





# How Do I Grow as a Christian?

Spiritual Disciplines: Bible Study

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# Introduction

“And do not offer any parts of [your body] to sin as weapons for unrighteousness. But as those who are alive from the dead, offer yourselves to God, and all the parts of yourselves to God as weapons for righteousness. **For sin will not rule over you, because you are not under the law but under grace.**” (Romans 6:13-14, CSB)

# The Bible is God's Word to Us

Spiritual Disciplines:  
Bible Study

**“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17, ESV)**

# The Bible is God's Word to Us

Spiritual Disciplines:  
Bible Study

<sup>7</sup>The law of the Lord is **perfect**,  
reviving the soul;  
the testimony of the Lord is **sure**,  
making wise the simple;  
<sup>8</sup>the precepts of the Lord are **right**,  
rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the Lord is **pure**,  
enlightening the eyes;  
<sup>9</sup>the fear of the Lord is **clean**,  
enduring forever;  
the rules of the Lord are **true**,  
and righteous altogether.

<sup>10</sup>**More to be desired** are they than gold,  
even much fine gold;  
**sweeter** also than honey  
and drippings of the honeycomb.  
<sup>11</sup>Moreover, by them is your servant **warned**;  
in keeping them there is great **reward**.

(Psalm 19:7-11, ESV)

# The Basics

1. 66 Books of the Bible
  - 39 Old
  - 27 New
2. Written by over 40 different authors...
3. Over a period of over 2000 years...
4. In different literary styles...
  - Law, History, Wisdom & Poetry, Prophetic, Gospels, Letters, Apocalyptic
5. With one, unified story running through it all: **the redemption of God's people in Jesus Christ**
  - Creation, Fall, Redemption, New Creation

# 4 Step Process for Good Bible Study

Spiritual Disciplines:  
Bible Study

1. Prayer
2. Observation
3. Interpretation
4. Application

# Prayer

Spiritual Disciplines:  
Bible Study

“Open my eyes so that I may  
contemplate wondrous things from your  
instruction.”

(Psalm 119:34, CSB)

# Observation – *what does it say?*

Before starting a new book, ask and answer these questions:

1. Who wrote it?
2. To whom was it written?
3. When was it written?
4. In what style was it written?
5. Major themes of the book?

# Observation – *what does it say?*

- Think of yourself as a biblical detective.
- When studying a passage (a paragraph at minimum), ask:
  1. Who?
  2. What?
  3. When?
  4. Where?
  5. Why?

# Who?

1. Who is in this passage?
2. Who is speaking or writing?

Observation

# What?

Observation

1. What literary style is this written in (**genre**)?

- *Style* of writing determines the *rules* of interpretation
- You don't read a menu at the restaurant as directions to your friends' house. You don't read instructions in a cookbook as a love letter.
- Genres are like a game— each game has its own agreed upon rules for playing. There is some overlap in general (e.g. this is a sport, you're on a team, you're trying to win, etc.) but the rules *how* to win or *what* is illegal varies from game to game.

# What?

Observation

1. What is happening?
2. What events?
3. In what order?
4. What is the argument? (in a letter)
5. What is repeated, emphasized, contrasted (“but”), compared (“like, as”)?
6. What happens to the characters?
7. What words or phrases are hard to understand?

# When?

Observation

1. When is this taking place?
2. When did this text occur in relation to other events in Scripture?
3. When was the writer writing?

# Where?

Observation

1. Where is this taking place?
2. Where are the people in the story?
3. Where are they going?
4. Where are they coming from?
5. Where is the writer?
6. Where were the original readers of this text?

# Why?

Observation

1. Why is this included?
2. Why is it placed here?
3. Why does this follow that?
4. Why does this precede that?
5. Why does this person say that?
6. Why does the other person say nothing?
7. And on and on...

