

Inductive Bible Study

Pastor Dan Finrock teaches native pastors how to study God's Word, using the Bible alone as their resource.

story by Christine Scheller
photos by David Villarete

The Indian air was hot and thick. Eleven hundred pastors were crammed in the partially completed sanctuary at CC Eluru to learn how to study the Bible, verse by verse. The two-story concrete building, with only a foundation and roof, was draped with a rainbow of fabric to block out the withering heat of the sun.

Dan Finrock had taught the men how to create a sermon from their study of Isaiah, Chapter One, using Inductive Bible Study (IBS). Seated on plastic lawn chairs, each man then crafted his own sermon using this method.

He began to preach from the text they had studied. The sanctuary became electric with a powerful move of the Holy Spirit as Dan finished. Men began to weep in repentance, and spontaneous prayer broke out—much of it for the lost souls of India.

CC Eluru's pastor, Abraham Motakatla, whispered to Dan that some did not fully understand how to be saved. The invitation was given, and a dozen men came forward.

Simple but Profound

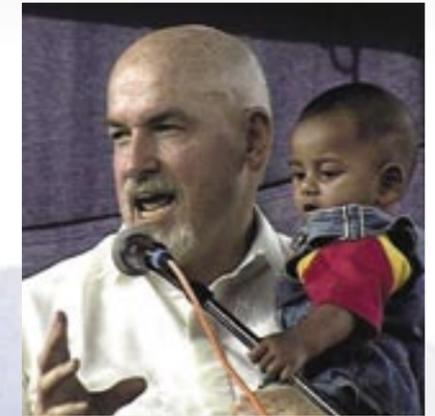
Dan has traveled around the world instructing others in IBS's simple but profound method. IBS teaches how to study God's Word without outside study aides. It is particularly helpful for native pastors that lack commentaries or access to teaching tapes. Seeing the need to assist pastors in developing countries with this method, Dan began Intensive Care Ministry (ICM) almost 20 years ago.

He developed a seminar and manual for teaching the IBS system. It includes a three-column charting system for



Pastor Dan with the ministry team at the Mori outreach.

recording observations, interpretations, and applications. It takes participants through the whole gamut of different ways to look at the five different book types found in Scripture and provides instruction in preparing Bible studies and sermons from the text.



Abraham's grandson is dedicated.

Returning to Teach

Last year, Dan took his fourth IBS trip to CC Eluru, located in the southeastern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. Over 1,000 pastors had to be turned away for lack of space on that trip, so the February 2003 trip was scheduled. Eleven hundred were in attendance this time.

“The pastors are eager to learn IBS because it works only with Biblical facts,” said Dan. “Three steps are taught—observation, interpretation, and application. You see all sorts of things you never noticed before.”

Though he doesn't consider himself an evangelist, Dan and a team of ten, including pastors Dave Villarete and Terry Evans of CC Santa Maria, CA, and Darrell Sparks, senior pastor of CC Antelope Valley, CA, risked possible arrest to preach the Gospel in the coastal city of Mori in India.



A typical scene on the Indian roads.



Pastor Darrell Sparks, CC Antelope Valley, walks with a new friend.

A foreign evangelist had recently been beaten and stabbed by a Hindu mob in the region. The preacher was arrested and deported for speaking publicly on a tourist visa. Despite the threat of violence, Dan and the team preached to thousands of people over three nights of evangelistic outreaches. Hundreds of Hindus came forward for prayer each night, with many praying to receive Christ.

In Hyderabad, the capital city of Andhra Pradesh, the enthusiasm of the staff and 350 students at Gospel for Asia Bible College was infectious as they learned IBS. Dan was invited to take the seminar to Gospel for Asia's 60 other Indian Bible colleges.

The team flew to the coastal city of Chennai for one last seminar. The pastors were thrilled to be taught to study the Scriptures in a completely new way. Dan says of the trip overall, “We had a wonderful response everywhere we went.”

Beginnings in Banning

As senior pastor of CC Banning, CA, Dan had taught simple ‘book studies’ at a couple of pastors’ conferences in the Philippines. Those in attendance had never gone straight through a book of the Bible. “That’s the only way I knew,” said Dan.

