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## Read God's Word

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

# Read God's Word

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Reading God's Word can make a big impact on your life. As was presented in the previous lesson, there are five basic ways for you to benefit from God's Word: hear it, read it, study it, memorize it, and meditate on it. In this lesson, we will consider how *reading* God's Word can make a big impact on your life.

The purpose of reading God's Word is to change your life! The great preacher D. L. Moody said it well: "The Scriptures were not given to increase our knowledge, but to change our lives." With that in mind, it is important to remember that when you are reading the Bible, it's best to read it slowly and thoughtfully.

You should find some way to record your thoughts and be able to record key verses. Reading is more than just "reading" ... you need to think as well! "Reading" is not as intense as "studying," but you still have an intention of gaining something from the text!

"Every scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the person dedicated to God may be capable and equipped for every good work." —2 Timothy 3:16-17

Q. What do you learn about God's Word from these verses?

As you read your Bible, ask yourself questions, and then answer them! Make your reading enjoyable! Go on a "hunt" to find promises God has for you.

This is especially easy if you are using an online resource. You can simply type in a keyword and off you go! Record the references so you can refer back to them later.

Many people find it helpful to keep a journal. You can record what you are reading and learning from the Bible as well as any other insights God gives you about your relationship with Him, how He is working in your life, and what He is doing in and through you. A journal can be a great reminder of God's blessings and strength!

If this is your first adventure in reading the Bible, it can be easier to start in the New Testament, reading at least one of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John). Many teachers recommend starting with John. The book of Acts tells about the actions of the early Christians. Acts is a "must-read" at some point for all Christians. After Acts, you'll find the letters to the first Christian churches, which

give instruction and guidance for daily living. And finally, in the book of Revelation, you will see how Christ is going to end all things in this world and begin ruling as “King of kings and Lord of lords.”

Q. What in the Bible are you currently reading? What are you learning?

One way to read the Bible is to simply open it and read whatever is in front of you. You can definitely gain from this approach, but being a little more systematic will be more beneficial to you in the long run. If you can actually write down some of what you are reading and thinking, that can also be valuable.

Start your reading time with two sheets of paper. On one, write down the things God is teaching you as you read, and on the second, jot down the things that come to mind that you need to take care of in your life. That will allow you to stay focused. There is no pressure. Simply read until God shows you something, then stop and think. As you read, ask yourself some of the following questions, and answer them!

What does this mean?

What caused this situation?

Why did God include this?

Why is this important?

Is this really true?

What difference does knowing this make?

What action should I take?

What am I missing?

What can I claim for myself?

In what ways am I really trusting God?

Talk to the Lord about what you read and make some notes. When you start to read God’s Word on a regular basis, you will find yourself growing in your relationship with your heavenly Father! As you read, talk to God about everything you are thinking. Cultivate the sense of His presence and His love. Worship Him. Thank Him for what you are reading and learning and thinking and experiencing. Give Him your intense attention and concentration Praise Him.

Many people find it helpful to have a daily reading program helps them read steadily through the entire Bible in a systematic way. There are many plans available. Whatever method you choose to use, get started! Each day jot down the chapters that you read and then you will know where to start the next time. Modify the plan to suit your needs.

### **Application**

Q. What goal can you set for reading God's Word?

Q. How do you plan to achieve your goal?