

## Hints for Topical Bible Study

1. **Be systematic.** Prepare a list of subjects that you wish to study, including Christian doctrine, Christian lifestyle, or other topics that interest you.
2. **Be thorough.** Don't just study a few passages on each subject, but try to find as many as possible. Subject indexes and concordances will be helpful, as will cross references.
3. **Be exact.** Find the exact meaning of every passage. To do this, it is important to:
  - a. Note the exact words being used.
  - b. Note the exact meaning of the words used.
  - c. Note the context of the verse, that is, what goes before and what comes after it.
  - d. Check any parallel passages or cross references.
4. **Be permanent.** Arrange the results of your topical study in an orderly way and write them down.

## Help when...

- **Afraid?** Psalm 27; 91; Isaiah 41:5-13; Mark 4:35-41; Hebrews 13:5,6; 1 John 4:13-18
- **Afraid of death?** Psalm 23; Psalm 63:1-8; John 6:35-40; Romans 8:18-39; 1 Corinthians 15:35-57; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; 2 Timothy 1:8-10
- **Angry?** Proverbs 15:1; Matthew 5:21-24; Romans 12:17-21; Ephesians 4:26-32; James 1:19-21
- **Anxious? Worried?** Psalm 25; Psalm 46; Matthew 6:24-34; Matthew 10:26-31; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 1 Peter 5:7
- **Controlling your tongue?** Psalm 12; Psalm 19:14; James 3:1-12
- **Deciding something important?** 1 Kings 3; Psalm 139; Daniel 2:14-23; Colossians 3:12-17
- **Defeated?** Romans 8:31-39
- **Depressed?** Ps 16; 43; 130; Isaiah 61:1-4; Jeremiah 15:10-21; Lamentations 3:55-57; John 3:14-17; Ephesians 3:14-21
- **Disappointed? Let down?** Psalm 55; Psalm 62:1-8; Jeremiah 20:7-18
- **Discouraged?** Psalm 34; Psalm 42:6-11; Isaiah 12:1-6; Romans 15:13; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Philippians 4:10-13; Colossians 1:9-14; Hebrews 6:9-12
- **Doubting your faith in God?** Psalm 8; 146; Proverbs 30:5; Matthew 7:7-12; Luke 17:5,6; John 20:24-31; Romans 4:13-25; Hebrews 11; 1 John 5:13-15
- **Encountering a cult?** Matthew 7:15-20; 2 Peter 2; 1 John 4:1-6; Jude
- **Facing a disaster?** Genesis 8:1-9:27; Job 36:22-37:13; Psalm 29; 36:6-9; 124; Jeremiah 31:35-37; Romans 8:31-39; 1 Peter 1:3-12
- **Facing peer pressure?** Proverbs 1:7-19; Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 6:1-5; Ephesians 5:1-20
- **Friends fail?** Psalm 41:9-13; Luke 17:3,4; 2 Timothy 4:16-18
- **Being a friend?** Proverbs 17:17; Luke 10:25-37; John 15:11-17; Romans 16:1-2
- **Financial difficulties?** Proverbs 11:7; Ecclesiastes 5:10-20; Matthew 6:24-34; Luke 12:13-21; 1 Timothy 6:6-10
- **Frustrated?** Job 21:1-16; Job 24:1-17; Job 36:1-26; Matthew 7:13,14
- **Grieving?** Job 19:25-27; John 11:25-27; John 14:1-7; Romans 8:31-39; Romans 14:7-9; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- **Impatient?** Psalm 13; Psalm 37:1-7; Psalm 40:1-5; Ecclesiastes 3:1-15; Lamentations 3:25-33; Hebrews 6:13-20; James 5:7-11
- **Insecure? Lacking confidence?** Deuteronomy 31:1-8; Psalm 73:21-26; Psalm 108; Pph. 4:10-20; 1 John 3:19-24
- **Jealous?** Psalm 49; Proverbs 23:17; James 3:13-18
- **Leading others?** Isaiah 11:1-9; Isaiah 32:1-8; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 2 Timothy 2:14-26; Titus 1:5-9
- **Lonely?** Psalm 22; 42; John 14:15-31a; Hebrews 13:5-6
- **Losing your property and possessions?** Job 1:13-22; Job 42:7-17; Isaiah 41:17-20; Romans 8:18-39

