

# Read the Bible as Your Spiritual Food

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The Bible is given by God to believers for their good and for their edification. The Scriptures reveal God, expose sin, highlight Christ, and demand repentance and faith. So how can believers read the Bible and profit from it? How can children of God read God's Word as spiritual food and nourishment for the soul? *This essay will provide a number of directions for believers.*

**Christian, read your Bible...**

## **DAILY.**

The Bible speaks of itself as the spiritual food for believers. Just as people eat meals daily so children of God must feast upon heavenly bread daily. Christ is worthy of our contemplation and worship and study every single day. So feast daily upon His Word to know God, follow God, love God, and obey Him. You can't read the Bible too much.

## **PRIORITY.**

Before meeting with men, believers would do well to meet with God. Men are ready to meet with men after meeting with God but before a Christian communes with his Christ, he would do well to refrain from conversing with men. Bible reading should take priority in a Christian's life. Don't let anything crowd out this meeting time with God!

## **DEVOTIONALLY.**

Read the word for soul-enjoyment and for communion with the triune God who saved you. Don't read the Word to check off the box in a Bible-reading plan. Don't read the Word for others. Don't read the Word for sermon preparation. Read the Word to warm your heart in greater love for Christ and hotter affection for His magnificence.

## **EXPECTANTLY.**

Expectations. They usually can be harmful to relationships; but not with Bible reading. Read the Word and expect to meet with God, to fellowship with Him, to realize hidden sins, to behold the merciful Savior, and to expect the Spirit to conform you into the likeness of the Savior. Expect great things from the greatest book ever written.

## **PRAYERFULLY.**

Bible reading is one-way communication. It is God speaking to His people. One-way communication doesn't take relationships very far, or very deep. Reading Scripture is God speaking to His people. Praying to God is His people speaking to Him. Two-way communication always benefits relationships and can allow them to deepen, strengthen, and grow fonder in love and affection toward one another. Read your Word prayerfully and talk often with God.

## **COMPLETELY/ENTIRELY.**

God gave a complete Bible to make a complete Christian. God did not give an entire Bible for people to pick and choose verses or portions of the Bible that they like and merely and only read those sections to the neglect of others. To be a well-rounded, whole Christian, study your whole Bible fully. Read Genesis through Revelation. Understand it. Be patient and devote yourself with diligent discipline to the complete reading of the Bible.

## **PROGRESSIVELY.**

God gave His Word progressively. And thus, God's people should read His Word progressively. God did not drop a heavenly book down from the clouds one day in its entire form. Rather, men wrote and penned inerrant Scripture progressively over time. Similarly, believers should read *through* portions of Scripture with determined progression. They should read through all of Ezekiel, all of Leviticus, all of Revelation, all of Zechariah, all of Psalms and strive for understanding and gospel clarity. That is to say: aim to read *through* books of the Bible, not mere random verses.

## **APPLICATIVELY.**

Always read with the aim for application. Allow the truth of God from the Word of God to saturate deep into the fabric of your being so you hear God as you read the text. Obey Him as you apply it to your life. Begin by implementing the text to your life specifically. Always read with a view toward growth in holiness and piety. Don't resist the Spirit's work of conviction and the guilt that comes over exposed sin. Confess it, humble yourself, repent and turn from it, hide in Christ's righteousness, and remind yourself of the many promises of Christ to His people. Read the Word with the intent of change. Allow Christ to expose sin. Read and apply. Read and apply.

## **WORSHIPFULLY.**

The more you read Scriptures the more God in His effulgence and exaltation will permeate your heart and mind. You cannot get past Genesis 1 without stopping and worshiping God for His Almighty and unstoppable omnipotence. You cannot get past Isaiah 53 without adoring the God's great gospel of substitutionary atonement. You can't get past Revelation 22 without worshiping Christ and longing for the day when all God's people will see God in eternal bliss forever. Read the Word and *respond to God's revelation of Himself* by having God-centered thoughts, God-saturated passions, God-permeated conversations, and God-glorifying motivations. Read the Word and worship the Author!

## **MEDITATIVELY.**

To meditate means to ponder profusely; it means to chew the cud and to mutter truth repeatedly in one's heart and from one's lips. To meditate implies that one fills his heart and mind with God and His truth so that the heart is enlarged, the mind is engaged, the conscience is softened, and the affections are won. Pick a verse from the reading, or, better yet, set aside a specific time to ponder a biblical topic (e.g., substitution, heaven, hell, brevity of life, humanity of Christ, suffering, virgin birth, filling of the Spirit, etc.). Allow the word to soak in you. As a person enjoys soaking in a lingering bath for refreshment, so the child of God should soak as he lingers long with Christ in Scripture.

## **HUMBLY.**

Always place yourself under the authoritative Word of God. Never sit in judgment over God's truth. Let the Word expose your heart. Let it prick the conscience. Let it point out crevices of sin. And don't fight it. Don't resist it. But embrace the glorious work of God's grace as He humbles His people, out of Fatherly love, through the written Word and by the searching Spirit. So read humbly. Don't pick and choose what you'll obey. Surrender to it all. Humble yourself before the clarity of Scripture. Stand courageously upon the truthfulness of Scripture. Live in full obedience to the authority of Scripture. Proclaim tirelessly the gospel as found in the Scripture. Read with a humble heart!