# Interpretation – *what does it mean?*

Spiritual Disciplines:  
Bible Study

- What the *biblical* author meant....now what *you* want it to mean.
- It cannot mean for us what it did not mean for them.
- The better you do your observation, the less time interpretation will take

# Interpretation – *what does it mean?*

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Bible Study

1. Content
2. Context
3. Compare
4. Christ
5. Consult

# Content

Interpretation

- Summarize/Restate what was said in your own words. Can use a dictionary or another translation if you need help here
- Good translations to consult– NASB, ESV, CSB, NIV, NET, NLT (more of a paraphrase, but can still be very helpful for understanding meaning)

# Context

Interpretation

- What comes before?
- What comes after?
- Does that help clarify anything confusing?
- What was the historical or cultural context of this passage? (Study Bible helps here, but don't go to the answers too soon).

***Context is king!!!***

# Compare

- Compare Scripture with Scripture
  - Use cross-references!

Interpretation

It will be told of the Lord to <sup>b</sup>the  
*coming* generation.  
31 They will come and <sup>a</sup>will declare  
His righteousness  
To a people <sup>b</sup>who will be born,  
that He has performed it.

### PSALM 23

*The Lord, the Psalmist's Shepherd.*  
A Psalm of David.

1 The LORD is my <sup>a</sup>shepherd,  
I <sup>l</sup>shall <sup>b</sup>not want  
2 He makes me lie down in  
pastures;  
He <sup>b</sup>leads me

Notice the tiny "a" before the word "shepherd". This "a" corresponds with the "a" in the column in the center of the page. This is a cross-reference.

453  
30 <sup>b</sup>Ps 102:18  
31 <sup>a</sup>Ps 40:9;  
71:18 <sup>b</sup>Ps 78:6

23:1 <sup>l</sup>Or do  
<sup>a</sup>Ps 78:52; 80:1;  
Is 40:11; Jer  
31:10; Eze  
4:11-13; Jn  
10:11; 1Pe 2:25  
<sup>b</sup>Ps 34:9, 10; Php  
4:19

2 <sup>l</sup>Lit waters of  
*rest*  
<sup>a</sup>Ps 65:11-13; Eze  
34:14 <sup>b</sup>Rev 7:17  
<sup>c</sup>Ps 36:8; 46:4

3 <sup>l</sup>Lit tracks  
<sup>a</sup>Ps 19:7 <sup>b</sup>Ps 5:8;  
31:3 <sup>c</sup>Ps 85:13; Pr  
4:11; 8:20

4 <sup>l</sup>Or valley of  
*deep darkness*  
<sup>2</sup>Or harm  
<sup>a</sup>Job 10:21, 22; Ps  
107:14 <sup>b</sup>Ps 3:6;  
27:1 <sup>c</sup>Ps 16:8; Is  
43:2 <sup>d</sup>Mic 7:14

5 <sup>l</sup>Or anoint  
<sup>a</sup>Ps 78:19 <sup>b</sup>Ps  
92:10; Lk 7:46  
<sup>c</sup>Ps 16:5

6 <sup>l</sup>Or Only 2Ab  
other reading is  
returns to <sup>l</sup>Lit for  
length of days  
<sup>a</sup>Ps 23:7, 10 <sup>b</sup>Ps  
77:4-6

### PSALM 25

7 <sup>a</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates,  
And be lifted up, O <sup>l</sup>ancient  
doors,  
That the King of <sup>b</sup>glory may  
come in!

8 Who is the King of glory?  
The LORD <sup>a</sup>strong and mighty,  
The LORD <sup>b</sup>mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O gates,  
And lift *them* up, O <sup>l</sup>ancient  
doors,  
That the King of <sup>a</sup>glory may  
come in!

10 Who is this King of glory?  
The LORD of <sup>a</sup>hosts,  
He is the King of glory.

### PSALM 25

*Prayer for Protection,  
Guidance and Pardon.*  
A Psalm of David.

1 To You, O Lord, I <sup>a</sup>lift up my  
soul.  
2 O my God, in

# Compare

Interpretation

- Compare Scripture with Scripture
  - Use cross-references!
- Compare this phrase/word with others in the same *book* (e.g. Galatians), then the same *author* (e.g. Paul), then the same *testament* (e.g. New Testament), then the *whole Bible*.

