



TIPS FOR STUDYING THE BIBLE

Read the entire passage a few times before starting. Read it in another translation too.
If you usually read out of the ESV, try reading a different version, like NASB or NIV.

Use these four steps when studying the Bible:

STEP 1: OBSERVATION • What does this passage say?

STEP 2: INTERPRETATION • What does this passage mean?

STEP 3: CONNECTION • How does this passage point us to the person and work of Jesus?

STEP 4: APPLICATION • What am I going to do about what this passage says?

OBSERVATION	What does the passage say? What does the passage say about God? About me? About the world? Who is it written to? What are the verbs/actions? What are some cause and effect relationships? What are some repeating words/phrases? Who is speaking? What is being said? Where is this happening and in what context?
INTERPRETATION	What does the passage mean? What is the historical/cultural background? Look up specific words/definitions. Ask the “why” questions. Why is this instruction being given?
CONNECTION TO CHRIST	Where is there a connection to Christ in the passage? How does this connect to the gospel? How does this connect to the work of Christ?
APPLICATION	How does this apply to my life? Are there specific commands to obey? How does this relate to my circumstances? Is there an example to follow? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a call to action?

***NOTE:** Interpretation (meaning) is finding out what the passage means, NOT what it means to you. There is an original meaning to the text. It can have a personal application for you, but its meaning is consistent. Before we can understand how it applies to us today, we must first understand what it meant in its original context.

OTHER TIPS FOR BIBLE STUDY

PRAY: Pray that God would give you wisdom, insight, and courage to obey what the text says. Pray before studying and pray after. Pray for the eyes of your heart to be enlightened, pray for the Spirit to help you understand, and pray for your heart to be changed and to move in action, and that bible study would not be a duty, but delight.

CULTURAL REFLECTION: Where does this passage intersect or conflict with our culture today? How does this passage change our worldview?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION: Talk it out with others. Pray it out with others. If it's confusing, ask for help. Bring it to your group, a friend, or someone a little further along in their journey if you want to process it deeper.

MEDITATION & MEMORIZATION: Biblical meditation is filling your mind with God's word. Pick a passage or book of the Bible and reread it, thinking about it, ponder it. If you can, memorize it! Write it on a note card or sticky note and put it on your bathroom mirror. Have a friend ask you to recite it to them. Be intentional and get creative!