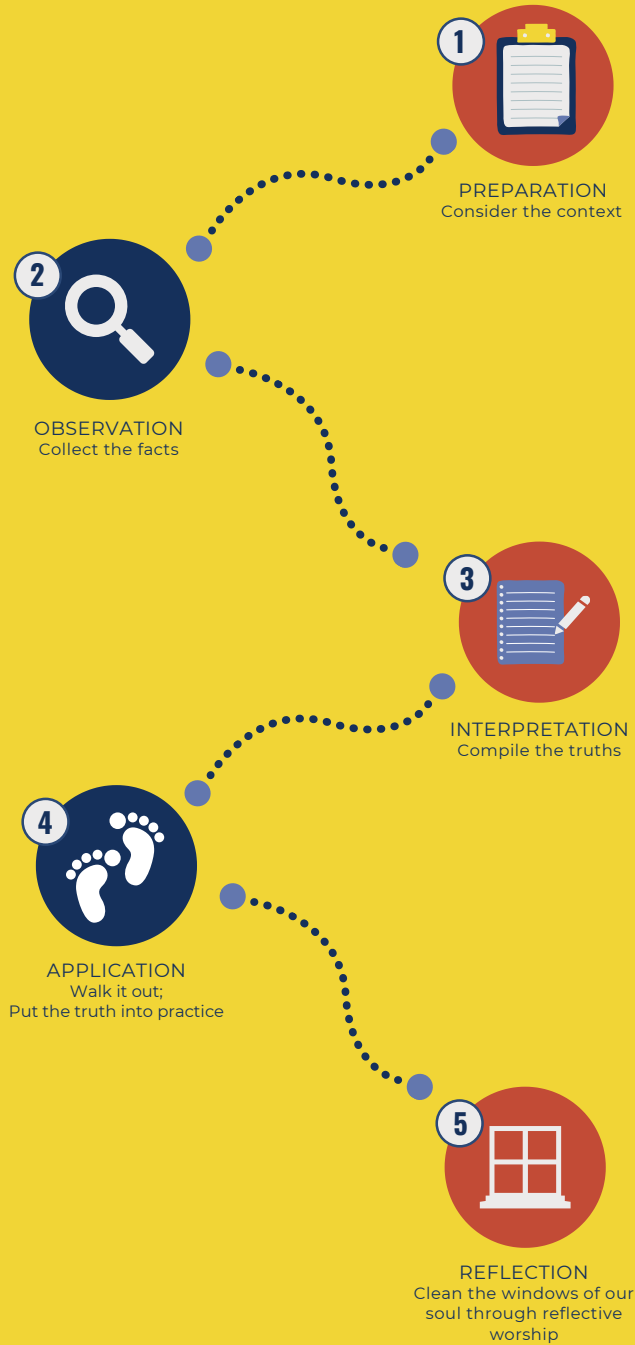


Essentials Bible Study

DISCOVER THE ESSENTIALS FOR A
MEANINGFUL LIFE AND ETERNAL LEGACY

Take an essential step into His Story,
and you will discover your own!



womeninthewindow-intl.org/essentials/

(Graphic Design: Susannah Welch)

Supplemental Material for
Essentials: Discover the Essentials for a Meaningful Life and Eternal Legacy
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Our first step in this Essentials narrative inductive Bible study is preparation. If you are teaching an Essentials Bible study group, or if you are simply studying on your own, here are three simple but vital steps to help you prepare well. Preparation is most definitely an essential. When we prepare a scrumptious recipe, we gather our ingredients, consider the temperature, and then proceed. In much the same way, we prepare for Bible study as we **read, research, and always remember to pray.**

READ her story in an essentially literal Bible translation (word-for-word) such as the English Standard Version and a dynamic equivalent version (thought-for-thought) such as the New Living Translation. Whenever possible, read out loud and more than once.

RESEARCH the background of the story to determine context and the type of literature, and to understand the writer's aim for the original audience.

REMEMBER TO PRAY—God has something special to say to you through His Word. While the timeless truths in each story are for everyone, He understands you and your needs, and He wants to meet you right where you are. As you pray, you open your heart to receive His personal and practical Word of exhortation and hope.

1. Where do we find her story in the Bible? If possible, identify the genre or type of literature.

2. How does the context inform the meaning?

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3. Who wrote this specific book of the Bible, and what do we know about them?

More notes....



Observation

The **Observation** window of inductive Bible study answers the question: “**What does the passage say?**”

Read the story at least two times. Again, I recommend reading two different translations of the Bible—one that is a word-for-word translation, like the English Standard Version, and one that is thought-for-thought, such as the New International Version. List the chapter and verse where you see the following facts.

It is helpful to read the section of Scripture before and after the story to provide more insight into the context. Avoid consulting study notes in your Bible or reference material until you have completed the observation window. This allows you to have an unfiltered perspective on what God’s Word has to say, rather than an opinion of what someone else thinks God’s Word has to say.

1. Who was she?

What do we see about her in the text?

List all people included in the story, including all references to God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit including pronouns.

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Take special note of repeated words and phrases. There is a reason why things are listed more than once.

2. Where did she live? worship? work? travel?

List all **places** in the story, as well as “where” words like *inside, under, behind*, etc.

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3. When did she live?

List **time-related words** like *before* or *after*.

Note when this takes place in the Bible and in history.

4. What other important facts do we learn about her? What is her essential? Is there a key Bible verse that exemplifies her essential?

3  *Interpretation*

Interpretation asks and answers the question: “**What does the story mean?**” Now that we have accurately observed the facts, we can properly interpret and discern the timeless truths that we learn from this biblical account.

In this step, we will list at least two timeless truths from this story (there are usually more than two). The way that we determine if a truth is timeless is by asking: “**Is this true for all people, in all places, and at all times?**”

Refer to the principles of Interpretation found in *Essentials*.

Timeless Truth #1:

Verse(s):

Timeless Truth #2:

Verse(s):



Reflection

Reflection is our final step, and yet it opens the window of our soul to receive the refreshing wind of the Holy Spirit. Engage in an activity that is refreshing for your soul: prayer, praise, journaling, lamenting, confession, silence, solitude, art, and/or nature appreciation. I like to call these soul food.

These are just a few examples, and others can be discovered and developed by studying Richard Foster’s *Celebration of the Disciplines*, or my personal favorite, *The Spirit of the Disciplines* by Dallas Willard.

What a difference it makes when the windows of my home are clean. The breathtaking view outside is renewing and life-giving. In the same way, as we contemplate the truth(s) we’ve learned through this narrative inductive Bible study, we can see what is essential to renew, refocus—and yes—*cleanse* our souls.



Application

Application answers the question: “**What does this truth mean for me?**” and “**How do I live in response?**” It is time to apply God’s timeless truths to our own lives and to experience the great fulfillment this brings as we move forward into spiritual maturity. This application window helps us to remember what we learn far more than if we only hear or read these truths. It empowers us to both know and do what the Bible says!

And remember, it is a message to obey, not just to listen to. If you do not obey, you are only fooling yourself. For if you just listen and do not obey, it is like looking at your face in a mirror but doing nothing to improve your appearance. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you keep looking steadily into God’s perfect law—and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it. James 1:22-25 NLT

Ask, “Is there a(n) _____?”

- principle to apply
- command to obey
- attitude to change
- sin to renounce
- truth to believe
- example to follow
- specific action to take

Timeless truth to be presented:

Method selected for presentation (song, dance, story, etc.):
