

The ABCs of Bible Study

Text: 2nd Tim 4:1-4:

This morning, as we leave the old year and approach 2010 I want us to look at the ABC's of how to study the bible. (Read Text).

A=ATTITUDE

If you have a strong desire to find out what's right and to live as you should before God, that attitude will serve you well as you read and study the Bible. This desire becomes the motive that keeps you "on task," as you seek to discover the right way of the Lord. "Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with the whole heart," ([Ps 119:2](#); [James 1:21](#)).

B=BALANCE. Important that we have balance in our study.

You should give attention to all the Word of God. There may be certain topics you develop a special interest in, and some passages may be especially relevant to current needs. But you need to have a good, overall knowledge of all the Word of God. ([Acts 20:7](#))

C=COMMANDMENTS

In your study, you will come across commandments; imperative statements which require action, and originate in divine wisdom. Carefully look into the context, and discover who the commandment is directed to. If the commandment applies to you, decide right then that you will obey ([Ps 119:4](#); [Rev. 22:14](#)). Remember context, context, context.

D=DILIGENCE

Diligence means great effort and care. If you read the Bible carefully, and study the context, define words and consult references ... that requires effort, but pays great dividends. Pray as David did: "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous thing from Your law," ([Ps 119:18](#)).

E=EXAMPLES

All through the Scriptures, there are examples. We read of people who did good things, and afford us excellent illustrations of what's right. There are also stories of good people who took wrong turns, and sinned against God. In other words, there are good examples and bad examples. We should study these, and let them instruct us ([1 Cor 10:6](#); [Phil 4:9](#)).

FAITH

Effective Bible study requires belief in God, trust in Jesus, and full confidence in the truth of God's Word. Mere intellectual or academic interests will never yield the fruit that is generated by faith ([Rom 10:17](#); [Heb 11:6](#)).

GOD

One vital accomplishment of Bible study is to learn about God. There is really no other way to find out who God is, what He is like, how He reacts, and what He has promised, except in the Scriptures ([Rom 11:22](#)).

HELP

Don't ever hesitate to ask for help. Have you ever been in a preacher's office? The walls are lined with hundreds of books, and their purpose is to help the preacher understand the Bible.

Dictionary books, concordances, commentaries and reference works simply imply that we may need some help. There is no shame in asking for help ([Acts 8:30,31](#)).

IMPLICATIONS

As you go through the written Word of God, not only will you learn from examples, and find commands that apply to you, there are also implications. Don't call just anything an implication, but when the information in the text leads to a conclusion, accept it and consider it to be part of God's revelation.

JESUS

"...God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..." and this good news is the theme of the Bible. Look for this everywhere! In Old Testament prophetic passages, the psalms of David, the institutions of the Mosaic system, the gospel accounts, Acts, the epistles and the Revelation of John ... Jesus is everywhere. Look for Him, and let every new experience of Bible study bring you closer to Him ([John 3:16](#); [Col 1:18](#)).

KNOWLEDGE

Your object is to acquire a knowledge of God's truth ([Col 1:10](#)).

LOVE for the Truth

Paul spoke of some who would perish, and he said they were deceived "because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved," ([2 Thess. 2:10](#)). Therefore, a love for the truth is an essential quality of a good Bible student.

MATURITY

Growth to maturity in Christ can never be realized, apart from Bible study. As you learn of Christ, and study His will and apply what you learn, you involve yourself in a process that produces maturity ([Col 1:28](#)).

NOURISHMENT

Understand that you cannot have spiritual life without the divine food that sustains that life. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God," ([Matt 4:4](#); [Heb 5:12-14](#); [1 Peter 2:1-3](#)).

OBEDIENCE

Honoring Christ and pleasing God by obeying the Word of God ... let that be your constant object ([Matt 7:24-27](#); [Heb 5:9](#)).

PATIENCE

Do you sometimes think it would be great to sit down with your Bible today, and have complete knowledge by noon tomorrow? That's not reality. Be patient with yourself, keeping studying, and you'll add more to your store of Bible knowledge after every session ([Phil 3:15](#)).

QUESTIONS

Use questions to learn about a text. "Who wrote this ... Who was it written to ... What was the historical circumstance ... Are there are other passages that will help me understand this ... What is there in this passage that I need to apply ... How does this passage help me understand other parts of the Bible?" etc.

REVIEW

Don't ever finish or "get through" with any portion of Scripture. Go back and review. Start over again with key passages, and you may learn something you missed before ([Phil 3:1](#); [2 Peter 3:1](#)).

STUDY

There is a difference between reading and study! When you read, that's your first contact with the information. Next, you should think about that information: "What did it mean to them? What does this mean today? How do I apply this today? How does this passage or teaching relate to other parts of the Bible." When you study, you apply the mind God gave you to the book He gave you ([Eph 5:17](#)).

TRACKING Promises and Prophecy

When you find a promise ([Gen 3:15](#)), or a prophecy ([Isaiah 53](#)) in the Old Testament, follow those passages to their fulfillment.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES.

Especially when you read the stories in the Old Testament, don't just regard those passages as historical narratives. Look for underlying principles that transcend dispensational boundaries ([Rom 15:4](#)).

VERSIONS

Bible book stores shelves are running over with all sorts of different versions and translations of the Bible, some good and helpful; others, twisted and inaccurate. Consulting several English translations can be helpful, but don't get too far away from the standard translations (King James, New King James, American Standard, New American Standard).

WORDS

Don't deceive yourself into thinking that "word studies" and definitions are boring or unnecessary. The fact is, God has chosen to communicate with us through words. We need to know what those words mean. Use a good Bible dictionary, consult references, and respect the Biblical significance of the words you read ([1 Cor 2:13](#)).

X Marks the Spot

Systematic reading all the way through the Bible is a great help to your understanding. Read a portion, mark an "X" in the margin, or put the date, then continue at that place next time.

YOURSELF

We may be tempted, in our Bible reading and study, to immediately think of others how they need this; how others have violated what the passage says. Our first concern must be self-examination ([2 Cor 13:5](#)).

ZEAL

As you read and study and gain knowledge, be sure that knowledge is accompanied by the zeal to teach and practice the truth of the gospel ([Rom 10:1-3](#)).