- **Managing your time?** Proverbs 12:11; Proverbs 28:19; Mark 13:32-37; Luke 21:34-36; 1 Timothy 4:11-16; Titus 3:8-14
- **Needing peace?** John 14:1-4; John 16:33; Romans 5:1-5; Philippians 4:6-7
- **Needing protection?** Psalm 27:1-6; Psalm 91; Philippians 4:19
- **Needing rules for living?** Romans 12
- **Overwhelmed? Experiencing stress?** Isaiah 55:1-9; Matthew 11:25-30; John 4:1-30; 2 Corinthians 6:3-10; Revelation 22:17
- **Prayerful?** Psalm 4; Psalm 42; Luke 11:1-13; John 17; 1 John 5:14-15
- **Procrastinating?** Matthew 22:1-14; Matthew 25:1-13; 2 Corinthians 6:1-2
- **Rejected?** Psalm 38; Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 4:16-30; John 15:18-16:4; Ephesians 1:3-14; 1 Peter 2:1-10
- **Seeking forgiveness?** Psalm 32:1-5; Psalm 51; Proverbs 28:13; Joel 2:12-17; Matthew 6:14-15; Luke 15; Hebrews 4:14-16; 1 John 1:5-10
- **Seeking God's help?** Psalm 5; 57; 86; 119:169-176; 121; Psalm 130; Matthew 7:7-12
- **Seeking salvation?** John 3:1-21; Romans 1:16-17; Romans 3:21-31; Romans 5:1-11; Romans 10:5-13; Ephesians 1:3-14; Ephesians 2:1-10
- **Sick or in pain?** Psalm 38; Matthew 26:39; Mark 1:29-34; Romans 5:3-5; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10; 1 Peter 4:12-13
- **Suffering or persecuted?** Psalm 119:153-160; Matthew 5:3-12; Romans 8:18-30; 2 Corinthians 4:1-15; Hebrews 12:1-11
- **Tempted?** Psalm 19:12-14; Psalm 141; Luke 4:1-13; 1 Corinthians 10:12-14; Hebrews 2:11-18; Hebrews 4:14-16; James 1:12-18
- **Tempted by sex?** 2 Samuel 11:1-12:25; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; Galatians 5:16-26
- **Thankful?** Psalm 100; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; Hebrews 13:15
- **Tired? Weary?** Psalm 3:5,6; Psalm 4:4-8; Isaiah 35:1-10; Matthew 11:25-30; 2 Thessalonians 3:16; Hebrews 4:1-11
- **Feeling useless? Inferior?** Isaiah 6:1-8; Jeremiah 1:4-10; Galatians 1:11-24; Ephesians 4:1-6; 1 Peter 2:4-10
- **Vengeful?** Matthew 5:38-42; Romans 12:17-21

## Hints for Chapters Bible Study

1. Choose a Bible book and select the chapters you wish to study.
2. Read background material about the book: its purpose, themes.
3. Make an outline of its contents and structure. Read the chapter several times.
4. Note important differences between Bible translations.
5. Note carefully the context of the chapter.
6. Divide the chapter into natural divisions, and name them.
7. Note the facts of the chapter in their proper order.
8. What is God doing or revealing about Himself?
9. Which people are mentioned, and what you learn about each?
10. Look for key themes, such as the covenant, the antithesis between world & church, God's sovereignty, the line to Christ.
11. What are the main lessons of the chapter?
12. What is the central truth of the chapter?
13. What is a key verse in the chapter?
14. Note the best verse in the chapter, which struck you the most.
15. Note any subjects, words or phrases for further study.
16. Name the chapter.
17. What new truth you have learned from the chapter?
18. Apply the chapter to your life.
19. What have you resolved to do as a result of studying it?

