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## How We Should Read the Bible

### Selected Scriptures

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Well, today is the last day of the year. It's hard to believe that the year is already almost gone. And so as we prepare to start the new year tomorrow, I want to challenge you, like I did last year, to read your Bible every day. Last year we looked at several things. Looked at how to read the Bible, spent a couple messages on it. We introduced a reading plan.

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I know our family was able to do it and we completed it back in December. Now we're ready to start again. You know, Bible reading is essential. You should read it every day as much as possible. This is the key to developing a healthy appetite for God's Word. One writer said, you can't expect to come to church on Sunday with a hunger for God's Word if you haven't been feeding on it throughout the week.

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I agree with that. Another one says John Piper likens daily Bible reading to eating an appetizer that cultivates a spiritual appetite for the Sunday sermon. That is, it prepares and trains your palate for the main meal. So here is the main meal. But unfortunately the sad reality is that many do not read the Bible. Even though we have technology now and most of

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Every Christian has the Bible on their phone, but many still don't read it faithfully and consistently and systematically.

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Reading the Bible will certainly allow you to hear the voice of God, because the voice of God is right here in the pages of Scripture. You know, when we were studying the Protestant Reformation, we learned that the Bible was not in the language of the people. It was in the language of the learned. It was in the language of the clergy. But now it's in the language of the people, right? And we have the wonderful

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privilege of reading it. There were many problems with not having it in your language because it made you ignorant of God's will, made you ignorant of the gospel, made you ignorant of salvation. But again, now that the Bible is in our language, we need to read it. Did you know that there are over 3,000 translations of the Bible?

**02:34**

You say, well, I didn't even know there were that many languages in our world. But 3,000, and there's more being translated all the time. And so with each people group having their Bible in their language, that certainly leaves everyone without excuse. We can't say, well, I can't read the Bible because I can't read the language. We don't have that problem now. Charles Spurgeon says,

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I venture to say that the bulk of Christians spending more time in reading the newspaper than they do in reading the Word of God. And even Jesus, to the rebuke of some, he said on five different occasions this question, "Have you not read?"

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They didn't understand his teaching because they weren't faithfully reading the Word and they certainly weren't obeying it. They can't obey what they don't read. Therefore, they were subject to error. They were subject to the lack of understanding of the Word of God and what it meant. So it's really essential that we develop the habit of reading our Bibles regularly and consistently. You know there's a story in

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Acts chapter 8 that illustrates the importance of this subject for both reading and understanding. If you want to look at it, it's found in Acts chapter 8 and beginning at verse 26. It's the story that you're familiar with, the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. You remember that? Luke tells us that the angel, the Lord, had spoke to Philip and told him to get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem.

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to Gaza.

**04:21**

the door.

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So he got up and went and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all of her treasure, and he had come to Jerusalem to worship. And he was returning and sitting in his chariot.

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he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, go up and join this chariot. Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and said, do you understand what you were reading? He said, well how could I unless someone guides me? And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. I want you to notice in that passage that the eunuch was reading God's Word.

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But he didn't understand what he was reading. Again, that's the same problem that many of us have, hence the purpose of the pastor. But once he understood, he

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believed, and he was what? Baptized. I remember years ago when I was witnessing to a security guard at my job. And I remember telling him, if I'm going to be judged by the things that are in this book, I ought to read it.

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I ought to know what's there and he ought to do the same.

**05:44**

There are several ways to effectively read it. Let me give you what a few of them are. First, we must read it carefully. We do that by being alert and by not falling asleep. You know, if you pick your Bible reading time when you're tired, it's not going to be very fruitful because you're going to succumb to the flesh at some point. I found as

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I've gotten older that I can't read laying back. You know again that's when the lights begin to go out. You need to read when you're at your best. Reading when you're tired or sleepy that's not going to accomplish much of anything except for guilt. So you need to make sure you're rested, make sure you're alert.

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And even though you may not, you know, feel your best, you need to read it anyway. And you can always come back later and look back over it. Reading carefully also involves reading deliberately and reading slowly. Some people like to read like they're in a drive-through at a restaurant. Everything is in a hurry. They don't slow down long enough to even enjoy the meal.

**07:05**

What's the point of reading in a hurry if you're not going to benefit from your reading. So you need to take time as you read. Secondly, we would say we need to read repeatedly. We must return often to the beginning of the passage. That means we must read it again and again. In other words, we must use repetition because

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everything that we learn is not learned the first time. How many times did it take you to tie your shoe?

