
Developing your Walk with God

Drawing near to the heart of God!

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Open Thought: What does it mean to be a mature Christian? What are you willing to do about it?

READ 2 Peter 1:5-7

ATTITUDE The prelude to effective study and LIFE!

Do you call yourself an expert on receivership? You probably say no way! But do you live your life that way. That is having a "me first" identity, always placing the emphases on the "I" and "Me". If only I... If it could go this way for me...Then I could....

So that the ownership of you life is completely self focused and centered. The ownership of your life is yours and yours alone! But Christ call us to Him, and out of ourselves. Our ownership has been transferred, our pink slip has been signed over from ourselves to Christ, IF you claim Christ as your Lord. What effect are you having to those around you? When we relinquish our selves to Christ, then the proper attitude of life will take over. The vision of our life and the result of what we have will be based on a positive outlook. A positive attitude that is based solely on what Christ has done for us . So regardless of our external circumstances we are to be totally focused on our Lord. We then are to allow our attitudes to be Christ centered. We could allow our circumstances to take the lead or Christ to take the lead, the choice is given to us.

If we are receivership oriented and not Christ centered, then all of those circumstances will be squeezed, and bitterness and resentment will flow out of them. Or we can be Christ centered and oils of sweetness will pour out. What pours out from you? The love and care that is modeled to those around us or the bitterness and hostility will not be squeezed from our circumstances, but from our attitude that results from those circumstances. The way Christ is exhibited in you will be from your focus and attitude and **not** your circumstances. Your direction in life, your joy and happiness, your cares and concerns, our willingness to reach beyond yourself will grow from your attitude and maturity, all stemming from who you are in Christ!

Then the circumstance will change once we realize our error and the receivership mentality dies, and the Christ centered life is birthed. This is the

way we are made, the reason we endure suffering, the way a fallen sinful and unjust world is turned from the glory of Satan into the glory of our Lord. By allowing Christ to reach in us and conform us to His image and character, regardless of what we are going through, regardless of our circumstances.

The attitude will be the impact that strikes at the issues of life. Breaking them away from our hurt and pain to the absorption of grace and the acceptance of Christ. We can not trust in our education, wealth, success, failures, people, appearances, skill, giftedness, or circumstances. The trust must be laid on the floor of the cross and now where else. Our attitude must be Christ driven and not appearances driven. We must embrace the day with joy, knowing Christ is at work in us, in those around us.

Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it. As the elect, saved by grace, it is still up to us what we make out of what Christ gives us. Maturity will make the difference of a life of distinction and purpose, or a life governed by strife and chaos. So what is your response, what is your attitude were does your maturity lay?

Explain having a negative attitude is cutting yourself off from the blessings and wonder that God has in store for you. You may not be rich or famous, but that is not important, it is the positive attitude of life and receiving His redemption and blessing that will give you meaning and true happiness that no car, job, house, spouse or anything that could ever bring you!

Negative attitudes will tie us up from experiencing life, joy, fulfillment, peace, love and happiness! As does refusing to give our will up for our Lord and savior. Go through the next week being fully aware of your attitudes, keep a journal of them, that is keep track of you negative attitudes and positive attitudes. Then notice your feelings and responses in those situations.

There are times when I journal, that is keep a diary of what is going on in my life. I sometimes look back on them and gain new insight on what I was going through, that I did not have back then. I have become more adept to interpret God's leading and plan for me the more I experience life and receive what He has done. By looking back on what we have been through and see the hand of God there, it will give great comfort and encouragement for what lies ahead or what we are going through now.

As I gain new insight into my personality and the Lord's working into my issues and problems I realize how shadows they are compared to my Lord's holiness and greatness.

By concentrating on Christ and what He has done will lift us up better and more complete than anything we could ever do. Thus the thrust of journaling has taught me is to look beyond myself and keep focused on Christ. The other end of

this journaling is a problem that people including Christians in their zeal keeping faithful to their journals, is that they become self absorbed and only see themselves and their problems and not the Lord. So be careful if you do this exercise of journaling, keep focused on why you are doing it, which is to grow closer to the Lord and not to yourself.

We are called to keep focused on Him and not ourselves, so we are looking at God's Word as a mirror to ourselves, to our soul, as not to see us, but to see God working in us. When we only see ourselves, we see sin and brokenness, failure or self-seeking inclinations and wrong attitudes.

We must see God's interests and not our own, and then the journey of maturing in the faith will become more real, as our problems become less as He becomes more.

The same thing can happen when we read the Word. We become so consumed with our interests we do not see the calling and response we are to give. Thus we grow bitter, thinking that this devotion stuff is not for me, so we turn it off. We replace it with so much activity that God is pushed out of our lives, except on Sunday morning. But even then we are rushed and stressed and do not feel the worship or hear the lesson, we only hear ourselves, our problems of getting the kids ready, or the stress at work.

We need to respond to the text with a surrendered will and a mind cleared of our anxious thoughts. When we are focused on our fears, hopes, dreams, needs, emotions we have no room to learn what God has for us nor will we be able to think deeply enough into the text so there is a transformation of our nature and will, as philosophers call our existential core. Because there can be no serious behavior or personality change unless the core of who we are is changed. And Christ is the only one who does that right! This transformation in Romans 12 can not happen when we are in the way, well mostly God will do as He pleases, its just that He usually does not over right our will, He waits for us too be surrendered and poured out to Him. So do not take the chance and allow your stubbornness to get in the way of God working in you!

Are you a Bondservant of Jesus?

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me (Gal. 2:20)."

The Call that Christ gives us:

These words simply mean that I chose to break away from my way of doing things, and to focus on and embrace God's ways. These words mean the break up of my independence: the surrendering of my life to the supremacy of

the Lord Jesus. So, still confused, it means that I am not the focus of my life, it is not about me, since I am in Christ. It is not about you, it is about Him.

No one can do this for you, no parent or pastor, you must do it yourself. You must take the step to go up to the plate, if you are going to play in the game. You have to get onto the field, put on the glove and pay attention to participate. You cannot just watch others play, or watch your parents or family, or read it in a book, you must go out there yourself.

God may bring you up to the plate of opportunities all year long, but He will not push you through it; He will pitch, you must swing. You have to give up your self-centered independence from God, and take ownership of what He has done for you. You have to embrace oneness with Him; that is not following your own ideas, but choosing absolute loyalty to Jesus. Even going against your Christian friends, who have God so wrapped up in a meat box that they keep Him at a safe distance. Because if they dared open up His gift, they will lose their precious independence, and selfish ambitions.

Most people do not want to surrender themselves, but unless you do, you cannot grow in Christ, you cannot mature in faith. If you think you can wait and do this later in life; you are wrong! It is much, much, much, harder to do it then. Did you know that over 90% of people who come to be Christians are in High School! It is very rare to do it as an adult, because you have had a lifetime of independence and rationalization living away from God. This can even be true if you still go to a church.

Once you come to that point of total loyalty to the Lord, there is no possibility of mistake that you belong to Him, and not to yourselves. You will not know anything about loyalty to Christ, unless you understand what He meant when He said, For My sake, "Because of me", (This is what committed Christianity looks like, we will fail, and we must retry, because with grace and the Holy Spirit we will succeed in Him when we allow Him to work and be that bondservant!) in the B-Attitudes (Matthew 5:11). Your identity of who you are is because of what Christ has done. Not just knowing about it, not just going to church, not just wearing Christian t-shirts and bracelets, but letting that knowledge travel 18 inches down into your heart. This is what makes a strong Christian that God can truly use.

