

TOPICAL STUDY: INSTRUCTIONS

1. HOW TO SELECT PASSAGES:

- a. Determine the range of Scripture you will draw from (e.g. all NT, OT, Paul's letters).
- b. Write down all the verses you know related to the topic.
- c. If you are using a Bible with cross-references, follow the cross-references from the verse you already know to discover related verses.
- d. Examine a topical index: Use concordance in back of your Bible, an exhaustive or complete concordance (e.g. Strong's, NIV or NAS concordance), Naves Topical Bible, or look it up on the internet bible.crosswalk.com.
- e. Use your topical index to find verses related to your topic by searching for words with like meaning (e.g. for evangelism look up: evangelism, gospel, witness, nations, etc.)
- f. Eliminate verses that don't apply by scanning the entries and looking up the contexts to see if they are relevant.
- g. Write down at least 20 references that appear to be most relevant to your topic.

2. HOW TO SELECT 5-7 PASSAGES:

- a. Choose verses that answer your question about the topic or address your topic most clearly, concisely, and comprehensively.
- b. Choose one representative verse when multiple references in your list communicate the same general thought.
- c. Choose verses that add balance and thoroughness to your understanding of the topic. Your short list of selected passages should represent the diversity of ideas turned up in your initial collection.

3. HOW TO STUDY INDIVIDUAL PASSAGES:

- a. Write out the verse in your own words.
- b. Scan the chapter(s) context preceding and following the passage you have chosen to get a broad sense of the issues the writer is dealing with.
- c. Read carefully the context of the verses preceding and following your chosen passage to get a sense of the writer's train of thought.
- d. Observations:
 - i. Ask the who, what, when, where, why of the passage and any other questions you may have and then answer them. What is the tone of the passage?
 - ii. Pay attention to key words and look up their meanings and usages in other passages, underline important grammatical words such as therefore, but, since, so that etc, note any other words that are of importance.
- e. Interpretation
 - i. Summarize in a few words what the writer is trying to say in this passage
 - ii. Write the main principle taught in the passage in one or two sentences (include this in the collect section in your final write up).