



How to Do a Character Study

8 Simple Steps

1. Select a character to study
2. List the passages related to this character (use a concordance or search tool such as the Blue Letter Bible www.blueletterbible.com)
3. Read the verses you listed. List key verses or passages. Apply what you learned when you completed a verse analysis.
4. Develop a character profile of the person you are studying including strengths, successes, flaws and failures. Use the worksheet to help you develop you read.
5. Write a brief character sketch that tells the story of your character.
6. How do you relate to this character?
7. Write a summary of what you learned including.
 - A. Character studied
 - B. Facts about the character
 - C. Character profile
 - D. The character's story in your own words
 - E. What I learned and how I might apply what I learned
8. List themes, questions, what might appear to be a theological problem or conflict, and other potential areas of study resulting from this character study. Collaborate

How to Do a Character Study

Helpful Hints and Tips for Completing a Character Study

Pick any character you like. Use a concordance or Bible search tool to help you list verses that relate to the character you choose. You will likely see references to other verses that relate to your character as you go through your study.

Read the verses on your list. Use the principles you learned as you learned how to do a verse analysis to help you get the entire context related to the character you selected. Read them all quickly and then study in more detail those verses that seem to invite more attention. Expanding the context is particularly important as you study a character so be sure and move backward and forward from the verse list to give you the whole picture.

Begin with a profile of the character. Build on the profile to develop a brief biographical sketch – a summary of the character based on what you can tell from the Bible. It helps to keep in mind that the characters in the Bible are real people. They lived in their day the same way we live today. James 5:17 says, “Elijah was a man with a nature like ours...”. James was one of the writers of the New Testament but he was referring to Elijah, one of the prophets in the Old Testament. Elijah lived in the period written about in 1 Kings and 2 Kings. He was referred to by the writers of the New Testament. It helps to keep in mind that the writers of the New Testament “had a nature just like ours”. Knowing this can help you relate to the characters of the Bible as real people. They had strengths and weaknesses, challenges in life, and issues to face in their day the same way we do today.

There are a couple of ways to look at doing a character study that may help. Pretend that you are the owner of an NFL franchise or other professional sports team, or perhaps a coach at a Division I university. You are looking for athletes for your team. How would you evaluate the character you are studying? What are their strengths, their weaknesses, and their tendencies? What are the facts relating to their background that help you understand this character better? What are their character traits, their skills, their gifts? What are their tendencies? How have they grown as their story is revealed? This perspective can help you summarize the character.

How to Do a Character Study

Considering this athletic parallel, how do you relate to this character? What have you learned about this character, about the character's relationship to God, how they lived their life, and the story of their life? If you were looking at "drafting" this person, how would you view them? Considering God's perspective, how would you describe the way God viewed this character? How do you apply what you have learned to your life?

As you study characters in the Bible, you will surely relate to their lives, their circumstances, their challenges, their mistakes, and their successes. It helps to remember that that is the reason they are there. Perhaps the biggest secret to the successes (and failures) of the characters in the Bible is how they related to God. God through His Word lets us benefit from their experience.

As you complete character studies, consider how you might summarize your own life from the same perspective as you use when you consider those in the Bible. If you were a Bible character, how would you summarize your life? What would the story of your life be - your story so far? How would you like the story to be written for your future? This perspective can help you learn the most and change your life - you write the character study of your life and then seek God's Word to live it out. How does God view you? How does He view differently than He does the characters in the Bible?

Read through the Character Study Worksheet. You may also want to have some note paper available for this type of study. The worksheet for this lesson is more like an outline of things to consider as outline of things to consider as you work through the steps of a character study.

For additional insight, consult a good Bible dictionary for more insight into your character. Google can help you get started but your best bet is to consult a reputable Bible dictionary such as Vine's Expository Dictionary. The Blue Letter Bible is a great online resource (www.blueletterbible.com). It has Bible dictionaries linked directly to their website.

As always, you are encouraged to collaborate with others.