# Reading the Bible

## A Practical Guide

## The Importance of Bible Reading

*"This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success." Joshua 1:8*

*"Oh, how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day." Psalm 119:97*

*"Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105*

*"Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" Luke 11:28*

*"For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." Romans 15:4*

*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Colossians 3:16*

*"All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17*

*"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword." Hebrews 4:2*

## Hints for Effective Bible Reading

1. **Be motivated.** Remind yourself of the value of reading God's Word by reading what the Bible itself says about the importance of Bible reading (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
2. **Create time.** Read the Bible at regular times every day. Be awake - early mornings are better than late nights (Ps 119:148).
3. **Develop a plan.** Bible study is most effective when you choose a method of Bible study and follow a scheme. Study the Bible chronologically, topically or by chapters. Decide what topic you will study or chapters you will read, and organize a systematic approach to your Bible reading.
4. **Persevere.** Stick to your plan. Don't give up if you miss a day.
5. **Be realistic.** Set reasonable goals for yourself that you can achieve. Don't expect to master the Bible in a day, month or year. Expect often to be puzzled by it (2 Peter 3:16).
6. **Pray.** Ask God to help you understand His Word (Ps 119:18).
7. **Don't just read, but study.** This may mean re-reading verses. Keep asking yourself: "Why? What does this verse mean? What does it mean for me? Is that all it means?" (Ps 119:15).
8. **Focus on Christ.** Remember that Christ is the center of Scripture, and that all of Scripture points to Him (Luke 24:27).
9. **Focus on God.** Ask "What is God revealing about Himself?"
10. **Apply.** Meditate on the Word, and apply it to your life. Don't put your Bible away without having asked yourself what you have learned from what you have read (Romans 15:4).
11. **Be permanent.** Some people find it helpful to record what they have learned in a notebook. Mark key verses and thoughts in your Bible. This will help you to refer back to them later.
12. **Remember.** Try to carry the thought you have learned with you throughout your day. Memorize key verses (Ps 119:11).

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**'Trinity' Canadian Reformed Church**  
Worshiping at 32 Unity Road, Caledonia, ON  
(10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.)

## Hints for Applying the Bible

As you meditate on a passage of Scripture, ask: Is there...

- Any *example* for me to follow?
- Any *command* for me to obey?
- Any *error* for me to avoid?
- Any *sin* for me to forsake?
- Any *promise* for me to claim?
- Any *blessing* I can enjoy?
- Any *failure* from which I can learn?
- Any *new thought* about God Himself?
- Any *truth* that has greatly affected me?

## Methods of Bible Study

### 1. Chronological Study

Read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. For more variety, you can alternate between the sections of the Old Testament and the New Testament. If you are not familiar with the Bible, prevent yourself getting lost in detail by just reading the important passages listed in the outline below. For example, begin with the section on "The beginning", then read the section on "Christ's ministry", then "The patriarchs", and so on.

### 2. Topical Study

Take up various subjects treated in the Bible, one by one. Go through the Bible and find what it has to say on these subjects, using a concordance or subject index. Suggested topics are listed on the outline below.

### 3. Chapters Study

Work your way systematically through a single Bible book or part of a book, studying the chapters in their order. Suggestions include:

*Old Testament:* Genesis, Judges, Ruth, 1 Kings, Psalms, Micah.

*New Testament:* John, Acts, Ephesians, James, 1 Peter, 1 John

## Outline for Chronological Bible Study

### The Old Testament

#### A. THE BEGINNING

- Creation **Genesis 1-2**
- The fall into sin **Genesis 3**
- Cain and Abel **Genesis 4**
- Noah and the flood **Genesis 6-9**
- The tower of Babel **Genesis 11: 1-9**

#### B. THE PATRIARCHS

- The call of Abraham **Genesis 12:1-9**
- God's covenant with Abram **Gen. 15&17**
- Sodom and Gomorrah **Genesis 18-19**
- The birth of Isaac **Genesis 21: 1-8**
- Abraham sacrifices Isaac **Gen. 22:1-19**
- Isaac and Rebecca **Genesis 24**
- Jacob and Esau **Genesis 25:19-34 & 27**
- Jacob marries Rachel and Leah **Genesis 28:10-22 & 29:1-30**
- Jacob wrestles with an angel **Gen. 32:22-32**
- Joseph and his brothers **Genesis 37**
- Joseph in Egypt **Genesis 41-45**
- The suffering of Job **Job 1-3; 38-39; 42**

