

5 P's Bible Study

“Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.”

Hebrews 5

One of the best ways to get “solid food” is through Bible Study. The Bible is God’s “love letter” to us. It reveals His character, His love, His justice, His plans, etc. When we spend time studying it we get a bigger picture of who He is.

The Bible can be challenging to read at times. It is good to remember that the Bible was written for us, but it was not written to us. The 66 books of the Bible were written by 40+ authors, on 3 continents, in 3 languages, over a period of about 1500 years by kings, fishermen, priest, government officials, farmers, shepherds, doctors, and more. At times, God was speaking to very specific people or groups that lived in a different culture at a different time in history... BUT the truth of the scriptures stands the test of time. God’s character and nature DOES NOT change. So as we study, we need to “wrestle” with the scriptures. We need to probe and ask questions. As we do, we get to know the Creator, the Author of Life, the God of the Universe.

We also must be humble enough to realize that we cannot fully understand God. So, when we study His word we need to have the posture of a learner. Concordances, commentaries, translations, etc, are great tools, but we still may not fully comprehend all that God is and does. So we can offer our opinion, our wisdom, our research, but we always need to acknowledge His greatness, immeasurability, depth, and holiness that is more than our mind can grasp [Is 55:8-9].

Bible Study:

You will need a notebook, pen, and Bible. Choose a book of the Bible (or a few chapters) to study. Determine how many weeks you want to do this study – then divide the book or chapters up. Each individual should do the study alone during the week - take notes. Then discuss as a group.

EX: Ephesians has 6 chapters. One chapter each week for 6 weeks - or - divide each chapter in half to study a half of a chapter each week for 12 weeks.

Structure of the Study:

It is best if you can spread this out throughout the week and really “chew” on it - Let God work through his Word. Pray and ask God: 1) help me understand, 2) what do I need to learn.

- 1) Day 1: Read this week's scripture/passage/chapter straight through twice in one sitting.
- 2) Day 2: Read this week's scripture/passage/chapter straight through in one sitting.
- 3) Day 3-5: Begin to answer the "Five P's". Start with Purpose, Promise, and Primary Verse. It is important to get an idea of the passage and what God is communicating before we jump to ourselves – *our* problems/questions and *our* application.
- 4) *Day 6 – optional: Paraphrase*
- 5) *Day 7 – optional: Is there a verse or two that you can memorize? Write it down on a note card and put it in your car, on your mirror, on your desk this week.*

1) What is the **Purpose** of this passage?

- In your opinion what do you think is God's purpose in this passage? (It is good to have an opinion, but sometimes we might not have an accurate understanding of the purpose God intended.)

2) What are the **Promises** in this passage?

- A promise is God's Truth. It reveals his character. When you read a passage look for truth statements. *For example...Paul's prayer in Eph 3:14-21 there are many promises. God's spirit strengthens us v16, Christ lives in us through faith v17, He is at work within us v20.*

3) What is the **Primary verse** in this passage?

- In your opinion, if you had to pick one verse that stands out or summarizes this passage or is the most important... which one would it be? Why?

4) Are there "**Problems**" that I have with what I am reading? Things I don't understand? Or might not agree with? A better way to say this is "What questions do I have... but "question" doesn't begin with a "P".

- God has a purpose for all of scripture [2 Tim 3:16], He is perfect [Ps 18:30, 2 Sam 22:31], and his Word is perfect and true [Ps 19:7, 119:160]. We just might not always understand. We also might not always find answers to our questions/ problems.
- "Wrestling" with problems/questions with others is one way God can help us understand and grow in maturity [Prov 27:17].

5) What is the **Practical application** of this scripture in my life?

- How can I make this part of my life? What is God asking me to do in light of what I just read? What now? What needs to change? What needs to be added to my life? Removed? What step of obedience do I need to take this week as a result of this passage?

#6 Optional: Paraphrase: Write the passage of scripture in your own language. You can do this verse by verse, idea by idea, paragraph by paragraph, or 3-5 summary sentences.