**07:34**

Long time, right? I mean, times did it take you pronouncing words to begin to form sentences and to be able to have a conversation. We learn by repetition. And good readers will read a passage many times. Third, I would say, we must read aloud. When we read aloud,

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We hear the words, we hear the phrases, and they take on a whole new look as you hear it. It also helps to keep your mind focused. I would say do it at least once in your reading. Or you can alternate back and forth, read out loud for a little while until you're tired of reading out loud, and then start reading silently again. Go back to reading out loud.

**08:26**

But whenever you do it, just do it slowly. Take time to focus on each word. And the words that you don't understand, just look them up in the dictionary. Fourth, we must read with tools in hand. Kind of tools I'm talking about is a pen or pencil, pad of paper, something to write on. Because you know, when you read, you're gonna see things, you're gonna have questions. Jot them down.

**08:57**

The value of help of your pencil or your pen can't be overstated. There was a professor at Harvard who once approached a student concerning the study of a special area of zoology. He gave him a pickled specimen, a halomon. And that was to be the sole object of his scrutiny for days to come. And he would tell him over and over and over three things. One, look, look, look.

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else could master the subject. Second thing he would say, draw on the paper what you see, for the pencil is one of the best eyes. And third, he was to see the parts of the fish in their orderly arrangement and in relation to one another because in the professor's blunt words, facts are stupid things until brought into connection with some

**09:54**

general law. So for three whole days the student kept following the advice of his teacher and in doing so he learned just about all that there was to know about a halomon. In fact he was so absorbed in that learning process and it made such an indelible impression that years later he said if he attempted to draw a fish he couldn't draw anything but halomans.

**10:24**

I'm convinced that a pencil in the hand is the best mechanical aid that you can use in a reading project. Fifth, I would say we must read to understand. As you read, you'll come across things you don't understand. Don't let that discourage you. Make notes on your pad. Write down the questions that you have. Come back later. Answer the questions. Your observation of the text should make you want to understand what it means.

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It should drive you to question the text. Sometimes you might ask, well, what's the main point of what I'm reading? I ask questions like, well, what's this all about? That's really the first thing I wanna know, before I really understand what it means, I wanna know the context, I wanna know what the story's about. You could ask questions like, how's the writer getting this across, or what are some of the truths or the facts that he's trying to emphasize?

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How does he relate truths to each other? You could even ask the question, what's my purpose of reading this? See, God wants you to understand his book. His meaning is

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not hidden, it's not a mystery. Six, I would say, we must reflect as we read. This is what is called the lost art of meditation.

**11:42**

People involved in meditation today, they're not meditating on God's Word, they're just contemplating their belly button to nirvana. Reflection is the mind and the heart at work thinking over what the eyes have seen. I like that. Reflection is the mind and the heart at work thinking over what the eyes have seen. You know, that's what I like about this being a book.

**12:13**

Because you can freeze it. The print is frozen. And so I can read, and I can have it all before me, and if I want, I can read it again. I can read it a third time. I can keep reading it. If I start out and I'm a little distracted, I can keep reading it until I'm caught up, and my distractions are no longer there.

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I'm so thankful Guy didn't give us a music video.

**12:42**

You know, much videos today, everything moves so fast that you can't even catch up with it.

**12:48**

Reflection in Bible reading should have the same intensity of meditation where the soul has the desire and the intention of obeying the Word of God. God said to Joshua in Joshua 1 8, this book of the law shall not depart from your mouth but you shall meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do according to all that's written in it for then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have success.

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**13:17**

So when you do this, you need to do it purposely. You don't just read. You read for a reason. You read for a purpose. You read for a particular aim in mind. Even the Psalmist had a purpose in hiding God's Word in his heart. He said in Psalm 119, 11, Your Word I have treasured in my heart, that I might not sin against you. That was his purpose. He knew that if he hid the Word in his heart, that would become a deterrent to sin. You know, the Bereans had a purpose.

**13:47**

examining the scriptures daily. It says in Acts 17 11, now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the Word with great eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. They were hearing Paul preach, they were reading their Old Testament, they were researching their Old Testament and trying to understand the truth.

**14:17**

Irving Jensen says, Reading only isolated verses out of context and expanding them according to personal whims is a dangerous practice. It is as foolish and fruitless to read the Bible without purpose as it is to search about a room looking for nothing in particular. I was thinking about that because many times I've went into a room to go get something and I've forgot along the way why I was going there and I'm standing around just kind of looking around the room thinking maybe it'll come to me why I'm in here.

