

How to Study the Bible—1

The Bible is the only reliable data about God
The Bible is the Word of God
It is impossible to know God without knowing the Bible

How to Study Bible

Jonah

Excited—the Word of God is living! Active! Powerful!
It will Speak to you! It Guides you! Protect you! Empowers you!
Guards you against temptation! Renews your mind! Builds your faith.
Shows you heavenly riches! Shows you God's promises! Gives you identity! Speaks absolute
TRUTH and Truth Set free—Don't miss out

How to Study the Bible

1. **Choose a translation you understand.**
2. **Choose a consistent plan, time, and place to study**
3. **Understand the context.**
4. **Read slowly and ask questions.**
5. **Pray for God to speak to you and apply what he shows you.**
6. **Where do I start?**

1. **Choose a translation you understand.**

1. **Word-for-word translation:** KJV, Amplified, ESV, NASB, NJKV
2. **Thought for thought:** NIV, NLT REB
3. **Paraphrase:** Ex. the Message bible, the Passion bible

What should we use? One that you understand, I use the NJKV 1960,

2. **Choose a Plan, time, and place. Be consistent if you miss one day don't miss 2.**

Successful people do consistently what others do occasionally.

3. **Understand the context.**

- Context matters more than you can imagine—Understand ...

Who wrote it?— To whom was it written? —What is its purpose?

- We can learn context with a study bible, (introductions, concordance) your version, bible websites (blue letter bible), commentaries

4. **Read slowly and ask questions. (SPECK)**

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| • Is there a SIN to be avoided? | • Is there a COMMAND to obey? |
| • Is there a PROMISE to be claimed? | • Is there something to KNOW about God? |
| • Is there an EXAMPLE to follow? | |

5. **Pray for God to speak to you, and apply what He shows you.**

(Pray) à What do you want me to see—Say to me—Show me?

- God speaks through dreams, visions, audibly, but most commonly through the Bible
- God can speak to you as you read the Bible, guide you, strengthen and establish you, give you peace, minister to you, show great and mighty promises, confront you, convict you, and call you to ministry.

- There is a revelation of the Word of God that comes from God **Luke 24:45** And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.
- This is a good prayer to pray when we read the Bible
- Let me understand Lord

6. Where do I start?

- Gospels I would recommend Luke, finish with John, book of Acts
- James
- after I recommend the poetic books,
 - Psalms: will teach you how to pray
 - Proverbs: will teach you wisdom
- After I recommend the history of the Old Testament starting with Genesis
- A particular story or character like Jonh, David, Paul, Joshua, Gideon, Jabez
- Before you know it, you'll get familiar with the stories, characters, places, and events.

Start w/ Jonah —James I

Jonah 3: Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you.” 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, [a]a three-day journey in extent. 4 And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day’s walk. Then he cried out and said, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” 5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. 6 Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. 7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his [b]nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. 8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish? 10 Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

- God called Jonah the first time and Jonah ran from God
- Went on a ship, and the Lord provided a storm. Jonah told the sailors to throw me overboard
 - The storm was a provision of God
- Gets swallowed by a big fish that the Lord provided. He prays and repents, the Lord spoke to the fish and it vomited Jonah on the beach
 - A second strange provision by God
 - God’s provision may look like a problem, but they are God showing us grace
 - While Jonah was waiting God was working
 - What a powerful prayer that Jonah made inside the fish
 - He prayed the Word of God....
- He’s on the shore and is a mess: fish guts, slimy, smelly (like some of us) but as time goes by, as our relationship with God grows, as we read and learn the Bible the Lord begins to transform us
- Jonah is forgiven and is back home, **Chillin' out, maxin', relaxin', all cool, And all shootin' some b-ball outside of the school (Fresh Prince of BelAire)**
- But God speaks to Jonah **a second time**
 - Thank God that He gives us a second chance
- If we fail, he calls us back again and gives us so many second chances

- We cannot forget for one day that we are here by the mercy of God **psalms 103:10** He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;
- Are'nt we Glad for the Lord who loves us and has mercy to call us back **Lamentations 3:22** Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

Adam and Eve sinned against God, but God made a covering for them, showing grace
Moses murdered an Egyptian and was on the run, but God still called him to deliver Israel
David committed adultery and murdered Uriah to cover it up. When He repented, God forgave him and still called him a man after His own heart

Rahab lived as a prostitute and because she protected the spies, God redeemed her and included her in the lineage of Jesus

Peter denied the Lord 3 times, Jesus forgave him and used him to be the leader of the early church

So many of us here: we were so far away from God, But God has given us a second chance.

- 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord.
- This is what we need to do when God gives us another chance, when God calls us again
- Jonah this time obeyed the Word of the Lord
- Just FYI... these people were enemies of Israel, and Israel were enemies of Nineveh (Ninevah was the capital city of Assyria)
- Yet Jonah went to do what God asked him to do, in a city of his enemies
- My Homiletics teacher would have a fit... ready "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" Maybe he said more we don't know
- No introduction, no great joke, no icebreaker for three days to 120k people this message of condemnation
- Maybe Jonah thought they were not going to listen; this was a waste of his time, no one would repent, and I might get killed here
 - Never underestimate the preaching of the Word of God, never underestimate what God is doing in someone's life
 - Think about that one loved one, that one good friend, that family member, that son or daughter who has strayed away from the Lord. Paul says to preach in season and out of season, i.e.
 - The preaching of the Word of God worked then, and it works now (the word of God is living its powerful... the anointing of the Holy Spirit... the convicting of the Holy Spirit... the timing of God, and the calling of God)

- Jonah preached a bold message..... And Ninevah repented

5 So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. 6 Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. 7 And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying,

Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water.

8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?

- They believed God, not just believed in God
- There are so many in this country who believe in God, but they don't believe God
- If they believed God we wouldn't see what we see in Christianity today in America
- They believe in a loving God, but they don't believe that God loves them
- They believe in a God that saves the lost, but they don't believe that God can save their loved one

The king heard the message of Jonah proclaiming a fast for everyone, even the animals... that's a fast and **8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.** To truly repent is to completely change our mind about sin

10 Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it. When they repented, God relented and showed compassion When we fail.. when temptation overcomes us and we give in..

Repent and cry out to God... He will show you mercy and Grace and be compassionate **Isaiah 30:18 Therefore the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you.**

- God is not looking to catch you in sin, to condemn us, But he is waiting to show compassion, mercy, and grace
- Imagine a conversation with Jonah after this
- For some, this is God calling you for yet another chance,
- Every chance from the Lord demands a choice from us
- A choice to brush His word off or to repent and turn to God and turn from our ways

If we turn to God
He is merciful, full of grace

Do you need a second chance in an area of your life
Did you not get it right the first time
God is calling you again

God Bless you