

Ephesians

Lesson #14, Chapter 4 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 4 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 4. 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 1-16).
 - b. Summarize paragraph 2 (verses 17-24).
 - c. Summarize paragraph 3 (verses 25-32).

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 4 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 4

1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,

3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

8 Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men."

9 (Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.)

11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ,

16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

17 So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,

18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

20 But you did not learn Christ in this way,

21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus,

22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,

23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

26 Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

27 and do not give the devil an opportunity.

28 He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.

29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

32 Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.