**14:47**

And sometimes it never does and I leave the room dazed and confused. Some of you do the same thing, right? You walk back into the other room and you sit down, go back to your own business and sometimes I'll even pray, Lord, I remember what it was I was trying to do. And sometimes again it never comes and other times I'll be involved in something and all of a sudden it'll pop in my mind and I'll run into that room and get whatever it was. Or usually by that time it's unimportant. It lost its purpose.



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**Seventh, we need to pray as we read. If you reflect humbly, you will reflect prayerfully. Need to bathe your reflections in prayer from the start of it all the way to the end of it. David's prayer in Psalm 119 and verse 18 was for God to open his eyes that he may behold wonderful things from God's law. That's what we ought to be praying, same thing. He prayed in**

**15:43**

**someone 1997 all how I love your law it is my meditation all the day**

**15:53**

**You think about God's Word throughout the day? If you're meditating on it, you will. David later said when he meditated on God's testimonies, it gave him more insight than all of his teachers. So if you do these seven things, this will help you as you read your Bible. It also helps you as you seek to understand the Bible. Now in the remaining time that we have, I want to talk about three types of reading.**

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**I was just talking about the preparation to doing these three types, but there are three types. There's devotional reading, there is analytical reading, and there is informational reading. Now I personally, in my study, in my time in the Word, have always focused on analytical and informational reading, but I'm beginning to rethink this devotional reading.**

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**you'll understand what I mean as I talk about this. Devotional reading is different from the other two. The key to understand about this type of reading is everything you've done up to this point is preparation to devotional reading. But understand that the preparation is not the devotional reading. Devotional reading is your personal devotional time. It takes all of these things into**

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to where you're reading it carefully and you're reading it for understanding, you're meditating on it, you're prayerfully going through it.

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It is your worship. You're not sitting here reading for information. You're not trying to analyze anything. You're reading it for worship. Sometimes, you know, you can read certain passages, and it just stimulates.

**17:49**

kind of response from you. Now I'm not going to sit here and say that in analytical and informational reading that worship is not a byproduct of that because it is because I'll tell you when you come to the understanding of a text and you've been working in trying to understand what this Bible verse or Bible passage means and the lights begin to come on and you just like thank you Lord and you worship.

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But this is a time of reading the Bible alone with God. It's not, again, analytical reading or informational reading. It's reflection. It's confession. It's faith. It's obedience. It's building your relationship with God. It's really like meditation. It's your response from thinking on Him. It's very personal. It's not a group Bible study. It's not any kind of Bible study. It's not...

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You know for me standing up here and teaching is not even doing it right here at church. It's personal along, it's kind of like in Matthew 6 where Jesus told his hearers that when you pray go in the closet, close the door, go into that secret place. Same thing.

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**19:02**

Andrew Murray said, some read the Bible to learn, and some read the Bible to hear from heaven. Devotional reading is that. It's seeking to hear from heaven. So reading it out loud is very helpful. Sometimes, maybe I don't want to just read, but I want to listen. You know, much of Bible reading was really listening. But now we have everything here. We can read it too.

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So it's waiting on the Lord. It's seeking the things that are above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. That's what Paul said in Colossians 3, 1 to 3. It's setting your mind on things above, not on the things on the earth. It's like in Romans 12 where you're presenting your body as a living and a holy sacrifice acceptable to God. You're not being conformed to this world, but you're being transformed by the renewing of your mind.

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So in devotional reading you're actually praying and confessing and believing and obeying what you already understand from Scripture.

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Richard Mayhew said, every time I open the Bible to study it's with the fresh confession that it's the Word of God. Therefore, I accept it as inerrant, that means truthful, and infallible, that means trustworthy. It thus becomes my teacher and also my absolute authority for both belief and behavior. So that's one type of reading and sad to say sometimes

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We forsake that as well. We forsake the time to contemplate God. We forsake the time to really get to know Him. You know, when you're getting to know a person, you're learning everything you can about the person. You know, but if you were in their presence and you never really said anything to them, you never had a conversation

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with them, I don't think they'd want to hang out with you very much. You'd have a hard time getting them back.

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second time. If all you want to do is just sit silently or you ignore them. You talk about everything else but you don't include them in what you're talking about.