Has that break-up of your independence come yet? Is there anything in the way of God in your life? Anything else is, being a religious pious fraud, a hypocrite. The main point to decide in your life is not what College you will go to, or who will I go out with, or will I try pot, or will I go to the spot and drink with my friends, or will I get this car I want, or can I just get out of here; the point of life is what will I give up? Will I surrender to Jesus Christ, making Him Lord of my life, placing no conditions whatsoever as to how the destruction of my will may come?

Once you have broken away from your own understanding of yourself. When you reach that point, immediately the reality of the cross will hit you. You will be forever supernaturally identified with Jesus Christ as your Lord. Then the reality of this passage and the meaning of life, and the best plan there is for you, will all unfold before you. And the witness of the Spirit of God will be living in you. I have been crucified with Christ.

The passion of Christianity comes from deliberately signing away your own rights and becoming a bondservant of Jesus Christ. That is the lowest level of a slave in Paul's time. That means your life will no longer belong to you. Until you do that, you will not begin to be a growing Christian, one that God can use. You will just grow up to be bitter and fall away from the Church, if you stay, you will just occupy a place in the pew. You will be critical, cynical, and condescending to those around you, and a stench in the face of the Lord! God does not desire this for your life; He loves you and wants your best.

Your sole value for existence is for God to help Himself to you, and use you in the lives of people around you. Will you allow Him to help Himself to you, or are you more concerned with your own ideas of what you are going to be? He already has given His best for you!

One of the main problems of why young people and Christians go bad in their motives and behaviors is that they forget who they are. Too many people who go to a church do not have a clue what it is all about. The noise and busyness of life takes over the time slot that was originally reserved for God. So our time and excitement of church becomes clouded, preventing us from remembering what it is supposed to be about. So we forget who we are, and what we are called to do.

Thus, week by week we hurry ourselves and drag the family to go to church, through the tyranny of the daily grind, and sit in our pews, trying to recover from the exhaustion, hoping our struggle is not in vain. Thus we give little effort to what the words mean when we worship or sing a hymn, or what the pastor is talking about at the pulpit, or the beauty of the liturgy and the power and conviction of the words. We are just playing a part in a play without allowing the character to become who we are. Church becomes just a routine and not the church that Christ created for us to be.

The response:

It is our Call as Christians and youth workers to disciple Young people, so that they can realize who they are in Christ, and challenge them to get out of their comfort zone. So they do not fall into a rut; into 'pew sitting' Christians who just come to church and never do anything with their faith.

This means for our young people that no one can do this for them, no

parent or pastor, they must do it for themselves by surrendering to the leading of the Holy Spirit. That God may bring them up to the plate of opportunities all year long, but He will not push them through it; He will pitch, they must swing!

Yet most people do not want to surrender themselves, but unless they do, they cannot grow in Christ, they cannot mature in faith. But once they have broken away from their own understanding of themselves, and when they reach that point, immediately the reality of the cross will hit! Then the real growth and discipleship in Christ begins.

The passion of Christianity comes from deliberately signing away our own rights and becoming a bondservant of Jesus Christ. This can only happen with your part, just as a pastor preaching an incredible sermon, we have to hear it and apply it to make it incredible. We can do this together as a faith community, first by the parents, then by the church.

Please go to the Lord as prayer warriors, and seek Him on what role He is really calling you to for our Young people!

A disciple is willing to grow in Christ!

John Bunyan said: *“Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit, for such things as God has promised, or according to his Word, for the good of the church, with submission in faith to the will of God.”*

Being a disciple encompasses more than just asking Christ in our life and heart, and goes far beyond baptism or our church membership. Being a disciple goes further than our conversion, our acceptance of Christ as Savior, our election, or any initiation we could conceive of into the Christian life. Our initiation is by what Christ gave us and is only the beginning. The first step we take, that we receive by faith through His grace, is the entrance into the faith and Christian life. Accepting our election in Christ is not the only act of being a Christian! Yet, so many live their lives as if this were so! It would be like joining a ritzy and fancy full service club, but never venturing into that club. Therefore, we would miss all the exercise equipment, fellowship, and fun. We would never go to the parties, the dinning, and would miss the connections because we never attended. Thus, we would get virtually nothing out of it, except the satisfaction that we had joined. It is the same with becoming a Christian. We join the ultimate “club,” but never use it or let it help develop our connections and depth with God and others.

Yes, you may be saved, but if all the opportunities have been set aside, forgotten, and missed, oh, how sad that would be! Perhaps you may think all you have to do is be baptized as public initiation or dedication, and then sit yourself in a pew of compliancy and comfort, thinking, “I did my part, the rest is up to others.” Acceptance of what Christ has done is to be the door through which we

walk in faith, as is our public profession or testimony of our faith. It does not stop there! It **starts** there!

I have been on staff at many churches where the members and leadership felt their profession of faith or church membership was all they needed to get by in their Christian life and their leadership in the church. Yet, these people were shallow and did not understand the richness and depth of the faith. They did not even know how to run a church, because they did not know, because they did not learn, and because they did not grow in Him! Fortunately, I am a part of a church now that is concerned with discipleship and missions. However, have you wondered what the average church or Christian does about discipleship and encouraging people to draw nearer to the heart of God?

In most churches, people are encouraged to accept Christ, make a profession of faith, or be baptized. Then, they are congratulated, put on the membership role, and then quickly forgotten. Sadly, the Church has become a warehouse, holding Christians to numbers as a testimony and perceived success, and, as a whole, forsaken discipleship for cheap, contemptible programs with no teaching or meaning. These programs may seem great on the surface because they attract people, but they do not keep them. In doing shallow programming with little teaching or discipleship has left its members to figure out these spiritual growth things on their own. Therefore, the back door of the church is as big as the front door!

Perhaps this was not an act that was conceived in a smoke filled room by a counsel of demons, but it might as well have been so. Maybe the church has gotten lazy and has placated to the busyness of the culture. Whatever the reasons, the lack of discipleship builds a barrier to growth in Christ and exercising the best for His glory. It then corrupts our attitude, allowing us to forsake the time and effort needed to work on our relationship with Christ. When a church forsakes discipleship, many will give up on Christianity, while others become confused, calloused, or complacent. Alternatively, they are swept away by false doctrines and cults because they do not know the difference.

Four points to consider and ask of yourself, “Where am I?” in these thoughts:

- 1. When we forsake discipleship**, we will end up just living for and to ourselves. We will miss opportunities, learning experiences, growth, and will exchange an eternity of rewards for a limited time of fun. This will turn into anger and bitterness later on in life!
Q: How have you seen this in your life?
- 2. We need to consider this extremely important point:** Jesus lived and died on our behalf, for He willingly gave up His life by paying the penalty for our

sins. He allows us not only to escape the fires of hell, but also gives us eternal life.

Q: What has been your response to who Christ is and what He did for you?

- 3. Being a true disciple means having a willingness to trust Him completely** in all aspects of life, from the highest highs to the lowest lows. It means we are not only willing to trust Him to provide for our salvation, but we trust Him for the future. We are to trust Him even when we do not know, like, or understand when, or where He is leading, or even if it is unpopular!

