

Part 9 Guide on How to Read the Bible

Dear friends, this is a very important topic that needs a separate study on its own, but I will focus today on the practical side of dealing with God's Word.

I would like to stress few important principles of God's Word before I move over to the practical side of the bible-study:

1. The Word of God is Jesus Christ and He is God divine made available to you through the Holy Spirit.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1 KJV)

2. Since the Word is God himself, it means that the Bible has no depth that can be exhausted. This means that if we want to grow in Jesus, we should never tire of studying the Word, it is the only book that each time you reread it God brings to us new spiritual revelations.

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12 KJV)

3. The Word of God is the seed that saves us when we heard the good news about Jesus and surrendered to Him.

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides for ever. (1Peter 1:23 KJV)

4. The Word of God is also the food that we need to grow and mature in the Lord.

As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby: If so you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. (1Peter 2:2-3 KJV)

5. The Word of God brings more faith.

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Rom 10:17 KJV)

Let's move to the practical side on how to read the Word of God.

If you are a new believer, or you never read the whole bible from cover to cover, I suggest you start your first reading of the whole bible from cover to cover. Start with the New Testament from the Book of Matthew to the Book of Revelation reading between 1-3 chapters every early morning before daybreak. Once you finish the New Testament, do the same with the Old Testament, from the Book of Genesis to the Book of Malachi. If you are consistent in your reading, in two years you can finish your first whole bible reading. This will be an immense blessing to you, the Holy Spirit will take you on an unforgettable journey. Please get a notepad where you can make a note of questions you may have along your studies and ask mature believers to help you with answering them. Please don't skip difficult or seemingly boring passages. You may be surprised how many hidden treasures are in some of those passages.

If you are a believer who have read the whole bible one or few times, continue doing so, at each reading the Holy Spirit will show you new treasures in the Word that are important for your maturity. You can also increase the pace of reading, from 1-3 chapters to 3-7 chapters daily. Fast reader will manage this in about an hour.

The daily reading of the Word of God is an important habit to develop. Please don't ignore it for your spiritual growth will depend on it. For those that haven't mastered this habit I would say that you suffer from spiritual malnutrition. What did Jesus say?

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.
(Matthew 4:4 KJV)

The bible is divided in two sections – New and Old Testament. The New Testament means the new covenant which God made with mankind through the sacrificial death of Jesus. It has 27 books.

The Old Testament means the old covenant between God and Israel. It is divided in four sections: the five books of Moses (Genesis to Deuteronomy), the historical books (Joshua to Esther); the poetic books (Job to Song of Solomon); and the prophets (Isaiah

to Malachi). Each section is more or less the same in size, all books are in total 39.

For mature believers I suggest that you alternate the New Testament whole reading and afterwards one section of the Old Testament. Then you repeat reading the New Testament followed up by reading another Old Testament book. In this way you will emphasise more on the New Testament without neglecting the old one.

How does one read the bible? Start by simple prayer asking the Lord to help you believe the Word and understand it. Then start studying your portion for the day. Once you finish reading your portion, ask the Holy Spirit to help you practice it. This is the most critical aspect of your study. If you don't practice the Word, it will remain a seed but not food for you. You will become an intellectual believer who has knowledge about Jesus but actually doesn't know Him personally. If that describes any of you, take the following warning from Jesus seriously:

Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity.
(Mat 7:21-23 KJV)

As Jesus was saying this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and told him, "How blessed is the womb that gave birth to you and the breasts that nursed you!" But he said, "Rather, how blessed are those who hear God's word and obey it!" **(Luke 11:27-28 ISV)**

So, please remember these three elements in prayer – believing, understanding and practicing the Word.

Dear fellow believers let us become mature in the Lord and not ignore Jesus for He is the Living Word which is our daily food.

Our next part 10 is on how to fast.