

Method 11 - The Book Synthesis Method of Bible Study (P. Rhebergen)

In the Book Synthesis Method of Bible study we will summarize and condense the lessons learned previously. The word synthesis indicates the putting together of the discrete items that together compose a whole; thus in the Book Synthesis Method of Bible study we will put back together the details we extracted from the book through our previous two studies.

The Book Synthesis Method of Bible study is the last of three methods of Bible study that, together, will give you an extremely comprehensive view of each book of the Bible. These three methods will require the greatest effort on your part but will ultimately yield the best results. Each of the three emphasizes a different aspect of one overall process of study:

Survey (Method 9 - Book Survey Method) - obtain a detailed overview of a particular book of the Bible.

Analysis (Method 10 - Chapter Analysis Method) - study each chapter of the book in great detail.

Synthesis (Method 11 - Book Synthesis Method) - take what you learned in the previous two study stages and put it all back together, drawing conclusions as you go and gaining an appreciation of the whole of the book.

11.1 - Tools

- 11.1.1 - Bible and several additional modern translations
- 11.1.2 - Bible dictionary and/or Bible encyclopedia
- 11.1.3 - Bible handbook, such as Unger's or Halley's
- 11.1.4 - Old and New Testament surveys
- 11.1.5 - Cultural contextualization tools

11.2 - Hints

- 11.2.1 - Have the results of both your Book Survey Method and your Chapter Analysis Method available and complete, you will need to refer to them frequently during this study.

11.3 - Steps

- Step 1 - Reread the book several times in the same manner as you did in the Book Survey method.

- Step 2 - Write out a detailed, final, outline using the preliminary outline from your Book Survey and the passage summaries from your Chapter Analysis. These, when coupled with your current readings, will allow you to put this outline in its final form.

- Step 3 - Write down a descriptive book title using the same methods by which you gave titles to each section in your Chapter Analysis. The title should be original and define the contents of the book in as few words as possible.

- Step 4 - Make a summary of your insights. You will here summarize the major and minor themes as well as the conclusions of the book as you discovered them in the previous two studies. Avoid commentaries for the moment as you are attempting to arrive at your own understanding of the Bible. Feel free to add new ideas you have discovered during the readings in step one.

- Step 5 - Write out a personal application. Review all applications listed in your Book Survey and Chapter Analysis studies, noting any which you have not yet completed and making definite plans to complete them in the near future if not immediately. If all are complete select other potential applications and make plans to implement these in your life as soon as possible.

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Step 6 - Share the results of your study with other. The Christian faith is unique in that each of us is individually saved through Christ Jesus, yet our carrying out of that faith is best done in a community of believers. Time and again we as Christians are referred to in the New Testament as the Body of Christ and we are encouraged to build each other up in the faith:

Ephesians 4:11-16 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

One of the ways in which the building up other Christians takes place is to share with them what you have learned of God, be it through Bible studies such as this or illuminations from the Holy Spirit.

Reference:

1. Warren, Richard, with William A. Shell, 12 Dynamic Bible Study Methods, Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois, 1987.

Method 11 - The Book Synthesis Method of Bible Study (Chart)

1. Book:	Chapters:	Number of Times Read:
2. Detailed Final Outline:		
3. Descriptive Title:		
4. Summary of Insights:		
5. Personal Application:		
6. People with Whom to Share this Study:		