Q: What is in the way from this happening fully in your life?

- 4. Being a true disciple allows us to put our hand to the plow and not look back.** When you plow a field, you have to keep your eyes ahead. If you keep looking back, you will create zigzags so the water cannot flow and the cultivators and harvesters cannot function. Then the crops will not grow or ever be used. As we grow in Christ, we too have to keep our eyes on Him. In doing so, we will be of better use to Him, and become increasingly unsatisfied with anything less than His call and character.

Q: Has this become a reality in your walk with Christ?

God does not ask us to seek converts, He simply asks us to disciple. Discipleship is modeling and teaching Christians the precepts of the Bible, mainly prayer, doctrine, and Christian living. All will lead to the main thing--the reason for our being, the meaning of life--worship. It is not the services on Sunday; it is having an attitude and heart that worships Christ! Yes, we are still to evangelize, but that is not our main mission and call! When we evangelize, we must realize that it is the role of the Holy Spirit to bring people into an intimate relationship with God. This is an act of divine intervention and grace. He uses us as the tools, but He is the means! We are to care, and share with others His love and character. We are to obey and reach out, but we cannot lead people anywhere. He is the One who leads! Our goal is to worship and model to others our worship. Not just the service in the church, but the lifestyle of a heart surrendered and poured out to His (Gal. 2:20-21; Phil. 3:10).

Out of a worship-centered heart will come a church that is also poured out in the community, a lighthouse of God's love and care to the world. We are to model to the community a Christ-like character, encouraging others to surrender themselves to Jesus Christ. However, this is only the beginning!

Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith. Surrender is the process in which we grow toward Him and His will, and away from our will. Surrender is making Christ the Lord of all of our life so the worship can happen, so that the discipleship and growth can happen. For this to truly happen, we must rid ourselves of false presumptions, perceptions, reckless ideas, faulty thinking, and other such things that are barriers to our growth, so we can make room for Him.

Jesus authors our faith, and teaches us how to run the race according to God's will, His glory, His worship, and His purpose. Thus, we gain a deeper intimacy with our Lord as our Commander and Friend, as our God and our King and the provider of Grace, as our Love, and our reason for being. In His purposes, we find real contentment, joy, and fulfillment.

So how can I do this? My proposal is basic on how to grow closer to Christ and deeper in our walk with Him, and in drawing near to the heart of God! This is for a new Christian, with no idea of what to do, to the experienced pastor who has walked with God intimately for decades. It is for me, and it is for you, regardless of personal experience, spiritual growth experience, developmental level, disabilities, or age.

How to be a capable Bible student

The capable Bible student is rooted and grounded in the spiritual disciplines of the faith, whose drive is their passionate love relationship to the Lordship of Christ. And what flows out of it is the desire to love God's people, to herd them with love into the pastures of maturity. To lead where the leader has been before, and the people have not been. The mature Christian or leader must exhibit the maturity of the Christian life as the result of their growth and experience in the faith. An effective leader cannot be new to the faith. Even the Apostle Paul spent three years being discipled by Barnabas, and he received his call and was empowered directly from Christ Himself. I have seen too many immature Christians who lead by who they are in society, and not who they are in Christ.

A few years ago while on staff at a church, we received a family who came to faith at a crusade, and the father was the founder of a major fast food franchise. So in less than a year he was my boss, and the president and ruling Elder of the congregation. Now he was a great guy and very successful in business, but he did not know how to run a church. So he instinctually ran it like a business and his policies failed. He did not know how to lead in a church, which is different than in a corporation, even though a lot of the principles are transferable. After several years he did become a good leader as he matured in the faith. But the church suffered during his learning curve needlessly. There is no substitute to time spent in the face of our Lord, with a surrendered heart and a learning will. We must be willing to be humble no matter who we are and our experience. I had to learn this lesson a few years back when I went from being on staff at a large and influential church to a small church in a small town. My first thought before accepting the call was that I was too good for it. But God wanted me there to teach me to walk closer to him, and not walk in the position that I held. So I did, and I experienced humbleness. Nobody knew me as the conference speaker or author or big position in a big church, but just a youth pastor in a small church. But this is where Christ wanted me, and I learned a lot.

It prepared me for the road He had for me. And I'm glad I went there because I learned things in a broader context, that I could not have in a large "mega" church.

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly.

Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful." (II Timothy 2:15-16; 22-24)

This passage is a testimony to the importance of holiness, and to keep ourselves growing in our spiritual lives so that our emotional selves are impacted and grow too.

Spiritual maturity will lead into emotional maturity most of the time, unless there is some physiological or psychological problem, or deep stress that has never been resolved. It is imperative for the leader to be in control of their emotional health. If not, they need to step down and seek help both spiritually and psychologically. If the leader is given to fits of rage or is just overly emotional, they cannot set the example that Christ has. We are not to be Vulcan's exhibiting pure logic and no emotions, absolutely not. God created us as emotional beings, but as with anything we must have control of the excess and the potential for rampage.

How to have a Devotional Time

GETTING STARTED: How to draw closer to the heart of God by building a deeper relationship with God!

First Peter talks about humbleness, which is characterized by the willingness to grow in Christ, receive learning, and experience growth. Two of the best ways to do this is personal devotion time and being a part of a small group Bible study. Peter tells us we ought to be humble toward one other so that we can know the grace of God, and not be in opposition to God. Then secondly, he says, we had better be humble, not only toward one another, but toward God. This is so straightforward. This is so essential--to be a blessed Christian and church, to be a growing Christian and church, not in numbers, but in what is most important--discipleship, which is leaning, learning, and growing in Christ, leading to a lifestyle of worship!

How can I develop quality time with our Lord so I can become a deeper and more mature Christian?

Here are nine thoughts to get you pointed in the right direction:

- A. GOAL: See where you are Spiritually** (Acts 22:8-10; Phil. 2:13) and determine where you need to go. Then, make a goal, and understand your GOAL. Your goal is to become complete, that is, fullness in Christ, (Col. 1: 28), or to say it another way, to become a mature Christian, a person whose attitudes and actions are like Christ's (Eph. 4: 13). Where are you spiritually and where do you need to go? Not only where do you want to go, but also where is God calling you to go?
- B. PROCESS: Understand there is a PROCESS** (Psalm 16:11; 73:28; Prov. 16:9; Heb. 11:1-6) at work. It does not happen overnight, and you cannot get it in a bottle, off a shelf, or by sitting in a pew. The process is one of the main growth builders. It is about the journey as well as the destination. It is an essential step toward reaching your goal to spend personal, daily time with God. Thus, the journey is as important, if not more, than the destination, because in our walk we are learning and growing! If we just arrived at the goal without the struggles of getting there, we would not have built any depth, strength, or maturity! Make sure your goals are a match to God's! We must never allow our presumptions and pride to cloud His way!
- C. PLAN: Plan ahead** (Is. 26:3; Mark 1:35). This does not automatically happen. You need to plan out your devotions to make them more effective. You can get many prepared devotional schedules at a Christian bookstore or sit down on Sunday and decide exactly what paragraphs or chapters you will be studying during each of the next seven days. Doing this will eliminate the problem of spending half of your devotion time trying to decide what you will study that day. You can use a Bible reading chart, quality devotional books, or a pre-written guide, but try not to just dive in. You will get much more out of your experience by having a plan.
- D. CONTENT: Put into your devotional time variety and consistency** (Psalm 16:8-11) in what you study. One month, you might study an Epistle. Then, you might spend a month or two in a narrative passage such as 1 Samuel. Then, you might go back to the N.T. to study a doctrinal passage such as Romans. Then, switch again to a minor prophet such as Joel. Try to go through the entire Bible in your devotional study within a year, or two at most. Do not stay in just one section, such as the Epistles, and do not skip the O.T., as you cannot understand the N.T. without the O.T.! Do not use the same plan year after year. Break it up, and try new ones. Do the same with your devotional books. Mix them up. If you have a good one such as *My Utmost for His Highest*, stick with it for the entire year, go to another one, and then go back

to Chambers in the following year. When we are too consistent, it may turn into rhetoric, and then you will have a habit, not time with Christ!

