



How to read the Bible for all it's worth

Week 3 – How to get a grasp on your Bible

"The one who looks steadily at God's perfect law ... and makes that law his HABIT - not listening and then forgetting, but actively putting it into practice will be happy in all that he does."

James 1:25

Pause for Discussion 1:

What kind of things would you do to keep a relationship healthy & growing with another person?

I. HOW TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

"Faith comes from **hearing** the Word of God." Rom. 10:17

Ways to Hear God's Word

- The Bible on tape
- Church services & studies
- Sermon tapes
- Radio/TV teachers

PROBLEM: We forget _____ % of what we hear after 72 hours.

TO IMPROVE YOUR HEARING

1. Be ready and eager to hear God.

(Jesus) "*He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*" Luke 8:8

"How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" Psalm 119:103

2. Deal with attitudes that prevent hearing God (Luke 8:4-15)

"Consider carefully how you listen ..." Luke 8:18

- *A Closed Mind:* Is fear, pride or bitterness preventing me from hearing God?
- *A Superficial Mind:* Am I really serious about wanting to hear God speak?
- *A Preoccupied Mind:* Am I too busy and concerned with other things to concentrate on what God has to say?

3. Confess any sin in your life.

"... **Get rid of** all moral filth and humbly accept the Word..." James 1:21

4. Take notes on what you hear.

*"We must pay more **careful attention** to what we've heard, so that we do not drift away!"* Heb. 2:1

Here's a thought....Buy yourself a nice notebook perhaps!

5. Act on what you hear!

*"Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. **Do what it says!**"* James 1:22

*"Whoever ... does not simply listen and then forget, **but puts it into practice** - that person will be blessed in what he does." James 1:25*

Here are 6 ways to get a grasp on your Bible. Draw around your hand.

II. HOW TO READ GOD'S WORD

*"Happy is the one who **reads** this book ... and obeys what is written in it!"* Rev. 1:3 (GN)

How often should I read God's Word? _____

*"(The Scriptures) shall be his constant companion. **He must read from it every day of his life** so that he will learn to respect the Lord his God by obeying all of his commands." Deut. 17:19 (LB)*

SUGGESTIONS

1. Read it systematically
2. Read it in different translations. (*What's your favourite translation and why?*)
3. Read it aloud to yourself – it stops the mind from wandering
4. Underline or color code key verses.
5. Choose a reading plan and stick with it. (*there are many on bible.com*)

If I read approximately _____ minutes a day, I can read through the Bible once a year.

III. HOW TO MEMORIZE GOD'S WORD

"Guard my words as your most precious possession. Write them down, and also keep them deep within your heart." Pr. 7:2-3 (LB)

BENEFITS OF MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE

1. It helps me resist temptation.

"I have hidden your Word in my heart that I might not sin against you." Ps. 119:11

2. It helps me make wise decisions.

"Your Word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path." Ps. 119:105

3. It strengthens me when I'm under stress.

"... Your promises to me are my hope. They give me strength in all my troubles; how they refresh and revive me!" Ps. 119:49

4. It comforts me when I'm sad.

"Your words are what sustain me ... They bring joy to my sorrowing heart and delight me." Jer. 15:16

5. It helps me witness to unbelievers.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." 1 Peter 3:15

Here are some scriptures that you may want to try and memorize! Why not decide to test each other next time?!?!?

Proclaim Christ:

All Have Sinned Rom. 3:23; Isa. 53:6

Sin's Penalty	Rom. 6:23; Heb. 9:27
Christ Paid the Penalty	Rom. 5:8; I Peter 3:18
Salvation Not by Works	Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5
Must Receive Christ	John 1:12; Rev. 3:20
Assurance of Salvation	I John 5:13; John 5:24

Rely on God's Resources:

His Spirit	I Cor. 3:16; I Cor. 2:12
His Strength	Isa. 41:10; Phil. 4:13
His Faithfulness	Lam. 3:22; Num. 23:19
His Peace	Isa. 26:3; I Peter 5:7
His Provision	Rom. 8:32; Phil 4:19
His Help in Temptation	Heb. 2:18; Ps. 119:9, 11

Grow in Christ likeness:

Love	John 13:34-35; I Jn. 3:18
Humility	Phil. 2:3-4; I Peter 5:5-6
Purity	Eph. 5:3; I Peter 2:11
Honesty	Lev. 19:11; Acts 24:16
Faith	Heb. 11:6; Rom. 4:20-21
Good Works	Gal. 6:9-10; Matt. 5:16

IV. THINKING ABOUT GOD'S WORD

Meditation is _____ about a Bible verse in order to discover how I can apply its truth to my own life.

