

JESUS

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IDENTITY

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MISSION

From Bible Reading to Bible Study

**“All Scripture is breathed out by
God and profitable for teaching, for
reproof, for correction, and for
training in righteousness,”**

2 Timothy 3:16



Bethlehem Assembly of God

Why This Is Important:

“God’s Word *has* life, *gives* life, and *nourishes* life. We should have appetites for the Word just like hungry newborns! We should want the *pure* Word... because this alone can help us grow. When I was a child, I did not like to drink milk, so my mother used to add various syrups and powders to make my milk tastier. None of them really ever worked. It is sad when Christians have no appetite for God’s Word but must be “fed” religious entertainment instead. As we grow, we discover that the Word is milk for babes, but also strong meat for the mature (1 Cor. 3:1–4; Heb. 5:11–14). It is also bread (Matt. 4:4) and honey (Ps. 119:103).” – Warren Weirsbe

Often, we don’t have an appetite for God’s word because we lack the desire to read, the discipline to keep reading, or the tools to understand what we’ve read. Other times we eat the wrong things that turn our attitudes away from God and His Word.

Keep in mind that you’re reading a grand story with timeless principles. This means when you’re reading Scripture, you’re not just gaining information but you’re in a place to meet the person of Jesus on every page.

We’ve put together this 10-step resource for you to help you develop a love for God’s Word, to deepen your relationship with Him, to see Christ in all of Scripture, to become a student of the word and to grow. This resource is an adaptation of ideas and practices found in the [Logos Bible Study](#) software put together for your benefit.

Here are some best practices to get the most out of this resource:

1. *Pray and praise God before starting your studying time.* Even if it’s a short prayer, starting with gratitude is always great. We’re blessed to have this kind of accessibility to scripture and the ability to read and study God’s word. God has preserved His Word throughout history and faithful Christians gave their lives to protect the Scriptures, let’s be grateful.
2. *Devote actual time for study.* You won’t get through all these steps in one sitting and you shouldn’t. Don’t rush through the studying, being a student of scripture takes time. Eventually it’ll get easier and quicker as you get used to it but take your time developing these skills. We recommend at least a few weeks of study for any topic or passage.
3. *Context is vital.* Remember that every verse is meant to be understood in the context of its passage. Every passage is meant to be understood in its chapter,

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every *chapter* to its *book*, and every *book* fits into the grand narrative of the Bible, ultimately pointing to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

1. Read Your Passage

1. Read your passage several times in your preferred Bible version. (Don't have one? Click [here](#) for our recommendation!)
2. Mark any words or ideas that draw your attention.
3. You might want to highlight things that you want to look up later or key phrases or sentences that seem important for the main idea of the passage.
4. *Desired Outcomes:*
 1. You'll become more familiar with the passage and its ideas.
 2. You'll begin developing your own questions and observations.
5. *How to get started:*
 1. What questions or insights do you have about this passage?
 2. What confuses, surprises, or challenges you?
 3. Remember your questions and keep them in mind as you explore further.

2. Read Your Passage in Other Translations

1. This can help you improve your understanding of the passage.
2. Differences in translations may indicate places where the interpretation of the text is debated or where there may be different approaches to translations.
3. *Desired Outcomes:*
 1. You may see possible differences by using other translations.
 2. You may notice specific words or phrases that translations tend to handle differently.
 - A. Example: 1 Corinthians 1:27

"Instead, God has chosen what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen what is weak in the world to shame the strong." - CSB

"But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;" – ESV

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4. *How to get started: Click [Here](#) to try it yourself!*
 1. What differences do you see in your passage between translations?
Are any words or phrases different?
 2. How do the differences affect your understanding of the passage?
 3. Are the different translations saying the same thing in different words or do they reflect different understandings of the passage?
 4. Recommended Bible Translations: [ESV](#), [CSB](#), [NKJV](#), [NASB](#)

3. Identify People & Places in Your Passage

1. Most passages include references to people, places, or important time periods. What makes them important is for you to explore.
2. We want to identify the people mentioned and explore the roles they play.
3. You can understand the passage better if you make note of all the individuals (or groups) involved.
4. *Desired Outcomes:*
 1. You will determine the key people, places, or time periods in your passage.
 2. You will gain background knowledge about the groups and individuals mentioned in the passage.
5. *How to get started:*
 1. Who are the main players in your passage?
 2. What makes them important to the passage?
 3. How are these players similar to or different from the person of Jesus?
 4. What is the time period of your passage?
 5. What locations are being referenced?

4. Identify Important Cross-References

1. Examine relationships between your passage and other passages in the Bible.
2. "Scripture interpreting scripture" has been a guiding principle of Bible interpretations for centuries. The idea is that the meaning of an unclear passage can be made clear by another passage where the meaning is more straightforward.

