Date: \_\_\_ Bible Text: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Bible Study Method(s): Inductive ( 1 or 2 ) / Associative / Devotional

Step I: What does this text mean?

Step II: What does this text mean to me?

Step III. How can I apply this text to my life?

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**5. Learning To Listen As We Read**

The art of Bible study consists of reading and listening attentively in our own minds to what the Bible is saying to us. Remember, God wants to speak to us through the Bible. Therefore, we should pay attention to every word. This requires that we first concentrate and absorb the message in order to reflect upon it. In this way, we can explore several levels in a story or spend considerable time on a particular level that interests or challenges us.

At first we are simply aware of facts in the story we “hear”. Later, we interpret what we have learned according to our own experiences. This deeper understanding gives us a better basis upon which to communicate with God. Difficult passages require more reflection and can often be interpreted in the light of similar but clearer passages. We can also ask for the advice of mature Christian friends. We ultimately reach our goal of communion with God when we are able to react to the Bible passage according to His will.

In effect, this is what happens in a Bible class when various members express their understanding of a particular portion of scripture. The individual Bible reader seeks to imitate this variety of perspectives by looking at scripture in a variety of ways. This is the goal of *the Bible Study Seminar*. When we reflect on what we have read and “heard,” we can more clearly see whether or not we have understood a situation. When we try to formulate the matter in our own words, we can know if the real meaning of the text has come through to us.

The “listening as we read” approach requires dedication and commitment on the part of the individual Bible reader. Naturally, the more mature reader will gain a deeper understanding of a passage than will the novice. Ultimately, every Christian who wants to know and do God’s will can achieve a more thorough understanding of scripture by “listening” while reading.

**Note:** If we give the same full attention to pulpit preachers and Bible teachers, we will gain more from the gospel message.

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