

## A Pathway For Hearing And Knowing God

*The purpose of reading the Biblical Scriptures is to listen to God speak, to see His glory revealed, to learn from Him, and to let the power of His Spirit take His truth and transform us into the persons He created us to be.*

*Below is a simple guide for where to start. Bible study is not a one size fits all. One method may help you focus and grow while another method may take you deeper. Each step toward God on the pathway is worth it.*

### **Step 1: Prepare**

- Set up a maintainable routine. You are not striving for perfection; you are seeking intimacy with God. No one will have a flawless streak of 365 days. Life happens and things get in the way, but do your best to establish the priority.
- Choose a time where you are at your best: rested and available.
- Create a space where you will be undistracted. Put away and turn off anything that might keep you from being fully present for the time you set apart.

### **Step 2: Pray**

- If you are preoccupied, rushed or have something pressing on your mind, take 3-5 deep breaths. Then in your own words, invite your own soul and God's presence into the time you have available that day. Time with God is not meant to be one sided. It's a two-way conversation.
- Reflect on the privilege we have to be with Him and then with a grateful heart, tell God how much you appreciate Him making a way through Jesus for you to have this renewed relationship.

### **Step 3: Read**

- Choose a portion of the Scriptures
- Don't be in a hurry to devour a chapter a day. Some chapters are weightier than others. Patiently read and think through the thoughts of the text.
- It is more important to get what God is saying than to hit a predefined target. You could miss God's voice and what He is saying to you.
- Use a reading plan, if you are unsure where to start.
  - <https://www.navigators.org/resource/bible-reading-plans/>
  - <https://www.ligonier.org/blog/bible-reading-plans/>
  - <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-reading-plan/>
  - <http://www.bibleclassmaterial.com/Catalog/Mark%20Roberts/BibleReadingSchedule.htm>
  - <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/>
- Read the passage through 2 or 3 times slowly.
- Read one of those times out loud, allowing your mind to not only recognize the words but to hear them being spoken.

#### **Step 4: Study Thoughtfully**

- We are asking what the words, sentences and paragraphs mean in the context of the original letter, history or context.
- What does this passage tell me about God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), myself, other people, the world?
- What is taught, commanded, promised, warned or celebrated?
- What examples are we to imitate or avoid?
- How would you restate this text in your own words?
- In one or two sentences, summarize what you have read: What is the central idea of this verse, paragraph, chapter or story?
- Research commentaries, various translations and use Study Bible notes to help you gain insights of language usage and cultural context.

#### **Step 5: Study In Community with Other Believers**

- Online Groups
- Develop-connected community through the You Version app or Right Now Media tools.
- Choose one of the many study plans available.
- Invite others to join you for the purpose of growing closer to God.
- Choose a start date together.
- Meet weekly or chat online to share thoughts, reactions and questions.
- Life Groups or Community Groups.
- Gather at specific times to share with others what God has been saying to you.

#### **Step 6: Apply**

- In what ways might this truth relate to actual situations in your daily life?
- Pick just one specific thing you will do (or not do) today because of what you have read.
- Ask God for His presence and help and then experience it!

#### **Helpful Resources:**

- **Online Resources:**

- [www.Biblegateway.com](http://www.Biblegateway.com)
- [www.Biblehub.com](http://www.Biblehub.com)
- [www.Biblestudytools.com](http://www.Biblestudytools.com)
- [www.Elijah.com/lexicon.html](http://www.Elijah.com/lexicon.html)
- [www.Blueletterbible.org](http://www.Blueletterbible.org)
- [www.RightNowMedia.com](http://www.RightNowMedia.com)

- **Other Resources:**

- The Bible Reader's Companion by Lawrence O Richards
- NIV Application Commentary series
- The New American Commentary series

- **Bibles for Knd-1st Grade:** Any storybook Bible will do! Kids at this stage should be focusing on learning the stories of the Bible. Help them to become familiar with Bible characters and the way Scripture is one big story. Some of my favorite storybook Bibles are:
  - [The Jesus Storybook Bible](#)
  - [The Big Picture Bible Storybook](#)
  - [I Will Follow Jesus](#)
  
- **Bibles for 2nd-4th Grade:** 2nd-4th graders are more comfortable reading on their own. They can begin reading Scripture independently from an age-appropriate Bible. They can focus on finding books, chapters, and verses on their own. They can also learn how to answer the question: "how does this apply to me?"
  - [New International Readers Version \(NIRV\)](#). This is at a 3rd grade reading level.
  
  - Once you have the right Bible for your child, use it in conjunction with these resources:
    - The YouVersion app for phones and tablets. (there are studies made specifically for kids) You can even have the app read aloud to you in any translation!
    - RightNow Media! RightNow Media has tons of kids Bible education videos. There is no right or wrong place to start. Find what looks interesting and go from there.
  
- **Devotionals For Kids:**
  - [Indescribable](#) by Louie Giglio
  - [I Am: 40 Reasons to Trust God](#) by Diane M. Stortz
  - [52 Week Bible Story Devotional](#) by The Gospel Project