Without any cross-cultural training or plan other than to follow the Lord’s leading, Dan, his wife, Debbie, and their three young children moved to the Philippines. It was 1985. Trials awaited them. Adjusting to the new culture was more difficult for Dan and Debbie than for the kids. When financial support dwindled, they learned to walk by faith.

“It was amazing how God would prompt people to send us money in the mail even though most letters had been opened at the post office before they were delivered,” remembers Dan.

The influence of Dan’s IBS teaching is evident in the Philippines, as many national pastors continue to benefit from it. Eighteen years ago, there were only a few Calvary Chapels in the Philippines. Now, there are approximately 20 works in progress, due in part to the IBS influence on the young Christians.



Pastor Dan taught outside of Chennai.

In 1991, the Finfrocks returned from the Philippines just in time for an eventful meeting at CC Costa Mesa. Calvary Chapel pastors, including Chuck Smith, Don McClure, Mike MacIntosh, Greg Laurie, and Raul Ries, met with Campus Crusade for Christ president, Bill Bright, to discuss opportunities in newly democratic Russia. Thousands there were coming to Christ

after seeing the *Jesus* film, but there were no churches to disciple them. Dr. Bright came to Calvary Chapel because of its ministry and church-planting reputation.

Psalm 1:1-3		
OBSERVATION	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION
<p>1. Vs. 1-3 speak of the way to be blessed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vs. 1 Blessed</p> <p>List three negatives of what he needs to avoid.</p> <p>a. Does not <u>walk</u> in the counsel of wicked.</p> <p>b. Nor <u>stand</u> in way of sinners.</p> <p>c. Nor <u>sit</u> in the seat of scoffers.</p> <p>What makes him happy?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vs. 2 Delights in the law of the Lord</p> <p>Meditates day and night.</p> <p>What is this man like?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vs. 3 Like a tree planted by streams of water</p>	<p>Means happy in an inner spiritual way.</p> <p>Means Christians must not listen to the world’s counsel. Follow after counsel of God. World is filled with its counselors and can lead Christians astray.</p> <p>There is a pathway of sin which Christians must flee. Sin can be so tempting and cause us to stand in its path, which leads to destruction.</p> <p>The world is filled with people who make fun of other people – ridicule their faith.</p> <p>(Note progression from walking to sitting.)</p> <p>This refers to God’s Word, it brings him great joy.</p> <p>This means he spends time reading and studying God’s Word, and then thinks about it often day and night.</p> <p>The person who studies God’s Word is like a tree near water. It is always refreshed, nourished and never lacking.</p>	<p>I want to be blessed/happy. I will ... <i>(do what?)</i></p> <p>I must be so careful of the counsel I receive so I will always do the will of God. I will get my counsel from ... <i>(you answer)</i></p> <p>I/We must be so careful not to get caught in the path of sin. I need to walk in the right/righteousness by ... <i>(you answer)</i></p> <p>I/We can never be happy or blessed if we mock and make fun of others. I will guard my heart and mouth by ... <i>(you answer)</i></p> <p>I want to believe in God’s Word more and more.</p> <p>I want God’s Word to penetrate my life, so I need to spend more time studying and meditating.</p> <p>I desire to be this type of person. I want my roots to go deep. How?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read & study the Word. 2. Set daily time to do this.

Typical outline of the Inductive Bible Study, the heart and soul of the IBS method.

Pastor Chuck turned to Dan in the meeting and said, “Tell Dr. Bright what you have been doing in the Philippines.” Afterward Dr. Bright agreed that IBS training was exactly what Russia needed.



Indian pastors received a certificate of completion from Pastor Dan.

The first IBS seminar was held in Russia in March 1992. It was not uncommon for Russians to dedicate their lives to Christ in the middle of the seminar, desperate not to let another moment slip by. One school superintendent went through the training and then asked ICM staff to train over 500 teachers in his district who were required to teach the Bible but didn’t know how. More than 80 percent of these public school teachers prayed to receive Christ. Dan later used the facility at Twin Peaks, CA, to train Americans pastors to teach IBS worldwide.

Intensive Care Ministries provides ongoing IBS training through its branches in Russia and the Philippines. This past spring, Dan taught at the CC Bible College in Peru. He and the ICM staff have also taught in Thailand, Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, Israel, Mexico, Poland, Austria, Romania, Korea, New Zealand, Sudan, and Uganda. 🇺🇸

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