

A Timely and Encouraging Message: How to Study the Word of God

“Thus says the Lord, Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,” declares the Lord.”
Jeremiah 9:23-24 (NASB)

The Bible is a book about God. That is why the most important question we will ask when we open the Bible is, “What is God revealing about Himself?” It is not, “How will the Bible speak to me?” The Bible will speak to us, but that should not be what we are seeking.

As A. W. Tozer so rightly stated in *The Knowledge of the Holy*, “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.” Because what we think about God shapes our worldview. We must know God as He has revealed Himself in Scripture to be able to understand ourselves. He is our True North, the only unchanging point of reference.

I. Have a systematic plan for reading through the Bible annually.

- A. When studying a particular passage of scripture read it through slowly.
- B. Consider the context - read the surrounding text.
- C. Read the passage a second time and underline or highlight repeated words or journal your thoughts.

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12 NASB).

- D. Look up any words you have a question about.
- E. Read the passage in several different translations.

“For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires” (Hebrews 4:12 NLT).

“The word of God, *you see*, is alive and moving; sharper than a double-edged sword; piercing the divide between soul and spirit, joints and marrow; able to judge the thoughts and will of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12 The Voice).

“For the word of God is living and active *and* full of power [making it operative, energizing, and effective]. It is sharper than any two-edged ^{bl}sword, penetrating as far as the division of the ^{bl}soul and spirit [the completeness of a person], and of both joints and marrow [the deepest parts of our nature], exposing *and* judging the very thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12 AMP).

We are seeking to help you develop a taste for the Word of God and the God of the Word - “Oh taste and see that the Lord is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!” (Psalm 34:8). Because God’s Word is spiritually discerned, our flesh will not get it and may be bored or easily distracted.

II. Allow the Bible to transform and renew your mind.

- A. Memorize it.
- B. Meditate upon it.
- C. Listen to it - (Bible.Is, YouVersion, Blue Letter Bible)

Romans 12:1-2 states, “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Studying, meditating upon and memorizing the Word of God changes us from the inside out. This is not about Behavior Modification. We are seeking to change at the heart level. As we set out affection on Christ and immerse ourselves in His Word, our thoughts and emotions will be transformed.

III. Ask questions.

- A. What does this text reveal about God?
- B. What does this text reveal about Man?
- C. What does this text reveal about sin?
- D. Where have I seen this before? (Make connections)

IV. Cross-reference scripture verses.

Two-edged sword - Revelation 1:16; 2:12 and 19:15 (sharp sword)
The Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God - Ephesians 6:17

V. Read commentaries/Use Bible Apps.

www.biblegateway.com
www.blueletterbible.org

VI. Listen to sermons/Teaching podcasts.

- Tim Keller
- Bellevue Women
- Jen Wilkin
- Priscilla Shirer
- Alisa Childers
- Nancy Guthrie
- Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth
- Journeywomen with Hunter Beless
- At the Table - SBC Women's Leadership Network

VII. Teach through the text.

VIII. Provide pertinent illustrations and application.

Resources:

Chronologicalbibleteaching.com
The Knowledge of the Holy by A. W. Tozer
Women of the Word by Jen Wilkin
Teaching to Change Lives by Howard Hendricks
The Reason for God by Tim Keller
66 Love Letters by Larry Crabb
The Good and Beautiful God by James Bryan Smith

I have written two books that trace themes through the Bible - (available on Amazon)

- *Leaving Ordinary: Encounter God Through Extraordinary Prayer* - is a study of the Old Testament Tabernacle and how it pointed to and was fulfilled by Jesus.
- *Choose Wisely, Live Fully: Lessons from Wisdom and Folly, the Two Women of Proverbs* - traces the theme of choices throughout scripture especially in the lives of Wisdom and Folly, personified in Proverbs 1-9.