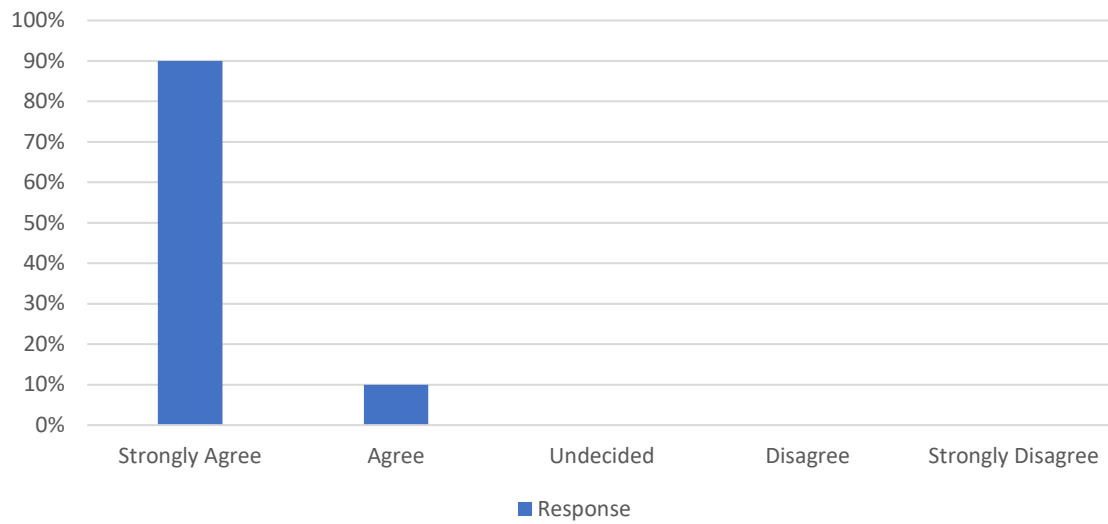
Please circle the most appropriate number of each statement which corresponds most closely to your desired response.

1. Were the test questions easy to understand?
1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Undecided 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree
2. Were the test questions complicated?
1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Undecided 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree
3. Were test questions clear and to the point?
1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Undecided 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree
4. Was the test process clearly explained?
1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Undecided 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree
5. Through instructions given, I understood what was expected of me.
1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Undecided 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree





Question 5: Through instructions given, i understood what was expected of me.



Appendix E: Pre-Test

PRE-BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

PARTICIPANT CODE # _____

1. Gender: ___ Male ___ Female

2. Age:
 ___ 18-24 ___ 25-35 ___ 36-45 ___ 46-55 ___ 56-65 ___ 66 or over

3. Prior education:
 ___ Some elementary school ___ Middle school diploma
 ___ Some high school ___ High school diploma
 ___ Some college ___ Technical school
 ___ Associate's degree ___ Bachelor's degree
 ___ Master's degree ___ Other: _____

4. How long have you attended Nazareth Baptist Church?
 ___ 0-5 years ___ 6-10 years
 ___ 11-20 years ___ 21 or more years

5. How many inductive Bible studies have you completed?
 ___ None ___ 1-5
 ___ 6 or more

6. According to Jude, false teachers are _____.
 - a. Worldly, united, Spirit-filled
 - b. Earthly, united, do not have the Spirit
 - c. Worldly, cause divisions, and do not have the Spirit
 - d. Earthly, cause divisions, Spirit-filled

7. Who in the book of Jude said that there would be mockers in the last time?
 - a. Jude
 - b. Satan
 - c. Michael
 - d. Jesus

8. Observation answers the question _____.
 - a. What am I reading?
 - b. Where are we going?
 - c. What do I see?
 - d. Why am I reading?

9. The analogy of Scripture is _____.
 - a. Comparing Scripture to commentaries
 - b. Comparing Scripture to history
 - c. Comparing Scripture to a sermon
 - d. Comparing Scripture to Scripture

10. The six steps of *lectio divina* are silence, reading, _____, prayer, contemplation, and compassion.
 - a. Meditation
 - b. Silent reading
 - c. Read aloud
 - d. More silence

11. Why did Jude write the letter?
 - a. To teach people about salvation
 - b. To warn people about false teachers
 - c. To teach spiritual disciplines
 - d. To get people to go to church

12. Application answers the question _____?
 - a. What do I see?
 - b. What am I reading?
 - c. How does this apply to me?
 - d. How does this apply to the church?

13. Who said, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints”?
 - a. Jude
 - b. Jesus
 - c. Michael
 - d. Enoch

14. Jude is the brother of _____.
- James
 - Paul
 - Jason
 - Michael
15. A biblical text has _____ meaning(s) but has _____ application(s).
- many, one
 - one, many
 - two, many
 - many, one
16. Appropriation answers the question _____?
- What do I see?
 - What does this mean to the church?
 - What does this mean for me?
 - Why am I reading?
17. Who are the people Jude is warning Christians about?
- False teachers
 - Disciples
 - Satan
 - False gods
18. Jude is writing to those who are _____.
- Elected, majestic, and lost
 - Called, sanctified, and preserved
 - Sanctified, called, preserved
 - Preserved, holy, faithful
19. What did the Lord do to those who came out of Egypt but did not believe?
- Let them go to the Promised Land
 - Saved them
 - Destroyed them
 - Cursed them
20. Interpretation answers the question _____?
- What does it mean?
 - What does it say?
 - What does it mean to me?
 - What does it mean to the church?

