

METHODS OF BIBLE RESEARCH

A researcher should work like a:

- a) DETECTIVE, investigating every possible clue.
- b) ENGINEER, researching thoroughly and analytically.
- c) SCIENTIST, testing each possibility to see if it is workable.
- d) JUDGE, weighing facts objectively, listening to both sides of the question.

There are two opposite errors that are common: a) the tendency to take everything secondhand from others, and b) the refusal to take anything from others.

Study methods are sometimes categorized in a manner that is very artificial, in as much as each emphasizing a phase of study that cannot stand alone but must be linked with the others to form one chain. These methods are presented below (in simplified outline form) for the purpose of revealing the various aspects of good research.

A. INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

- a) Examines details and draws conclusions of general perspectives.
- b) Opposite of deductive method which starts with generalizations and moves for their support to particulars (prejudice; unsound).
- c) The inductive method is the objective method--no one is perfectly objective and impartial.

B. DIRECT, INDEPENDENT BIBLE STUDY

- a) Using Bible alone (without outside views).
- b) It's a good policy to study with Bible only before checking external sources that might color or prejudice.
- c) External studies are valuable after internal studies.
- d) With long experience, one can go direct to external studies because: 1) years of independent reading 2) not easily persuaded 3) has basic perspective.

C. LITERARY BIBLE STUDY

- a) Consider the style of the literature.
- b) Literature is a method of communication--to communicate intelligently, one must understand the method.

D. PSYCHOLOGICAL BIBLE STUDY

- a) The Bible is not an almanac of facts.
- b) The Bible is a record of living, dynamic, real experiences.
- c) Consider the experiences and the cause and impact of them.

E. CONSTRUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

- a) Sometimes boundless dimensions pass by unnoticed, while we fasten our eyes on commas and prepositions.
- b) We need to see the total picture (study constructively).

F. COMPREHENSIVE BIBLE STUDY

- a) Thorough in means and scope.
  - 1) every means used to study Bible 2) complete mastery of entire scope.

G. SINCERE BIBLE STUDY

- a) Put nothing in, but draw everything out.
  - 1) shut eyes and ears to nothing 2) taste it all.

H. ASSIMULATIVE BIBLE STUDY

- a) Digest it, read it and live it.
- b) Appropriately its truths by faith and act upon it by faith.

I. REVERANT BIBLE STUDY

- a) Approach the Fountain of Wisdom humbly and Gratefully.