

MASTERING THE WORD: PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Welcome to the CMF Training page on **BIBLE STUDY**. A great way to begin our discussion and training on Bible Study is to look at the import of the Bible.

THE BIBLE

Anonymous

This Book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the Way of Salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers.

Its doctrines are holy; its precepts are binding, its stories are true; and its decisions are immutable. Read it, to be wise; believe it, to be safe; and practice it, to be holy.

It contains light to direct you, food to sustain you, and comfort to cheer you.

It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter.

Here Paradise is restored, heaven is opened, and the gates of hell disclosed.

Christ is its grand object, our good its design, and the glory of God its end.

It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet.

Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully.

It is the mind of wealth, a paradise of glory, a river of pleasure.

It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the laborer, and condemns all who trifle with its contents.

It is given you in life, will be opened up at the judgment, and remembered forever.

A.W. Tozer said of God's Word:

The great need of the hour among persons spiritually hungry is twofold: first, to know the Scriptures, apart from which no saving truth will be vouchsafed by our Lord; the second, to be enlightened by the Spirit, apart from whom the Scriptures will not be understood.

Our challenge as believers is to become master workmen of God's Word who correctly understand it and apply it to daily living. Bible Study is the key and requires us to place ourselves in a training mindset that will work to discover God in His Word.

2 Tim. 2:15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

1 – A TRAINING MINDSET

To appropriate truth in an experiential way requires discipline and effort on our part.

1 Tim. 4:7 Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, **train** yourself to be godly.

Philip. 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—[choose to] **think** about such things. [**train your mind to think**]

2 – GOD IS FOUND IN HIS WORD

God wants us to know Him, and to know Him, we must know His Word. He is found in His Word.

John 20:31 But these [Words] are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

John 14:7 If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

Bible study – Roll Up Your Sleeves – Study so as to master

Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel.

This is where you roll up your sleeves and wrestle with God until he blesses you from the Word. We exhort you to be like Jacob who continued to wrestle with the angel until the angel blessed him. *Bible Study is wrestling with God's Word until the particular passage "blesses you."*

This requires effort, discipline, **WORK**.

Genesis 32:22-28 That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maidservants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. 24So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. 25When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. 26Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak."

But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

27The man asked him, "What is your name?"

"Jacob," he answered.

28Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome."



BIBLICAL MOTIVATION

Why do we need to do personal Bible Study?

Our faith must have a solid foundation which is God's Word

Matthew 7:24-27 – Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. [25] The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. [26] But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put

them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. [27] The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.

We must discover truth for ourselves

All of Romans 14 speaks to this.

Acts 17:11 – Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Wisdom from God's Word is to be pursued and sought after.

Proverbs 4:5, 7-9, 13

[5] Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or swerve from them.

[7] Wisdom is supreme; therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.

[8] Esteem her, and she will exalt you; embrace her, and she will honor you.

[9] She will set a garland of grace on your head and present you with a crown of splendor.

[13] Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life.

We must study so as to be Christ's disciple.

John 8:31-32 – To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. [32] Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.



**GETTING
LAUNCHED**

As we launch, it is helpful to have a common definition of what we mean by the term "Bible Study."

Dr. Howard Hendrichs (Dallas Theological Seminary) has 3 components of Bible study

1. Must be in written form.
2. Must require outside preparation.
3. Must have a forum of discussion

What should be understood is that Bible Study is work.



TECHNICAL POINT – [Recommend you read this primer on knowing why it's to have a Scriptural foundation for what you believe. Click here.](#)

Step 1 – Understand the principles of personal Bible study:

- **Bible Study forces you to validate your presuppositions from your youth.** A presupposition is something you believe beforehand, in this case, it means something you believe before validating it for yourself in God's Word.

1 Cor. 13:11-12 *When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. [12] Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.) Bottom line: Challenge everything, and discover Truths anew from the source—God's Word!*

- **When doing Bible Study, you must rely upon the Holy Spirit.**

John 16:12-15 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. [13] But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. [14] He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. [15] All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."

- **Bible Study must include outside preparation, have a written form, and have forum for discussion** (H. Hendricks definition). There is something miraculous that occurs when you wrestle with God one-on-one over His Word. This concept is captured above in wrestling with God until blessed by Word (Gen 32:22-28).

