

Intimacy with God - Reading Your Word

“We don’t read the Bible to finish it, but to be formed by it.”

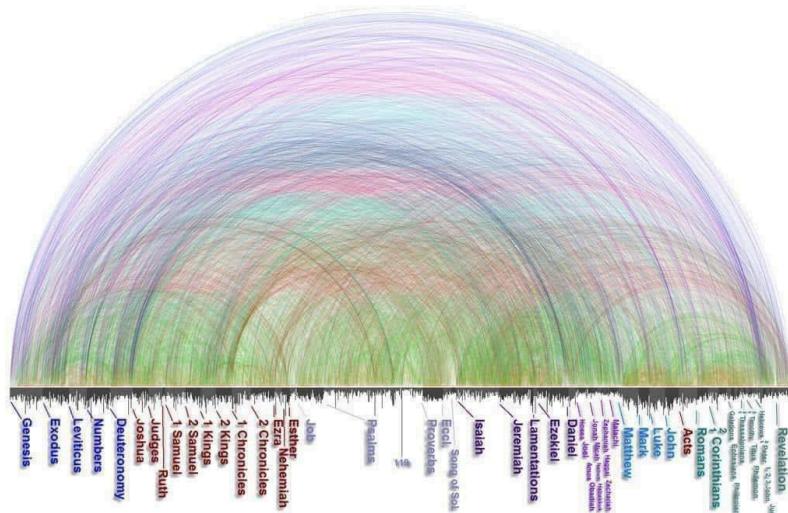
Goals:

- Grow in our relationship with God by spending daily time in His Word.
 - Build a consistent and structured rhythm in your Word.
 - Learn true hermeneutics and basic exegetical tools to rightly handle Scripture.
 - Read the Bible with both personal intimacy and theological accuracy.

The Bible: 66 books, 40 authors, 3 languages (*OT: Hebrew + Aramaic, NT: Greek*), written over 1,500 years (1400-1450 B.C. to 90-95 A.D.), 63,779 cross references.

The Bible is the inspired and sufficient Word of God, revealing His glory and His work of redeeming all things to Himself through Christ.

1. **God speaks through His Word.**
 2. **Scripture reveals God's character, will, and redemptive plan.**
 3. **It is where we commune with God**
 - a. To truly Know him and not just know about Him. (John 17:3)
 - b. Reading the bible is an act of worship and transformation (Romans 12:1–2)
 4. **It sanctifies us.**
 - a. “Sanctify them in your truth; your Word is Truth” (John 17:17)
 - b. It equips us for holiness and ministry.
 5. **It's how we fight the enemy and sin**
 - a. Jesus defended against Satan using scripture (Matt. 4:1-11)
 - b. It protects us from lies.



1. Foundations for Intimacy with God Through Scripture

Objective: Relationship with God!

- Daily Time With God: Not legalistic, but relational. (Luke 5:16; Psalm 1:1–3)
- Heart Posture: Humility, hunger, and expectation (Psalm 119:18; James 1:21)
- Structure & Rhythm:
 - Set a consistent time and place.
 - Use reading plans or a Bible-in-a-year structure.
 - Go through an entire book from start to finish. Chew on the Word slowly.
 - Keep a journal while reading.
 - Write down questions you have, things you don't understand, truths that you wish to go deeper into.
 - Take time with someone discipling you or a friend to unpack these things more.

2. Walking Through Scripture with Context

Objective: Reading Scripture in its biblical and cultural context.

Examples:

- Luke 5:1-11 (Peter follows Jesus)
- Philippians 4:13 (contentment in all circumstances)

Consider

- Historical Context: What was happening when this was written?
- Literary Context: What's before and after this verse? What language is being used that highlights the tone of the passage? Is this passage telling you what took place and factual truths (Imperatives) or is it commanding you as a Christian to put this into practice in your life, what to do (Indicatives)?
- Cultural Context: What did this mean to the original audience?

3. Hermeneutics: How to Interpret Scripture

Definition: Hermeneutics = The art and science of biblical interpretation.

Definition: Exegesis = Drawing out the original meaning of the text.

Scripture interprets Scripture (analogia fidei)

1. **Genre matters:** Poetry ≠ Prophecy ≠ Epistle ≠ Narrative
 - a. **Poetry:** Psalms, proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon
 - i. *These books use poetic language, metaphor, and Hebrew parallelism; many are reflective or instructional.*
 - b. **Prophecy:** Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Micah, Revelation
 - i. *These books contain the messages of God delivered through prophets, often concerning judgment, hope, exile, and restoration.*
 - c. **Epistle:** Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1–3 John, Jude
 - i. *These are instructional or pastoral letters written to churches or individuals.*
 - d. **Narrative:** Genesis, Exodus, Ruth, The Gospels, Acts
 - i. *These books primarily tell the story of God's work in the world and with His people.*
2. **Theological lens:** All Scripture points to Christ
 - a. “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” Luke 24:27

Practice: Read and interpret Luke 10:38-42 (Mary & Martha) using hermeneutical questions:

- Who is the author? Audience?
- What is the setting?
- What's the main truth?
- How does this point us to Jesus?

4. Exegetical Tools & Application

Objective: Simple steps for studying scripture.

Basic Exegetical Steps:

1. **Observation:** What does the text say?
 - a. Who is speaking? Who is involved?
 - b. What is happening? What are the key themes or repeated words?
 - c. When and where is this happening?
 - d. Are there contrasts, cause and effect, or promises?
2. **Interpretation:** What does it mean?
 - a. What is the main point or message?
 - b. How does this relate to the surrounding passage or book?
 - c. What is the theological truth being taught?
 - d. What does this reveal about God, mankind, or salvation?
3. **Application:** How does this apply to my life?
 - a. Is there a command to obey? A sin to repent of? A promise to believe?
 - b. How should this change my thinking, my heart, or my actions?
 - c. How does this deepen my relationship with Christ

Example Passage to Walk Through:

- Colossians 3:12–17

Tools to Recommend:

- a. Inductive Bible Study Method (OIA)
- b. Logos or BibleHub
- c. Cross-referencing (using marginal notes or concordance)
- d. Bible dictionaries
- e. Study Bibles/ commentaries (ESV Study Bible, Matthew Henry Commentary)
- f. Online resources (Blue Letter Bible, BibleProject)
- g. Recommended books:
 - i. *Knowing God* by J.I. Packer
 - ii. *Seeing & Savoring Jesus Christ* by John Piper