



Table of Contents:

- Overview
- Impacting Your Environment
- Personal Testimony Development
- Mastering the Gospel Presentation
- Assurance of Salvation
- Relational Evangelism
- Deliberate Disciple-making
- Prayer
- Devotions
- Bible Study
- Memorizing Scripture
- Large Sections
- Scripture Review
- Stewardship

We're on the Web
<http://www.CMFHQ.ORG>

Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/CMFHQ>

Twitter

<http://twitter.com/CMFHQ>

PO Box 1207
Englewood, CO 80150-1207

Phone: (303) 761-1959
Toll Free: (800) 798-7875
Fax: (303) 761-4577
E-mail: ADMIN@CMFHQ.ORG

Discipleship Training Guide

Boots on the Ground — Discipleship • Prayer • Community • Support

Overview

Welcome to the CMF Discipleship Training Guide. CMF is committed to helping fulfill the Great Commission by helping those who serve in the military society minister

to those with whom they serve. The Great American military man or woman is the ideal person to reach other Great Americans in the Armed Forces for Jesus Christ!

This training guide will help you Be Christ's Disciple in the Military and Evangelize and Disciple others.

What you'll find on each page



Biblical Motivation: The key to anything we do is to have good, solid Biblical motivations that are born from God's Word. Every aspect of our training will begin with a Scriptural motivation



Getting Launched: With each aspect of Training, the first challenge is to get launched. We must figure out how to get started and gain some early momentum and experience initial success. A correlation is "primary education" that lays a foundation.



Continuing Further: Now that we've taken off, we want to experience sustained flight by going further in a particular aspect of training.

Continuing the correlation, this is "secondary education" that takes us further and deeper in a particular discipline. This is key to mastering the Training.



Further Study: Many times, as you master a particular aspect of Training, you will want to dig deeper into God's Word to learn more and to truly appropriate the aspect of training. This normally involves a comprehensive time of Bible study and meditation/time of reflection. Think of this as "graduate education."



Suggestion: From time to time, we will make a suggestion in order to make your acquiring of a particular discipline or Training aspect go a little smoother.



Point to Remember: As you negotiate your way through the Training, there are key things we believe are important to remember.



Caution: We try to alert you ahead of time to avoid a common (or uncommon) mistake.



Technical Point: This is good info to know, but on the technical side of things.

Impacting Your Environment

Welcome to the section on Impacting your Environment. This may be the most important topic we study because we either lead others to Christ or away from Christ by our actions.

How about some questions to get us going:

- Are you salt and light in your unit or area of influence?
- Are you an approved worker who is not ashamed of your works?
- Do your friends know you are a Christian by your love?



Biblical Motivation

Salt and Light:

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:13-16 NIV)

Approved Worker:

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15 NIV)

Love One Another:

“This is my command: Love each other.” (John 15:17 NIV)

Jesus used salt and light to tell us how we should live in the world. It is interesting to note that salt is used to

flavor, preserve, and to heal. As salt we can be used for any of these or for all three.

Daniel was a seasoning for the exiles in Babylon. He could have succumbed to the culture, but he chose to be true to his Jehovah God in the middle of a pagan land. In Chapter 1 of Daniel you can read how he chose not to defile himself and was rewarded.

Ezekiel looked for one man to preserve the nation in Ezekiel 22:30. He looked for one man to stand in the gap. By standing in the gap, we can preserve our Christian heritage in a hostile environment.

There are many examples of healing in the Old Testament and the New Testament. We need to be able to heal the emotional as well as physical wounds of those with whom we come into contact.

We will discuss these in more detail later on in the study.

Paul told Timothy that approved workers were not ashamed. Do we do everything as unto the Lord as Colossians 3:17 tells us to do? This may be the most important area of our witness.

Finally, a song tells us that they will know we are Christians by our love. Do people know we are Christians by the way we love one another?



Getting Launched I

Pray, Pray, Pray. Start with prayer. Cover every encounter with your environment with prayer. Put on the armor of God from Ephesians 6 with prayer. Leave your house with prayer. Pray as your work. Pray, Pray, Pray.



Getting Launched II

What is your environment? According to Acts 1:8, we have different mission fields and we must disciple people in our mission field. In an infantry unit, our mission field may be a squad (Jerusalem), a battalion (Judea), the division (Samaria), and the whole garrison (the uttermost parts of the world). If you are on a ship, you can find the same every expanding areas of

influence. Your Jerusalem may be your family, your Judea the neighbors in your housing complex, your Samaria is the housing community, and the uttermost parts of the world can be the post. You are definitely an ambassador for Christ no matter where you go.

You may impact your environment through a fervent prayer life. You may start with the president and work your way down through the chain-of-command as you pray for wisdom, courage, and for the Christians to maintain a walk of faith. CMF has a monthly prayer calendar that allows you to specifically pray for individuals and installations on a daily basis. This prayer covering is so important because the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective (James 5:16).