Step 2 – Understand three simple goals of Bible Study.

1. Seek to honor Christ and His Word by making the Scriptures the source and foundation of our conclusions. What does this mean? It means avoiding commentaries and other sources outside the Bible at all costs. If you are having a trouble with a passage, keep wrestling with it asking God to help you figure it out. Believe that God's Holy Spirit will guide you into the Holy of Holies to find Truth.

2. Let the Scriptures stand alone as authoritative. God's Word is completely authoritative by itself. If you are having trouble understanding a passage, go to other passages in the Bible to figure it out. The Bible is the best commentary on the Bible.

3. Make sure your conclusions are Biblical. Seems like a dumb thing to say, but it is easy to take a narrative portion of the Bible where God is telling the story of what happening and then develop a conviction from the narrative rather from a doctrinal passage.

Example: Solomon was supposedly the wisest man in the Bible and he had multiple wives. Therefore it is okay to have multiple wives. However, Genesis is clear that God designed one man to become one flesh with one woman. Good examples of doctrinal passages are the Sermon on the Mount or Paul's Epistles. Look at what's being said by whom in what context for what reason.

Step 3 – Join (or even start your own) Bible Study. Some Bible Studies do not require you to do outside preparation, but we encourage you to prepare before each group gathering. This simple principle will make the Bible come ALIVE in newfound ways.



When starting out in Bible Study, it might be a good idea to start out with a study that is already developed that provides you questions and then has you look up verses and answer questions. This is a good way to get used to searching through the Scriptures to answer questions.



CAUTION – Don't take short cuts. In Bible Study, the process of personal studying (wrestling) is as important or even more important than drawing conclusions. The exercise is what makes you strong. ☺



**CONTINUING
FURTHER**

Now that we've taken off, we want to experience sustained flight in Bible Study. Here are some things to try:

1 As you begin doing Bible Study, you will want to start building a Bible Study library of "helps" to help you correctly discern God's Word.

These can found online or at a local Christian bookstore. We recommend you purchase them in the order presented, but do what serves your purposes. There is also Bible software available that provides many of this same background information.

- Bible Dictionary
- Bible Handbook
- Exhaustive Concordance
- Expository Dictionary (Vine's is the most common)
- Topical Bible

Don't forget to stay within your budget ☺



REMEMBER – We encourage you to stay away from commentaries. You'll notice that none of these references are commentaries that *interpret* the Bible. They simply provide background and reference information.

2 Up to this point, you have probably be doing a "fill in the blank" type of study that uses some type of workbook or guide with questions and space for answers.

The next step will be for you to try doing one of these more in-depth types of studies. Click on each link below to be taken to a separate document explaining how to do each type of study.

We encourage you to have a small group of folks with you to undertake each type of study.

- [ABC Bible Study](#)
- [Character Bible Study](#)
- [Topical Bible Study](#)

3 Another option for you is to visit the Christian Military Fellowship ONLINE Bible Study page to complete one of our provided studies.

[Just Click here to visit our CMF ONLINE Bible Studies.](#)



FURTHER STUDY To go deeper, attempt to do an **Inductive Bible Study**. This type of study can be the most rewarding study to conduct. However, they are not for the faint of heart. The study builds around 3 questions:

1. **What do I see? (Observation)** - This is always the most challenging portion of Bible study, which most people give only cursory attention to (unfortunately). The key to doing Bible study is "training the eye to see." Seeing correctly helps you Interpret correctly and so on. Environment - what it is like to be in the author's shoes.
2. **What does it mean? (Interpretation)** - What are the implications of what I just observed?
3. **How does it work? (Application)** - Two things to look for in this process:
 - How does it work for me?
 - How does it work for others?

Click on the following links to see the details of doing an Inductive Bible Study:



[Overview of the Inductive Bible Study](#)

[Instructions Inductive Study Worksheet](#)

[Sample Simple Chart Overview \(2 Thes\)](#)

[Sample Detailed Chart Overview \(1 John-page 1\)](#)

[Sample Detailed Chart Overview \(1 John-page 2\)](#)

[Sample Inductive Study Worksheet \(James 1:12-18\)](#)