

Why Study the Bible?

I. Bible Study is Essential to Spiritual Growth

As newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation. *I Peter 2:2*

II. Bible Study is Essential to Spiritual Maturity

Concerning [Christ] we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for some one to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For every one who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil. *Hebrews 5:11-14*

III. Bible Study is Essential to Spiritual Effectiveness

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. *II Timothy 3:16-17*

Getting Started

1. Determine your objectives

What do you want?
Not just now, but at the end of life.

Ask yourself this question: “*Do I want to have a personal Bible study program? Have I seen the crucial need for it?*”

2. Establish Your Priorities

How badly do you want it?
What price are you willing to pay?
There are plenty of things I’d like to do but not badly enough to pay the price required to do them.

Ask yourself this question: *Do I want to develop a Bible study program on a personal basis? If so, what price am I willing to pay? Sacrifice? Give up?*

3. Set a Schedule

This involves asking: *What means can I employ to maintain my priorities and accomplish my objectives?*

4 Develop Discipline

Many of us are expecting God to do what God is expecting us to do.

Step One: OBSERVATION

”What do I see?”

4 Things to Look For:

1. **Terms:** A term is more than a word. It’s a key word that is crucial to what an author has to say.
2. **Structure:** Grammatical (subject, object, main verb?)
Literary (cause/effect, questions/answers))
3. **Literary form:** Are we reading poetry, narrative, an epistle, a parable, or a proverb?
4. **Atmosphere:** What is the setting and feeling of the text? Transport your senses into the passage.

6 Questions to Ask any Bible Passage:

1. **Who** are the people in the text?
2. **What** is happening in the text?
3. **Where** is the story taking place?
4. **When** did the events take place?
5. **Why** is this included? Placed here? Follow that?
6. **Wherefore?** Or “So What?” What difference would it make if I applied this text?

Step Two: INTERPRETATION

”What does it mean?”

6 Hazards to Avoid

1. Misreading the text
2. Distorting the text
3. Contradicting the text
4. Subjectivism
5. Relativism
6. Overconfidence

6 Kinds of Writing in the Bible

1. **Exposition:** An exposition is a straightforward argument or explanation of a body of objective truth.
2. **Narrative:** Narrative means story.
3. **Parables:** A parable is a brief tale that illustrates a moral principle.
4. **Poetry:** The distinctive feature of poetry is its appeal to the emotions, as well as the imagination.
5. **Proverbs:** A proverb is a short, to the point nugget of truth, typically practical, and often concerned with the consequences of a course of behavior.
6. **Prophecy**

5 Keys to Interpretation

1. Content
2. Context
3. Comparison
4. Culture
5. Consultation

Step Three: APPLICATION

“How does it work?”

4 Principles of Application

1. **Know** the Bible text and know yourself.

Know your strong points. What have you got going for you? Know your weak points. What is your greatest hindrance to spiritual growth? Know what you need!

2. **Relate** the Word of God to your experience.

How does the truth of God affect your relationship with God, yourself, parents, teachers, friends, others who do not know Christ? How do you view Satan, the enemy?

3. **Meditate** or think about what the Bible teaches.

True meditation is pondering the truth with a view to letting it help and readjust our lives. Memory is one of the keys to meditation. How much Bible do you know?

4. **Practice** the truth of what the Bible says.

The ultimate goal of Bible study is to practice the truth. Scripture was not written to fatten geese but to train athletes and equip soldiers for the realities of life. “Run to win.” Fight to win.” That’s the message of the Word.

9 Questions to Ask

1. Is there an example for me to follow?
2. Is there a sin to avoid?
3. Is there a promise to claim?
4. Is there a prayer to repeat?
5. Is there a command to obey?
6. Is there a condition to meet?
7. Is there a verse to memorize?
8. Is there an error to mark?
9. Is there a challenge to face?

Ten Spiritual Disciplines to Practice

1. **Prayer** Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving
Supplication + Listening
2. **Read Bible** – 3 chapters / day will complete in 1 year
3. **Journal** – Write out prayers – Thoughts on Bible study
4. **Memorize Scripture** – Single verses or whole passages
5. **Listen** to Christian Radio, Cd’s
6. **Hymns & Praise Songs** - Memorize and sing
7. **Be Accountable** – have a teen who is also praying, reading
8. **Read Christian books** – biographies, devotionals
9. **Attend Church** – Sunday School, Worship Service
10. **Be Mentored** – Have a parent or a youth leader help you

Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness. For bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. **I Timothy 4:7**

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.

Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air;

but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

I Corinthians 9:24-27

For God has not given us a (spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. **1 Timothy 1:7**

“Stand still and know that I am God”

Psalm 46:10

Three Steps to Slow Down

- Step 1: Journal
- Step 2: Write out your prayers
- Step 3: Listen

Adoration Confession Thanksgiving Supplication

+ Listen

Three Questions to ask God while Listening

1. What's the next step in developing my character?
2. What's the next step in my relationship with my family and friends?
3. What's the next step in serving You?

Three Ways to Test if what you hear while Listening is from God:

Be careful! Read: I John 4:1 I Timothy 4:1
 Matt. 24:24 II Cor. 11:14

1. Is what I hear consistent with the Bible, God's Word?
2. Is what I hear consistent with the person He made you to be?
3. Is what you hear consistent with a life of servanthood?

Four Cautions:

1. If a leading requires you to make a major, life-changing decision in a very short time, question it.
2. If a leading requires you to go deeply in debt or place someone else in a position of awkwardness, compromise or danger, question it.
3. If a leading requires you to shatter family relationships or important friendships, question it.
4. If a leading creates unrest in the spirit of mature Christian friends or counselors as you share it with them, question it.

The Apostle Paul's Prayer

*For this reason,
I bow my knees before the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and on earth
derives its name,*

*that He would grant you,
according to the riches of His glory,
to be strengthened with power through His Spirit
in the inner man,
so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;*

*and that you,
being rooted and grounded in love,
may be able to comprehend with all the saints
what is the breadth and length and height and depth,
and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge
that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.*

*Now to Him who is able to do
exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think,
according to the power that works in us,
to Him be the glory in the church
and in Christ Jesus
to all generations
forever and ever.
Amen.*

Ephesians 3:14-21