- E. FOCUS: Set aside time each day by focusing on the purpose for your growth** and maturity (Psalm 119:130; Isa. 42:16; John 4: 23-24; 15), and then make it a priority. In doing so, you will be able to “go for it” with passion and vigor. Let Christ transform you through His Word. ATTITUDE is essential. You must start with the proper attitude! You are going before a Holy GOD!!! Usually, it is good to spend most of your devotional time closely examining a few verses, not rushing through multiple passages. This will help you keep focused. Some find it best to take notes, write down questions, and ask a mentor. In addition, you can set aside one day a week to switch from taking detailed notes on a few verses, to reading a chapter or two from a different passage without taking any notes. Whatever way you choose to go, stay focused and do not bite off more than you can chew!
- F. MATERIALS: Get the best stuff you can get, and buy a good Bible** (Eph. 4:1-3) in an easily understood translation such as the *New Living Translation*. Consider using a Study Bible. I prefer *The Reformation Study Bible*. For serious study use the NIV or NASB or NKJV. The best devotional books are “*My Utmost for His Highest*” by Chambers, and “*Evening by Evening*” by Spurgeon. You can also get a notebook that can be used exclusively for things to do with your relationship to God and to other believers so you can write down what you learn and any questions you may have.
- G. PLACE OR LOCATION: Select a quiet place** (Luke 5:16) to study where you are free from distractions. Remove all distractions. Close the drapes, shut the door, turn off the TV and radio, clear all busy work from your desk, take the phone off the hook, and lock the cat in the bathroom--whatever it takes. You will then be better able to concentrate and have better quality time with Him. Be serious about meeting God!
- H. TIME: Select a quality time** (Eph. 2:18). Choose a time for your devotions when you are at your best. Usually, early morning is best, because outside distractions are at a minimum during this time. If you are not a morning person, do it when you are most alert. Give God your best! Set aside "x" number of minutes to study, and "y" number of minutes to pray. Be flexible to the Spirit's leading within this framework! If you have a short attention span as I do, then break it up throughout the day. Perhaps read from the OT in the morning, a passage from the NT at lunch, then read a devotion and practice intercessory prayer before bedtime. Remember, this time is holy, which means it is to be set apart to, and for God only. If you are just being devoted to your plan and time, then there will be little room for Christ. The plan is the tool for growth, not the growth itself.

- I. SHARE: What you have leaned** (Psalm 55:14; Matt. 18:20; Rom. 12; 2 Cor. 12:18). We learn also by doing and sharing. What we have been given is usually not meant for us solely, it is a gift that keeps on giving as we, in turn, help others! A willing heart, a teachable spirit, the willingness and availability to share are essential for a disciple of our Lord!

From these nine precepts, we realize that from the character of Christ will come the conduct of Christ, if we choose to follow Him. Then, those values of our daily walk that drive our behaviors, will, in turn, influence others and build our character. You cannot lead where you have not been, or when you do not know the direction to go. This is why discipleship is so essential to the aspect of being a Christian. We are called, not to just visualize discipleship, but to do it, not to just talk about it, but to do it. One cannot just think about dinner and satisfy hunger. The ingredients need to be gathered, the meal has to be prepared. Then it is eaten! The Christian who wants to become deeper and more mature, and the effective church will take Scripture and the call of our Lord seriously, and then implement it into the function of applying it into their lives!

APPLICATIONS: Here are some thoughts to consider about turning and applying your devotional time into action:

- A. You will never be able to fully experience the complete value of a devotional time until you discipline yourself to apply what you have learned. Study with the determination that God will give you an application. Then, be willing and able to put it into action without fear or trepidations. Allow your trust in Christ be real and exercised!
- B. Make your applications measurable. Think through the *who, what, where, when, how* and *why*, such as, "I will begin showing more love to my neighbor by asking if there is anything I can pick up for them from the store next time I go shopping."
- C. Sometimes you will see four or five specific ways the passage you have studied can be applied. It is better to select one you want to apply from the Word that day and do it. If you try to implement three or more ways, you will most likely get frustrated and fail. If you cannot decide, stick to the first one that pops up, or the area where you need the most help.
- D. Make most of your applications short-range, such as things you will do within the next day or so, or within the week. Periodically, God will give you an application that you will need to work on for a longer time. When that happens, rejoice and praise God, for this will build you up. At the same time, continue to work on fresh, short-range applications. See them as baby steps that will eventually turn into a marathon. Let God do a new work in you each day, and be thankful He wants to work in you.

Are you transformed by the Word?

We can master the entire Bible and, even be totally transformed by the Word; but, if nothing comes from it, it is meaningless and nearly worthless. This is one of the main points of the book of James. Our faith must have a response to it. Yes we may be saved, but what good is it if we do nothing with it.

With the knowledge we have learned, it becomes our responsibility! And then we are to ask, "how then do I live?" What can I do now, today, or this week to implement the instructions given to me with my relationship to Christ, to others, and to myself?

True application comes only from the result of a life transformed. You may do good works without Christ, but they are out of a sense of obligation and guilt, and not out of a response to our sin nature that has been covered by grace creating a willing and loving heart to model the character of our Lord!

- The fruits of the Spirit are the result of a life transformed by Christ.

How we are un-transformed: "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:19-21)

How we are transformed: *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other."* (Gal 5:22-26)

- God uses His Word to transform us, it is what we do, and what He does. He sends us His Spirit, we respond.

REMEMBER: Application comes out of a Changed life and leads to a life transformed! Rom 12:1-3

SOMETHING TO CONSIDER:

- Satan would like nothing better than for you not to do the above!!! Do not procrastinate. Press on!!! Do not assume that because you understand something that you have applied it!!! Do not get frustrated. You cannot expect instant results.

- Studying the Word without putting any application to it is like buying a nice new car, taking it home and keeping it in your garage. Then all you do is sit in it and pretend you are driving, listening to the radio, but never actually turning it on and going anywhere with it.
- When we read God's Word and do nothing with it, we become the biggest fools in the universe!
- This area of putting feet to God's Word is the most neglected aspect of our Christian life! But it is at this part where our lives change and God uses us to change others.

Discussion: THINGS TO VIEW, ASK, AND APPLY:

Take your passage, (choose a short book like II or III John or Jude or...) and go through it together or in small groups with these steps.

Jesus urged us to build our lives on His Word. (See Matthew 7:24-27)

- What must I do to make God's Word real in me?
- When will what I learned end up in my day planner?
- What is my response?
- The Word of God is to lead us to model the character of Christ, to be formed in the image of God.