3. *Desired outcome*
 1. You will better understand the relationship between your passage and other passages in the Bible.
4. *How to get started: (hint: Some online Bible resources will show you cross-references when you hover over the links in the verse; [Like here!](#))*
 1. Why is this cross reference important to the passage you're studying?
 2. Which cross-references are most important for your passage?
 3. What additional insight do the cross-references provide for your understanding of your passage?
 4. Write your own cross-references when a passage you're reading reminds you of a passage you've read before.

5. Summarize Your Passage

1. Review what you have studied and summarize it.
2. Writing a brief summary or an outline of your passage and what you've learned about it will strengthen your understanding of the passage. You'll have an easier time remembering the main points of your study.
3. *Desired outcome*
 1. Summarizing what you have learned will help seal your understanding of the passage.
4. *How to get started:*
 1. In a brief paragraph or bullet format, summarize the passage and the main points you have learned.
 2. Try to be as short and concise as possible.
 3. Think of how you would explain the passage to a child.

6. Look At Your Passage Christocentrically

1. "Christocentric" is a big word that simply means Christ at the center.
2. Now that you know what your passage is saying, think of how that passage fits in the grander story of Scripture.
3. The whole Bible is about Jesus. Every story, theme and idea whisper His name. He is the main hero of the story, not us.

4. It's important that we look at every passage we study in light of Jesus and how his life and death make it possible for us to live changed lives. This doesn't mean every story is an analogy of Jesus or that every verse is about Jesus directly but everything in Scripture does point to Him.
5. *Desired Outcome:*
 1. You will have a deeper and more meaningful appreciation for Jesus.
 2. You will meet him on the pages of Scripture making the Bible come alive to you.
 3. You will see all the Bible through the lens of Jesus.
 4. You will avoid making the Bible passage about yourself.
6. *How to get started:*
 1. Did this passage take place before, during or after the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus?
 2. Is my Bible study helping me understand the person and work of Jesus better?
 3. How does Jesus' life help me to apply the principles taught in this passage?
 4. Pray that the Holy Spirit would show you connections to Christ and give you the power to live more like Him.

7. Read Commentaries

1. Look at Bible commentaries to see how others have interpreted your passage.
2. Using commentaries will help you consider the contributions of others to give you a better understanding of your passage.
3. Commentaries help serve as parameters to make sure your study is aligned with how others have studied the same passage. These parameters serve as guard rails to make sure we don't run off course in our Bible study.
4. *How to get started:*
 1. Which parts of your passage do most commentators spend time discussing?
 2. Is there debate on particular parts of your passage?
 3. Have your commentaries modified your understanding of the passage? In what ways?
 4. Some recommended commentaries:
 - [*The Gospel Transformation Bible*](#), [*ESV Study Bible*](#), [*The Bible Exposition Commentary*](#), [*Blue Letter Bible*](#)

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8. Determine Your Passage's Important Principles

1. An important part of Bible study is determining what timeless principles are taught in a passage so that you can apply those principles to your life today.
2. The meaning of a passage will be applied differently at different times and places, but the underlying truths of Scripture will be applicable in some way at all times and places.
3. Before we can apply a passage, we must understand what principles it teaches.
4. *Desired outcome*
 1. You will consider the deeper meaning of your passage
 2. You will identify the theological principles taught by your passage.
5. *How to get started:*
 1. What theological principles are being communicated in your passage?
 2. Which principles are the most important?
 3. How might these principles be applied today?

9. Apply The Passage's Principles to Yourself

1. Consider how to apply the principles that you identified to your own life.
2. *Desired outcome:*
 1. You will evaluate how the passage has inspired or challenged you.
 2. You will consider how to apply the passage in day to day living.
3. *How to get started:*
 1. How has this passage challenged or moved you?
 2. What issues (personally or corporately) are involved with this passage?
 3. What spiritual struggles are addressed in this passage? (Either directly or indirectly)
 4. What response might /do you think the passage should inspire in others if you shared this passage and your insights with them?

10. Share The Insights from Your Bible Study

1. What have you learned that you should share with others?

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2. Your insight could be valuable to others and sharing about it may encourage or enlighten your friends.
3. *Desired outcome*
 1. Sharing your insights with others can help to deepen and reinforce your own understanding.
 2. Others may benefit from your study.
4. *How to get started:*
 1. Tell a friend that you've been studying a particular passage of the Bible and ask if they would be interested in hearing what you've learned.
 2. Start with your summary, allow them to ask questions, and invite them to study scripture with you!



SUNDAYS • 6:30PM

The Café • 12 E. Fairview Ave.

nharish@bethlehemag.org



@BethlehemYoungAdults

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