

Did you know that the Bible gives us instructions on how to read it?

“ 2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. ”

This means every word of the Bible is designed to provide us 4 things: teaching, rebuking, correcting and training. So, reading the Bible becomes a conversation with God in which we discover what each passage means in line with these purposes.

Summarize- (teach) First, discover the basic teaching in the passage. It's not about deep insight, or personal application. Simply, discover the headline, or put the main thought in a nutshell.

Expose- (rebuke) Next, get honest about how this passage evaluates our lives. The Bible challenges thoughts and actions. When it happens you may feel vulnerable and exposed. Don't be defensive, be real. However, the Bible may instead affirm and encourage, if we are already in line with it's teaching.

Change- (correct) This is about doing something specific, making adjustments. In light of God's Word, we discover some things we need to stop and some we need to start. Making these changes will be an uphill climb, but worth every step.

Prepare- (train) This is about seeing the direction God's Word is taking you. The end result of this process is being one step further in spiritual maturity. God has a plan for your life and the Bible is preparing you for something. Discover/dream/pray what it might be.

Let's Get Started...

- 1) Find a quiet place without distraction. Bring a Bible, notebook, something to write with, and expectation!
- 2) Pray and ask God to speak to you from the Bible.
- 3) Read a short passage slowly and silently. Read it again out loud. Don't rush the reading.
- 4) Use your journal to write down responses to the 4 purposes of the Bible. (see below)
- 5) Pray again! (see to the right)

1 SUMMARIZE

(teach) What is the basic teaching of the passage? How can I put this lesson, or these principles in a nutshell? Without going too deep can I summarize it into a thought?



3 CHANGE

(correct) What specific action should I take? Spiritual growth requires change, what kind of correction does this passage indicate I need? What needs to be added to or taken from my life today?



2 EXPOSE

(rebuke) What is this passage pointing out in my life? What am I doing that is not lining up with Scripture? What am I NOT doing that I should be doing?



4 PREPARE

(train) What new direction does this teaching push me toward? For what might this passage be training me? If I accept this teaching and alter my life, what would the results be?



How To Pray...

Jesus gave us a model for prayer in Matthew 6:9-12 when He said,

9 "Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.' 10 'Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.' 11 'Give us this day our daily bread.' 12 'and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.' 13 'And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.'"

Adoration (vs 9) - Tell God how amazing He is and thank Him for everything.

Submission (vs 10) - Agree God is right and your job is to yield to Him.

Provision (vs 11) - Ask God to provide, acknowledging the difference between needs and wants.

Confession (vs 12) - One by one, admit to God where you have fallen short.

Protection (vs 13) - Ask Him for specific direction and protection in your life.