Mediate over the passage you are studying, that is reflect on it, ponder it, and think of it so that you are seriously going over the passage over and over in your mind. Then the memorization will become easier since the verse(s) have rooted in you!

- **Pray** to ask God how to implement His truth to you.
- **Tell Others.** Remember Matthew 28. The best way to remember what you learn is to teach others.
- **Accountability.** Let someone else you know and trust hold you to your promises especially as it relates to the study of God's Word.

Beware!! The more knowledge we have, the more accountability and responsibility we have to God. This is why Moses was not allowed into the Promised Land, when he seemingly disobeyed God by hitting a rock with his

staff. It may not seem much of an offense to us, but before God, Moses knew better than anyone else. Fortunately for us today, we have grace!

"Going Deep:"

Have a student read the following passages (it is always better focused to go deep by turning out the lights and light a candle):

"But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. And of this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher. That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day. What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us." (II Tim. 1:10-14)

- You can stand in an ice-cream shop all day long and stare at all of the flavors. But no enjoyment or satisfaction will come until you bite into a scoop for yourself!
- Remember the Word of God's purpose is to transform us into the image of God, to model His character!
- Discipleship is following Christ and not just beliefs, ideas, or causes. Too many people are devoted to a doctrine or a cause in the name of Christ, but not Christ Himself! That is how we got the Inquisition and Crusades.

"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time." (I Tim. 1:6-9)

Conclusion:

There are many ways we can do devotions and study the Bible effectively. There is no "best" way, only that we do it! Many Christians feel all they have to do for their spiritual growth is sit in a pew, turn on the television or radio, or naturally receive their knowledge for being a Christian. However, this is not the

way to transform our lives. You can no better grow deeper in Christ without any effort as you can go to a grocery store and stand in the produce section and become a cucumber. To be a mature and growing Christian, we must read and get into the Word of God ourselves. We do it through prayer, hard work, discipline, concentration, application, and even more **prayer!**

Take this to heart: Jesus never asked anyone to do anything without enabling them with the power to do it. Let this be your encouraging motive (Matt. 28:20)!

Remember, Christ loves you, and wants the best for you. His way is the best way, and we need to have Him and the perspective of eternity in mind, not our limited feelings and desires!

"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment." (1 Cor. 2:14-15)

Some passages to consider on discipleship and mentoring which are not options, but a command: Proverbs 18:24; Matthew 7:18-24; 10:1-42; 19:28-30; 28:16-20; Mark 1:1-5; 1:35 – 2:12; Luke 9:23-25; 48; Luke 14:26-27; John. 8:31; 12:20-26; John 14; 15; 1 John: 5:3; Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 3:5-11; 12; Galatians 6:1-10; 2 Timothy 2:7; 1 Peter 3:15.

Please see our Bible Reading Charts and our Devotion page to further help you!

Accountability Questions

Here is the 7 accountability Questions.

1. Did you accomplish your spiritual goals for this month? Did you pray for others? Did you have a daily quiet time with God?
2. What did you do to enhance your relationship with your spouse?
3. In What ways has God blessed you this month? And/ or what disappointment consumed your thoughts this month?
4. Did you look at someone lustfully this month?
5. Have you shared your faith? In what ways? How can you improve? Have you had an opportunity with a non-Christian?

6. Where are you financially right now? Are things under control? Are things under anxiety? Is there any great debt?

7. What do you see as the number one need for the month? What do you see the other persons' in the group their number one need?

Bible Reading Chart from Into Thy Word!

Print this out in your printer's best 'dpi' setting and cut it out and put it in your Bible! Feel free to pass this on!

Bible Reading SCHEDULE:

