BIOGRAPHICAL METHOD
Dynamic Bible Study Methods
by Rick Warren

Definition:
• Select a biblical person and research the Scriptures about that individual in order to study his/her life and character. Attempt to find out what made an individual's life a spiritual success or failure. Try to become thoroughly acquainted with the inner life of the person you are studying.

Step One - Select the Bible Person You Want to Study
• It is helpful to begin with a person that has few references in Scripture.
• Be careful not to confuse different people who have the same name when looking up references.
• Make sure to find the various names which may apply to just one person. (Example: Peter-Simon)

Step Two - Make a List of All the References about that Person
• Use a concordance or topical Bible to find all the references you can about the person.

Step Three - Write Down Impressions, Observations, and Other Important Info.
• As you read the references you've listed, make some notes about your first impressions you have about the person. Then write down some basic observations and important information you discover about the person.

Step Four - Make a Chronological Outline
• Allows you to see how God slowly molded and changed the person or how Satan brought him down.

Step Five - Identify Some Character Qualities
• Make a list of good and bad character qualities that stick out in the person's life along with the accompanying verse.

Step Six - Show How Other Bible Truths Are Illustrated in His Life
• Examine the person's life to see how it illustrates other truths taught in the Bible.
• Examples: Look for examples that illustrate the Biblical truth that "you reap what you sow." Look for examples that illustrate the Biblical truths from Proverbs or Psalms.

Step Seven - Summarize the Main Lesson(s) From His Life
• In a few sentences write out what you think is the main lesson that is taught or illustrated by this person's life. Ask yourself if there is anyone word that could describe the person's life?
• Ask yourself what was his or her outstanding characteristic?

Step Eight - Write Out a Personal Application
• Ask yourself:
  o Did I see anything of myself in this person's life? Did he show some of my weakness?
  o Did he reveal to me some of my strengths? What impressed me most about this person's life?
    Where do I fall short in this area? What do I intend to do about it?

Step Nine - Pass It On
• Share the insights you received with someone else.

Helpful Bible Study Tools:
• Bible
• Exhaustive Concordance
• Topical Bible