21. What are the six basic questions of observation?
- Who, what, when, where, why, therefore
 - Who, what, when, why, how, whatever
 - Who, what, when, where, why, huh
 - Who, what, when, where, why, how
22. Application includes asking _____?
- How does this passage point to Christ?
 - How does this passage point to Jude?
 - How does this passage point to me?
 - How does this passage point to our pastor?
23. Biblical meditation is _____.
- Reading the Scripture
 - Thinking about the Scripture
 - Reading, reflecting, and responding to the Scripture
 - Reading the Scripture silently
24. Michael argues with _____ for the body of Moses.
- God
 - Satan
 - Jude
 - Apollyon
25. What was Jude originally going to write about?
- His relationship with God
 - His relationship with the people
 - False teachers
 - Salvation

Appendix F: Post-Test
POST-BIBLE STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

PARTICIPANT CODE # _____

1. According to Jude, false teachers are _____.
 - e. Worldly, united, Spirit-filled
 - f. Earthly, united, do not have the Spirit
 - g. Worldly, cause divisions, and do not have the Spirit
 - h. Earthly, cause divisions, Spirit-filled

2. Who in the book of Jude said that there would be mockers in the last time?
 - e. Jude
 - f. Satan
 - g. Michael
 - h. Jesus

3. Observation answers the question _____.
 - a. What am I reading?
 - b. Where are we going?
 - c. What do I see?
 - d. Why am I reading?

4. The analogy of Scripture is _____.
 - a. Comparing Scripture to commentaries
 - b. Comparing Scripture to history
 - c. Comparing Scripture to a sermon
 - d. Comparing Scripture to Scripture

5. The six steps of *lectio divina* are silence, reading, _____, prayer, contemplation, and compassion.
 - a. Meditation
 - b. Silent reading
 - c. Read aloud
 - d. More silence

6. Why did Jude write the letter?
 - a. To teach people about salvation
 - b. To warn people about false teachers
 - c. To teach spiritual disciplines
 - d. To get people to go to church

7. Application answers the question _____?
 - a. What do I see?
 - b. What am I reading?
 - c. How does this apply to me?
 - d. How does this apply to the church?

8. Who said, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints”?
 - a. Jude
 - b. Jesus
 - c. Michael
 - d. Enoch

9. Jude is the brother of _____.
 - a. James
 - b. Paul
 - c. Jason
 - d. Michael

10. A biblical text has _____ meaning(s) but has _____ application(s).
 - a. many, one
 - b. one, many
 - c. two, many
 - d. many, one

11. Appropriation answers the question _____?
 - a. What do I see?
 - b. What does this mean to the church?
 - c. What does this mean for me?
 - d. Why am I reading?

12. Who are the people Jude is warning Christians about?
 - a. False teachers
 - b. Disciples
 - c. Satan
 - d. False gods

13. Jude is writing to those who are _____.
 - a. Elected, majestic, and lost
 - b. Called, sanctified, and preserved
 - c. Sanctified, called, preserved
 - d. Preserved, holy, faithful

14. What did the Lord do to those who came out of Egypt but did not believe?
- Let them go to the Promised Land
 - Saved them
 - Destroyed them
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15. Interpretation answers the question _____?
- What does it mean?
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 - What does it mean to me?
 - What does it mean to the church?
16. What are the six basic questions of observation?
- Who, what, when, where, why, therefore
 - Who, what, when, why, how, whatever
 - Who, what, when, where, why, huh
 - Who, what, when, where, why, how
17. Application includes asking _____?
- How does this passage point to Christ?
 - How does this passage point to Jude?
 - How does this passage point to me?
 - How does this passage point to our pastor?
18. Biblical meditation is _____.
- Reading the Scripture
 - Thinking about the Scripture
 - Reading, reflecting, and responding to the Scripture
 - Reading the Scripture silently
19. Michael argues with _____ for the body of Moses.
- God
 - Satan
 - Jude
 - Apollyon
20. What was Jude originally going to write about?
- His relationship with God
 - His relationship with the people
 - False teachers
 - Salvation

21. My knowledge and understanding of how to interpret the Bible has improved as a result of the Bible Only Bible Study.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Undecided
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

22. I will use the methods learned in the classes for my personal Bible study.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Undecided
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

23. I would participate in another Bible Only Bible Study on another book of the Bible.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Undecided
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

24. The inductive Bible study class has had a positive effect on my Bible studying.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Undecided
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

