

# SCRIPTURE & STUDY

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A SPIRITUAL PRACTICES DEVOTIONAL

B/P



# Scripture...

The Bible was written over a period of 1,600 years by more than 40 writers from all walks of life. Some were fishermen; some were politicians. Others were generals or kings, shepherds or historians. They were from three different continents, and wrote in three different languages. They wrote on hundreds of controversial subjects yet they wrote with agreement and harmony. They wrote in dungeons, in temples, on beaches, and on hillsides, during peacetime and during war. Yet their words sound like they came from the same source.

## Why should we read the Bible?

**Reading the Bible shows us God's character and how to imitate Him:** "Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children." - Ephesians 5:1/Hebrews 1:1-3

**Reading the Bible guards our hearts:** "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." - Psalm 119:11

**Reading the Bible helps us to be fruitful:** "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you." - John 15:7

**Reading the Bible offers spiritual guidance and wisdom:** "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." - Psalm 119:105

**Reading the Bible offers ethical teachings that can shape one's character and guide moral decision-making:** "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." - Proverbs 9:10

**Reading the Bible provides inspiration and encouragement:** "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." - Philippians 4:13

**Reading the Bible can lead to personal growth and transformation:** "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind." - Romans 12:2

**Reading the Bible gives us insight into the complexities of human nature and why we struggle with sin:** "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?" - Jeremiah 17:9

## How could I start to read the Bible?

Here's a suggestion from Eugene Peterson to help make your Bible reading time more meaningful...

**READ** | First, read the text, don't try to figure anything out. Read it slowly, meditatively; soak in the words. Let them flow over you, heart, mind, and soul. Take in what God is saying. Start with the Book of John if you're new to Bible reading.

**THINK** | Next, think about the words you have just read. Put yourself in the story (what do you see/feel). Are there words or themes that repeat? What is God trying to say, or what is He asking me to do? Consider it from different angles and perspectives. We can sometimes miss essential elements if we rush through them.

**PRAY** | Did God reveal something to you? Is He asking you to do something? Is there something that stirred you? Don't rush to live it out; focus on your relationship and conversation with God. Give it back to God, asking Him for clarity and strength to live what you've read.

**LIVE** | This is where we live out Jesus as Lord. We decrease, and He increases as we seek to live out what He's asked and equipped us to do. His faithfulness will be evident, and we will be a blessing to others as we live out the teachings of Scripture.

## Day 16: The Importance of God's Word

**READ:** **2 Timothy 3:16-17** "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

**THINK:** The Bible is more than merely a historical account of the Jews and the church. Every narrative, prophecy, teaching, warning, and command within its pages lead us to its ultimate Author—God, showing us the path to becoming His children and guiding us on how to live. Here are a few ways that happens:

**Teaching/Instruction:** Scripture helps teach us a proper worldview to order our actions. The Word of God is presented as sound doctrine, instruction, and authoritative teaching.

**Rebuking:** Scripture sets the benchmark which points out the wrong in an individual's life. When we witness sin in our or someone else's life, we can allow God's Word to speak and expose it.

**Correcting:** The Greek word for "correcting" used in 2 Tim. 3:16 is epanorthosis, which means "to set right again, correct, to make straight." It places us in a correct moral posture and helps us find the right path.

**Training in Righteousness:** Scripture helps show us how to live godly, righteous lives and make the right choices. Psalm 119:105 affirms, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." The Word of God directs us in living the Christian life.

**DO:** Reflect on the role of Scripture in your life. In the space below, write down three ways you have personally experienced the power and impact of God's Word. Take a moment to thank God for the gift of His Word and ask Him to deepen your hunger and understanding as you embark on this devotional journey.

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*"The Bible is the only book where the author is in love with the reader."*

- Anonymous

# Day 17: Memorizing Scripture

**READ: Psalm 119:11** “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.”

**THINK:** One of the benefits of the modern era is how easy and accessible the Bible is. We can pick up our phones anytime and read God’s word. But a forgotten practice is memorizing Scripture and hiding it in our hearts, so we can receive a continued blessing anytime we recall God’s word. When we remember portions of the Bible, it helps us in many ways.

