

Spiritual Disciplines: Bible Reading and Study

11/22/2020

I. BIBLE: “the owner’s manual for life,” “letters from home,” “the story of God.”
Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth = B.I.B.L.E.

God’s Word touts itself as an indispensable, life-saving, life-changing, life enhancing revelation from God (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21). To help us grasp all that, it likens itself to:

- bread (John 6:51)—necessary for life
- meat (Hebrews 5:12–14)—able to sustain and nourish mature believers
- gold and silver (Psalm 12:6; 19:10)—with profound truth making us spiritually wealthy beyond our wildest dreams
- milk (1 Peter 2:2)—full of simple truths to help “baby believers” grow
- a fire (Jeremiah 20:9; Luke 24:32)— uncontainable, able to consume what is dead
- a mirror (James 1:23–25)—able to show us what we truly look like inside and out
- a hammer (Jeremiah 23:29)—able to penetrate through hard heads and shatter hard hearts
- seed (Matthew 13:18–23)—able to grow and bear fruit when it takes root in our lives
- honey (Psalm 19:10)—delighting to our senses
- a sword (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12)—our best weapon in fighting spiritual battles
- a lamp (Psalm 119:105)—lighting our way in a world that has been darkened by sin and evil
- water (Ephesians 5:25–27)—able to wash us and make us pure

II. How should we read the Bible? Three step approach:

1) Observe the word of God—What does it say?

- a. Pray. Read. Question. Write.
- b. Devotionally. Expectantly. Comprehensively. Regularly. Obediently.

2) Interpret the word of God—What does it mean? Mark 8:22-26

22 When they arrived at Bethsaida, some people brought a blind man to Jesus, and they begged him to touch the man and heal him.

23 Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. Then, spitting on the man’s eyes, he laid his hands on him and asked, “Can you see anything now?”

24 The man looked around. “Yes,” he said, “I see people, but I can’t see them very clearly. They look like trees walking around.”

25 Then Jesus placed his hands on the man’s eyes again, and his eyes were opened. His sight was completely restored, and he could see everything clearly.

26 Jesus sent him away, saying, “Don’t go back into the village on your way home.”

Ask and answer a lot of questions. Use of all scripture. Context is king. Commentaries.

3) Apply the word of God—What does it mean to me?

Is there an overt command here to obey?

Is there a promise to claim?

Is there a new truth about God in which I can trust?

Is there a sin to avoid?

Is there a behavior to renounce?

Is there an attitude to embrace?

Is there an example to follow?

Is there a prayer to express?

What do I need to stop doing, start doing, or do better?

Praise the LORD. Blessed are those who fear the LORD, who find great delight in **his commands**. Psalm 112:1

David would say, "Your **word** is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
Psalm 119:105

Joshua would say, "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 is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." Joshua 1: 8,9

Spiritual Disciplines: Prayer

12/6/2020

I. What is prayer?

II. Why do we pray?

III. How should we pray?

- 1) **In faith**- *“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, **believe that you have received it**, and it will be yours.” Mark 11:24*
- 2) **In the name of Jesus**—*“And I will do whatever you ask **in my name**, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” John 14:13*
- 3) **According to God’s will**—*“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything **according to his will**, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.” I John 14,15*
- 4) **Unceasingly**—*“Pray **without ceasing**” I Thes 5:17*
- 5) **Confidently**—*“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace **with confidence**, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” Hebrews 4:16*
- 6) **Stubbornly**—*“Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always **pray and not give up**.” Luke 18:1*
- 7) **With the help of the Spirit**—*“In the same way, the **Spirit helps us** in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.” Rom 8:26*

Questions:

- 1) How is your prayer life? Why is it hard for you to pray? Be honest and specific.
- 2) In what way has God blessed you this past year in your spiritual growth?
- 3) Spend time asking God all your questions. Be specific in seeking His advice.
- 4) How did God’s truth speak to you this morning from His Word to your heart?
- 5) What adjustments do you need to make in your life as a result of this truth?

Statement or Request	Focus	Explanation
“Our Father in heaven...	God’s nature	Our prayers are directed to a loving father who wants the best for his children and whose heart we can trust. F.A.T.H.E.R.
hallowed be your name...	God’s glory	Our prayer should always focus on bringing honor and praise to God.
your kingdom come . . .	God’s kingdom	Our prayers ought to seek the righteous rule of God in every part of life.
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...	God’s will	Our prayers must always submit to the higher plan and wiser purposes of God.
Give us today our daily bread...	God’s provision	Our prayers need to be humble and dependent, looking to God to meet our needs.
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors . . .	God’s mercy	Our prayers acknowledge our constant need to receive and dispense grace.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”	God’s protection	Our prayers recognize the sobering reality of evil.