

HOW TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE

Wednesday Night Q&A Study

Key Text: 2 Timothy 2:15 — “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Introduction: Learning to Study the Bible for Yourself

Many Christians sincerely want to know their Bible better, but they are not always sure how to study it. They may read a chapter, close the Bible, and a few minutes later struggle to remember what they read.

Bible study does not have to be complicated. You do not have to be a preacher, own a library of commentaries, or understand Greek and Hebrew to begin studying the Word of God. With a Bible, a willing heart, prayer, and a few simple habits, any believer can begin learning how to study the Scriptures for himself.

The goal is not simply to finish a certain number of chapters. The goal is to understand what God has said, believe it, and allow His Word to change the way we live.

1. HAVE A REGULAR TIME AND PLACE

Bible study becomes more consistent when it becomes part of a routine. It does not have to be early in the morning, but having a normal time and place removes the question, “When am I going to do it?”

Do not just find time for your Bible; make time for your Bible.

2. START WITH PRAYER

Before trying to understand the Bible, ask God to help you understand it.

Psalm 119:18 — “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

Bible study is not merely academic. We are not just trying to learn information; we are trying to hear from God and be changed by His Word.

3. READ WITH A PEN IN YOUR HAND

Mark your Bible or keep a notebook nearby. Underline something that stands out. Circle repeated words. Put a ? beside something you do not understand. Put a ! beside something especially important. Write cross-references in the margin and write down questions to research later.

These simple habits turn us from passive readers into active students of the Word.

4. ASK QUESTIONS OF THE TEXT

Learn to ask questions while you read: What does it say? What does it mean? What does it teach me about God? Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to believe? Is there a sin to avoid? Is there an example to follow or avoid? How should this change me?

Bible study is not finished when I understand the verse. It is finished when the verse begins changing me.

James 1:22 — “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”

5. READ THE VERSES BEFORE AND AFTER IT

Never build a belief from a verse you have not read in its context.

Ask: Who is speaking? Who are they speaking to? What happened before this? What happens afterward? What is the subject being discussed? Reading the surrounding verses often clears up what a verse means.

6. LOOK FOR REPEATED WORDS AND IDEAS

If God keeps saying something in a passage, pay attention. Repeated words and ideas often reveal the emphasis of the passage.

For example, when reading John 15, words and ideas such as abide, fruit, love, and commandments appear repeatedly. Those repetitions help us see what the passage is emphasizing.

7. COMPARE SCRIPTURE WITH SCRIPTURE

One of the best tools for understanding the Bible is the Bible itself. If you are studying a subject such as grace, prayer, forgiveness, salvation, or faith, find other passages that deal with the same subject.

Learn to use the cross-references in your Bible. Many Bibles already provide references that point you to other passages dealing with the same words, subjects, or events.

8. DO NOT IMMEDIATELY RUN TO GOOGLE OR A COMMENTARY

When you find something you do not understand, wrestle with the passage yourself first. Read it again. Read the chapter. Compare other Scriptures. Pray over it. Think about it. Then use commentaries, dictionaries, study Bibles, or other resources.

Use study tools to help you understand the Bible, but never let the study tool replace the Bible.

9. STUDY BOOKS OF THE BIBLE — NOT JUST RANDOM VERSES

Pick a book of the Bible and begin working through it. For a newer Bible student, books such as John, Philippians, James, or 1 John are good places to begin.

When you study through a book, you do not have to wonder what you are going to read tomorrow. You simply pick up where you left off, and you begin to understand each passage in the flow and context of the whole book.

10. DO NOT WORRY ABOUT COVERING A LOT

You do not have to read five chapters to have studied your Bible. Sometimes, five verses carefully studied are more profitable than five chapters quickly read.

Bible reading gives me breadth. Bible study gives me depth. I need both.

11. WRITE DOWN ONE THING YOU LEARNED

At the end of your study time, write one sentence: “Today God showed me...” Then write another sentence: “Because of this, I need to...”

This simple practice moves us from observation, to understanding, to application.

12. DO NOT QUIT BECAUSE YOU MISSED A DAY

Missing one day does not mean you failed. Open your Bible again tomorrow. Consistency over months and years matters far more than having a perfect streak.

Do not allow one missed day to become a missed week, and do not allow a missed week to become a reason to quit.

A Simple Way to Practice: James 1:19–25

Take a short passage and work through the same process: read it carefully, circle repeated words or ideas, identify commands, ask what it teaches about God and the Christian life, compare it with other Scriptures, and then write down one personal application.

The goal is not simply to leave saying, “I learned about Bible study.” The goal is to leave knowing, “I can sit down tomorrow, open my Bible, and begin studying it for myself.”

Closing Challenge

God did not give us His Word merely to own it, carry it to church, or hear someone else teach it. He gave us His Word to read, study, believe, obey, and live.

Start simple. Be consistent. Ask questions. Pay attention to context. Compare Scripture with Scripture. Write down what God teaches you. Most importantly, come to the Bible with a heart that is willing to obey what you find.

2 Timothy 2:15 reminds us that we are to “study to shew thyself approved unto God.” The goal of Bible study is not to impress other people with what we know. It is to become a workman who handles the Word of truth faithfully before God.