

HOW TO CONNECT DAILY WITH GOD THROUGH HIS WORD

Getting Started: Pick a book of the Bible to Study - the Gospel of Mark, Ephesians, 1 Timothy, James, and 1 Peter are great places to start. Any modern translation of the Bible is good: ESV, NET, NIV, CSB, NASB, etc. (Avoid King James and New King James as well as paraphrases like the Living Bible or the Message).

Each time you begin a new book of the Bible, use a study Bible (the ESV Study Bible is excellent) or online tools such as BibleWebApp, Bible Gateway, or Blue Letter Bible to understand context of the book (Author, Audience, Date, Occasion/Purpose, etc.). Write down in a journal some of these key facts. Start from the beginning of the book and pick a manageable section that you can study in one sitting (usually a paragraph or two) and continue daily until you study the entire book. You may need to fight the urge to keep reading. Generally, it is advised to stick to one paragraph/section. More may be too much.

Pray: Psalm 139:23-24 (search my heart, oh God), 1 John 1:9 (confess sin), and ask God for grace to give you understanding and wisdom as you seek the truth from His Word.

Read: Read the section you've selected all the way through twice.

Title: Give the section you've just read a title and write it down with the passage reference in your journal. Try to avoid using the supplied titles in your Bible. If you think that title fits really well, try and paraphrase it in your own words.

Analysis: In your journal, write down your analysis of the section.

- Observe: "*What do I see?*" Who is speaking? To whom are they speaking? What is being said?" (repeated words/phrases/ideas? Where & when? (setting)
- Interpret: "*What does it mean?*" What is the specific teaching instruction to the original audience? What is the meaning of the story? What does it say about God? Try to avoid using study Bible notes or online tools until you've done your own analysis. Think of them more as a safety net if you are confused.

Theme: The big picture. Write out the main idea from the section.

Application: "*What does this mean for me?*" How do I apply this to my life? Look for universal principles taught in the text. Use the following acrostic to help you. Not all of these many appear in a single section, but often they will. Remember this is simply a tool for application, not the application itself.

S-in to Avoid

P-romise to claim

E-xample to imitate

C-ommand to obey

K-nowledge of God to share