

**Bible Reading and Study
Principles and Guidelines
Ver. 1.1.0**

- **Purpose** - There is only one reason to read the Bible ... To Know God. God has chosen the Bible, His Written Word, as His primary vehicle of communication to mankind. He reveals Himself through this book by the agency of His Spirit (His invisible presence) [2Cor 3:1-18](#). The words come alive as we read them and we receive them as if they were spoken directly to us for the first time [Heb 4:12](#). We not only hear His words but see Him with our spiritual eyes. It is like talking to someone over the telephone. We can't see them, but they are communicating themselves through the the words we hear.

- **Listening** - When reading or studying the scripture, have a heart tender and attentive to the voice of God. Approach the scriptures with reverence and anticipation expecting to hear from God. [Psa 119:1-176](#); [2Ti 3:15-17](#); [Jam 1:22-25](#). Listen to God with the Spirit, not the intellect. [1Co 2:1-16](#); [Joh 16:13](#); [Rom 8:16](#); [1Jo 2:27](#). Make certain to listen, hear and acknowledge the voice of the Spirit and store it in the heart, or it will be taken away. The level of value placed on what is heard is the level of value received. [Mar 4:22-25](#); [Mat 13:23](#); [Mar 4:20](#).

- **Transparency** - Approach the scripture as you would approach God, for it is in fact God you are going to. Come as you are with a willingness to allow God to show you what he sees within you. Be willing and ready to open your heart to God, face what you see, and deal with what you see. [Psa 139:23-24](#); [Psa 51:17](#); [Isa 57:15](#); [Isa 6:5](#); [Job 42:1-6](#); [Eze 3:23-24](#); [Dan 10:7-10](#); [Jam 1:22-25](#)

- **Bible Reading** - Reading for devotional purposes should be Read:
 - As you would read any book. From beginning to end. All of it. (Including books like Numbers and Leviticus.)
 - Should be relaxed and paced. A few verses to a book or two depending on how much time one has to devote.
 - Should be at a time when you are receptive and attentive. [Mat 14:23](#)
 - Regularly (i.e. read through the Bible in a year)
 - Note:
If you do run across a thought or principle that you want to study, do it in a study format and do not interrupt the regularity of the devotional reading. (Many Christians have substituted study for devotional reading and that has kept them from reading all the scripture.) If you don't regularly read through all the scriptures (i.e. once a year), that will open you up for an unbalanced view of Biblical Truth and expose you to possible doctrinal error.

- **Bible Study** - Bible Study is for the searching and gathering of information with the intention to learn and grow in understanding about one or more subjects. It is used to develop Bible Themes (knowledge) and Bible Principles (wisdom). [Mat 7:7-8](#); [Jam 1:5-8](#)
 - **Bible Study is interpretive in nature.** - It attempts to find out what is being said and interpret it. The interpretation then becomes a thought, belief, doctrine, or life principle.
 - **Rules for Interpretive Study:**
 - Take into account the context. Context, Context, Context!
 - Let the context answer the:
 - Who
 - What
 - When
 - Where
 - Why
 - Let the scripture interpret itself. Do not build a doctrine. Let the scripture declare the doctrine and you understand it. [2Pe 1:18-21](#)
 - Let no doctrine or theme or principle become official until it has been established overtly in at least two or three places in the scripture. No one verse can be used to declare a truth. God's method is by two or three let every word be established. See [Num 35:30](#); [Deu 17:6](#); [Deu 19:15](#); [2Co 13:1](#); [Mat 18:16](#); [Joh 5:31-47](#); [1Ti 5:19](#).
 - Do not approach a study with preconceived ideas of what any scripture means or says. God can take the same verse and speak to us in various different ways. Preconceived is to predetermine and that will tie God's hands and limit His ability to speak to you.
 - Keep from drawing conclusions prematurely. If something is unclear, confusing, or contradictory seek God for a better understanding, but let Him unfold it to you in His time and way. To say, "I don't know", is OK.
- **Relationship Oriented** - Life is relationships. ([Mat 7:12](#); [Mat 22:36-40](#); [Rom 13:8-10](#); [Jam 2:8-9](#)) All bible reading and study is to be used to develop your relationship with God and man. If it is approached or used for any other purpose, it is vain and destructive.
- **Review or Re-visit Regularly** - ([Jos 1:8](#); [Psa 1:1-6](#); [Psa 143:5](#)) Bible doctrine is based upon your understanding at the time. As you grow and mature in your understanding you will see and develop a broader understanding of the truths you have seen.
 - Always approach Bible study as if you were reading it for the first time.

- Remember, "experts have few choices but beginners have many".

- **Review with Others** - "In the multitude of counselors there is safety." [Pro 24:6](#); ([Mal 3:16](#); [Col 3:16](#); [Heb 10:25](#)) If God is speaking He will be speaking the same thing to more than one person. There is a common thread with truth. Truth is the same because God is truth and He never changes. What changes is your understanding of Him. It is good to discuss the things that God is speaking to you about when you have opportunity. Keep in mind that not all people see the same. This is when relationship orientation becomes so important. "Agree to Disagree without becoming disagreeable."

- **Remember, belief produces action.**
 - When you hear from God, confirm it back to Him. State the same thing back to Him.
 - Once you have confirmed the truth God has given to you, it will become a part of your belief system.
 - Remember, belief produced action. If you want to know what you believe, you can observe your life, because you live out of what you believe. ([Mat 7:16-20](#); [Mat 12:34](#))