Day 1 - Genesis 1-4	Day 72 - Luke 3-4	Day 156 - 2 Samuel 23-24	Day 218 - Job 1-4	Day 292 - Isaiah 57-59
Day 2 - Genesis 5-8	Day 73 - Luke 5-6	Day 157 - 1 Corinthians 1-4	Day 219 - Job 5-8	Day 293 - Isaiah 60-63
Day 3 - Genesis 9-12	Day 74 - Luke 7-8	Day 158 - 1 Corinthians 5-9	Day 220 - Job 9-12	Day 294 - Isaiah 64-66
Day 4 - Genesis 13-17	Day 75 - Luke 9-10	Day 159 - 1 Corinthians 10-13	Day 221 - Job 13-16	Day 295 - Psalms 120-133
Day 5 - Genesis 18-20	Day 76 - Luke 11-12	Day 160 - 1 Corinthians 14-16	Day 222 - Job 17-20	Day 296 - 1 John 1-5
Day 6 - Genesis 21-23	Day 77 - Luke 13-15	Day 161 - 1 Kings 1-2	Day 223 - Job 21-24	Day 297 - Jeremiah 1-3
Day 7 - Genesis 24-25	Day 78 - Luke 16-18	Day 162 - 1 Kings 3-5	Day 224 - Job 25-30	Day 298 - Jeremiah 4-5
Day 8 - Genesis 26-28	Day 79 - Luke 19-20	Day 163 - 1 Kings 6-7	Day 225 - Job 31-34	Day 299 - Jeremiah 6-8
Day 9 - Genesis 29-31	Day 80 - Luke 21-22	Day 164 - 1 Kings 8-9	Day 226 - Job 35-38	Day 300 - Jeremiah 9-11
Day 10 - Genesis 32-35	Day 81 - Luke 23-24	Day 144 - 1 Samuel 17-18	Day 227 - Job 39-42	Day 301 - Jeremiah 12-14
Day 11 - Genesis 36-38	Day 82 - Deuteronomy 1-2	Day 145 - 1 Samuel 19-21	Day 228 - Psalms 1-8	Day 302 - Jeremiah 15-17
Day 12 - Genesis 39-41	Day 83 - Deuteronomy 3-4	Day 146 - 1 Samuel 22-24	Day 229 - Psalms 9-17	Day 303 - Jeremiah 18-21
Day 13 - Genesis 42-43	Day 84 - Deuteronomy 5-8	Day 147 - 1 Samuel 25-27	Day 230 - 1 Thessalonians 1-5	Day 304 - Jeremiah 22-24
Day 14 - Genesis 44-46	Day 85 - Deuteronomy 9-11	Day 148 - 1 Samuel 28-31	Day 231 - Psalms 18-21	Day 305 - Jeremiah 25-27
Day 15 - Genesis 47-50	Day 86 - Deuteronomy 12-15	Day 149 - 2 Samuel 1-3	Day 232 - Psalms 22-27	Day 306 - Jeremiah 28-30
Day 16 - Exodus 1-4	Day 87 - Deuteronomy 16-19	Day 150 - 2 Samuel 4-7	Day 233 - 2 Thessalonians 1-3	Day 307 - Jeremiah 31-32
Day 17 - Exodus 5-7	Day 88 - Deuteronomy 20-22	Day 151 - 2 Samuel 8-11	Day 234 - Psalms 28-33	Day 308 - Jeremiah 33-36
Day 18 - Exodus 8-10	Day 89 - Deuteronomy 23-25	Day 152 - 2 Samuel 12-13	Day 235 - Psalms 34-37	Day 309 - Jeremiah 37-39
Day 19 - Exodus 11-13	Day 90 - Deuteronomy 26-27	Day 153 - 2 Samuel 14-16	Day 236 - Proverbs 1-3	Day 310 - Jeremiah 40-43
Day 20 - Exodus 14-16	Day 91 - Deuteronomy 28-29	Day 154 - 2 Samuel 17-19	Day 237 - Psalms 38-42	Day 311 - Jeremiah 44-46
Day 21 - Exodus 17-20	Day 92 - Deuteronomy 30-32	Day 155 - 1 Kings 10-12	Day 238 - Proverbs 4-7	Day 312 - Jeremiah 47-48
Day 22 - Exodus 21-23	Day 93 - Deuteronomy 33-34	Day 156 - 1 Kings 13-15	Day 239 - 1 Timothy 1-6	Day 313 - Jeremiah 49
Day 23 - Exodus 24-27	Day 94 - John 1-2	Day 167 - 1 Kings 16-18	Day 240 - Psalms 43-49	Day 314 - Jeremiah 50
Day 24 - Exodus 28-30	Day 95 - John 3-4	Day 168 - 1 Kings 19-20	Day 241 - Psalms 50-55	Day 315 - Jeremiah 51-52
Day 25 - Exodus 31-34	Day 96 - John 5-6	Day 169 - 1 Kings 21-22	Day 242 - Proverbs 8-11	Day 316 - Psalms 134-140
Day 26 - Exodus 35-37	Day 97 - John 7-8	Day 170 - 2 Kings 1-3	Day 243 - 2 Timothy 1-4	Day 317 - 2, 3 John and Jude
Day 27 - Exodus 38-40	Day 98 - John 9-10	Day 171 - 2 Kings 4-5	Day 244 - Psalms 56-61	Day 318 - Lamentations 1-2
Day 28 - Matthew 1-4	Day 99 - John 11-12	Day 172 - 2 Kings 6-8	Day 245 - Psalms 62-68	Day 319 - Lamentations 3-5
Day 29 - Matthew 5-6	Day 100 - John 13-15	Day 173 - 2 Kings 9-10	Day 246 - Proverbs 12-14	Day 320 - Ezekiel 1-4
Day 30 - Matthew 7-9	Day 101 - John 16-17	Day 174 - 2 Kings 11-13	Day 247 - Psalms 69-72	Day 321 - Ezekiel 5-8
Day 31 - Matthew 10-11	Day 102 - John 18-19	Day 175 - 2 Kings 14-16	Day 248 - Titus and Philemon	Day 322 - Ezekiel 9-12
Day 32 - Matthew 12-13	Day 103 - John 20-21	Day 176 - 2 Kings 17-18	Day 249 - Psalms 73-77	Day 323 - Ezekiel 13-15
Day 33 - Matthew 14-17	Day 104 - Joshua 1-4	Day 177 - 2 Kings 19-21	Day 250 - Psalms 78-80	Day 324 - Ezekiel 16-17
Day 34 - Matthew 18-20	Day 105 - Joshua 5-7	Day 178 - 2 Kings 22-23	Day 251 - Proverbs 15-17	Day 325 - Ezekiel 18-20
Day 35 - Matthew 21-22	Day 106 - Joshua 8-10	Day 179 - 2 Kings 24-25	Day 252 - Psalms 81-88	Day 326 - Ezekiel 21-22
Day 36 - Matthew 23-24	Day 107 - Joshua 11-13	Day 180 - 2 Corinthians 1-4	Day 253 - Hebrews 1-4	Day 327 - Ezekiel 23-24
Day 37 - Matthew 25-26	Day 108 - Joshua 14-17	Day 181 - 2 Corinthians 5-9	Day 254 - Hebrews 5-8	Day 328 - Ezekiel 25-27
Day 38 - Matthew 27-28	Day 109 - Joshua 18-20	Day 182 - 2 Corinthians 10-13	Day 255 - Hebrews 9-10	Day 329 - Ezekiel 28-30
Day 39 - Leviticus 1-4	Day 110 - Joshua 21-22	Day 183 - 1 Chronicles 1-2	Day 256 - Hebrews 11-13	Day 330 - Ezekiel 31-32
Day 40 - Leviticus 5-7	Day 111 - Joshua 23-24	Day 184 - 1 Chronicles 3-4	Day 257 - Psalms 89-94	Day 331 - Ezekiel 33-35
Day 41 - Leviticus 8-10	Day 112 - Acts 1-3	Day 185 - 1 Chronicles 5-6	Day 258 - Psalms 95-103	Day 332 - Ezekiel 36-38
Day 42 - Leviticus 11-13	Day 113 - Acts 4-5	Day 186 - 1 Chronicles 7-9	Day 259 - Proverbs 18-20	Day 333 - Ezekiel 39-40
Day 43 - Leviticus 14-15	Day 114 - Acts 6-7	Day 187 - 1 Chronicles 10-12	Day 260 - James 1-5	Day 334 - Ezekiel 41-43
Day 44 - Leviticus 16-18	Day 115 - Acts 8-9	Day 188 - 1 Chronicles 13-16	Day 261 - Psalms 104-106	Day 335 - Ezekiel 44-46
Day 45 - Leviticus 19-21	Day 116 - Acts 10-11	Day 189 - 1 Chronicles 17-19	Day 262 - Psalms 107-111	Day 336 - Ezekiel 47-48
Day 46 - Leviticus 22-23	Day 117 - Acts 12-13	Day 190 - 1 Chronicles 20-23	Day 263 - Proverbs 21-23	Day 337 - Psalms 141-150
Day 47 - Leviticus 24-25	Day 118 - Acts 14-15	Day 191 - 1 Chronicles 24-26	Day 264 - 1 Peter 1-5	Day 338 - Daniel 1-3
Day 48 - Leviticus 26-27	Day 119 - Acts 16-17	Day 192 - 1 Chronicles 27-29	Day 265 - Psalms 112-118	Day 339 - Daniel 4-5
Day 49 - Mark 1-3	Day 120 - Acts 18-19	Day 193 - 2 Chronicles 1-4	Day 266 - Proverbs 24-26	Day 340 - Daniel 6-8
Day 50 - Mark 4-5	Day 121 - Acts 20-21	Day 194 - 2 Chronicles 5-7	Day 267 - Ecclesiastes 1-4	Day 341 - Daniel 9-12
Day 51 - Mark 6-7	Day 122 - Acts 22-23	Day 195 - 2 Chronicles 8-11	Day 268 - Ecclesiastes 5-8	Day 342 - Revelation 1-3
Day 52 - Mark 8-9	Day 123 - Acts 24-26	Day 196 - 2 Chronicles 12-16	Day 269 - Ecclesiastes 9-12	Day 343 - Revelation 4-7
Day 53 - Mark 10-11	Day 124 - Acts 27-28	Day 197 - 2 Chronicles 17-20	Day 270 - Psalm 119	Day 344 - Revelation 8-11
Day 54 - Mark 12-13	Day 125 - Judges 1-3	Day 198 - 2 Chronicles 21-24	Day 271 - Proverbs 27-29	Day 345 - Revelation 12-14
Day 55 - Mark 14	Day 126 - Judges 4-5	Day 199 - 2 Chronicles 25-28	Day 272 - Proverbs 30-31	Day 346 - Revelation 15-17
Day 56 - Mark 15-16	Day 127 - Judges 6-8	Day 200 - 2 Chronicles 29-31	Day 273 - 2 Peter 1-3	Day 347 - Revelation 18-19
Day 57 - Numbers 1-2	Day 128 - Judges 9-10	Day 201 - 2 Chronicles 32-34	Day 274 - Song of Songs 1-4	Day 348 - Revelation 20-22
Day 58 - Numbers 3-4	Day 129 - Judges 11-13	Day 202 - 2 Chronicles 35-36	Day 275 - Song of Songs 5-8	Day 349 - Hosea 1-4
Day 59 - Numbers 5-6	Day 130 - Judges 14-16	Day 203 - Galatians 1-3	Day 276 - Isaiah 1-3	Day 350 - Hosea 5-9
Day 60 - Numbers 7	Day 131 - Judges 17-19	Day 204 - Galatians 4-6	Day 277 - Isaiah 4-8	Day 351 - Hosea 10-14
Day 61 - Numbers 8-10	Day 132 - Judges 20-21	Day 205 - Ezra 1-4	Day 278 - Isaiah 9-11	Day 352 - Joel 1-3
Day 62 - Numbers 11-13	Day 133 - Ruth 1-4	Day 206 - Ezra 5-7	Day 279 - Isaiah 12-14	Day 353 - Amos 1-4
Day 63 - Numbers 14-15	Day 134 - Romans 1-3	Day 207 - Ezra 8-10	Day 280 - Isaiah 15-19	Day 354 - Amos 5-9
Day 64 - Numbers 16-18	Day 135 - Romans 4-7	Day 208 - Ephesians 1-3	Day 281 - Isaiah 20-24	
Day 65 - Numbers 19-21	Day 136 - Romans 8-10	Day 209 - Ephesians 4-6	Day 282 - Isaiah 25-28	
Day 66 - Numbers 22-24	Day 137 - Romans 11-14	Day 210 - Nehemiah 1-3	Day 283 - Isaiah 29-31	Day 355 - Obadiah and Jonah
Day 67 - Numbers 25-26	Day 138 - Romans 15-16	Day 211 - Nehemiah 4-7	Day 284 - Isaiah 32-34	Day 356 - Micah 1-4
Day 68 - Numbers 27-29	Day 139 - 1 Samuel 1-3	Day 212 - Nehemiah 8-10	Day 285 - Isaiah 35-37	Day 357 - Micah 5-7
Day 69 - Numbers 30-32	Day 140 - 1 Samuel 4-7	Day 213 - Nehemiah 11-13	Day 286 - Isaiah 38-40	Day 358 - Nahum 1-3
Day 70 - Numbers 33-36	Day 141 - 1 Samuel 8-12	Day 214 - Philippians 1-4	Day 287 - Isaiah 41-43	Day 359 - Habakkuk 1-3
Day 71 - Luke 1-2	Day 142 - 1 Samuel 13-14	Day 215 - Esther 1-5	Day 288 - Isaiah 44-46	Day 360 - Zephaniah 1-3
	Day 143 - 1 Samuel 15-16	Day 216 - Esther 6-10	Day 289 - Isaiah 47-49	Day 361 - Haggai 1-2
	Day 155 - 2 Samuel 20-22	Day 217 - Colossians 1-4	Day 290 - Isaiah 50-52	Day 362 - Zechariah 1-5
			Day 291 - Isaiah 53-56	Day 363 - Zechariah 6-10
				Day 364 - Zechariah 11-14

