



“How to Study the Word of God”

The following study guide is taken from our recent series on “How to Study the Word of God” and focuses on the end of the series when we discussed practical methods and tips on studying God’s Word.

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Methods of Study

A. Topical Study

- Study a specific subject.
 - For example: Grace, faith, repentance, baptism, etc.

B. Verse-by-verse study

- Take a book, chapter or portion of scripture and dissect it verse-by-verse.
 - For example – This is what we’ve done the last two months on Wednesday nights in the Book of 2 Peter.
- Slow down and look at each verse in-depth.

C. Character Study

- Take an individual character from the Bible and study him or her in-depth.
 - Why study characters?
 - They are real people just like us
 - Their story is in the Bible for a reason.
 - We learn from their mistakes and/or victories.

D. Study Major Stories

- Study major stories in the Bible in great depth.
- For example:
 - Creation
 - The Flood

- The Exodus
- Sermon on the Mount

E. Read through the Bible

- Read through the entire Bible.
 - B.R.E.A.D. program (Bible Reading Enriches Any Day)
- Many others programs that give you a few chapters of the Old Testament and a few chapters of the New Testament each day on a pace to cover the whole Bible in a year.

F. Join a Bible Study Group

- Ladies Bible study
- LifeGroups
- Get some friends together and launch a Bible study group.

Practical Tips

Tip #1 – Less is more

- Our tendency is to read large amounts of scripture at one time.
- When we read large portions, we usually don't retain much.
 - Smaller parts allow time for reflection.
 - Digest, meditate, and look at the passage from every angle.
- This doesn't mean less time in the Word each day, it means less amount of scripture in that given amount of time each day.

Tip # 2 – Schedule a time to study

- Choose a specific time to study the Word each day and stick with it.
- Pick one of the methods we talked about and have a plan and be deliberate.

Tip #3 – Study the background of passage

- Explore the history and background of the writer.
 - Get to know the author before you read or study their book.
 - Some questions that help...
 - What is the author's history and background?
 - What type of family did he come from?
 - Do we know anything about his childhood?

- What was his profession?
- Where was he from?
- Who was he writing to? Why?
- What were some of his major life experiences?
- What type of personality did he have?
- What was his faith like?
- What was his relationship with God like?
- Did he have a personal earthly relationship with Jesus?
- How did God call Him?
- Explore the background and history of the book.
 - Where was it written?
 - When was it written?
 - Who was it written to?
 - Was it in response to a specific situation?
- Explore the Background of the world in which it was written.
 - What was going on in the world when the scripture was written?

TIP # 4 – Ask questions about the passage

- As you study, ask probing questions about the passage.
- Questions force us to dig, explore and look at different angles.
- Start by answering some simple questions dealing with the major theme.
 1. What is the major theme? What is the major thing God is saying?
 2. What does God want me to walk away with more than anything else today?
 3. How can I apply this to my life right now?
- *Continue with more probing questions...*
 4. What does this passage tell you about God?
 - Who is He here?
 - What part of His character is exhibited? (Comforter, Healer, Teacher, etc.)
 5. What is the main word or phrase that leaped off the page as you studied it?

6. Who is this passage talking about?
7. What is the response God is hoping for?
8. Ask “Why”?
 - Why was this particular word used?
 - Why was it written in this specific order?
 - Why was this included?
 - Why is this necessary?
 - Why was it worded this way?
 - Why does this part come before that part?
 - Why do I need to know this?

Tip #5 – Keep a journal or notepad

- Keeping a notebook or journal is a key to effective Bible study.
 - Write down thoughts that come to you as you study.
 - Write down things you feel God is speaking to you.
 - Write down questions that come to you that you’ll need to go back to the Word to answer.

Tip #6 – Look for Jesus in each passage

- Jesus is the central figure of the Bible.
 - This entire book is about Jesus Christ. The Bible is a “revelation” or “revealing” of Jesus Christ. The Bible reveals Him. Look for it!
 - You have never found the true interpretation of any passage of the scripture until you have found in it somewhere a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Tip #7 - Ask the Lord to guide you

- One of the main functions of God’s Spirit within us is to lead and guide us in truth.
- Invite God’s Spirit to be your teacher.
 - Ask Him to show you, speak to you, and lead you.
 - We still need the 5-fold ministry (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) who “feed the flock of God” and hold us accountable to truth, but we must have the Spirit guiding us in our personal study.