If you are a worrier, then you can meditate! But if you think positive about the Word of God and good things, then that's the kind of meditation Scripture commends.

WHY MEDITATE ON SCRIPTURE?

1. It is the key to becoming like Christ.

"... *Your life is shaped by your thoughts.*" Pr. 4:23 (GN)

"... *Be transformed by the **renewing** of your mind.*" Rom. 12:2

"As we ... **contemplate** the Lord's glory, we are being transformed into His likeness ..." 1 Cor. 3:18

2. It is the key to answered prayer.

*"If you live your life in Me, and my words live in your hearts, **you can ask for whatever you like, and it will come true for you.**" John 15:7 (Ph)*

3. It is the key to successful living.

"... Meditate on (the Word) day and night, so you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." Joshua 1:8

SIX WAYS TO MEDITATE ON A VERSE

1. **Picture it!** Visualize the scene in your mind.
2. **Pronounce it!** Say the verse aloud, each time emphasizing a different word.
3. **Paraphrase it!** Rewrite the verse in your own words.
4. **Personalize it!** Replace the pronouns or people in the verse with your own name.
5. **Pray it!** Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.
6. **Probe it!** Ask the following nine questions:

A really helpful way of reading God's word is to apply the 'spacepets.' Let me explain....

S.P.A.C.E.P.E.T.S.



When you read a chapter or a few verses, ask yourself the following questionsIs there any ...

SIN TO CONFESS?

PROMISE TO CLAIM?

ATTITUDE TO CHANGE?

COMMAND TO KEEP?

EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW?

PRAYER TO PRAY?

ERROR TO AVOID?

TRUTH TO BELIEVE?

SOMETHING TO THANK GOD FOR?

THE IMPORTANCE OF A DAILY QUIET TIME

Your time alone with God should be the top priority in your schedule for five reasons:

1. We were _____ to have fellowship with God.

"So God created man in his own image ..." Gen. 1:27, 2:7, and 3:8

"Look! I've been standing at the door and constantly knocking. If anyone ... opens the door, I will come in and fellowship with him and he with me." Rev. 3:20

2. Jesus _____ to make a relationship to God possible.

"God ... has invited you into this wonderful friendship with his Son, Christ our Lord." 1 Cor. 1:9

3. Personal time alone with God was Jesus' _____

Mark 1:35, Luke 22:39, Luke 5:16

*"Jesus **often** withdrew to lonely places and prayed."*

4. Every person who has been effective in _____ for God developed this habit.

Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, etc.

5. You cannot be a _____ Christian without it!

"Man cannot live on bread alone but on every word that God speaks." Matt. 4:4

"... I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." Job 23:12 (NAS)

"How can a young man cleanse his way? By keeping to your Word." Ps. 119:9

II. THE PURPOSE OF A DAILY QUIET TIME

1. TO GIVE _____ TO GOD.

"Give to the Lord the glory due to his name. Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness."

Ps. 29:2

"(Hezekiah) was successful, because everything he did ... he did in a spirit of complete devotion to

his God." (2 Ch. 31:21)

God deserves our devotion! (Rev. 4:11)

God desires our devotion! (John 4:23)

2. TO GET _____ FROM GOD.

"Show me the path where I should go, O Lord; point out the right road for me to walk. Lead me ..."
Ps. 25:4 (LB)

2 Things to Do In a Quiet Time

Consider your way: *"Ponder the path of your feet and let all your ways be established."* Pr. 4:26
(KJV)

"In all your ways acknowledge Him, and he will direct your paths." Pr. 3:6 (KJV)

Commit your day: *"Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him to help you do it and he will."*
Ps. 37:5 (LB)

3. TO GAIN _____ IN GOD.

"Delight yourself in the Lord; and he will give you the desires of your heart." Ps. 37:4 (KJV)

"... (God's) presence fills me with joy and brings me pleasure." Ps. 16:11

FACT: The better I get to know Christ, the more _____.

