

SERIES: HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

"Spiritual Preparation for Bible Study" (Psalm 119)

INTRODUCTION: The longest chapter in the Bible is a chapter that covers the importance of the Scriptures. It is a chapter that teaches us the value of God's Word. It is a chapter that teaches us how to study God's Word. And as we are going to see, it is a chapter that teaches us how to be mentally and spiritually prepared to read God's Word. One difference between reading the Bible and reading any other book is the fact that the Bible is completely inspired by God Himself.

II Peter 1:21, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Another major difference about the Bible is that we have the ability to have the author in the room with us as we study. We have the ability to learn from the very one spoke every word into existence. So we can't just pick up God's Word and read it like we would another book. There are specific things we must do in order to be prepared spiritually and to be prepared mentally.

I. BE PRAYERFULLY PREPARED (PSALM 119:12, 18-19, 27, 33-34)

A. PRAY THAT GOD WOULD OPEN YOUR EYES (PSALM 119:18)

- The word *open* here comes from the Hebrew word *galah* meaning to bring into captivity.

B. UNDERSTAND YOUR CITIZENSHIP IS NOT OF THIS EARTH (119:19)

"We need to completely understand that no commentary, no lexicon, no amount of intellect on our part, nor the complete understanding of hermeneutics can ever unlock the door of revelation of Divine Scripture to which only the Holy Spirit of God is the key."

C. UNDERSTAND THAT GOD CAN HIDE TRUTH FROM YOU (119:19)

I Corinthians 2:7, "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:"

Matthew 25:28-29, "²⁸ Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. ²⁹ For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

I John 2:18-19, "¹⁸ Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

II. BE SAVIOR SEEKING (PSALM 119:2, 10, 114)

A. THE BIBLE IS CENTERED AROUND CHRIST

John 20:31, "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

B. WE OUGHT TO SEEK CHRIST IN EVERY VERSE WE READ

Mark 8:12, "And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign?"

I Corinthians 1:22-23, "²² For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: ²³ But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;"

I Corinthians 2:2, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

"Christ Himself is the very life content of the Christian Faith." – W. Ian Thomas

II Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

PRINCIPLES:

- 1) Begin your Bible Study praying that God will open your eyes that you may see wondrous things and that He will place your mind into His captivity.
 - 2) Begin with the understanding that the Bible is written to the spirit, not the carnal mind and have the attitude of complete dependence on God's Holy Spirit to give you understanding.
 - 3) Begin your Bible study with a fear of God that understands that an independent attitude can cause God to hide His truth from you.
 - 4) In every Book, every chapter, every verse, every precept and every word, seek to find the Lord Jesus Christ.
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“The Priorities in Bible Study” (Deuteronomy 6:1-9)

I. BIBLE STUDY SHOULD BE SOUNDLY INDOCTRINATED (DEUT. 6:4-5)

- A. MONOTHEISM IS A FOUNDATIONAL DOCTRINE OF THE BIBLE
(DEUTERONOMY 6:4)

Acts 5:42, “And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”

II Timothy 2:2, “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

- B. SOUND DOCTRINE PRODUCES GODLY BEHAVIOR
(DEUTERONOMY 6:5)

Romans 8:9, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

II. BIBLE STUDY SHOULD BE DAILY DESIGNATED (DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7)

III. BIBLE STUDY SHOULD BE POST-MEDITATED (DEUTERONOMY 6:8-9)

- A. WRITE IT DOWN AND BRING IT WITH YOU.
B. MAKE A LIST OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGES BASED ON A PRECEPT.
C. LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO BRING IT UP IN CONVERSATION

3 things happen when you talk to others about what you read in your devotions:

1. **SOLIDITY:** The more opportunities you have to talk about what you read in your daily devotions, the more that precept will solidify in your mind and the less likely the devil will be able to snatch it away from you.
2. **ACCOUNTIBILITY:** The more you talk about it, the more you challenge others to begin reading and meditating on the Bible as well.
3. **EXPANDABILITY:** The more you talk about it with people who already do meditate on the Bible, the more they will add to that thought and expand your understanding of it.