# Christ

Interpretation

- How does this passage point me towards Jesus as the Hero of the story?

# Christ

Interpretation

“He said to them, ‘How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Wasn’t it necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and enter into his glory?’

Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted for them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures. (Luke 24:25-27 CSB)

# Christ

Interpretation

“You pore over the Scriptures because you think you have eternal life in them, and yet they testify about me.” (John 5:39 CSB)

# Consult

Interpretation

- Consult outside resources such as commentaries, atlases, theological dictionaries, study Bibles, etc.

# Application – *how should I respond?*

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Bible Study

1. What did I learn about God? His character, ways, plan, promises?
2. What did I learn about the myself or others?
3. How should I pray in light of this passage?
4. How should I change my thinking or living in light of this passage?  
What does God want me to do? What does God want me to stop doing?
5. How does the gospel – Christ's life, death, & resurrection on behalf of sinners to reconcile them to Himself – inform my understanding of this passage? How does this passage inform my understanding of the gospel?
6. Is there an encouragement or promise I need to meditate on?

# Patience, young padawan...

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Bible Study

- You're not going to master this overnight!
- You have to get lost a little bit in order to find your way
  - Imagine if Google Maps got taken away...
  - Think of Bible Study not as a debit account, but as a savings account – it has a cumulative effect
- Give yourself permission to do a sloppy job, to fail, and then to change
- Our ultimate desire is to see God for who He is and be transformed, NOT just have a bunch of Bible knowledge!

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# What is Faith?

Key Verse:

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”

Hebrews 11:1

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**Explanation:** Faith is not just believing but fully trusting in God.



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# Biblical Example

-Abraham

## Verse:

God called Abraham to leave his land without knowing where he was going.

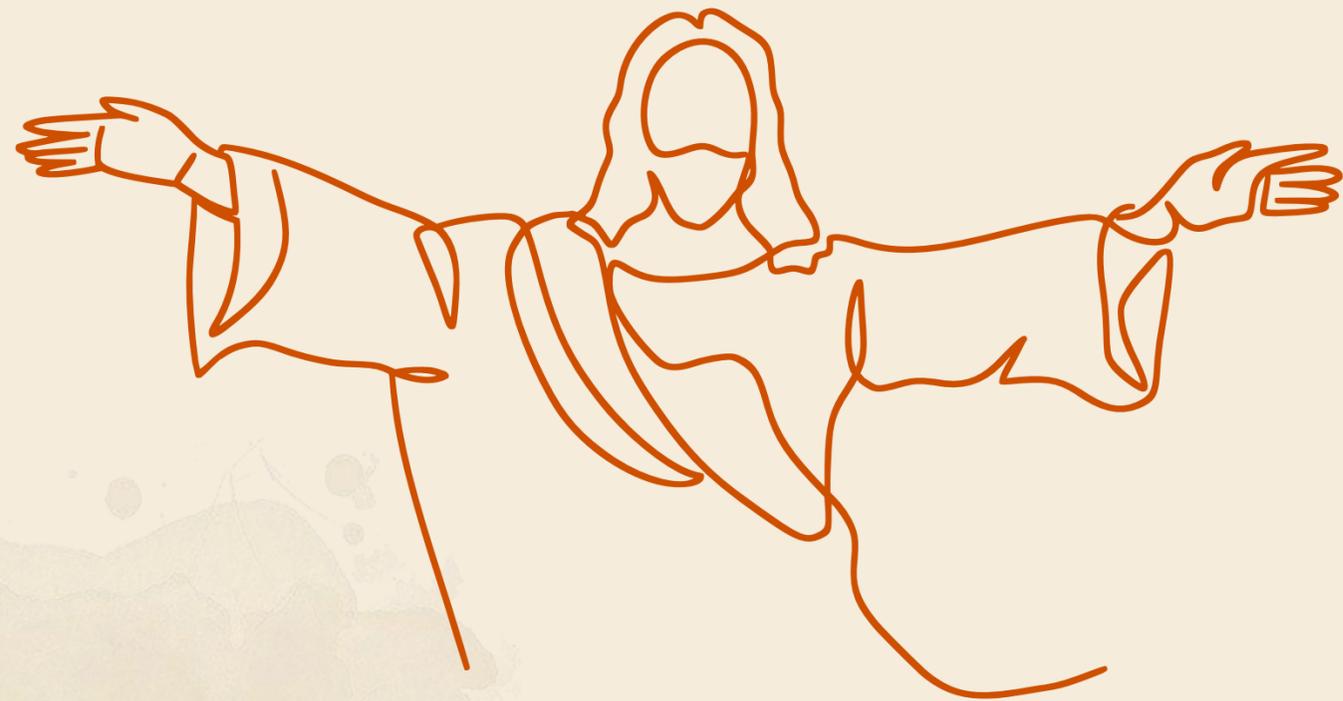
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Genesis 12:1