*The objective of your Quiet Time is not to study **about** Christ, but to actually spend time with him!*

4. TO GROW _____ LIKE GOD.

"Jesus has the power of God, by which he has given us everything we need to live and to serve God. We have these things because we know him.... With these gifts you can share in being like God" 2 Pet 1:4 (NCV)

*"When the council saw the boldness of Peter and John ... they were amazed and realized **what being with Jesus had done for them!**"* Acts 4:13

II. HOW TO BEGIN A DAILY QUIET TIME

1. SELECT A SPECIFIC TIME.

The best time to have a quiet time is when I am

_____!

We are all different so don't feel guilty for not spending an hour with God before you go to work, but here are some reasons for considering an early morning quiet time if you can.....

1. The example of Bible character.

(Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Hannah, Job, Hezekiah, David, Daniel, Jesus.)

2. It seems logical to begin the day with it.

"The best time to tune your instrument is before you play the concert, not after!"

3. It demonstrates that meeting with God is your first priority. You give him the first part of your day!

However making time to spend with God at some point in your day is the key to growth. Just do it when you are less likely to be distracted and when you feel at your peak in energy terms!

Whatever time you set, just be

_____.

IV. WHAT YOU'LL NEED FOR YOUR QUIET TIME

1. Maybe start with 15 minutes and let it grow. Don't watch the clock! Emphasize quality, not quantity!

2. CHOOSE A SPECIAL PLACE.

"Jesus left the city and went, as he usually did, to the Mount of Olives ... to pray." Luke 22:39 (GN)

The Important Factor:

*"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went to a **solitary place**, where he prayed." Mark 1:35*

3. GATHER THE RESOURCES YOU'LL NEED.

1. A Bible
2. A Notebook to write down your thoughts and prayer
3. Maybe play a worship song on your iPod / CD player

4. BEGIN WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDES

"Be still, and know that I am God." Ps. 46:10

"Open my eyes to see wonderful things in your Word." Ps. 119:18

"The thing you should want most is God's kingdom and doing what God wants" Matt 6:33

5. FOLLOW A SIMPLE PLAN

"FIFTEEN MINUTES WITH GOD"

Below is no hard fast rule of how to spend time with God, but it's a plan to *Get You Started*

1. _____ . (1 Minute)

Be still and quiet! Slow down! Prepare your heart. Take a few deep breaths and wait on God.

2. _____ . (4 Minutes)

Begin reading where you left off the day before. Read until you feel God has told you something. Then stop and think about it.

3. _____ . (4 Minutes)

See the section on "How To Meditate on God's Word".

You may use the S.P.A.C.E.P.E.T.S. or any of the 6 methods of meditation from the previous session. Think about what the passage means to your life. Write down your thoughts. Part of reflecting is *memorizing* verses that speak to you in a special way.

4. _____ . (2 Minutes)

See the section on "How To Apply God's Word".

Write out a personal application statement that is _____ practical, passable, and measurable.
"Thoughts disentangle themselves when they pass through the lips and the fingertips."

5. _____ . (4 Minutes)

Conclude your Quiet Time by talking to God about what He has shown you and praying your requests through.

V. OVERCOMING QUIET TIME DISTRACTIONS

1. THE PROBLEM OF DISCIPLINE

Your first problem in establishing a quiet time will face you the moment you wake each morning:
Am I going to get out of bed? (*"The Battle of the Blankets"*)

Suggestions

1. Go to bed _____.
2. Get up _____.
3. Be aware of quiet time _____.
4. Fall asleep thinking _____.

2. THE PROBLEM OF DISTRACTIONS

Satan will try to use anything to get your mind to wander during a quiet time.

Suggestions

- Get out of _____.
- Get thoroughly _____.
- Read and pray _____.
- _____ during your prayer time.
- Keep a _____

3. THE PROBLEM OF DRYNESS

Sometimes you will feel like you're not getting anything out of your quiet time. (*"The Battle of the Blahs"*) **Never judge your quiet time by your _____.**

Possible Causes of Spiritual Dryness

1. Your physical condition.
2. Disobedience to God.
3. Rushing your quiet time.
4. Getting in a rut.
5. Not sharing insights with others.

4. THE PROBLEM OF DILIGENCE

Your greatest problem will be your struggle to stay consistent. I find Satan fights nothing harder than my quiet time

Suggestions

1. Schedule it on your daily calendar.
2. Be prepared for Satan's excuses.
3. Leave your Bible open at night to the passage for the next day!

What if I miss a day?

Don't _____.

Don't _____.

Don't _____.

It takes _____ weeks for you to become familiar with a new task. Then it takes another _____ weeks before it becomes a comfortable habit.

Next week we will be to learn how to apply the Bible correctly.