

# Introduction to Inductive Method

There are many ways to approach the Bible. As we learn about the Inductive Method consider the following two approaches to Bible study.

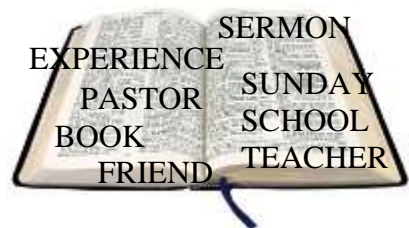
## The Deductive Approach vs. The Inductive Approach



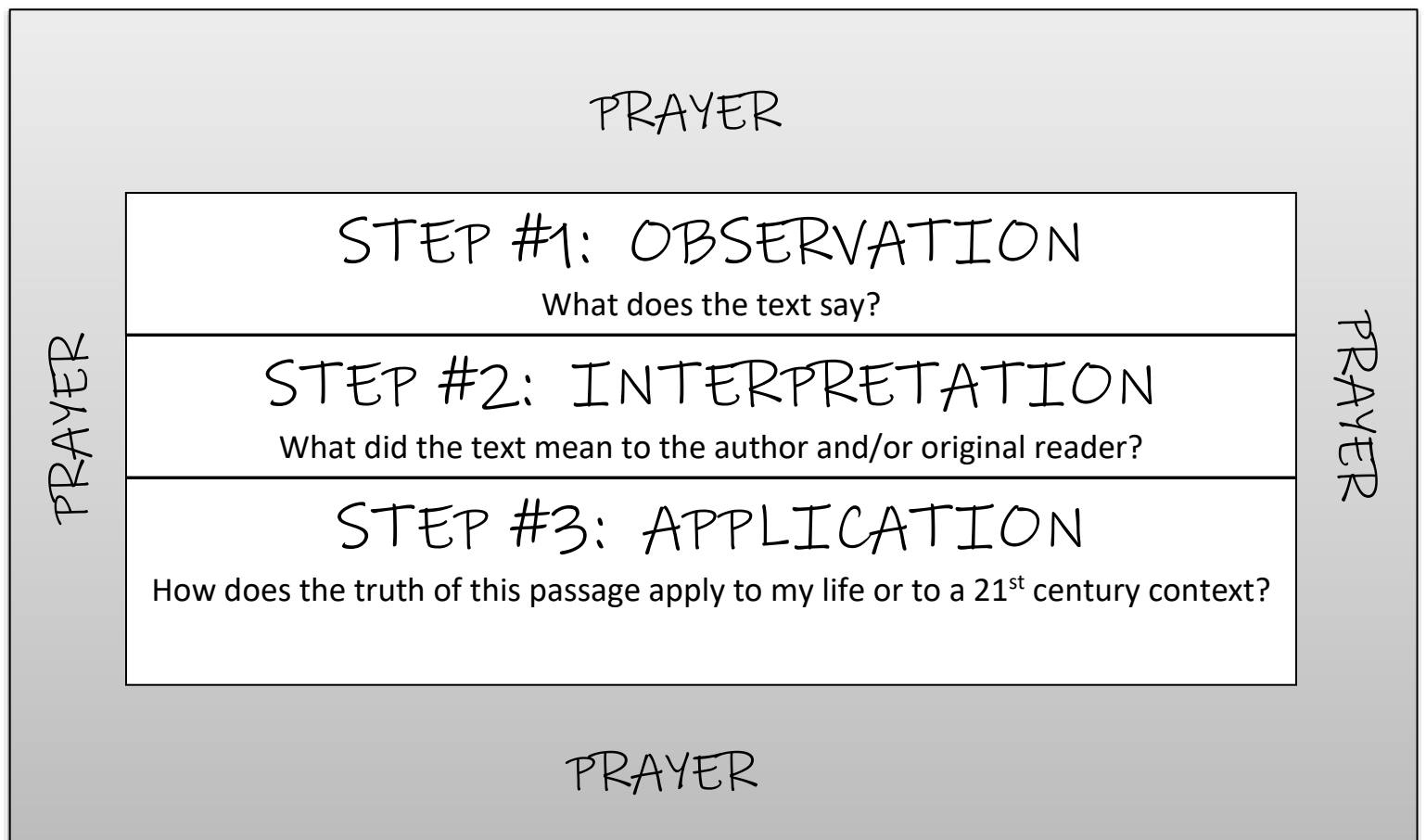
The Deductive Approach	The Inductive Approach
Comes to the text with an idea and then searches out a passage or passages to support that idea.	Allows conclusions to evolve out of what has been observed, laying aside preconceived ideas.
Dictates to the scriptures rather than letting the scriptures speak for themselves.	Seeks to let the Scriptures speak for itself.
One has already, to a certain extent, drawn conclusions before reading the whole text of scripture in context.	Studies the Scriptures in its literary and historical context.