Bible Reading Record

Here you can record your Bible reading progress!

Genesis 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47
48 49 50

Exodus 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40

Leviticus 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27

Numbers 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36

Deuteronomy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22
23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34

Joshua 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

Judges 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21

Ruth 1 2 3 4

1 Samuel 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31

2 Samuel 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

1 Kings 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22

2 Kings 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25

1 Chronicles 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
24 25 26 27 28 29

2 Chronicles 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36

Ezra 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Nehemiah 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Esther 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Job 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26
27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42

Psalms 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47
48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70
71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93
94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111
112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128
129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145
146 147 148 149 150

Proverbs 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Ecclesiastes 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Song Of Solomon 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Isaiah 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48
49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66

Jeremiah 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47
48 49 50 51 52

Lamentations 1 2 3 4 5

Ezekiel 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47
48

Daniel 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Hosea 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Joel 1 2 3

Amos 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Obadiah 1

Jonah 1 2 3 4

Micah 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Nahum 1 2 3

Habakkuk 1 2 3

Zephaniah 1 2 3

Haggai 1 2

Zechariah 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Malachi 1 2 3 4

Matthew 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28

Mark 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

Luke 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

John 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21

Acts 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28

Romans 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

1 Corinthians 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

2 Corinthians 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Galatians 1 2 3 4 5 6

Ephesians 1 2 3 4 5 6

Philippians 1 2 3 4

Colossians 1 2 3 4

1 Thessalonians 1 2 3 4 5

2 Thessalonians 1 2 3

1 Timothy 1 2 3 4 5 6

2 Timothy 1 2 3 4

Titus 1 2 3

Philemon 1

Hebrews 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

James 1 2 3 4 5

1 Peter 1 2 3 4 5

2 Peter 1 2 3

1 John 1 2 3 4 5

2 John 1

3 John 1

Jude 1

Revelation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22

The Bible contains 1189 chapters: 929 in the Old Testament and 260 in the New. Reading 3 chapters each day and 5 chapters on Sundays will cover the entire Bible in one year. Follow some plan. Even one chapter each day will cover the New Testament in only 9 months. God's Word is alive. The more you expose yourself to it, the more it will expose itself to you.

www.intothyword.com

There are also some good [Bible Reading Plans](#) available by email.

[Go to Believers Home Page](#)

Bible Reading Table

Print this table. Check each chapter as you read it. By reading two chapters of the New Testament every day, you will complete the Testament in less than 20 weeks. By reading three chapters every weekday and five on Sunday, you will complete the Bible in a year.

New Testament

Matthew	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
Mark	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16													
Luke	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24					
John	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21								
Acts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
Romans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16													
1 Corinthians	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16													
2 Corinthians	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13																
Galatians	1	2	3	4	5	6																							
Ephesians	1	2	3	4	5	6																							
Philippians	1	2	3	4																									
Colossians	1	2	3	4																									
1 Thessalonians	1	2	3	4	5																								
2 Thessalonians	1	2	3																										
1 Timothy	1	2	3	4	5	6																							
2 Timothy	1	2	3	4																									
Titus	1	2	3																										
Philemon	1																												
Hebrews	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13																
James	1	2	3	4	5																								
1 Peter	1	2	3	4	5																								
2 Peter	1	2	3																										
1 John	1	2	3	4	5																								
2 John	1																												
3 John	1																												
Jude	1																												
Revelation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22							

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15

Old Testament

Genesis	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50										
Exodus	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40																				
Leviticus	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27			
Numbers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	32	33	34	35	36																								
Deuteronomy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

	31	32	33	34																										
Joshua	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24						
Judges	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21									
Ruth	1	2	3	4																										
1 Samuel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31																													
2 Samuel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24						
1 Kings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22								
2 Kings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25					
1 Chronicles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
2 Chronicles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	32	33	34	35	36																								
Ezra	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10																				
Nehemiah	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13																	
Ester	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10																				
Job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42																		
Psalms	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
Proverbs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31																													
Ecclesiastes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12																		
Song of Solomon	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8																						
Isiah	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
	61	62	63	64	65	66																								
Jeremiah	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52								
Lamentations	1	2	3	4	5																									
Ezekiel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48												
Daniel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12																		
Hosea	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14																
Joel	1	2	3																											
Amos	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9																					
Obadiah	1																													
Jonah	1	2	3	4																										
Micah	1	2	3	4	5	6	7																							
Nahum	1	2	3																											
Habakkuk	1	2	3																											
Zephaniah	1	2	3																											
Haggai	1	2																												
Zechariah	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14																
Malachi	1	2	3	4																										

Inspired from a Campus Crusade Leadership Trainer

Growing to God seems too hard????