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Well, devotional reading will prepare you for the second type, and that is analytical reading. The Bible is to be a book that's read that way in an analysis that's thorough, that's complete, it's not limited by time, and it's not for mere information or for entertainment. You know, when I'm studying for Sunday, I'm limited. What am I limited for? Well, I'm limited because Sunday's coming.

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If I'm studying something for Sunday, I don't have a lot of time.

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venturing off into other areas. Now I certainly can do the devotional time you know sometimes that devotional time is getting ready in the morning. I take advantage of the apps on this thing right here this phone and I have one it's actually actually I have many Bible apps on here but there's one on here in particular that I like a lot and all it does is play the Bible.

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And I can pick what I want it to play and I can tell it to even read a section, not the whole chapter, just a section. Or I can do a Bible reading plan with it or anything, but I'm hearing it. And there's a particular voice that's reading the scripture. You get multiple voices that you can choose from, but there's this one particular one. He's very warm in his reading. And I could just listen to him all day long. It's not edgy at all.

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It's warm, soothing. Even in those moments where the text is, demands a different type of reading, he does that. But it's a good read, and it's very helpful. I'll do it when I'm driving, I'll do it when I'm in the shower, I'll do it when I'm getting ready, I'll do it sometimes just sitting there at my computer. Sometimes, even though I'm reading the text, I'll turn on.

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the voice of someone else reading the text and I'll just follow it in my Bible. You know what that does for me? It helps me not to be distracted. It helps me not to hear the other noises that are around me. It helps me to keep my eyes focused on the words that I'm hearing. Now, sometimes by myself, without a voice playing those words,

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the Word of God, sometimes I'll read and then I'll go, I'll start getting distracted, my mind starts wandering, I start thinking about other things. You know, I've even said this in my time of Bible study, to pull out a pad, also to use that pad to write down those things that are distracting you. Sometimes when you're doing that you'll go, in your mind, a little thing will come up and say, oh I gotta go do this.

**24:09**

But you know you can wait to do that, you just need to remember you need to go do that. So that pad becomes a little list of reminders of things that you need to get done. So that when you're done, you close your Bible, you don't have any guilt because you spent some time reading the Word of God and praying and confessing and so forth. Now you have your list of things you need to go do. You didn't let that list disrupt this extremely important time. So that's helpful. So again, an analytical reading.

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really not limited by time. I mean even when we're studying books of the Bible you'll know I'll do two parts to something if I have to. I really don't like to do that, but I will if I have to. And sometimes a text needs to be broken up into two or three parts and especially if you're a teacher and you're trying to get that out, you do have a limitation like I said of time. But

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whole unit, a whole paragraph, a whole section, a whole segment, and it will even look at individual words that make up the unit. So this is really what I do week after week. When we're studying a book of the Bible, in my preparation time, one of the things that I want to know is where does the text start or the subject start and where does the subject end?

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If I can determine that, that'll tell me what verses pertain to this subject, because you know if you're reading in a chapter and you have a section here, this section has one subject, and then you go over to the next section and it might not have anything to do with the previous one. It's now a new section and a new subject. Other times the second section has a lot to do with the previous section, and that's where context comes in.

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you're asking yourself, well, what did he just say? What's he been talking about all this time? How does that apply to this? How does that relate to what he's saying now? Sometimes it doesn't, sometimes it does, but that's part of analytical reading. That's where you get involved in observation, and really when you're reading scripture you're observing the text anyway, you know, you're looking at things, but observation, interpretation, and application, those are the three things of Bible study.

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sometimes people never get to interpretation, they'll just do some observation, they'll jump straight to application, and sometimes verses get misapplied, they get

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interpreted incorrectly because they're getting isolated and they're not in consideration of what has already been said. But let me talk about observation. Observation is the key activity of analytical reading.

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And the point of analytical reading is to make a thorough examination of all the parts of the unit of scripture as a basis for interpreting and applying it. Like I said, this is what I do each week. I break it up into parts. I want to understand it in its context. But when you're doing this, this is kind of the beginning point. You don't want to look at anything else. You want to just you and your Bible. You don't need a Bible dictionary. You don't need Bible commentary.

**27:27**

This is starting out just you and the Bible and by the way the Holy Spirit. It's a wonderful thing about the Bible is that as a Christian we have the author of Scripture in us. It's not like picking up any other book and you don't know the author. You have no way to get in contact with them to ask them any questions about something that they wrote. You don't have that privilege especially if you're reading from an author that's already died.