1. It can help us remember that triumphing over temptation becomes attainable through scripture memorization, arming you with the sword of the Spirit to combat sin (Eph. 6:17).
2. We can quickly quote a comforting passage to others going through difficult times.
3. We can find freedom from anxiety when we recall God’s promises.
4. It can give us confidence in our witnessing with friends, family, and neighbours.
5. It develops spiritual strength by embracing God’s presence in every moment, fostering a deeper trust in Him to meet daily needs and seize opportunities that come your way.
6. Jesus quoted Scripture in Matthew 4 when tempted by Satan in the wilderness.

**DO:** Here are a few Scriptures you may want to look up and memorize. Perhaps make a list of your favourite verses and seek to commit them to memory over the next few weeks.

## GROWTH IN CHRISTLIKENESS

Love	John 13:34,35	1 John 3:18
Humility	Philippians 2:3,4	1 Peter 5:5,6
Purity	Ephesians 5:3	1 Peter 2:11
Honesty	Leviticus 19:11	Acts 24:16
Faith	Hebrews 11:6	Romans 4:20,21
Good Works	Galatians 6:9,10	Matthew 5:16

*“The Bible was not given to increase our knowledge but to change our lives.”*

- D. L. Moody

# Day 18: Studying God's Word

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

**THINK:** In this passage, Paul encourages Timothy to seek the approval of God, not others, to say and do what God wants of him and not what others want. With many false teachers emerging, Timothy was to correctly handle the word of truth (the Greek word is *orthotomounta*, meaning, literally, "to cut straight"). Quite often, we can assume what the Bible means without first studying it, which can lead to us living in error or teaching that error to others.

**DO:** One of the ways to study the Bible can be what some call the Inductive method. It is a way to explore and understand God's word through 3 components: observation, interpretation, and application. During your Bible study time, choose a passage of Scripture and jot down answers to the following questions to better understand the passage of Scripture you are reading.

## INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

### BIBLE PASSAGE:

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OBSERVATION - What does it say? INTERPRETATION - What does it mean? APPLICATION - How do I need to change?

### OBSERVATION:

WHO are the main characters?

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WHAT happens in this passage?

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WHEN is this taking place in the big story of God?

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WHERE does the event take place?

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WHY did the people in the passage do what they did, and/or say what they said?

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Are there any repeated words, contrasts, or comparisons?

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## INTERPRETATION:

Look for the single meaning of the passage.

Consider each verse in light of surrounding verses.

Remember that scripture never contradicts other scripture.

Use tools, such as word studies, cross-references, but leave commentaries for last.

Be inquisitive and always ask questions - you are digging for truth.

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## APPLICATION:

What will I take away from this passage (the main idea)?

What actions/attitudes should I encourage and discourage in my life?

What do I learn about God, people, life in this passage?

What will I do with what I have learned?

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*"The Bible is the road map in which we are to travel through life."*

- Billy Graham

# Day 19: Meditating on God's Word

**READ:** **Psalm 1:2** "But whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night."

**THINK:** If you are looking for water, which is better - digging twenty 1-foot wells or one 20-foot well? The deeper you dig a well, the more likely you find water. The same is true with the Bible. The more time you sit with a passage, the more it will speak to you. Another example is driving somewhere versus walking there. Driving will get you there quickly, but we notice a lot more when we walk at a slower pace.

**DO:** Select a short passage or chapter from your daily Bible reading. Read it slowly and repeatedly, allowing the words to sink deep into your heart. Write down your observations and personal reflections. Then reread it 4 more times (in one sitting or over multiple days). What new observations are you noticing?

Reading #1

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Reading #2

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Reading #3

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Reading #4

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Reading #5

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*"The Bible is like a telescope. If a man looks through his telescope, then he sees worlds beyond; but if he looks only at his telescope, then he does not see anything but that."*

- Henry Ward Beecher



## Day 20: Applying God's Word in Daily Life

**READ:** **James 1:22** "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

**THINK:** Sometimes, when we read the Bible, we forget that we are reading for life change and not just information. When the Bible gives a command or promise, we must take it seriously, as it is for our benefit to do so. We are to receive, believe, and act upon what we read whenever we open the Bible. Simply reading God's word without obeying it will profit us little. Remember the words of Jesus when He said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luke 11:28).

