

Bible Study Techniques

Information resourced from
“Rick Warren’s Bible Study Methods”

General Tips for Reading the Bible

- To properly read the Bible it takes full concentration so use the best part of the day available to do so. Don't use a time when you are tired or distracted.
- It is not how much of the Bible that you read in a day that is important, it is how well you read the Bible. Focus on a reading a shorter amount and doing it well.
- Try to read the same passage in different translations because it can reveal interesting parts of the text that you did not previously notice.
- Pray that God would help with the process of interpretation and application.
- Bible reading is an active process. Open a dialogue with the text by asking the right questions.

**“I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who”**

-Rudyard Kipling

- The purpose of reading the Bible is to develop our relationship with God. This means that we need a clear interpretation of the Bible to ensure that we know the God whom we serve, because God revealed Himself through the Bible. However, our relationship with God is not simply to know Him, but to serve and obey Him. This means that for our Bible reading to build our relationship with our Lord, it must be applied to our lives. Interpretation without application is not the purpose of the Bible.
- Most truth is not hidden in the Bible but plain to see; the hardest challenge in reading the Bible is not discovering hidden truth, but rather applying the truth that is obvious.

Devotional Reading

Taking a key passage and meditating fully on it.

Step 1

Pray that God would speak to you and illuminate the meaning of the passage to you.

Step 2

Read the passage multiple times. Focus on different words (expand their meaning) as you run through the passage each time.

- For by **grace** are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God
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Step 3

Paraphrase the text. Say it in your own words.

e.g. God's rich love and forgiveness are the sources of salvation, nothing you do saves you. Trust and rest that is it fully a gift from God.

Step 4

Place the text in the following category:

Sin to confess? Do I need to repent?

Promise to claim? Do I meet the conditions?

Attitude to change? Changing a negative attitude or adopting a new positive attitude.

Command to obey? Willing to do it regardless of feelings?

Example to follow? Positive or negative example from which to learn.

Prayer to pray? Something to add or remember in conversation with God.

Error to avoid? Alerted or warned about something.

Truth to believe? New things about God or other teachings.

Something to praise God for? To be thankful for.

Step 5

Write application statement

- Personal: Relates to your own life.
- Practical: Contains concrete actions.
- Provable: Set a goal that can be measured.

Example: I should be bolder with my faith, I will share my testimony with at least one new person per week.

Summary Method

This technique is designed to help you learn that the Bible is written as one whole cohesive unit, and to see the flow of the text you are studying.

Choose a passage; it should be the beginning of a paragraph or chapter and go until the end of the paragraph or topic being talked about. Begin by reading the passage 4 to 5 times from beginning to end. If possible read it in different translations too.

Once read, you should have a grasp on the text, now apply the following steps to begin to interpret and apply the central teaching:

Step 1

Come up with a title for the passage between 1 to 5 words long.

Step 2

Summarize the contents of the passage.

Step 3

Pick out a key verse in the passage.

Step 4

Pick up and note any problems in the passage, verses or concepts that you don't understand.

Step 5

Summarize the central lesson or teaching of the passage.

Step 6

What is the intended response or personal application of the passage?
(What does God want you to learn or apply from this passage?)