This prayer life may be individually or in a group. The next item is definitely a group event, but can be done individually if necessary. That is to prayer walk around a specific area. You may want to pray for the teachers, students, and family members before the first day of school as you walk around the school building. You may want to go to the parade field and pray for the incoming commander prior to a change of command. You may want to prayer walk around the chapel prior to a new chaplain coming or right after a major construction effort. These are some examples of where a prayer walk will be effective.

One big area of influence is in the local chapel? Consider asking the chaplain how you may serve. In a smaller setting on a ship or in Korea, the lay leadership carries the program. In a larger chapel, the chaplain will still need lay people to make the program even larger. Consider Sunday School teachers, singing in the choir, usher, men's leaders, women's leaders, helping set up for communion, et al.

Finally, you may start or join a local CMF group and that will be the point where you will pray and plan for specific events. Many plan and then ask God to bless their events. It is so much better when we pray and God lets us know how He is working in our

Impacting Your Environment

area.



Getting Launched III

Your time in local fellowship groups will be important ways to reach out, but everything covered previously is so important. You must be light and salt to the community and develop a relationship for being a Christian who loves in order to really impact the community for Jesus Christ.

Understand that you cannot do it alone. Each one of us needs to rely upon the strength of God and upon a network of prayer partners. Philippians 4:13 is a good reminder that we can do all things through Christ who gives us the strength and John 15:5 reminds us that apart from Christ we can do nothing.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 tells us that two are better than one and that a cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 NIV)

(The third strand is God in the middle of the relationship)

Step 1 – Know what you are to do before you leave the house. This way you will not have to make decisions as to what to do – only to follow what is correct.

The Situation: There are many situations that will try your faith and you need to know beforehand what you will do. I knew of one air man in Korea who was determined to remain faithful to his wife in the States and he resolved not to go to any club while in Korea. His peers knew of that commitment and did not lead him into

temptation.

Psalm 119 is a good psalm for understanding how important it is to follow God's precepts. Psalm 119:11 tells us that Thy Word I have hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee.

Job 31 gives us a lot of practical decisions that we must make: not to look lustfully at a girl (1), not to walk in falsehoods or deceit (5), not to be enticed by a woman (9), not to deny justice (13), not to deny the desires of the poor or the widow (16), not to trust in gold (24), not to rejoice over the misfortunes of an enemy (29), and not to conceal sins (33). There are other lists, but this is a good one to commit to be holy as God is holy.

Step 2 – Have a prayer partner or an accountability partner our both.

The relationship is one of encouraging and confidentiality. The relationship is one that is salt and light in a dark and dreary world. The eventual outcome is the kind of relationship described in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. This person will help you do what you need to do as you stand for Christ because he or she will cover you with prayer and will be available to hear your report. When you are accountable to a person with skin that will help you to impact the world.

Step 3 – Be intentional about living for Christ

Several years ago, the phrase "What Would Jesus Do?" swept through the churches of the United States and made us all think of how Jesus would act before we acted.

Are you willing to pray for those in your spheres of influence?

Are you willing to support your chaplain and his or her programs?

Are you willing to join a local Bible study and support the leader when necessary in leading, in prayer and planning, in outreach, and in all that you are asked/led to do?



Suggestion

How did Jesus live:

True Spirituality: How to Live for Jesus Moment by Moment by

Francis Shaeffer can also give insights.

Step 4 – Constantly pray for the Holy Spirit to give you the discernment that is needed.



Caution

You must live a holy life in times of ease to live a holy life in times of stress. In

Jeremiah 12:5 God answered Jeremiah's complaint with "If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses?" and in 12:6 "If you stumble in the safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?"

This means that we must do what is right in our everyday lives so that when we are stressed, we will be able to make the right decision.



Continuing Further

Topics for study are wide and varied. I would suggest read Psalm 101 to make a commitment to live a holy life. If you like laundry lists, Galatians 5:19-21 tell what are to be avoided and Galatians 5:22-23 give the fruits of the Spirit which are to be followed. Ephesians 5 gives us thoughts on how to live our lives to impact our culture.

The bottom line is that you will either impact your world and culture or the culture will impact you.

The prop blast ceremony was an important rite in my first unit because all officers in airborne infantry units participated in them from the early days of the paratroops. Part of the ceremony was drinking heavy amounts of alcohol and I had to make a decision early on, to participate in the ceremony but with non-alcoholic drinks. This then set the tone for the rest of the time in the unit as I became the designated driver as I participated in the social events of the unit without the drinking and being able to teach Sunday School on Sunday. These kinds of stories are all around us and should be an encouragement when it looks like you cannot walk the Christian walk that you want to walk.