**DO:** Applications should be personal, practical, and possible for you to do. In seeking personal application, here is a powerful acronym to consider when trying to find the "SPECK" of truth in God's Word for you to receive, believe, and act upon. Consider reading Luke 8:4-8 and 8:9-15 and ask these five questions. Is there a:

**S**in to confess?

**P**romise to claim?

**E**xample to follow?

**C**ommand to obey?

**K**nowledge of God to believe?

"And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable, "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold." As he said these things, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."" (Luke 8:4-8, ESV)

"And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant, he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that 'seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.' Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away. And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience." (Luke 8:9-15, ESV)

*"The Bible is alive; it speaks to me. It has feet; it runs after me. It has hands; it lays hold of me!"*

# Tools for Bible Study

The material below is from the book *Bible Study Methods: Twelve Ways You Can Unlock God's Word* by Rick Warren

1. **Study Bible** - An essential tool is a good study Bible that includes cross-references and concordance. It needs to be practical to use – print large enough to be read for long periods and wide margins for taking notes.
2. **Several recent translations** - The Bible has been translated in many forms, and comparing a passage in multiple translations will be invaluable.
3. **Exhaustive concordance** - Next to your Bible, an exhaustive concordance (geared to your biblical translation) is an essential tool for Bible study. It is a Bible index of the words contained in that version. It lists every usage of every word in the Bible, giving all the references where that word may be found.
4. **Bible dictionary or a Bible encyclopedia** - A Bible dictionary explains many of the words, topics, customs and traditions in the Bible as well as giving historical, geographical, cultural, and archeological information. Background material is also given for each book of the Bible, and short biographies are presented for the major people of both testaments. A Bible encyclopedia is an expanded Bible dictionary, with longer articles that deal in greater detail with more subjects.
5. **Topical Bible** – Similar to a concordance, except that it categorizes the verses of the Bible by topics instead of words.
6. **Bible handbook** – A handbook is a combination of an encyclopedia and a commentary in a concise form. It is generally used for quick reference when reading through a particular book of the Bible.
7. **Commentaries** – This is a scholarly collection of explanatory notes and interpretations on the text of a particular Bible book or section. The purpose of a commentary is to explain/interpret the meaning of a biblical message by analyzing the words used, background, grammar and syntax, and relation of that particular book to the rest of the Bible. Commentaries can help enhance our understanding of the Bible. Still, they should not be relied upon until you complete your study so as not to sway your thoughts.

# The Bible's Story in 30 Days

Day 1	Creation	Genesis 1:1-2:3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 2	The Fall	Genesis 3:1-24	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 3	The Flood	Genesis 6:9-8:19	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 4	God's covenant with Noah	Genesis 8:20-9:17	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 5	God calls Abraham	Genesis 11:27-12:9	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 6	God's covenant with Abraham	Genesis 15:1-21, 17:1-8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 7	Isaac's birth and Abraham's testing	Genesis 21:1-7, 22:1-19	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 8	The Israelites go to Egypt	Genesis 46:1-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 9	The Israelites leave Egypt	Exodus 12:37-51, 13:17-22	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 10	The Ten Commandments	Exodus 20:1-21, Deut. 5:1-21	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 11	Joshua's farewell speech	Joshua 24:1-33	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 12	The Israelites request a King	1 Samuel 8:1-22	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 13	David and Goliath	1 Samuel 17:12-58	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 14	God's covenant with David	2 Samuel 7:1-29	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 15	Solomon builds the temple	1 Kings 3:1-2, 1 Kings 5:1-6:11	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 16	The kingdom is split	1 Kings 11:42-12:24	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 17	The northern kingdom is conquered	2 Kings 17:6-23	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 18	Judah is conquered	2 Kings 25:1-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 19	Return from exile	Ezra 1:1-11, Ezra 2:68-70, Ezra 3:8-13	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 20	Job's life and suffering	Job 1:1-2:13, Job 42:10-17	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 21	Jesus birth	Matt. 1:18-25, Luke 2:1-21	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 22	Jesus' baptism and temptation	Matthew 3:13-4:11	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 23	Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem	Luke 19:29-48	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 24	The Last Supper and Jesus' arrest	Mark 14:12-50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 25	Jesus crucifixion	John 19:1-42	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 26	Jesus' resurrection and ascension	Luke 24:1-53	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 27	The Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost	Acts 2:1-41	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 28	Paul's conversion	Acts 9:1-31	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 29	The gospel goes to the Gentiles	Acts 10:1-48	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day 30	The new heaven and new earth	Isaiah 65:17-25, Revelations 21:1-27	<input type="checkbox"/>