#### C. THE EXODUS FROM EGYPT

- Israel and Moses in Egypt **Exodus 1-3**
- The 10 plagues **Exodus 7-11**
- The exodus **Exodus 12**
- The crossing of the Red Sea **Ex. 13-14**
- Manna and quail **Exodus 16**
- Water from the rock **Exodus 17:1-7**
- The 10 commandments **Ex 19:1-20:21**
- The day of atonement **Leviticus 16**
- Rewards & punishments **Leviticus 26**
- The rebellion **Numbers 13-14**
- Israel in the wilderness **Numbers 20-21**
- Israel opposed by Balaam **Num. 22-24**
- Driving out the nations **Deuteronomy 7**
- Blessings and curses **Deut. 27-28**

- Death of Moses **Deuteronomy 34**

#### D. ISRAEL IN CANAAN

- Rahab and the spies **Joshua 2**
- Crossing the Jordan **Joshua 3-4**
- The battle of Jericho **Joshua 6**
- Achan's sin **Joshua 7**
- Joshua's long day **Joshua 10:1-15**
- The pattern of Judges **Judges 2**
- Deborah and Barak **Judges 4**
- Gideon the judge **Judges 6-7**
- Samson the judge **Judges 13-16**
- The Moabitess Ruth **Ruth 1-4**
- The prophet Samuel **1 Samuel 1-3**
- King Saul **1 Samuel 8-10**

#### E. KING DAVID

- David **1 Samuel 15-19**
- Saul and the witch **1 Samuel 28**
- Saul's death **1 Samuel 31**
- David becomes king **2 Samuel 2:1-7**
- God's promise for David's house **2 Samuel 7**
- David and Bathsheba **2 Samuel 11-12**
- David and his son Absalom **2 Samuel 15 & 18**
- David's psalm of thanks **2 Samuel 22**
- The wicked and the righteous **Psalms 1**
- God's glory & man's dominion **Psalms 8**
- The works and words of God **Psalms 19**
- The shepherd psalm **Psalms 23**
- Trust in the Lord **Psalms 27**
- Seek after the Lord **Psalms 42**
- Confession and forgiveness **Psalms 51**
- God's compassion **Psalms 103**
- Praise the Lord **Psalms 148 & 150**

#### F. KING SOLOMON

- Solomon's wisdom **1 Kings 3**
- Solomon's temple **1 Kings 6-7**
- The queen of Sheba **1 Kings 10**
- Benefits of wisdom **Proverbs 3**
- Wisdom and her rewards **Proverbs 8**
- The gentle answer **Proverbs 15**
- The noble wife **Proverbs 31:10-31**
- Remember your creator **Eccles. 11:6-12:14**
- Song of love **Song of Songs 4**
- Solomon's sin and death **1 Kings 11**

#### G. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

- The divided kingdom **1 Kings 12**
- The prophet Elijah **1 Kings 18:16-46**
- The prophet Elisha **2 Kings 2 & 4-6**
- The prophet Jonah **Jonah 1-4**
- The prophet Hosea **Hosea 1-3**
- The fall of Israel **2 Kings 17**
- False religion worthless **Jeremiah 7**
- Hezekiah's illness **2 Kings 20**

#### H. THE EXILE

- The fall of Jerusalem **2 Kings 25**
- New mercies every day **Lamentations 3:1-33**
- Daniel **Daniel 1-6**
- Esther **Esther 1-10**
- Shepherds and sheep **Ezekiel 34**
- The dry bones **Ezekiel 37**

#### I. RETURN FROM EXILE

- Return under Cyrus **Ezra 1**
- The temple rebuilt **Ezra 6**
- Sin of intermarriage **Ezra 9-10:18**
- The walls rebuilt **Nehemiah 2 & 6**
- Final reforms **Nehemiah 13**