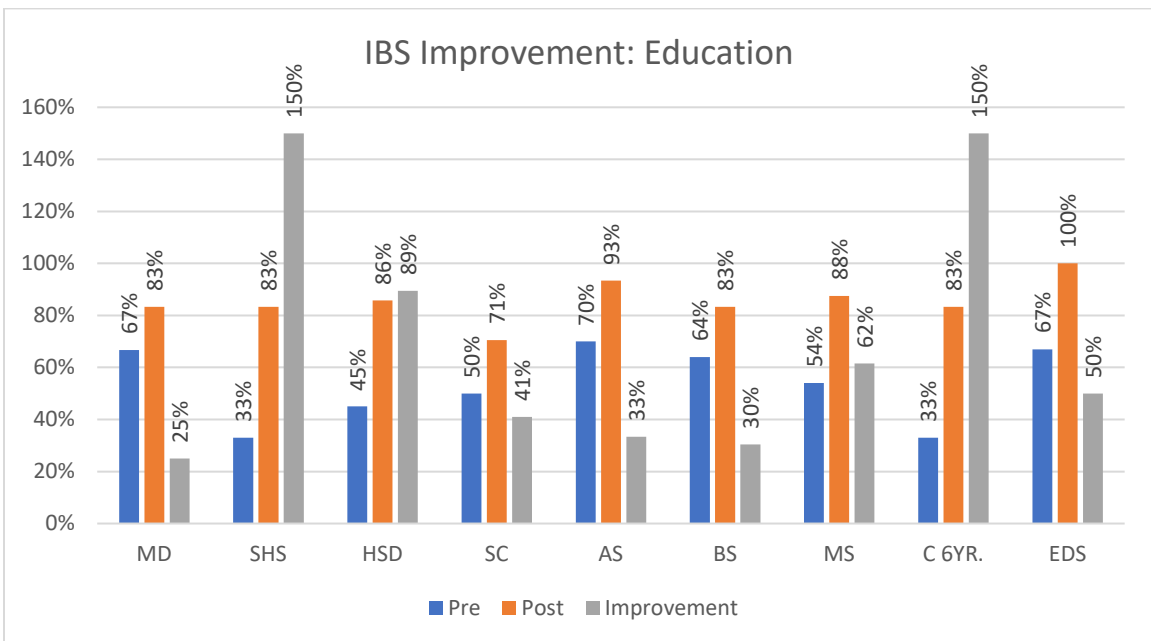
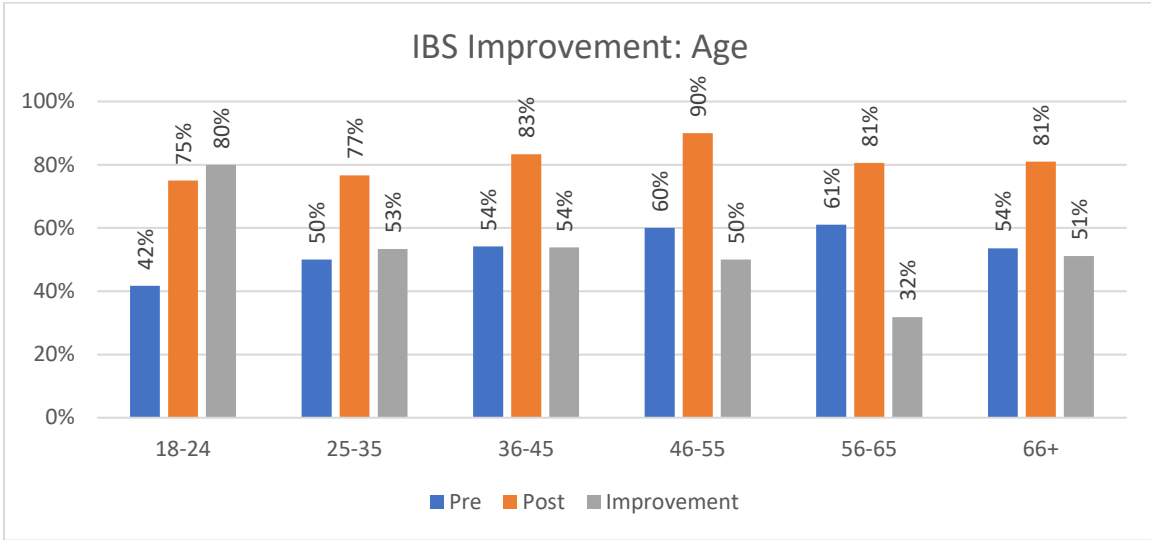
25. Do you think this study allowed you to fully understand the inductive Bible study method presented in the class?