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But that's not true with the Bible. You have the Holy Spirit. And so again, here's some more thoughts here. We need to start first with the Bible, put God's book in its place all of its own, and then begin to carefully observe what you're reading. Spurgeon quotes from a writer of his day. He said, most read their Bibles like cows that stand in thick grass and trample under their feet the finest flowers and herbs.

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He says, observe with the idea of discovering the detailed beauty that God has put into His Word. Take time to concentrate. Now observation is really answering a question. What do I see? Just like reading is answering a question, what does it say? Interpretation answers a question. What does it mean by what it says? Application answers a question. How does this apply to my life?

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**28:52**

But you got to start at the beginning. You don't just read a passage and jump straight to interpreting it. You don't read a passage and jump straight to applying it. Now I know that some passages are easier to apply and some of them are not. Some of them take some time. So here's some ideas on observation. First do it thoroughly. You do that by looking at the whole. This is getting a big picture overview. You're overlooking the

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whole of a passage or the whole of a book. So let's just say if you were going to say I want to study a book in the Bible I'll start small so I'll do 3rd John. Okay that's really small only one chapter you can do 2nd John one chapter you can do Jude one chapter you do Philemon one chapter okay so you could start very small and you say I'm just gonna read this every day.

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John MacArthur developed a plan when he was in seminary. He shared it in some of his books. I've heard him talk about it. He said, when you do your Bible reading, he said, read the Old Testament at least all the way through once a year. When you get to the New Testament, do it differently. Do it repetitiously. So just pick a book of the Bible. And like I said, maybe we'll do 2 John. And say, for 30 days, every day, I'm going to read 2 John. And while I read 2 John, I'm going to jot down on a little card.

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what that chapter is talking about. I'm just going to summarize it as briefly as I can so I can remember it. Now I did this with the book of James when I was studying it, and I didn't read it 30 times. I read it about 120 times every day while I was studying it, because I was doing that every day while I was studying the whole book. And to this day, I can still tell you what's in each chapter, because I did that. I put a heading over each chapter that would tell me what was there.



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and I can go back to it. So any time that I'm faced with some kind of dilemma, some kind of situation, that's really what goes on in my mind. My mind is scouring the many scriptures that I have read over the years, you know, almost 40 years. And when I go into some of these places that I'm really familiar with, like James or some of these books that we have studied together, it helps because

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One, I know where to go to find the information. Number two, I know what it means because I studied it. Number three, I'm not gonna take it out of context. I'm not gonna use it inappropriately because again, I took time to study it out. But this is kind of an idea. You take the whole, you're looking at it, so you're reading a whole book of the Bible. I guarantee after 30 days, you're gonna know what's there. You're gonna read James chapter one.

**31:42**

I'll just tell you what it says. James 1 talks about trials, talks about temptation, talks about how you respond to the Word, how you receive it, and how you minister it. Chapter 2 talks about partiality in the church, and it challenges you that when you're being partial to people that come in church as to what kind of faith you really have. And even

**32:08**

The faith that you have is going to be challenged by meeting the needs of other believers. Chapter 3 talks about this little thing in our mouth that gets us in so much trouble, the tongue. Chapter 4 talks about worldliness. Chapter 5 gives really various exhortations toward the end, but tells us really that when we're sick we need to call for the elders of the church to pray for us.

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Talks about what brings about joy in your life, talks about what brings about oppression in your life, talks about how to bring a straining member back to Christ. I mean there's a lot of information there.

**32:50**

But you want to look at it as a whole before you start breaking up into parts, start breaking up the passage. You know, when I'm studying, I want to define words. I want to understand grammar. I want to understand anything that's cultural there, anything that's historical there. Anything that will help me. But the passage is going to dictate to me what I'm going to go look for.

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In other words, if the passage is not talking about any kind of culture or history or geography, then I don't really need to go into those areas. But it will always have grammar. Always. There will always be some kind of history there because this is something that was written many, many years ago, right? And context. Context is king. So I want to do all of that. I want to look at the details.

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I want to look at the tiny pieces. I want to remember that I'm not going to see it all in this one time of sitting here doing this but I'm going to purpose to do as much as I can but I'm going to first observe it. So observation is really taking a good hard look at what is actually in the passage. You know, analytical.