#### J. PROPHECIES ABOUT CHRIST

- To us a son is born **Isaiah 9:1-7**
- The branch from Jesse **Isaiah 11**
- Comfort for God's people **Isaiah 40**
- The suffering servant **Isaiah 52:13-53:12**
- Invitation to the thirsty **Isaiah 55**
- The new covenant **Jeremiah 31:23-34**

## The New Testament

#### A. CHRIST'S PREPARATION

- John the Baptist **Luke 1:-66**
- The birth of Christ **Luke 2:1-20**
- Flight to Egypt **Matthew 2:13-23**
- Jesus named **Luke 2:21-40**
- The young Jesus **Luke 2:41-52**
- Jesus baptized **Matthew 3**
- Jesus tempted **Matthew 4:1-17**
- The 12 disciples **Matt. 4:18-25 & 10**
- The transfiguration **Matthew 17:1-13**

#### B. CHRIST'S TEACHING AND PARABLES

- The sermon on the mount **Matthew 5-7**
- The sower **Matthew 13:1-23**
- The kingdom of heaven **Matt. 13:24-52**
- The unforgiving servant **Matt. 18:23-35**
- The workers in the vineyard **Matt. 20:1-16**
- The wedding feast **Matthew 22:1-14**
- The great commandment **Matthew 22:37-39**
- The 10 virgins **Matthew 25:1-13**
- The sheep and goats **Matt. 25:31-46**
- The good Samaritan **Luke 10:25-37**
- The lost sheep, coin & son **Lk 15:1-32**
- The good shepherd **John 10:1-21**
- The high-priestly prayer **John 17**

#### C. CHRIST'S MIRACLES

- Water into wine **John 2:1-22**
- Calming of a storm **Matthew 8:23-27**
- Casting out demons **Matthew 8:28-34 & 17:14-21**
- Healing the blind **Matthew 9:27-31**
- Healing paralyzed **Matthew 12:1-14**
- Feeding thousands **Matthew 14:13-21 & 15:29-39**
- Walking on water **Matthew 14:22-36**
- Raising the dead **John 11:1-44**

#### D. CHRIST'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION

- Jesus' entry into Jerusalem **Matthew 21:1-17**
- The last supper **Matthew 26:17-35**
- Gethsemane **Matthew 26:36-46**
- Arrest, trial and crucifixion **Matt. 26:47-27:66**
- Resurrection **Matthew 28:1-20**
- The ascension **Acts 1:1-12**

#### E. THE EARLY CHURCH

- The coming of the Spirit **Acts 2**
- Ananias and Sapphira **Acts 5:1-11**
- Death of Stephen **Acts 6-7**
- Philip and the Ethiopian **Acts 8:26-39**
- Conversion of Paul **Acts 9:1-31**
- Peter and Cornelius **Acts 10**
- Peter in prison **Acts 12:1-19**
- Paul in Philippi **Acts 16:11-40**
- Paul's shipwreck **Acts 27-28**

#### F. THE LETTERS

- Righteousness in Christ **Romans 3:9-31**
- Security in the Spirit **Romans 8**
- Life of service **Romans 12**
- The church **1 Corinthians 12**
- Love **1 Corinthians 13**
- The resurrection **1 Corinthians 15**
- At home with Christ **2 Corinthians 5**
- Live by the Spirit **Galatians 5:16-25**
- Election **Ephesians 1**
- Live as children of light **Ephesians 4:17-5:21**
- The armor of God **Ephesians 6:10-20**
- Rejoicing always **Philippians 4:4-20**
- Holy living **Colossians 3**
- Faith **Hebrews 11**
- Faith and works **James 2:14-26**
- The tongue **James 3:1-12**
- Suffering **1 Peter 3:8-17 & 4:12-19**
- Christ's return **2 Peter 3**
- Walking in light and love **1 John 1-5**
- Practice and protect the truth **2 John 1**
- Christ's return and judgment **Rev. 19-22**