**Message:** Faith leads us to trust God even when the future is uncertain.



# How to Strengthen Our Faith?



Pray constantly

(1 Thessalonians 5:17)

Read God's Word

(Romans 10:17)

Obey His commandments

(James 2:26)

Trust in His timing

(Isaiah 40:31)



# Faith in Difficult Times

## Verse:

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

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Psalm 46:1



**Message:** Faith does not exempt us from trials, but it gives us strength to face them.

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# Testimony or Inspiring Story

**Example:**

A short story of someone who overcame difficulties by trusting in God.

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# Practical Application

## Question:

How can you apply faith in your life today?

## Example:

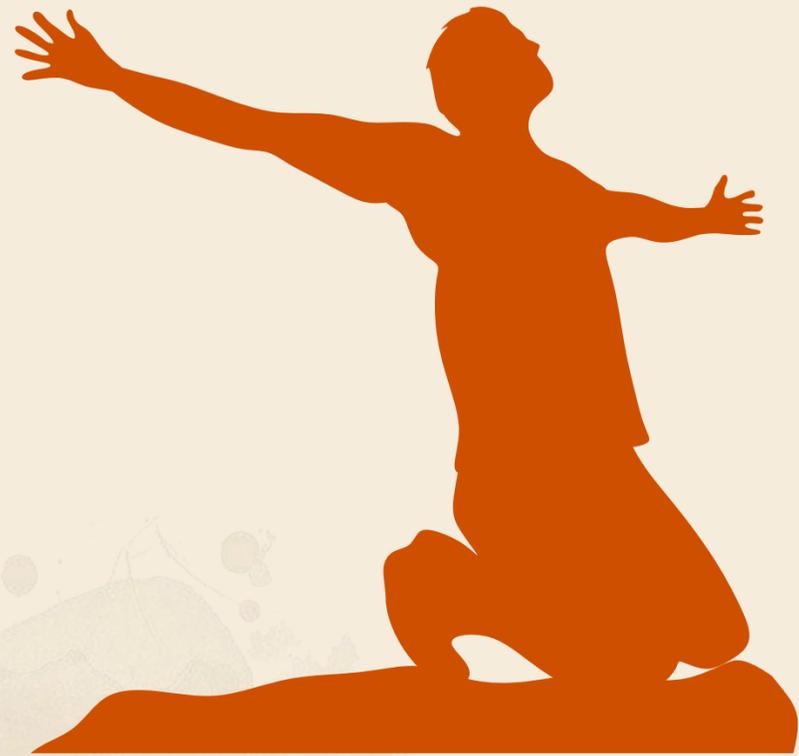
Choose to trust God in uncertainty, pray more, study His Word.



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# Call to Action



“God calls us to live an active faith. Today is the day to trust Him more and let His power transform our lives.”

Proverbs 3:5-6

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# Closing and Prayer

“Lord, help us to live by faith, trust in  
Your plan, and walk confidently in Your love.  
Amen.”