Consider this: A Sinners Excuse!

1. I'm OK because I am a good person.

You may think that way but God does not!

Rom: 3:23: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Rom: 3:10: As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Eccl: 7:20: For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

Not only does God show that you are a sinner, but He also warns you of the consequences of sin, and the judgment that follows.

Rom: 6:23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ezek: 18:4: Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Num. 32:23: Be sure your sin will find you out.

2. I'm too big a sinner to be a Christian

The fact is we all are! As a sinner we are saved because what Christ has done. He came to save us sinners, and if you relinquish your sins and trust and obey the Lord Jesus, you have God's word He will forgive you!

1Tm: 1:15: This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

Lk: 19:10: For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Isa: 55:7: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Prov: 28:13: He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

Rom: 10:13: For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Jn: 6:37: All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

Heb: 7:25: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

If you are among the "uttermost" ones, come now and rejoice in your salvation!

3. Not now! I'm just not ready yet.

Lk: 14:17: Come; for all things are now ready.

Heb: 3:15: While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.

Isa: 55:6: Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

2Cor: 6:2: (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)

Prov: 27:1: Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Jms: 4:13: Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

Lk: 12:19-20: And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

Mt: 25:13: Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

Are you ready, if not what is in the way?

4. There is too much to give up.

Mk: 8:36: For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

Ps: 84:11: For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Rom: 8:32: He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Mt: 6:33: But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Lk: 18:29: And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, 30: Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

Rom: 6:23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

What we may give up in no way compares to what we gain in Him!

Extra Insights:

For those who are new in the faith or need help getting started:

The 90-Day Experience By Jim Burns

To know the Word and to live by it, you will need to take daily time to read the Bible. To develop a habit of Bible reading, it is best to have a consistent time and place.

- When and where will you take time to put God's Word to work in your life? You'll need a method.
- How will you begin? Try this:

A Month of Praise and Wisdom

By reading less than 10 minutes a day for one month, you can go through the books of Psalms and Proverbs. The psalms are the beautiful songs of the Hebrew people and the proverbs contain great, practical advice on many aspects of life. All you need to do is read five psalms and one proverb each day and after a month you will have completed two of the greatest books in the Bible. Then you will be ready for a new plan and you will already have started the positive habit of reading the Bible each day.

Try an experiment that will change your life! You can read the entire New Testament in less than three months if you'll take 15 minutes a day and read approximately three chapters a day for 90 days. Listed is a format you can use to

try this experiment. You'll be excited to see the positive results of incorporating biblical principles into your life.

1. Matthew 1-4
2. Matthew 5-7
3. Matthew 8-10
4. Matthew 11-13
5. Matthew 14-16
6. Matthew 17-19
7. Matthew 20-22 37
8. Matthew 23-25 38
9. Matthew 26-28
10. Mark 1-3
11. Mark 4-6
12. Mark 7-9
13. Mark 10-12
14. Mark 13-16
15. Luke 1-3
16. Luke 4-6
17. Luke 7-9
18. Luke 10-12
19. Luke 13-15
20. Luke 16-18
21. Luke 19-21
22. Luke 22-24
23. John 1-3
24. John 4-6
25. John 7-9
26. John 10-12
27. John 13-16
28. John 16.5-18
29. John 19-21
30. Acts 1-3
31. Acts 4-6
32. Acts 7-9.
33. Acts 10-12.
34. Acts 13-15
35. Acts 16-18
36. Acts 19-21:36
37. Acts 21:37-25:22
38. Acts 25:23-28:30
39. Romans 1-3 40.
40. Romans 4-6 .
41. Romans 7-8
42. Romans 9-11
43. Romans 12-13
44. Romans 14-16
45. 1 Corinthians 1-4
46. 1 Corinthians 5-7
47. 1 Corinthians 8-11
48. 1 Corinthians 12-14
49. 1 Corinthians 15-16
50. 2 Corinthians 1-3
51. 2 Corinthians 4-6
52. 2 Corinthians 7-9
53. 2 Corinthians 1-13
54. Galatians 1-2
55. Galatians 3-4
56. Galatians 5-6:4
57. Ephesians 1-3
58. Ephesians 4-6

59. Philippians 1-2
60. Philippians 3-4
61. Colossians 1-2
62. Colossians 3-4
63. 1 Thessalonians 1-3
64. 1 Thessalonians 4-5
65. 2 Thessalonians 1-3
66. 1 Timothy 1-3
67. 1 Timothy 4-6
68. 2 Timothy 1-4
69. Titus 1-3 2
70. Philemon
71. Hebrews 1-2
72. Hebrews 3-4:13
73. Hebrews 4:14-7
74. Hebrews 8-10
75. Hebrews 11-13
76. James 1-3:12
77. James 3:13-5
78. 1 Peter 1-3:7
79. 1 Peter 3:8-5
80. 2 Peter 1-3
81. 1 John 1-3:10
82. 1 John 3-11-5
83. 2 John; 3 John; Jude
84. Revelation 1-3
85. Revelations 4-6
86. Revelations 7-9
87. Revelation 10-12
88. Revelations 13-15
89. Revelation 16-18
90. Revelation 19-22

Devotional Books

In less than 10 minutes a day you can read a devotional book. Usually a devotional book has a Scripture, story, challenge or action steps. Devotional books are written to plant the Word of God in your life and give you practical insight in your walk with God.

Into Thy Word Ministries highly recommends two:

1. My Utmost for His Highest, Chambers
2. Morning and Evening, Spurgeon

Remember these resources are free for you! Most ministries only sell there materials, we feel we are doing what God has called us too, by going ahead and offering the best materials possible for free and seek support for doing so. There is no obligation but please consider supporting our ministry if you are able to do so. As these materials have cost us a tremendous amount of time effort and financial resources that have taken us years to develop for you!

Feel free to pass this around to any pastor who is overseas or on the mission field who may need it! We also have several other “Pastors Training Packs” available in various languages on: “How to Study and Teach the Bible,” “How to Lead and Manage the Church” and many more. As a missions and discipleship organization it is our call to train pastors and provide resources to Christians and Church leaders all over the world. They may printout any information we have posted, reproduce it, make the needed cultural changes and translate it. All we ask of you is to keep us in prayer, keep the name of our ministry and any copyright information on the resources, and tell other pastors what we have to offer. If anyone does translate any of our material, please let us know and give us a copy so we can make them available to others in their language and culture!

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Richard Joseph Krejcir is the Director of 'Into Thy Word Ministries,' a Missions and discipling ministry. He is the author of several books including, Into Thy Word as well as numerous articles, curriculums and solid Biblical resources. He is also a pastor, teacher, speaker and a graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena California and currently completing his Ph.D in practical theology. He has amounted over 20 years of pastoral ministry experience, mostly in youth ministry, including serving as a church growth consultant.