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reading uses questions like who, what, when, where, and why. So if I'm reading I'll say something like, well who's the author? Who's writing this? Or who is he writing it to?

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what truth is being given or when did all this happen? Where did it happen? Why did it happen? When I was in seminary one of the questions a professor used to ask us when we were studying is determine why that book is there in the Bible. Could we live without that book? Would we be okay if it wasn't there in the Bible? In other words,

**34:54**

What does this book contribute to our understanding of the rest of the Bible? So again, this is things that I look for.

**35:02**

I want to know what's going on in the passage. I want to know what the story is about. I want to know who the characters are. I want to know where the subject begins, where it ends. I want to know what this passage says in its context. What were the previous verses about? Does it, the present verses, have anything to do with the previous? And next, I want to observe it systematically. Martin Luther, he studied the Bible like this. He said, first, I shake the whole tree that the ripest...

**35:29**

Apples may fall and then I climb the tree and I shake each limb and then each branch and then each twig and Then I look under each leaf See that that's being thorough. That's being systematic do the same thing when you come to the Bible

**35:46**

This becomes your homework, who, what, when, where, and why. Look for repetition. If the passage is speaking about a location, research it. For example, when we were studying the Gospel of Mark, by the way, we're gonna go back to it, but when we were studying, we read about locations like this. Just in one chapter, it mentioned the wilderness, it mentioned Judea, Jerusalem, the Jordan River, Nazareth, Galilee, the Sea of Galilee, and Capernaum. Do we know anything about these places?

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These places are mentioned, so it's best to know something about them. Know something about the geography, know something about the landscape. In Mark 1-21, we read about the synagogue. What can we learn about a synagogue? So it's helpful to look into these places. It's helpful to have some background to them. And the same is true if you're looking at people. Last, I would say, observe intimately.

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Look at it with the realization that you're reading a message from your heavenly Father to his spiritual child. It's like a letter from home when you're far away. If you're far away, you hadn't heard from anybody from your home, and all of a sudden you got a letter, oh, you'd be hanging on every single word, wouldn't you? You'd read it a number of times.

**37:15**

So we've looked at devotional reading, analytical reading, now the last one is informational reading. Informational reading is usually very factual. There is a program in my Bible study software called Factbook. It's very helpful.

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In fact, it's so connected to the Bible in the program that it has little symbols over certain words, and if you just kind of touch them, that window will open up and it'll give you facts and background to that information right there where that word was. Oh, it's so helpful. You can do it with the languages, you can do it with history, culture, you can do it with biography. Like if I just...

**38:00**

open up Factbook and I type in Jesus. The wealth of information it gives me about Jesus. Same is true of anybody else. So this is talking about facts, it's talking about truths. So some of the facts and truths that, I mean like if you start out in Genesis tomorrow reading your Bible, here's some facts that you'll find just in the first verse.

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**38:28**

What's the first verse of the Bible say? In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Listen to some of the facts that are in there. First of all, it tells us that there was some kind of beginning, right? In this case, we know the beginning of creation. Secondly, it tells us that the existence of God is there. It doesn't try to prove it, it assumes it, because it says in the beginning, God. Third, it tells us something that God did. He created the heavens and the earth.

**38:58**

It didn't happen by evolution, that's being taught in the schools, being taught in our culture. Next it would teach me about his name. Now in English I'm reading God, but in Hebrew it's Elohim. Elohim is a singular term with a plural ending. So it's telling me this, just by his name alone, that this singular God exists in a form of plurality.

**39:28**

What'd that just tell you? Trinity, right? Now the word Trinity doesn't appear in the Bible. That's a Latin word. But the concept is taught, right? One God existing in three persons identified as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All three of them are one God.

**39:55**

Deuteronomy 4:35 says, To you it was shown that you might know that the Lord, He is God and there is no other besides Him. 1st Corinthians 8:6, Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things and we exist through Him. We know Jesus is called God.

**40:21**

John 1-1 we looked at. In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Verse 14, the Word became flesh. We know that this is talking about Jesus. Thomas referred to Jesus as God in John 20-28. My Lord and my God. The Holy Spirit is God. Acts chapter 5.

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**40:43**

The whole story of Ananias and Sapphira. Peter said to Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit? And then later he says that you have not lied to men, but to God.