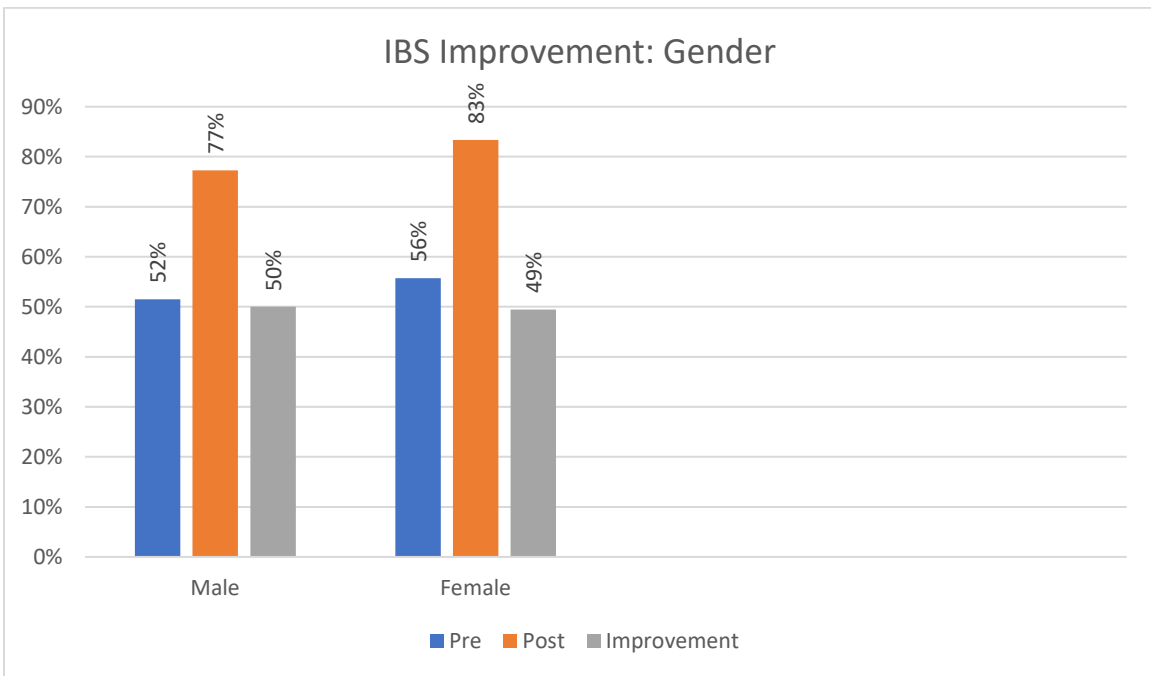
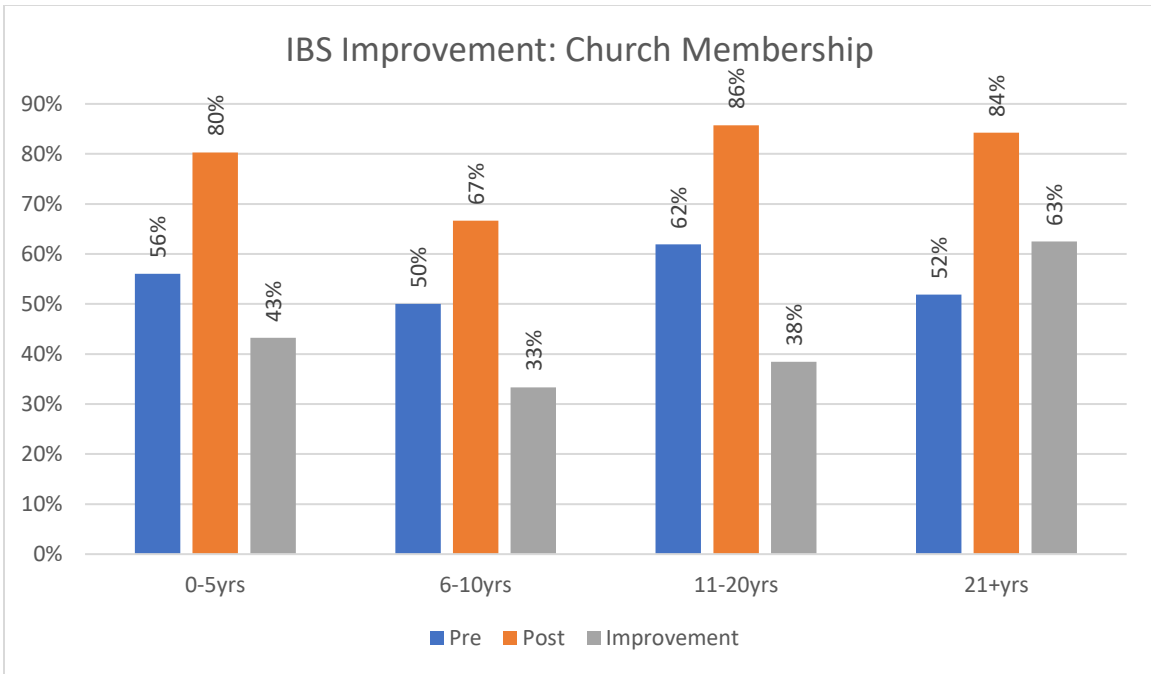
- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Undecided
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

