

BOOK SURVEY METHOD

Dynamic Bible Study Methods

by Rick Warren

Definition:

-Involves gaining a sweeping overview of an entire book of the Bible.

Step One - Read the Book

-Suggestions for reading the book:

- (1) Read through the book at one sitting.
- (2) Read through the book in a recent translation.
- (3) Read through the book rapidly, ignoring the chapter divisions.
- (4) Read through the book repeatedly.
- (5) Read through the book without referring to commentaries or someone else's notes.
- (6) Read through the book prayerfully.
- (7) Read through the book with pen or pencil in hand.

Step Two - Make Notes on What You Read

- As you read through the book, write down your impressions and the important facts that you discover.
 - Look for the following items:
- (1) Category
 - Is the book history? Poetry? Prophecy? Law? A Biography? A Letter?
 - (2) First Impressions
 - What is the first impression you get from the book? What do you think is the purpose of the writer? What "feel" do you get from reading it?
 - (3) Key Words
 - What are some of the significant words the writer uses? What words are repeated the most? What word or Words is he Using?
 - (4) Key Verse
 - What seems to be the key verse (if any)? What is the writer's key statement?
 - (5) Literary Style
 - Is the book a narrative? A drama? A personal letter? A discourse? Poetry? A combination of narration and poetry? Does the writer use figurative speech? Is he using a logical argument?
 - (6) Emotional Tone
 - Is the writer angry? Sad? Happy? Worried? Excited? Depressed? Calm? How do you think his hearers must have felt when they received this writing?
 - (7) Main Theme(s)
 - Write out what you believe the theme(s) is/are. What is his major emphasis?
 - (8) Structure of the Book
 - Do you see any obvious divisions of thought in the book? How is the book organized?
 - (9) Major People
 - Who are the principal personalities in the book? Which people are mentioned the most and what parts do they play in the book?

Step Three - Do a Background Study

-Allows you to find the historical and geographical setting of the book.

-Try to find answers to the following questions:

- (1) Who w the writer?
- (2) When w the book written?
- (3) Where was the book written?
- (4) To whom w the book written? Who were they? Who was he? Who was she? Find out about his/her/their historical and geographical backgrounds.
- (5) Why w the book written? Investigate the circumstances related to their writing.
- (6) What other background information sheds light on this book?
- (7) What is the place of this book in the Bible? Is it a bridge between various periods of history?
- (8) What are the geographical locations mentioned in the book? Where are they?

(9) What was the geographical, historical, cultural, and political setting at the time of the writing of the book?

Step Four - Make a Tentative Outline of the Book

Helpful hints in developing an outline:

- (1) Look for major divisions of the book first and then the subdivisions (which usually includes the chapters themselves) and finally the important points that fall under the subdivisions (which usually includes the paragraphs).
- (2) Watch the paragraph divisions for clues in outlining.
 - o Since the paragraph is the basic unit of thought in writing, you can use the paragraph divisions as a guide in designing the outline of the chapter.

Example:

Ephesians

1. The Position of Believers (1:1-3:21)

- A. Introduction (1:1-2)
- B. Spiritual Blessings in Salvation (1:3-14)
 1. What God Has Given Us (1 :3)
 2. The Work of God (1:4-6)
 - a. Chosen to be holy and blameless (1 :4)
 - b.. Adopted as His sons (1 :5)
 - c. Grace freely given us (1:6)

2. The Work of Christ (1:7-12)

- a. He sacrificed Himself for us (1 :7)
- b. He lavished grace upon us (1:8)
- c. He revealed His will to us (1 :9-1 0)
- d. He made us part orRis inheritance (1: 1 1-12)

3. The Work of the Spirit (1:13-14)

- a. He revealed Christ to us (1: 13)
- b. He sealed us as God's children (1:13)
- c. He guarantees our inheritance (1:14)

C. Paul's Prayer for the Church at Ephesus (1:15-23)

1. The Foundation of the Prayer (1:15-17a)
 - a. For faithful and loving believers (1 : 15)
 - b. To a faithful and loving God (1:16-17a)
2. The Formulation of the Prayer (1:17b-20)
 - a. Prayer for wisdom (1 : 17b)
 - b. Prayer for enlightenment (1: 18a)
 - c. Prayer for experiential knowledge (1: 18b-20a)
3. The Finale of the Prayer (1 :20b-23)
 - a. Acknowledgment of Christ's resurrection (1:20b)
 - b. Acknowledgment of Christ's dominion over all (1:21)
 - c. Acknowledgment of Christ's headship over all (1 :22)
 - d. Acknowledgment of Christ's lordship over the church (1:23)

Step Five - Write Out an Application

- Write out specifically the insights God has given you.

Step Six - Pass It On

- Share with others the insight God has shown you.