**40:58**

See, that's what you get with factual reading, informational reading. It also complements the surrounding Bible text by providing illustrations or providing examples. You know, the Bible is filled with examples. For example, in 1 Corinthians 10, there's an illustration of why we shouldn't live immorally. Paul uses the example of the Israelites in the wilderness, and he says in verse 7,

**41:26**

As it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink and they stood up to play. This is why they fell. And so that is given there for our example. Don't do this. Or this may happen to you. Paul said it in another place, if you sow to the flesh corruption, you will reap corruption. Or how about Romans 15, 4?

**41:51**

whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction so that through perseverance and encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. So it says it was written for our instruction. That's informational. That helps us. Informational reading also gives us a setting. Most passages of the Bible are for informational reading. They will concern history. They will report a

**42:21**

We actually find Jesus and the writers of Scripture doing this when they would refer back to the Old Testament. Did you know that the New Testament contains some 300 direct quotations from the Old Testament? Tell that to a Jew that rejects Jesus or rejects the New Testament. So listen, the New Testament is just as Jewish as the Old Testament. Yes, it's Gentile too, but over 300 direct quotations from the Old Testament into the New Testament?

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**42:51**

You know, another good place is Acts chapter 7. In Acts chapter 7, there's a factual account given by Stephen on the history of the Jewish people, beginning with Abraham, Moses, and King David and King Solomon. Wonderful history.

**43:08**

this is very helpful to us. And the passage of informational reading, it's when you come to that it's usually long, especially if it's historical. But just keep in mind it has one main thought running through it. So as we bring this to a close now, understand that reading is a must. I don't know what reading is like for you, but this has consumed my Christian life. I remember when

**43:38**

Jesus saved me. The very first thing that entered my mind besides thank you was now I want to know everything I can about my Savior. And that very night, me and a few friends went to the local mall and I bought a Bible. And I began reading that Bible.

**44:02**

In fact, I didn't know how to study, I didn't know how to do anything, nobody does in the beginning, babies don't know how to feed themselves, right, they have to be fed. I didn't know what, even how to underline, so I just began to underline everything, it was all good. Now we use highlighters, we use highlight everything. Then they came out with the rainbow study bible and it was in different colors because it highlights.

**44:25**

But let me close with this. Listen to these exhortations. God told Israel, Deuteronomy 17 19, that his word shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes.

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**44:49**

Read it all the days of your life. Second, Isaiah 34, 16, it says, seek from the book of the Lord and read.

**45:00**

Third, Deuteronomy 31, beginning at verse 11, it says, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place which he will choose, you shall read this law in front of all of Israel in their hearing. Assemble the people, the men and the women and the children and the alien who is in your town so that they may hear and learn and fear the Lord your God and be careful to observe all the words of this law.

**45:28**

their children who have not known will hear and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as you live on the land which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess. Everybody needs to hear it.

**45:43**

You know, there was no segregation of the church in the beginning. There were no Sunday school classes. There were no seminars. There was one meeting, and they did it every day. And they even did it from house to house, long before they had buildings to meet in. This has to be a daily practice for us. So whatever plan that you'll choose for the New Year tomorrow, make sure that your priority is to read the Bible.

**46:13**

because that's where you're going to learn about Christ. You know, Paul said to Timothy, in 2 Timothy 3.15, that from childhood, you've known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith, which is in Jesus Christ. The reason why Timothy knew this from childhood was because his mother and his grandmother read the word of God to him. They obeyed Deuteronomy 6.



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**46:40**

This is what it says, Deuteronomy 6 verse 6, These words which I am commanding you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorpost of your house and on your gates.

**47:09**

The Word is to be in front of you all the time. And the whole purpose of systematically reading the Word of God is to know God and to understand why you need Christ.

**47:27**

You know it's in the reading of the Bible that we learn what Christ did, right? And why He did it. We also learn about Adam's sin that was passed on to us because we can read it in the Bible. So again, I hope that you will entrust yourself to this for this new year. Let's pray. Father, we thank you so much for just the reminder.

**47:55**

how important it is that we read the Word of God systematically, consistently, carefully, faithfully, every single day. And if we can't sit and read it, that will also listen to it being read to us. Help us take advantage of all these tools that are available to us now that years ago we're not. But we have them now and may we use them wisely. We thank you for this time that we've had together today. We pray Lord as we

**48:25**

Just prepare to leave. Lord, that our minds and our hearts will just be drawn to what we've heard, and we'll begin in our heart planning as we start tomorrow, a new year, of reading your word. And we pray all this in your precious name. Amen.

