

How to Use This Study

Step One: Create Your Notebook

To create your *Discovering Doctrine* notebook, print this book file, then three-hole punch the pages and put them in a three-ring binder. You could add ten dividers to the notebook, if you want to, in order to help you stay organized. If so, label each divider with one of the following doctrines:

- The Bible (Bibliology)
- God (Theology Proper)
- Jesus Christ (Christology)
- Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)
- Man (Anthropology)
- Sin (Hamartiology)
- Salvation (Soteriology)
- Angels (Angelology)
- Church (Ecclesiology)
- Future Events (Eschatology)

Step Two: Look for Doctrine Discoveries

“Doctrine” means “teaching.” As you read the Bible during your regular school work, church attendance, or personal devotions in the coming months, watch for what it teaches about these ten main doctrines.

- The Bible (Bibliology)
- God (Theology Proper)
- Jesus Christ (Christology)
- Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)
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When you discover a teaching that falls into one of those categories, record that statement on a page in the corresponding doctrine’s section. Be sure to record the Scripture reference where you find each statement.

For example, if you began reading in Genesis 1 you would discover a doctrine teaching in verse 1 about God. You could record “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth—Genesis 1:1” as the first entry in your notebook in the doctrine of God section (Theology Proper).

As you continued reading, you would discover a teaching about the Holy Spirit in verse 2 to record in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit section (Pneumatology).

From verses 3–25 you could record all the specific things that God created, or you could simply summarize that first chapter of Genesis by recording “God is the creator of everything—Genesis 1:1–25” in the Theology Proper section. It’s your notebook; you decide what to write.

Verse 27 could be recorded in the doctrine of Man section (Anthropology) since it teaches us that mankind is made in the image of God.

Now, not every verse will contain a teaching about a doctrine. For example, many verses describe what someone did or give Christian-living instructions, but they don't necessarily teach us about what man is like or what God is like. It might be helpful to read and search for teachings together with your parent for the first few chapters until you get the hang of what to record and what doesn't necessarily need to be recorded. Some guiding questions are given in each section to give you an idea of what kinds of teachings to look for and record.

When the passage does contain a teaching, you determine in which section you want to record it. Some teachings apply to more than one doctrine. Or you could record the teaching under all applicable doctrine sections; that's fine. The main point is to get into the Word and organize what it teaches about these key doctrines so you can accomplish Step Three.

Step Three: Write Your Personal Doctrinal Statement

After you have read the Bible and organized its teachings under the ten main doctrines, you are ready to prepare a personal doctrinal statement—What do you believe about those doctrines?

Going through your *Discovering Doctrine* notebook one subject at a time, review all the teachings you have recorded, along with their corresponding Scriptures, and write a narration, or essay, that organizes and summarizes that doctrine. When you have completed one doctrine, move on to the next until you have ten summaries that detail what you believe.

As you can see, this study is no quick assignment; however, it is a vitally important one! Ideally, you should take several years to read the entire Bible, record its teachings about each doctrine, then organize and summarize your findings in written form. We recommend you begin this process in seventh grade and continue it through high school, using twelfth grade to review and write the ten narrations that will comprise your personal doctrinal statement. If you are beginning this study after seventh grade, don't worry about it, but be aware that you may need to put in some significant time to make sure you get all the way through the Bible and still have time to write your ten summaries.

Make the commitment now to complete this project. If you are faithful to keep an eye open for doctrine discoveries every time you read the Bible, you will develop an important life-long habit that will serve you well. And if you are diligent to record and organize those discoveries over the coming months, you will build for yourself a wonderful tool that will help you to stand strong, knowing what you believe and why.

No other subject in your education is as important as this one! Pray for guidance as you read and seek to understand the truth about the Bible, God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Man, Sin, Salvation, Angels, the Church, and Future Events.

May God bless you in your study of His Word!