

HOW TO GET MORE OUT OF YOUR BIBLE READING

February 9, 2008

Pray

Remember that this is a spiritual book and your understanding is not just from your brain. You must depend on the Spirit to help you to understand. Do you recognize your dependence on God to even understand His Word? Remember also that this is not just something to do before you read, but rather something necessary for your spiritual growth. *Psalm 119:18, Ephesians 1:15-23, 3:14-19*

Read Carefully

- ❑ Read more slowly—the faster you read the more likely that your reading is going to be superficial (in most cases). Be careful that you are not equating volume with how much you are growing.
- ❑ Read and pay attention—most of us get distracted while we are reading. Make sure you stay focused. One way to do this is by taking notes while you read.
- ❑ Read to get the big picture. This may mean reading the whole book at one time to make sure the little things you are emphasizing are actually the point of the author. Can you summarize the main point?
- ❑ Read in another translation to get different words that point in the same direction.
- ❑ Read through the chapter headings. Don't let the divisions in your Bible distract you from the context. Check to see if those headings are right too.

Meditation

- ❑ Meditate as you read—this is harder for some people than it is for others. The way you will be able to see things in the text is to reflect more deeply on what you are reading. There are several things that you can do to help this happen.
 1. Ask questions of the text. There are several places that you can find questions already prepared, but you must modify them to fit your particular text.
 2. Emphasize different words while you read the text.
- ❑ Meditate after you read also. We should be getting something in our reading that we can “take with us” throughout the day. If you have spent time thinking on a verse or section, you should be able to think about it the rest of the day. If you need help, write something down and plan certain times when you will look at what you have written. Memorizing Scripture also helps with this.

Application

Always read a text with the plan of applying whatever you must from that text. This could be changing a thought process that you have held, it could be a different understanding of the God you love, it could be specific actions you must take or any number of other things. Regardless, you must read it with the plan of responding. Do you respond to the things that you already know? If you are not, why would you expect God to give you more? *Psalm 119:97-104*

Understanding/Remembering

Can you summarize what you have read? Write down a few points on a slip of paper and put it in your pocket so you can think about it throughout the day.

Teach

Make sure you talk about or teach what you are learning to others. This will make it stick with you more.

A Couple of Sample Texts

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

Exodus 21:20-25