



Bible Study Methods

Lesson Three

Review: Reading with X-ray Vision

Every book has a skeleton hidden between its covers. Your job as an analytical reader is to find it. A book comes to you with flesh on its bare bones and clothes over its flesh. It is all dressed up. You do not have to undress it or tear the flesh off its limbs to get at the firm structure that lies under its soft surface. But you must read the book with X-ray eyes, for it is an essential part of your apprehension of any book to grasp its structure. (Mortimer Adler, How to Read a Book, 75)



Structural Elements:

Cause and Effect — one event, concept or action that causes another.

Climax— a progression of events or ideas that climb to a certain high point before descending.

Comparison— Two or more elements that are alike or similar.

Contrast— Two or more elements that are unlike or dissimilar.

Explanation or Reason— The presentation of an idea followed by its explanation.

Interchange— when action, conversation, or concept moves to another then back again.

Introduction or Summary— opening or concluding remarks on a subject or situation.

Pivot or Hinge— a sudden change in the flow of the context; a minor climax.

Proportion— emphasis indicated by the amount of space the writer devotes to a subject.

Purpose— a declaration of the author's intentions.

Question and Answer— the use of questions or questions and answers.

Repetition— terms or phrases used two or more times.

Specific > General— progression: a single example to a general principle, or vice versa.

I. Seeing the Structure (continued)

Great Commission Use the above process to make observations on a familiar passage: Matthew 28:18-20. Be sure to bring your list of observations next week. Don't get frustrated if this seems hard or confusing. As we discuss your observations next week the process will become clearer.

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

OBSERVATIONS:

Observations:

Text Layout:

Annotation of Structural Elements:

II. The Art of the Chart

A chart is to the Bible student what a map is to a mariner. It aids him or her in navigating an ocean of words, pages, books, ideas, characters, events and other information. Without a chart or some similar device, he is liable to founder on the shoals of mental overload.

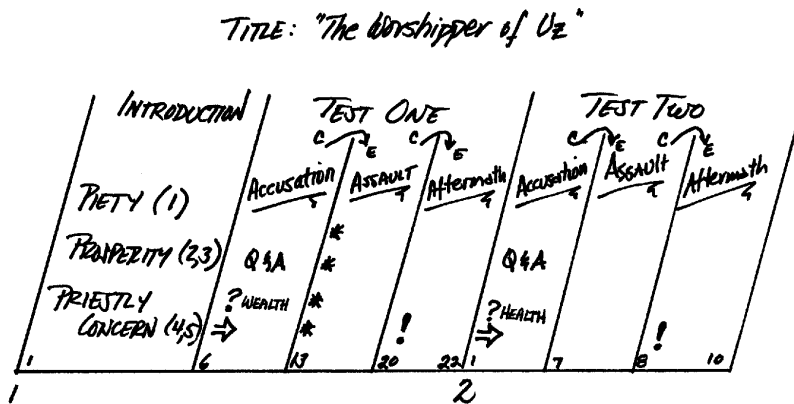
We live in a visually oriented society... Charts can show relationships between verses, paragraphs, sections and even books. Using a chart you can comprehend the purpose and structure of a portion of scripture at a glance. Howard Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, pp. 181-2.

- (1) Make a **study-draft chart** of the passage.
 - Make a “skeleton” chart showing major and sub sections.
 - Title the sections and sub sections (focus on clarity in titles).
 - Annotate the chart to show structural elements.
 - Annotate the chart to show key words or concepts.
 - Don't worry if it gets a bit cluttered.

- (2) Revise your chart to make a **presentation chart** of the passage.
 - Determine the purpose of your chart.
 - Select elements of the draft that fit the purpose.
 - Title the sections and sub sections (use creativity if you like).
 - Annotate the chart with key elements (structure or content).
 - Don't allow too much clutter.

Chart Examples:

The Structure of Job 1:1-2:10 This sheet has the text of Job divided into three sections. First, give each section a title that is descriptive of the contents. Second, for each section how would you subdivide the section? Draw a line showing this division. Third, give each sub-section an descriptive label.



Assignment:

Review the material from Lessons 1-3. If you have questions bring them with you. Next lesson we will begin our discussion of Interpretation. Continue to use what you have learned about observation as you attend hear a sermon, attend Sunday School or a Bible Study, and study on your own.

WEBSITE: www.drstevej.com/bsm.htm