### What are preconceived ideas?

Preconceived ideas are ideas that come from books we read, sermons we've heard, teachings we've had in the past, experiences we've had or experiences of others around us, opinions of friends, family, teachers, etc. They are not necessarily bad ideas but these things can block our view of what the Bible actually says. We want to allow the Bible to speak for itself and in order to do that we have to set aside these ideas so that we can discover what the Bible says.



# THREE STEPS OF INDUCTIVE METHOD



# OBSERVATION

STEP #1:  
OBSERVATION  
What does the text say?

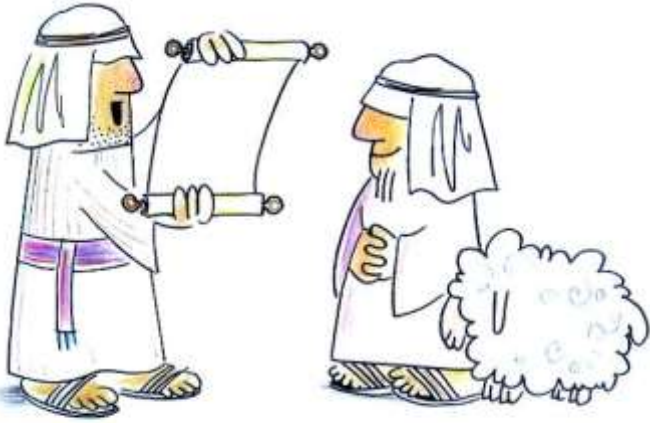


In the step of OBSERVATION we are becoming more and more familiar with what the text says. First we **notice** things in the text like people, places, main ideas, contrasting thoughts, important words, repeated words, illustrations, lists, summaries, quotes, etc. Then we **examine** them closer to gather more information about the thing we noticed.

In this step we are detectives gathering clues but not drawing conclusions. We are not deciding what the text means but are simply looking for the facts without interpreting them.

“Look, look, look until looking becomes seeing”

# INTERPRETATION



~ Interpretation

STEP #2:  
INTERPRETATION  
Why did the Author write this?  
What does it mean to the Original Reader?

Interpretation is determining what the book or passage meant when it was first written. Interpretation is not what it means to the 21<sup>st</sup> century reader.

With interpretation you need to consider:

- Author
- Original Reader – the people to whom the book was written
- Original Hearer – the people that were present when the actual events took place and heard the words that were spoken. (E.g. the people who heard Jesus teach) There will not be an Original Hearer for each book.
- Historical and Cultural Background
- Literary context

INTERPRETATION BUILDS ON THE FOUNDATION OF OBSERVATION.

- Thorough observation results in better interpretation.
- Observation focuses on "What does the text say?"  
Interpretation builds on that and asks "Why is this said?"

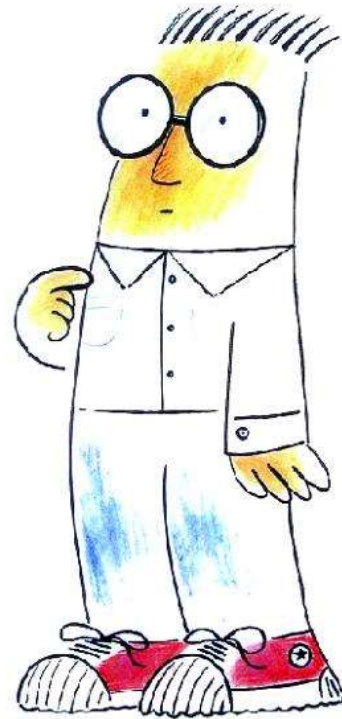
“Why?”

“What is the historical background?”

# APPLICATION

## STEP #3: APPLICATION

What is the timeless truth?  
What does it mean to me?



Application

**APPLICATION IS THE GOAL OF BIBLE STUDY!** The Scriptures demand a response and changed lives. Application is looking into the mirror of the Scriptures and walking away a changed person.

**APPLICATION BUILDS ON YOUR OBSERVATION AND INTERPRETATION.**

The quality and depth of your application will depend on the quality and depth of your observation and interpretation.

In this step we ask questions that begin to stir our hearts to action:

- "What does this mean for me?"
- "How does this affect my worldview?"
- "How does this relate to my church, my job, my family, my finances?"
- "How does this affect the decisions I make?"
- "How does this change what I believe or how I think?"
- "How does this change my view of God?"

But this step is not complete until we take action. Make a plan of action and then put it into practice. Ask someone to keep you accountable to it and evaluate your progress. Remember to seek the help of the Holy Spirit in this.

**"Do, Do, Do!"**