

Ephesians

Lesson #10, Chapter 3 Observation

The goal of this lesson is to teach you how to look at and begin to study a text of Scripture. Observation is a necessary part of Bible study, which can often be overlooked or rushed through. Observation begins with reading through the chapter and then reading and rereading it again and again! At this stage in the Bible study you're noticing and then recording what God has put into the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what it means or how it applies to your life—that will come later, I promise. Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding Word of God. You'll be glad you did!

I've included Chapter 3 at the end of this lesson so you can print it out and mark it up if you'd like. I find it helps me see items more easily if I'm marking and noting things as I go.

How to Do a Chapter Observation

1. Begin with prayer. Ask God to show you how His word fits together. Ask Him to reveal the gems of His word. Pray for a clear mind and a patient heart as you look at His word for this lesson.
2. Read straight through the chapter using the *Ephesians Bible Text* handout in this lesson. This will show you the flow of the chapter.
3. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 3. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.
 - a. Summarize paragraph 1 (verses 1-13).
 - b. Summarize paragraph 2 (verses 14-19).
 - c. Summarize paragraph 3 (verses 20-21).

4. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: What is the main point of this chapter? How do all these details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

5. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your 3-5 word title should reflect the contents of the chapter. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

6. On the *Ephesians Bible Text* handout mark key words. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. Start with these first. Mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

Mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

7. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time *God* is mentioned as you did in *Ephesians Chapter 1*. Your *Chapter 3* list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below from *Ephesians Chapter 1*.

- Vs. 1 – by the will of *God*
- Vs. 2 – grace to you and peace from *God*
- Vs. 2 – *God* our *Father*
- Vs. 3 – Blessed be the *God* and *Father*
- Vs. 4 – just as *He* chose us

8. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter and any actions that are required of the reader.

9. Now, list them on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.

10. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted.
11. Now list what you discovered about comparisons and contrasts on the extra paper you’ve been using.
12. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)
13. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
14. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *God* and *Father* from Ephesians 1:1.
15. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter. An attribute is a characteristic or quality used to describe an object or person. For example, you might read John 3:16, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*” From this verse we see that God is loving [because He loved the world]; He is giving [because He gave His Son]; He is eternal [because only the eternal can offer eternal life].
16. Look for lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts. Number the lists within the Bible text, then record your list out to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper. This will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action. For example, in Ephesians 1:1 *we find a list about those to whom Paul is writing*. We discover 1) they are called saints; 2) they live in Ephesus; 3) they are faithful; and 4) they are in Christ.
17. Be sure to mark or write down any “nuggets” you observed which you thought were interesting.

Remember, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in each chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life at this time. Your task at this time is to look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter. Have fun digging into God’s word!

Ephesians Bible Text
Chapter 3

1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you
Gentiles—

2 if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for
you;

3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.

4 By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of
Christ,

5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now
been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;

6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and
fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God’s grace which was given
to me according to the working of His power.

8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the
unfathomable riches of Christ,

9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been
hidden in God who created all things;

10 so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to
the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.

11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ
Jesus our Lord,

12 in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.

13 Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,

15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name,

16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man,

17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

21 to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.