26. What did you like about the study?

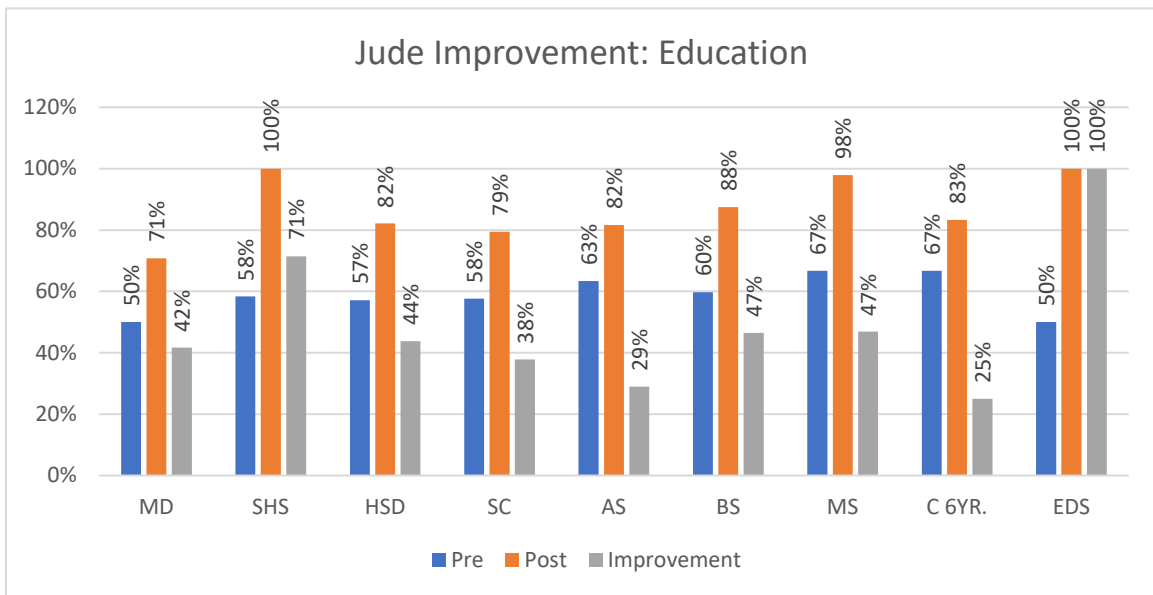
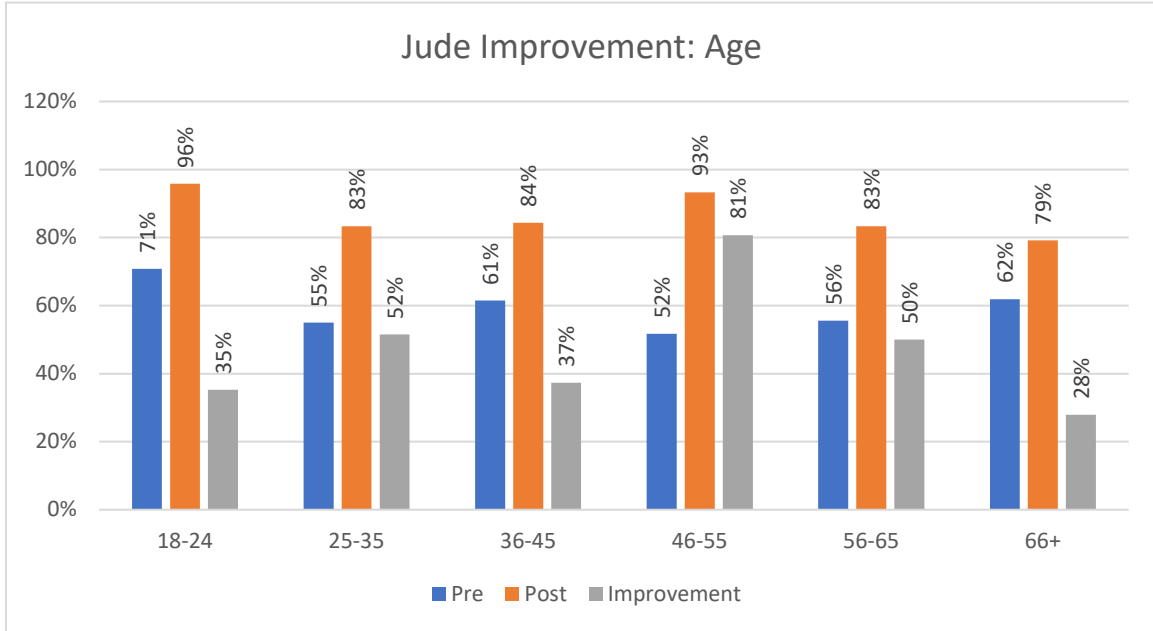
27. What suggestions do you have for improving the study?

