Inductive Study Approach

To facilitate "hearing" God's Word as you study, this approach employs three basic, sequential techniques:

- Observation
- Interpretation
- Application

Observation

Teaches you to see what the passage says and is the basis for accurate interpretation & correct application. Observation answers the question, "What does the passage say?"

Step 1: Begin with Prayer
Step 2: Ask the "5 Ws & an H"

- Who is speaking? Who is this about? Who are the main characters? To whom are they speaking?
- What is the subject or event covered in the chapter? What do you learn about the people, event, or teaching?
- When do/are the events occur or did/will something happen to someone in particular?
- Where did or will this happen? Where was it said?
- Does this location have a relevant past or future mention in Scripture?

Step 3: Mark Keywords & Phrases
Step 4: Look for Lists
Step 5: Watch for Contrasts & Comparisons
Step 6: Note Expressions of Time
(Don't forget "until", "then", "when", and "after")
Step 7: Identify Terms of Conclusion
("wherefore", "finally", "for this reason", "therefore", "so" etc.)
Step 8: Develop Chapter Themes

Ignore the ones printed in your Bible and instead write in the margin what YOU think the theme is, centering on the main person, event, teaching or subject of Scripture. (Sometimes themes actually begin in the previous chapter and/or end in the subsequent chapter.)

Interpretation

Answers the question, "What does the passage mean?"

Follow these basic rules:

1. Remember that context always rules first.
2. Always seek the full counsel of the Word of God. (Compare and contrast similar passages.)
3. Remember that Scripture will never contradict Scripture.
4. Don't base your convictions on an obscure passage of Scripture.
5. Interpret Scripture literally.
6. Allegories and typology are used to illuminate & confirm, never to replace & create.
7. The NT has priority.

Application

Answers the question, "What does it really mean to me personally? What truths can I put into practice? What changes should I make to my life?"