

# Lesson 5 - Completing a Section Survey

In the first four lessons, we tackled the massive work of completing a book survey. If you have never done anything like this before now, you may have found it to be quite the daunting task. If you have not completed your book survey yet and now you are worried about whether you will be able to develop those skills, do not worry. This week's lesson will give you a chance to practice all the same skills for a smaller section of the book. And, believe it or not, we're still in the Observation stage of our Inductive Bible Study method.

## Repeat the Observation Steps

In the Observation stage of an inductive Bible study, you read the passage several times, make note of any recurring ideas, themes, events, people, words, etc., create an outline of the text, and identify how the different sections relate to one another. This week you are going to do those same steps with a much smaller passage. The good news is that a lot of work you have already done for the book survey can be used in this step.

Because you may need some motivation to repeat this process, here's why this work is being set up in this way. We are eventually going to do the work necessary to interpret a specific verse in *Philippians* by answering one of the questions that arises from our reading. In order to do so, we need to have a thorough understanding of the context of that verse. We are building a pyramid, where the base layer is a strong understanding of the book as a whole. Now we are building our next layer. We will make the same types of observations on a smaller passage. Because it builds on the whole book survey, we will be able to see how this smaller section fits into the larger book. All this work on the macro level will help us answer the important interpretation questions on the micro level when we reach the peak of our pyramid that focuses on a single verse or two.

The verse we are going to eventually interpret is found in the larger section of Philippians 1:27 - 2:18. We will repeat the process of the book survey on this smaller passage. We will read that passage several times. As we read it, we will create a list of the ideas that repeat throughout that section. We will develop an outline that breaks down the larger section into smaller pieces. Once our outline is complete, we will identify the grammatical structures that show how the pieces relate to one another.

Your outline of the entire book, especially if you did a graphical outline, may already have the breakdown you need for this text. If so, you can now see the immediate benefits of that work as you continue to work your way through a bible study of an entire book.

## Finding Recurrences

Because you are dealing with a much smaller passage, recurring themes, ideas, words, or phrases may not be as obvious. The quantity of how many times it repeats will certainly be lower than in a whole book. The passage for this week's assignment is only twenty-two verses long, so anything considered a recurrence will probably only occur two or three times. An important consideration when trying to identify recurrences for such a small passage is whether the recurrence is a driving force throughout the passage. Another important consideration is whether the recurrences stretch across the whole passage or concentrated in one verse

Let's look at an example of how to find the recurrences of a smaller passage by identifying the recurrences in Philippians 4:1-9. Here are some possibilities of recurrences for this section.

Which ones should we include? Try this on your own before you look at the answers below!

- "in the Lord"
- "Rejoice"
- "God"
- "Peace"

***Don't look below until you've tried above on your own!***

Okay, which ones did you pick? Here are some thoughts to consider.

- The phrase "in the Lord" occurs three times - in 4:1,2, and 4. The recurrence covers about half the passage. Plus the phrase "in Christ Jesus" occurs in 4:7. These are probably related. Include "in the Lord" in your list.
- "Rejoice" occurs twice in 4:4. By itself, it probably does not qualify as a true recurrence for the entire section. However, if you include Paul calling the Philippians believers his "joy and crown" in 4:1, you might be able to make a case for identifying a rejoicing attitude as a recurrence.
- "God" occurs three times - 4:6,7, and 9. "Peace" occurs in 4:7 and 9, in conjunction with "God". The phrase "peace of God" is a better candidate for inclusion as a recurrence because it is noted twice as something that will result after a specific action.

It is possible that when you search for recurrences in passages as small as this, you may not be able to identify any. Don't become distraught if that happens to you. In the scenario where no obvious recurrences are present, go back to your master list from your book survey. See what recurrences occur in this section you are observing. If any of those occur two times or more in this section alone, it's probably worth noting. If that is not true for any of your whole book recurrences, make mental note of any that occur even once in the section. Those occurrences will be useful when you get to the interpretation stage.

## Creating an Outline

As you have seen, the process of identifying the recurrences of a passage is shaped by the size of the passage. The same is true when creating an outline for the passage. If you were creating the outline of a section from Genesis, chapters 37 through 50 for instance, chances are you will outline that section by grouping the chapters into smaller groups. If you look back at the graphical outline given to you for Genesis in Week 2, you can see the chapters in that section grouped into smaller sections of chapters 37 thru 41, 42 through 45, and 46 through 50. A closer look of the chapters may reveal that some of the chapters need to be split, depending on the flow of the ideas or narrative in the passage. For something smaller like we are doing with Philippians, your outline of a smaller section will consist of giving titles to paragraphs or even subparagraphs, possibly even grouping them.

