

INTRO TO DISCIPLESHIP

DISCIPLESHIP COARSE

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LESSON 2 HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE PASTOR DORINDA

The Word of God is full of history, wisdom, poetry, warnings, and truth. When approached with a heart open to the Holy Spirit's whispers and a mind focused on understanding, the Bible can be one of a Christian's greatest resources and treasured objects. But it also takes time. It can be confusing. It can feel like a chore and an obligation sometimes, particularly in seasons of spiritual difficulty or when life gets busy.

For some people, they never had an opportunity to build in the habit to have a daily quiet time to invest in studying the Bible, and struggle to start. There are many ways the world can serve as a distraction as well.

God wants us to be in His Word, spending time with Him, and getting to know Him through that time and study; one of the Psalms reads, "More to be desired are [God's precepts in the Word] are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb" (Psalm 19:10). Studying the Bible should be a sweet experience, so finding ways to make it a better experience can help someone enjoy their time in the Bible more.

Here are 10 ways to better enjoy reading the Bible.

1. Get a plan. Let's face it, we have all looked at our Bible and asked where do we begin? We have also at times just opened it, in hopes we opened to the passage that was "meant for us to read that day. Find a plan that works for you. (Youversion has so many to help you choose from.) My personal favorite is the Chronological plan.

2. Follow a Bible Reading Plan themed around a concern or topic of interest

When people go through phases of life, sometimes they need to focus on passages of the Bible that can speak to whatever they are experiencing.

Struggling with doubt? Find passages and stories that focus on confidence in God's plan. Need a little more joy in your life? Seek out passages that speak about joy.

It can be difficult to know where to find relevant passages. Fortunately, there are lots of free resources online that can act as a guide themed around many topics and experiences. Here are links to a few common themes:

Verses about hope, joy, courage, trusting God, no fear, God's love

3. Interpret the Bible

As I read Scripture, I always keep in mind one simple question: "What does this mean?" It's not enough to read the text and jump directly to the application; we must first determine what it means, otherwise the application may be incorrect.

4. Do It with a Friend or Family Member

Being able to share thoughts, feelings, and ideas with another person may make reading the Bible a more fun experience. Have a coffee date once a week with a friend to exchange notes and observations. Make it a family experience, with everyone in the family reading the same verses or passages and then discuss it over dinner.

The Bible can act as a wonderful tool for bonding between people, and the company can provide an avenue for discovering more about God's Word. The Holy Spirit illuminates different things to different people, so the opportunity to share how the Lord is working in each individual's life through their study can be fulfilling.

5. Memorize Your Favorite Verses

Memorization can be difficult but rewarding. Lots of people want to have better recall for Bible verses, so using quiet study time as an opportunity to focus on learning certain passages by heart can be an effective way to start the memorization process. Whether you learn better by repeating aloud, reading the same thing several times, or writing something down, engaging with the Bible in a tactile way with the intent to embed it in your heart and mind is always a worthwhile pursuit.

6. Use your Bible Study Tools Kit.

There is no right or wrong way to use it. Use the highlighters to highlight certain verses, topics, or subjects. Use the sticky notes to make notes, write thoughts, questions, dreams etc. Writing down your ideas after reading something can be an important way of processing your feelings. It also serves as a record of progress, personal growth, and seasons of life that can be valuable to look back on in the future. Use the washi tape to attach notes, cards, or even add more note pages. Use your creativity and these tools to make your Bible come alive.

7. Obey what the Bible says.

Having read and interpreted the Bible, you should have a basic understanding of what the Bible says, and what it means by what it says. But my Bible study doesn't stop there. I never study God's Word just to get a sermon. My ultimate goal is to let it speak to me and enable me to grow spiritually. That requires personal application.

Bible study is not complete until we ask ourselves, "What does it mean for my life and how can I practically apply it?" We must take the knowledge we've gained from our reading and interpretation and draw out the practical principles that apply to our personal lives.

If there is a command to be obeyed, we obey it. If there is a promise to be embraced, we claim it. If there is a warning to be followed, we heed it. This is the ultimate step: we submit to Scripture and let it transform our lives. If you skip this step, you will never enjoy your Bible study and the Bible will never change your life.

Bible study is not optional in the Christian life. It is both the obligation and the privilege of all believers. If you are not involved in regular, systematic Bible study, you are missing one of the primary means God uses to bring us to maturity (1 Peter 2:2).

8. Pray

Ask God to help you as you read. Ask for wisdom to understand and to obtain fresh revelation as you read God's Word.

9. Declare God's truth

As you read the Bible declare and speak out loud what God's Word says. Declare HIS promises and HIS truths that you find in the Bible.

10. Believe

It's not enough just to read the Bible, it's important that you BELIEVE what God says. It's important to remember God's truth about you, your family, your circumstance and HIS goodness.

Daily REFLECTION

Date: _____

Bible Passage: _____

What am I learning about God? What did I learn?

How does this passage change the way I should live?

Truths about God:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Truths about who God says I am:

- _____
- _____
- _____

After reading this passage, do I feel there is something I need to confess:

What can I repent of?

Notes:

After reading this passage, do I feel there is something I need to confess:

What is an action step I can take after reading this passage?

- _____
- _____