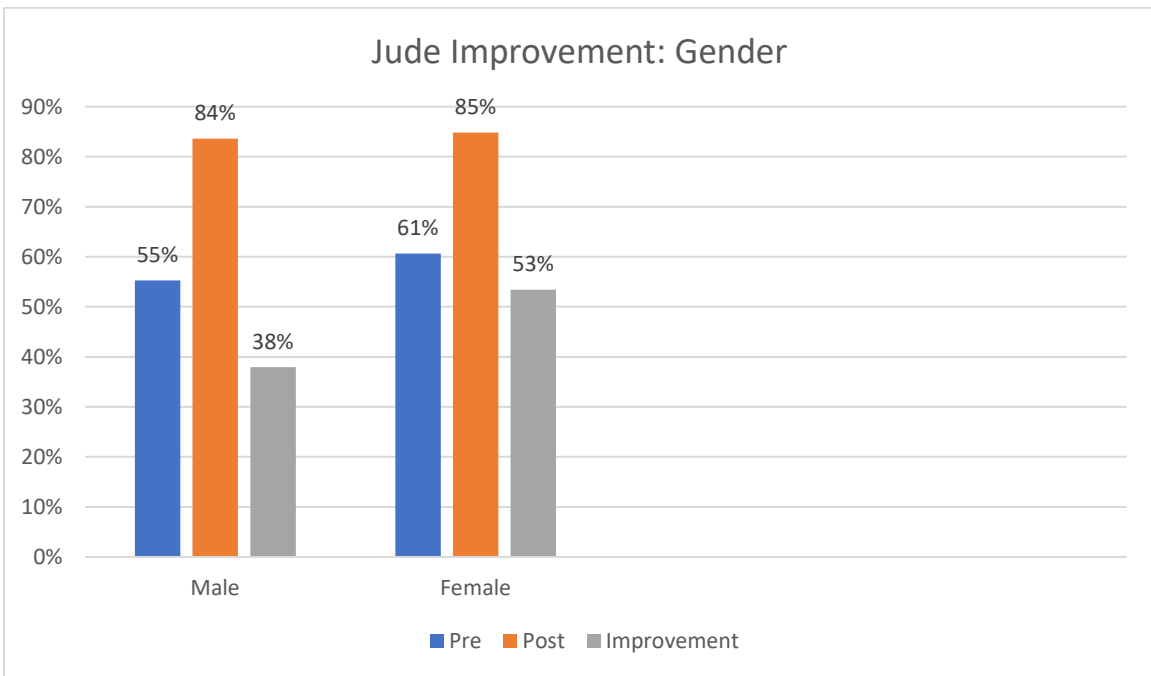
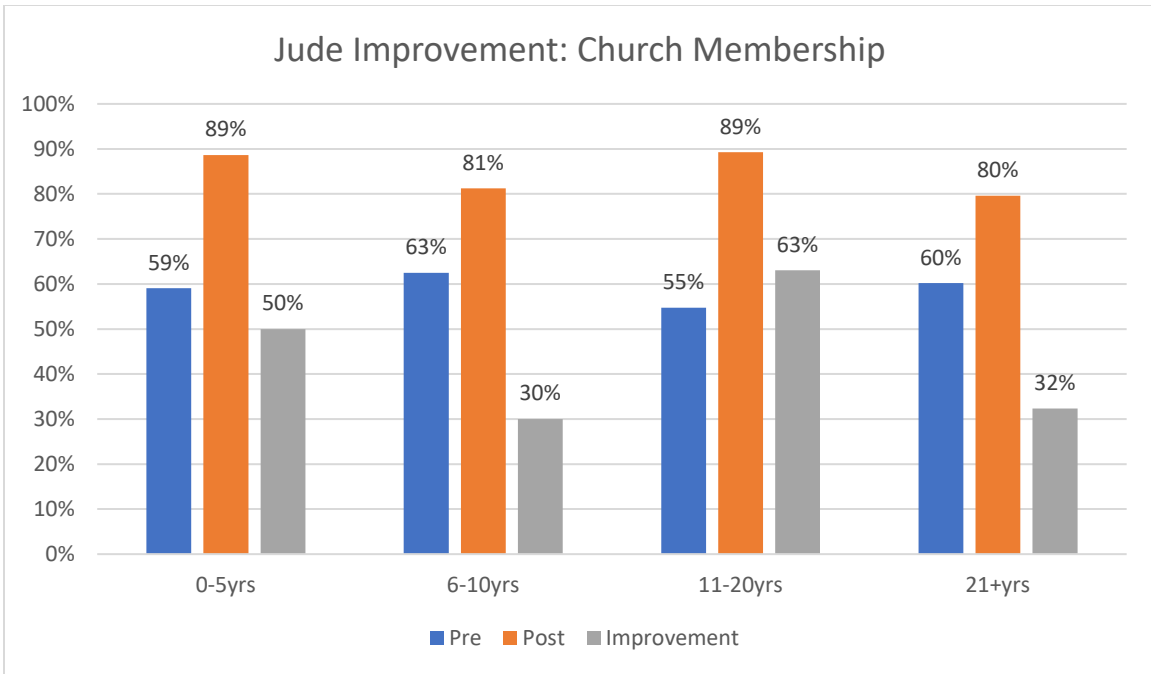
Appendix G: Overall IBS Improvement



