

— 1 John —  
Lesson #9 Chapter 3 Overview

The goal of this lesson is to teach you how to look at and begin to study a text of Scripture. Observation is a necessary part of Bible study, yet all too often it can be overlooked or rushed through. Simply put, observation is the practice of noticing what God has placed in His Word. *At this stage* in our Bible study, I only want you to notice and then record what you observe in the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what the Scriptures mean or how they apply to your life—that will come later, I promise.

Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding Word of God. Rich treasures are waiting for you!

I've included Chapter 3 (NASB) at the end of this lesson so you can print it out and mark it up if you'd like. I find it helps me see items more easily if I'm marking and noting things as I go.

1. SUMMARIZE. To begin, read through Chapter 3. Now, summarize the contents of Chapter 3. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.<sup>1</sup>
  - a. Summarize paragraph 1 (verses 1-3).
  - b. Summarize paragraph 2 (verses 4-10).

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<sup>1</sup>The method and process of observation in Bible study does God honor, as we stop, observe, and consider each and every one of His recorded Words, in their context. I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the debt I owe to the Precept Inductive Bible Studies observation method, which I have adapted in my studies. As far as I know, the method is the brainchild of Kay Arthur, though I've encountered a number of others who have also come up with similar ways for observing the text. The point of observation is to slow down and really look at what God has preserved for us in His Word. What I've created here is simply another variation to help us peer more closely at the Scriptures—for our good and His glory.

- c. Summarize paragraph 3 (verses 11-12).
  
  - d. Summarize paragraph 4 (verses 13-22).
  
  - e. Summarize paragraph 5 (verses 23-24).
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2. SUMMARIZE. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: *What is the main point of this chapter?* How do all these details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.
  
  3. TITLE. Now you're ready to title your chapter. Your 3-5 word title should reflect the contents of the chapter. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.
  
  4. MARK and LIST. On the *1 John Bible Text* handout mark any key words you see in the chapter. *God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit* are always key words. It's easiest to start with these "God" words first. Next mark words or phrases that are repeated at least 3 times. Mark any other words that seem important to the chapter or are strongly emphasized.

You can mark words or phrases by creating a symbol or using a certain colored pencil every time it appears. This will enable you to see at a glance how often a word is used in the chapter or note a progression of thought.

- a. Next, *list the phrase containing the key words* on a separate sheet of paper. This step will allow you to pull together the information you noted from marking the key words. Be sure to cite the verse references when you list your key word information.

For example, with *God* as your key word you would begin to make a list of the information you discovered every time *God* is mentioned in 1 John Chapter 2. Your Chapter 2 list about *God* should begin by looking something like the one below.

Verse 5—*God* is love

Verse 13—*God* is Father. He is knowable.

Fun study tip to try: Mark any key/repeated words that you notice appear all the way through the book, even if their use in individual chapters may not fit the “3 times or more” rule. This will allow you to trace major themes and an author’s thoughts throughout the book.

5. MARK and LIST. Mark any *commands* that are listed in the chapter. Look for things the author is telling his readers to do or be. Now, list them on your separate sheet of paper in the same way you did for the key words.
6. MARK and LIST. Mark words or phrases that are being *compared or contrasted*. Words like *as, likewise, in the same manner, or like* will help you find words or phrases being compared. Contrasting words like “light/dark” or “love/hate” and the word “but” will help you find words or phrases that are being contrasted. Now list what you discovered about comparisons and contrasts on the extra paper you’ve been using.
7. MARK. Mark transition terms: *therefore, wherefore, finally*. Sometimes an author has his own kind of transition term that lets you know he is making a switch to a new topic, so be sure to look for those kinds of terms. (Generally, these are at the beginning of a paragraph.)
8. MARK and LIST. Mark any time *so that* is used. In putting together your list, look for what comes before the “so that” which will bring about or produce some kind of result. For example, in Philippians 1:10 “so that” appears, but in order to understand its significance you need to also look at verse 9. Your entry for Philippians 1:9-10 might say something like, “Paul prays that the Philippians’ love would abound in real knowledge and all discernment *so that* they would be able to approve the things that are excellent and live sincerely and blamelessly until the day of Christ.” I think you will be so blessed by this part of your observation time!

# Scripture Paths Bible Studies

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9. MARK. Mark expressions of time—words like *shortly, quickly, soon, for a little while*.
10. MARK. Mark words that are synonyms of each other. For example: *Paul and Timothy are bond-servants* from 1:1.
11. LIST. List any *attributes* of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit that you notice in this chapter. You'll start this list by going back up to your listed "God" words that you marked earlier in Question #4. An attribute is a characteristic or quality used to describe an object or person.

For example, you might read John 3:16, "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*" From this verse we see that God is *loving* [because He loved the world]; He is *giving* [because He gave His Son]; He is *eternal* [because only the eternal can offer eternal life].

12. LIST. Look for lists of words, phrases, or related thoughts. Number the lists within the Bible text, then record your list out to the side in the margin or on a separate sheet of paper. This will help you see the thought progression of the author or the results of some action.

For example, in 1 John 1:1 we find a list about the *Word of Life*. We discover 1) the Word of Life was from the beginning; 2) John heard the Word of Life; 3) John saw the Word of Life with his own eyes; 4) John looked at the Word of Life; 5) John touched the Word of life with his hands.

13. NOTE. Be sure to mark or write down any "nuggets" you observed which you thought were interesting, spurred on some thought, or made you want to study further.

*Remember*, the purpose of this lesson is to observe and take note of what is in the chapter. You are not making any interpretations or applications to your life right now. Your task at this time is to simply look for the treasures that God has put in each chapter.

As you do this lesson, take time to worship and thank the Lord that He has preserved His Word for you to study. Admire and marvel at what He placed in this chapter for you to notice. There really isn't any other time in our studies where we simply look at, think on, and study God's Word for itself, so have fun with this lesson! And may the Lord be blessed by your labors!

### **1 John Chapter 3**

**1** See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

**2** Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

**3** And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

**4** Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

**5** You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

**6** No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.

**7** Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;

**8** the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.

**9** No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

**10** By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

**11** For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

**12** not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

**13** Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you.

**14** We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

**15** Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

**16** We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

**17** But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

**18** Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

**19** We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him

**20** in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things.

**21** Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;

**22** and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

**23** This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.

**24** The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.