If you created a graphic outline when you completed the whole book survey, the probability of already having your section outline is high. The graphic outline allows you to get more detailed, so may have already done this step without realizing it.

Let's go back to Philippians 4:1-9 and outline it together. Take a moment to read over these verses. Look at your work from creating the outline for the book survey.

- How did you break down the paragraphs in this section? Give each paragraph a descriptive title.
- Do any of these paragraphs need to be grouped with another to form a subsection with the larger section? For this example, that is probably NOT the case because the section is so small already. Grouping paragraphs is more likely for a larger section.

Before looking at the example outline for this section given below, create your own so you can compare the two.

***Don't look below until you've tried above on your own!***

## Outline of Philippians 4:1-9 - Exhortation to Demonstrate Christ's Righteousness

- I. 4:1 Stand Firm
- II. 4:2-3 Euodia & Syntyche
- III. 4:4-7 Joy, NOT Anxiety
- IV. 4:8-9 Christian Mindset & Practice

## Identifying Grammatical Structures

All the grammatical structures we learned about for the whole book apply to smaller sections as well. When trying to identify recurrences and other grammatical structures, make note of only those ones that are evident across the specific section you are surveying. These same recurrences or structures may not have appeared in the initial book survey because they are isolated to this section and not spread across the entire book. As you identify recurrences and other structures, refer to the list of questions given in last week's lesson to ask about each structure. Intentionally and specifically asking these questions will force you to think more deeply about what you are reading and lead you to deeper understandings of the text.

A section survey may feel redundant. However, it enables us to gradually narrow down the book we are studying. Our goal is to identify how all the parts fit together, starting with the largest parts (book survey), working down to a smaller section, and eventually down to the verse or even phrase level. We are intentionally taking it slow so we can become comfortable with the skills needed to fully complete all the elements of the observation - interpretation - application cycle.

## Homework

This week, complete a survey of the section Philippians 1:27-2:18. A survey of Philippians 4:1-9 has been provided as a guide for your work. Remember to include the following elements in your survey:

- A summary of the section & how it relates to the larger book
- The key verse of the section
- An outline of the section. Remember you can use your work from the book survey.
- A list of recurring ideas, events, words, etc. and their accompanying questions
- The grammatical structures that relate the sections of the outline together and accompanying questions for those structures.

# Section Survey - Philippians 4:1-9

## Context & Summary

This section is the final section of a larger section on *Becoming Like Christ* (1:27 - 4:9). It speaks directly and specifically to issues within the Philippian church. Two individuals are called out by name, Euodia and Syntyche, for their quarrel. A third individual, whose name is not given (“true companion” verse 3 *ESV*) is called upon to assist. Paul gives explicit direction on how to deal with any anxiety caused by the current situation, quite possibly, but not limited to, the oppression of the Judaizers (3:2).

## Outline

Philippians 4:1-9 - Exhortation to Demonstrate Christ’s Righteousness

- I. 4:1 Stand Firm
- II. 4:2-3 Euodia & Syntyche
- III. 4:4-7 Joy, NOT Anxiety
- IV. 4:8-9 Christian Mindset & Practice

## Key Verse

Paul’s exhortation to “stand firm thus in the Lord” (4:1) is the key verse for this section. It sets the stage for the following material which details how the readers are to stand firm as a demonstration of their Christlikeness.

