



# The Chapter Study

How to study the Bible for yourself

# An Aid for Craving the Word

- 1 Peter 2:1-3, craving the pure milk of the Word is a secret to spiritual growth
- Craving involves reading, first and foremost. But is that all?
- Today, insights I've gleaned to go beyond the repetitive reading plan I learned from MacArthur

# Many Bible Study Methods

- *The Navigator Bible Study Handbook*
- Rick Warren's *Bible Study Methods*
- Kay Arthur & others, *The New How to Study Your Bible*
- The MacArthur *Study Bible* has a nice little 5 step outline in the introduction
- The Murphy method is a little bit of all of them

# The Murphy Method

- Simple, yet readily expandable
- Weekly, yet easily doable
- Basic, yet practically applicable
- Personal, yet quickly universal

# The Basic Process

1. Read the text every day for 30 days (e.g., 1 John)
2. Do a chapter study on a different chapter each week
3. Add at least 1 'To Do' to your planner each week
4. Share what you learn with someone at least once each week

# Repetitive Reading

- Reading it every day for 30 days fills your mind with the content of Scripture
- Reading it daily also gives you the ability to follow the flow of the larger argument
- Reading it repeatedly causes you to both skim what you're familiar with and catch the not so obvious

# Reading Strategy

- Make it a daily task you look forward to
  - Coffee time/Quiet time
  - Try to keep it from being a chore
- Have a pen handy to write down questions (or, put notes/questions in your Bible)
- Commit to 5 or 6 days a week
  - Leaves room for grace
  - Delivers from guilt and defeat

# Basic Weekly Process

- Read the text each day (6x/wk)
- Do a chapter study each week
  - Use your Sat or Mon morning for this
  - It should be a 30 minute dedicated break from normal
  - You can do it at lunch at work if you can guarantee both the liberty and opportunity to work without a conscience issue
  - Make it fun—something to look forward to



# The 7-Step Chapter Study

1. Chapter Title
2. Basic Outline
3. Your Observations
4. Key Questions
5. Chapter Summary
6. Key Verse
7. Personal Application

# 1. Chapter Title

- Give the chapter a simple title
- Use your own word(s)
- Make it catchy or memorable
- Make it relevant
- Make it short (1 word is best/5-7 words max)
- This is a content title
- It should help you remember the content of the book in order (e.g., Gen 1-4)

## 2. Basic Outline

- Start with the paragraphs identified in your Bible translation
  - Some have the text in paragraphs
  - Some have the first v. in bold
  - These aren't inspired, but they are great places to start
- Use a standard paragraphing system
  - Main points are I, II, III
  - Sub points are A, B, C
  - You can even use commentaries here if you want—but it's more useful to do it yourself
- Focus on content!
- Relate your points back to your chapter title

# Sample Outline – John 1

- I. The Word (1:1-18)
  - A. The Word is God (1:1-4)
  - B. The Word is Light (1:5-13)
  - C. The Word became Flesh (1:14-18)
- II. John the Baptist (1:19-34)
  - A. Is not the Word (1:19-23)
  - B. Came to point out the Word (1:24-28)
  - C. Pointed to Jesus as the Word (1:29-34)
- III. The First Disciples (1:35-51)

# Sample Outline – John 2

- I. The Wedding at Cana (2:1-12)
- II. The Cleansing of the Temple (2:13-22)
- III. The Comprehension of Christ (2:23-25)

# Keys to a Good Outline

- Keep it simple
  - Don't use big theological terms
  - Don't make it a chore
  - Don't get into microscopic detail
  - You can always go back and expand it later if you go to teach it
- Keep it content oriented
- Make it yours
  - Your words, your thoughts, your ideas
  - It is first of all meant as an aid to your own personal learning and recollection

# 3. Your Observations

- Take a few minutes to note some things about this chapter that are worthy of note
  - When you go through the outlining process you will begin to see things that are biblically insightful and relevant—this is esp. true after you've read the text 10-20 times.
  - Include things it says and things it doesn't say
  - These are things you might be inclined to share with others if you were doing a Bible study
- Write these observations down, so you can remember them
  - We are by nature forgetful people
  - We can often learn from ourselves if we leave a trail (my own sermon notes freq. enlighten and remind me of things I've already learned)

# 4. Key Questions

- Everything else you've done up to this point has been a record of what you know or have seen or figured out on your own
- Now, make a list of questions that you have at this point from the text
- These can include anything from
  - Interpretive issues, word meaning, culture
  - Theological or historical questions
- This list is for your future study
  - If time, look at the MSB notes
  - Get a type or sermon download
  - Get a book or ask an elder
  - Bring it up with your study partner (1 Jn 5:21)



# 5. Chapter Summary

- Write out a little **one paragraph** summary of the point of this chapter
- Make it a basic content summary of the text you've been looking at
  - Put it in your own words
  - Don't make it more than it is—just write out a sentence for each paragraph to help you remember what you've done thus far!
  - Don't write an essay—write a summary!
  - This is a memory device, not a grade changer 😊

## 6. Key Verse

- Pick a key verse in the chapter to focus on over the course of this next week
- Make it a memory verse for the week
- Make it the focus of an additional study exercise (download a GTY tape on the verse)
- Write it on a 3x5 card and carry it with you during the week

# 7. Personal Application

- Write out one real personal application area of your life to work on during this next week
  - It doesn't even have to be directly related to the text you've studied
  - But, you do need to write it down in your planner (and study journal)
  - You may even want to develop a full put off/put on strategy for this built on Eph 4 & Rom 12; Remember, craving leads to feeding which results in spiritual growth!
- Share it with some one!

# The Life Pattern

- Work through the NT this way
  - Little book, big book is the MacArthur strategy
  - I started with it, but then started picking the ones I most wanted to do
- The impacts in my life were immediate
  - I started thinking of passages during the day when I had questions of how God wanted me to act or respond
  - I started thinking of God and what His Word says when I felt the smallest pangs of conviction
  - I'm convinced this generated in me an increasing hunger for the Word that ultimately propelled me into this ministry
- Final words
  - See me when you finish it all
  - Be open to new ways and opportunities to share it with people that the Lord brings along