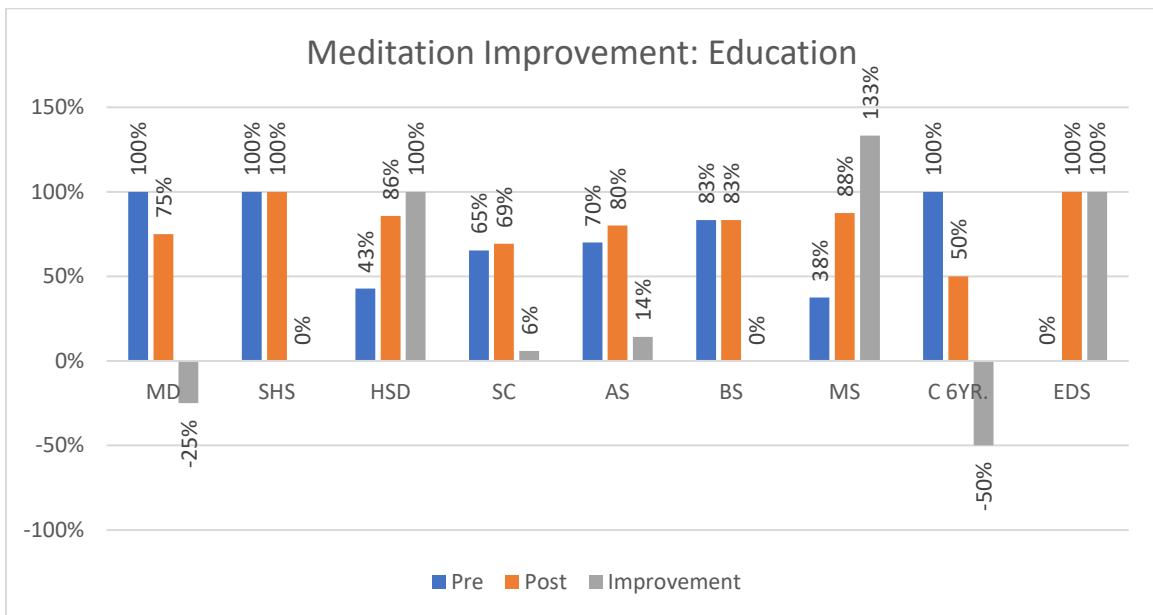
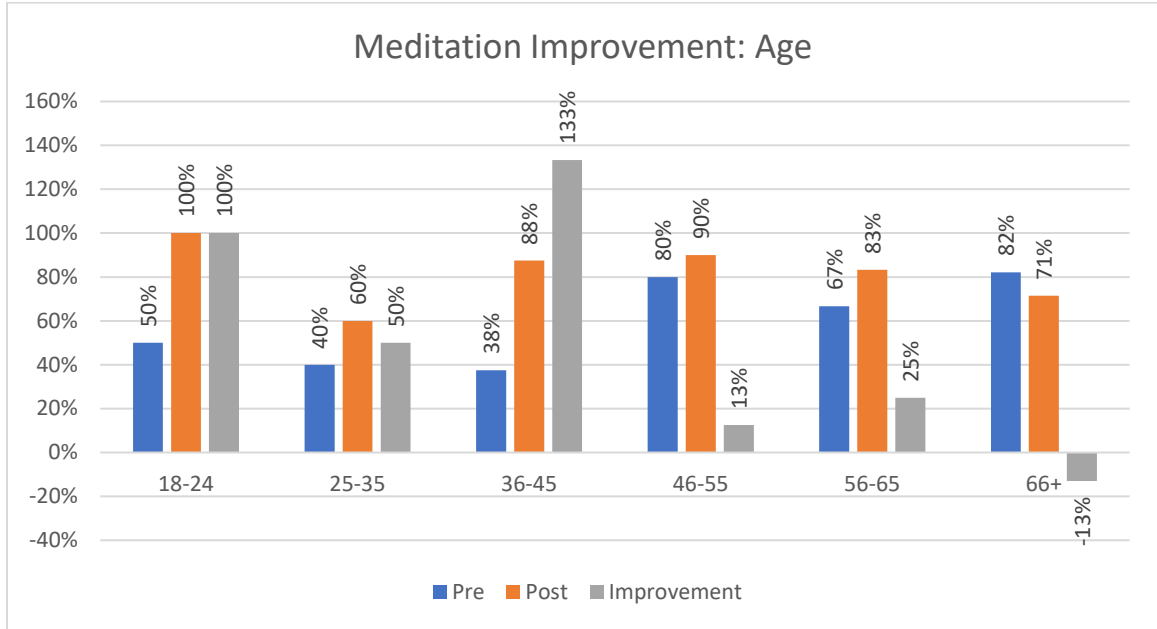