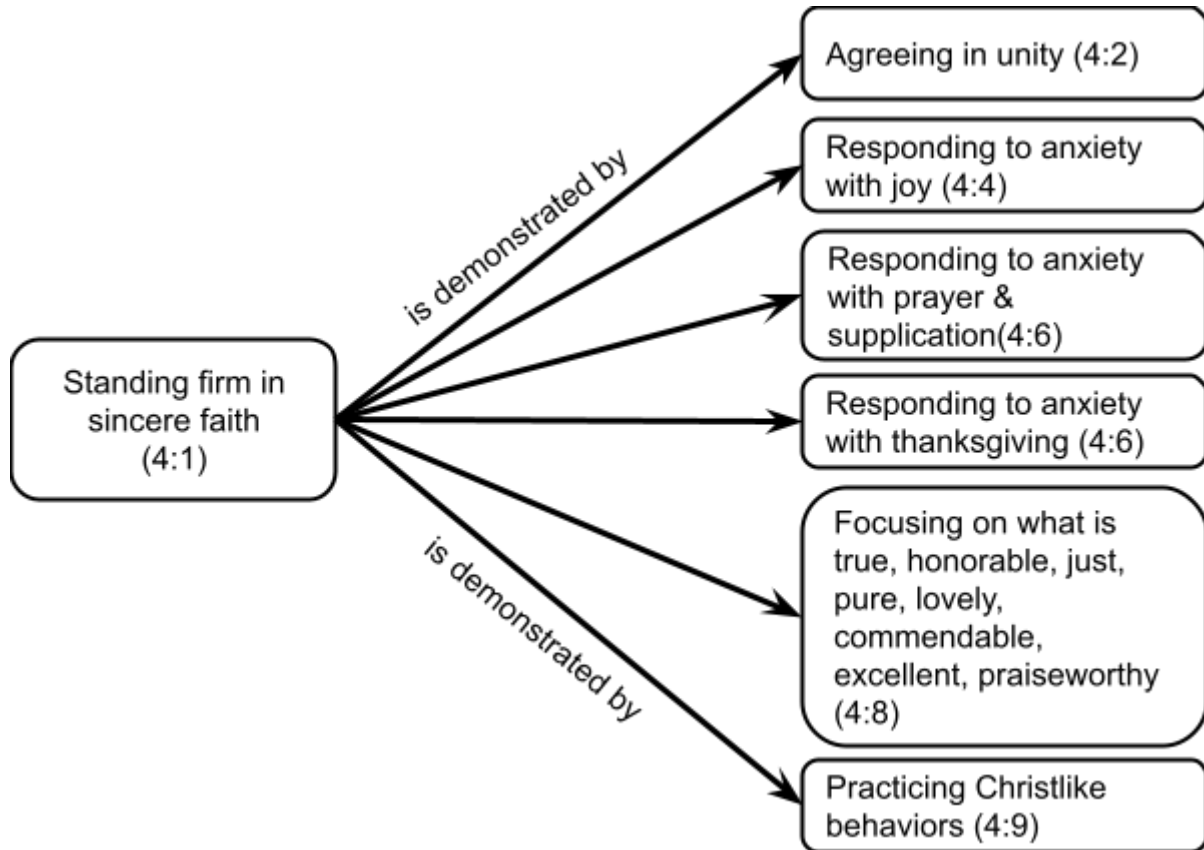
## Recurrences

- “in the Lord”
  - Paul encourages the readers to “stand firm *in the Lord*” (4:1).
  - Paul pleads with Euodia and Syntyche “to agree *in the Lord*” (4:2).
  - Paul continues to encourage the readers by telling them to “rejoice *in the Lord*” (4:4)
  - In a related occurrence, the peace of God is described as guarding the hearts and minds of the readers “in Christ Jesus” (4:7).
  - What is the meaning of “in the Lord”? Is it a physical place, method, mode, intellectual perspective or some other form of action? How do all these occurrences relate to one another and add understanding to one another? Why is “in the Lord” repeated? Why is it important that “in the Lord” is repeated?

- Peace from God
  - The “peace of God” results from praying to God with thanksgiving in the face of anxiety (4:7).
  - The “God of peace” will be with those who have the mind and practices of Christ (4:9)
  - What is the specific meaning of “peace” in these passages? How is it related to God? Is God the only source or one source out of many? If there are many sources, how is God’s peace different from the others? How does this peace result from the indicated processes? Are these the only processes that lead to God’s peace? Why do these processes lead to God’s peace? How do the repeated references to God’s peace relate to and add understanding to one another? Why is God’s peace repeated in this way? Why is it important that God’s peace is repeated in this section?
  
- Joyful attitude
  - Paul refers to the readers as his “joy and crown” (4:1).
  - The readers are encouraged to rejoice in the midst of all circumstances, whether positive or negative (4:4).
  - What is the meaning of joy and rejoicing? How do these two instances relate to one another? How do they add meaning to one another? Why is this joyful attitude repeated? Why is it important that a joyful attitude is repeated?

## Other Grammatical Structures

### *PARTICULARIZATION*



Questions: What is the meaning of standing firm? How do the characteristics or actions listed demonstrate this? How do these characteristics and actions add to our understanding of the meaning of standing firm? Why does the writer include these specific examples? Why are these examples important?