

Putting it all together...a method from homiletics...(C. Hammond)

Homiletics is simply the art of preparing and preaching a sermon. While this term is used largely for pastors, the method can aid a personal Bible study. This technique, in the field of Homiletics, involves the careful outline of a passage in Scripture.

There are **6** steps to this technique:

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|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) Prayer | 3) Divisions | 5) Aim |
| 2) Worksheet | 4) Subject Sentence | 6) Applications |

1) **Prayer**

Prayer is a necessary step before any Bible study. The Holy Spirit is needed to show you new insights and understanding of the Word.

2) **Worksheet**

Read the passage of Scripture several times to get a reasonable understanding of what is taking place. Read more than one translation. Ask yourself questions like: who are the main characters, what is happening, when is this occurring, where is this taking place, why is this event present?

On a sheet of paper, list the verses' numbers for this study and begin to write down a short phrase or a single word from each verse that will remind you what is happening in that verse. You may do each verse individually or you may combine verses together if they have the same thought or event. For example:

John 3

1-3)	Jesus tells Nicodemus, be born again	22)	Jesus goes to Judea to baptize
4)	Nicodemus questions how?	23-26)	John's disciples confused
5-8)	be born of Spirit	27-30)	John knows he must diminish
9)	Nicodemus questions again	31-33)	the One from above knows all
10-15)	Son of Man to be lifted up to bring life	34)	He speaks the truth from God
16)	belief in Christ brings eternal life	35)	God loves Son, given everything to Him
17-18)	those who believe are saved	36)	whoever believes in Him has eternal life
19-21)	seek truth to find light of God		

3) **Divisions**

Look at your worksheet and group the verses together into several main thoughts. Each thought becomes a division. Each division may be a single paragraph or it may include several paragraphs. Look at your Bible to see if it has divisions or paragraphs, which may help you.

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For each division, write a short, but complete sentence describing the key action and character in that division. Keep your sentence factual as opposed to spiritual. For example:

John 3

- I) v. 1-15 Jesus tells Nicodemus he must be born again.
- II) v. 16-21 God loves us so much He gave His son for our eternal life.
- II) v. 22-36 John testifies that Jesus is from above and speaks God's truth.

4) Subject Sentence

From your divisions, combine the central thoughts into a subject sentence of 10 words or less. This must be a complete sentence with a subject and verb. A good way to work towards this sentence is to ask yourself, "What is this chapter really about?" Look at who the main character is and what is he / she saying or doing? Just as with the division sentences, keep the subject sentence factual, not spiritual.

The goal of the subject sentence is that if you were to read it to a person who is familiar with the book you are studying, that person should be able to identify the passage from your subject sentence. Remember, no more than 10 words. For example:

John 3 Subject Sentence

Nicodemus learns of spiritual rebirth while John confirms Jesus' message.

5) Aim

At this point, you begin to find the compelling motive of this passage that would cause you to change your life. A good way to determine your aim is to ask yourself the question, "What action should I take in response to this passage of Scripture?" Or finish this sentence, "Cause me to..." Use an action verb, not a passive verb if possible. Think of the main action that you need to take as a result of your Bible study. Keep your aim short and definite. For example:

John 3 Aim

Cause me to: believe in Jesus Christ to receive the gift of eternal life and avoid the wrath of God.

6) Applications

Go back and look at your divisions. Generally, you should try to write at least one application for each of your divisions. These should be applications to everyday life. What does the passage say about your business life, your home life, or how do I apply this to other situations? If one of your divisions deals with prayer, an example application might be, "How much time do I spend daily in prayer?" Or, "how much time should I be spending daily in prayer?"

Write your applications in the form of a question. Also, whenever possible, use words like how or what or when to ask a question that can no be answered with a simple yes or no. You want to challenge yourself to think about your answer and not just pass it off lightly. Strive for clarity, brevity, and simplicity. Jesus was very clear. He was usually quite brief and He was amazingly simple. And He had all the answers! For example:

John 3 Application

Have I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior and Lord?

What must I do to have eternal life?

Does my current lifestyle bear witness that I am walking in the light, or are there areas of my life that needs to change?

In whom or in what am I trusting for complete joy?