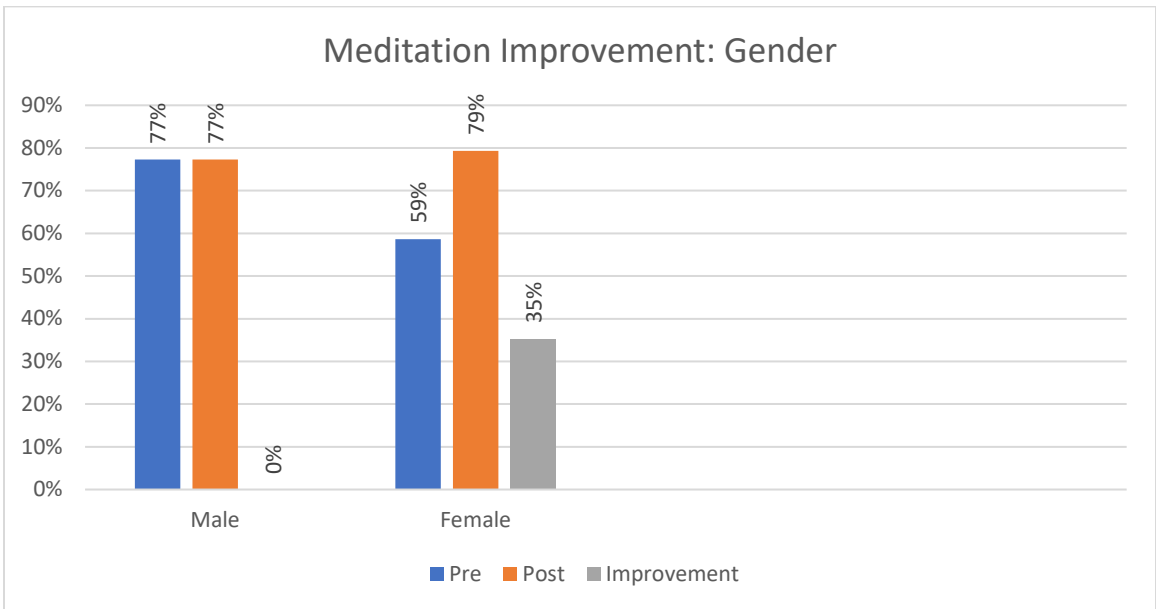
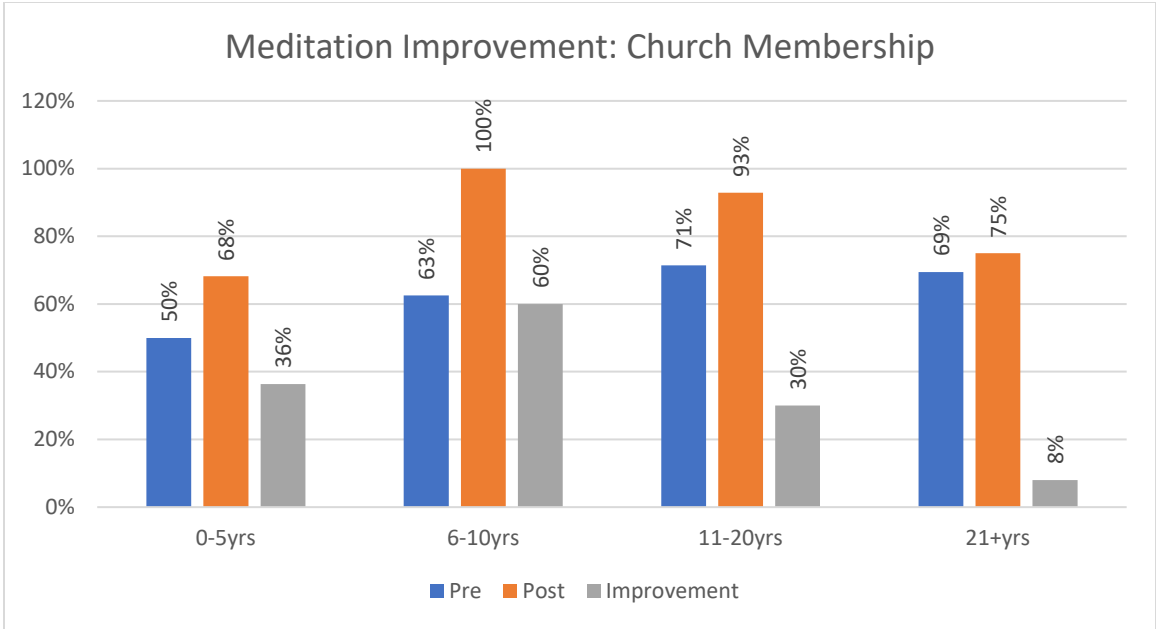
Appendix H: Overall Jude Scores





Appendix I: Overall Meditation Scores





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Appendix J: IRB Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

August 26, 2019

Jason L. Bell
IRB Exemption 3881.082619: Building Biblical Literacy: Introducing the Inductive Bible Study Method

Dear Jason L. Bell,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

(2) Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if . . . the following criteria is met:

- (i) The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;
- (ii) Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at