“People tend to talk about the things they know about.” – unknown

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“The Right Results of Personal Bible Study” (Psalm 119:6-9)

I. THE RESULT OF PURITY (PSALM 119:6-9)

A. THE RESULT OF RESPECT (PSALM 119:6)

1. **FAVOR:** David didn't read the scriptures out of desire, not duty.
2. **CARE:** David took care in reading God's Word.
3. **BEHOLD:** David read with awe and amazement.

I Thessalonians 2:13, “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”

I Corinthians 3:1, “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.”

I Corinthians 2:11, “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.”

4. **RESPECT:** This is not just lip service.

B. THE PATTERN FOR PRAISE (119:7)

C. THE CONDITION FOR CLEANSING (119:9)

II. THE RESULT OF PRODUCTIVITY

- A. IT PRODUCES CONVICTION (PSALM 119:11, 17, 38-40, 59-60, 104, 120, 128)

“Either sin will keep you from the Bible or the Bible will keep you from sin.”

B. IT PRODUCES DIRECTION (PSALM 119:3-5, 35, 67, 133)

- Notice the words, “directed”, “path”, “went astray”, and “order my steps.” These have to do with direction.

Proverbs 3:5-6, “⁵ Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. ⁶ In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

C. IT PRODUCES WORSHIP (PSALM 119:46-48, 54, 108, 137, 171-175)

John 4:23, “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.”

III. THE RESULT OF PROFITABILITY (II TIMOTHY 3:15-17)

A. DOCTRINE – WHAT IS RIGHT

B. REPROOF – WHAT IS WRONG

C. CORRECTION –HOW TO GET RIGHT

D. INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS – HOW TO STAY RIGHT

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"How to Make Your Bible Come Alive" (Psalm 119)

"Lord, from the cowardice that dare not face new truth; from the laziness that is contented with half truth; from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, Good Lord, deliver us." – Prayer from a Kenyan Christian

I. YOU MUST APPRECIATE THE VIRTUES OF THE WORD OF GOD

A. THE BIBLE IS A TIMELESS BOOK (PSALM 119:89, 152)

"All of the Bible's enemies have not torn one hole in its holy vesture, nor stolen one flower from its wonderful garden, nor diluted one drop of honey from its abundant hive, nor broken one string of its thousand-stringed harp, nor drowned one sweet word in infidel ink." – Robert G. Lee

I Peter 1:25, "But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

B. THE BIBLE IS A TRUTHFUL BOOK (PSALM 119:142, 151, 160)

John 17:17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

I Corinthians 14:37-38, ³⁷ If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. ³⁸ But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant."

II Timothy 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

Matthew 4:4, "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

II Peter 1:21, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

C. THE BIBLE IS A TREASURED BOOK (PSALM 119:72, 103, 127)

II. YOU MUST ASSIMILATE THE VITALITY OF THE WORD OF GOD

Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

John 6:63, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

A. PRAY OVER IT (PSALM 119:12)

Luke 24:45, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,"

Luke 24:32, "And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"

B. PONDER IT (PSALM 119:15, 147-148)

When you read a passage, ask these questions:

1. Is there a promise to claim?
2. Is there a lesson to learn?
3. Is there a blessing to enjoy?
4. Is there a command to obey?
5. Is there a sin to avoid?
6. Is there a new thought to carry with me?

C. PEN IT DOWN

D. PRESERVE IT (PSALM 119:11, 16)

E. PRACTICE IT (PSALM 119:1-5)

"If you want to know more of the Word of God, you must first obey the part you already know." – Adrian Rogers

"It's not the part of the Bible I don't understand that gives me a hard time. It's the part I do understand." – Mark Twain

F. PROCLAIM IT (PSALM 119:13, 27, 46, 172)

III. YOU CAN NOW APPROPRIATE THE VALUES OF THE WORD OF GOD

A. IT WILL BE A SOURCE OF VICTORY (PSALM 119:45)

B. IT WILL BE A SOURCE OF GROWTH (PSALM 119:32)

I Peter 2:2, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

C. IT WILL BE A SOURCE OF JOY (PSALM 119:54, 111)

D. IT WILL BE A SOURCE OF POWER (PSALM 119:28)

E. IT WILL BE A SOURCE OF GUIDANCE (PSALM 119:105)