Impacting Your Environment



Remember

We never have to do this in our own strength:

We can walk the Christian walk through Christ who gives us the strength.

Here are a couple of thoughts concerning everyday situations Christians can face and the response will further or hinder the work of the Gospel.

1. When you get too much change back, what do you do?
2. Is the bottom line more important than doing it right? Or in other words can you live with integrity by using the Golden Rule as the standard—regardless of religion, culture, or circumstances.
3. Do you tip your waitress after church or just give a salvation tract?
4. Are you guilty of road rage while having a “Honk if you love Jesus” bumper sticker?
5. Some things are right, but foolish. As a Christian, do you go to an R-rated theater? While it is not evil to go there, what does it say for your witness if some else would see you?

There are many benefits of impacting your culture rather than have your culture impact you.

Besides loving God by following His commandments, there are several benefits of living a Christian life. Josh McDowell's book *Right from Wrong* lists the ways that God provides for us and protects us as we follow His guidelines. For Example:

- Sexual Purity protects us from guilt, unplanned pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual insecurity, and emotional distress. Sexual Purity provides for peace of mind, trust, spiritual rewards, optimum atmosphere for child rearing, and true intimacy.
- Honesty protects us from guilt, shame, a cycle of deceit, and ruined relationships. Honesty provides for a clear conscience, sense of accomplishment, a reputation for integrity,

and trust.

- If we love one another we will be protected from strife, self-centeredness, and spiritual barrenness. This love will provide us with peace, fulfillment, and spiritual blessing.
- You can look at many other areas of our life such as drinking, gossiping, envy, fits of rage, disobedience to our civil authorities, witchcraft, and idolatry to find out how they damage our spirit, soul, and body and then see how living a life of obedience will provide protection against the bad effects.



Further Study

There are so many books and plans to help you in your study. These 3 books are examples of what can be used as a starting point:

- Josh McDowell & Bob Hostetler – *Right from Wrong*
- Rick Warren - *The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I Here For?*
- John C. Maxell – *There is no such thing as business ethics*

I hesitate to offer these suggestions because I am obviously leaving out many. But the point is that there are many study guides that can be used in a discipleship setting.

Final Thought

This study may have been a little different than what you thought looking at the title. We do have a responsibility to impact our environment where ever we are placed. I do believe that we have the responsibility to preach at all times and to use words when necessary as Saint Francis stated.

We are looking for one man (or woman) to stand in the gap on the many issues that we face as a nation. Standing in the gap will impact our environment more than any set of words can do.

We reach people one at a time and each person is open to our witness as he or she observes us living the Gospel or walking the Walk. However, we cannot impact the culture if we become a part of it. Read the book of

Daniel to see how he went from a exiled youth to the person in charge of the whole kingdom (Daniel 6:3) because he maintained his faith.



Final Caution

There are times that you will not impact on the culture and will be good not to be defiled by the environment you are living in. In 2 Kings 5 we find that Naaman a commander of the army of Aram was healed of leprosy. In verse 18 he understood that he would have to participate in pagan worship to keep his position and he prayed for forgiveness if he ever had to do that. Many Christians today have to be a Christian in secret and, if that is the case in your situation, let your light shine as much as you can so that others may see your good works to glorify your Father in heaven (from Matt 5:16).

We also saw that Queen Esther was not permitted to reveal her nationality nor family background, (Esther 2:10) but was ready to spring to action at the right time because she had attained royalty for such a time as was needed (Esther 4:14)

Personal Testimony Development

Welcome to the section on Developing Your Own Personal Testimony. Sharing our faith is fundamental to being a believer in the Saving Work of the Cross.

You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day,

By the deeds that you do and the words that you say.

Men read what you write—distorted or true;

What is the gospel according to you? Anonymous

According to Eastmon's Bible Dictionary, the word Gospel means "good news." It is the rendering of the Greek evangelion, i.e., "good message." What good news? Paul captured the essence of the "good news" in 1 Corinthians 15:1-5:

"Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve." (1 Corinthians 15:1-5 NIV)

The Gospel message is that Jesus died for sins on the Cross and rose again to sit at the right hand of the Father. By the fact that He died and rose again, we too, by faith in His atoning death and resurrection, can be born again into a new life in Christ that will endure for all eternity with Him.

That we are saved should be manifest in how we live our lives and what we share about our faith in Jesus Christ. We call this our "Testimony." The simplest testimony in the Scriptures is found in the story of the Blind

Man in John chapter 9. This is the one -verse testimony:

He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" (John 9:25 NIV)

It may be easy for a non-Christian to argue with our theology or opinions, but he cannot argue with our personal experience. It's a lot like the blind man referenced above. The Pharisees questioned his conversion theologically up one side and down the other, but all their arguments fell flat in light of the blind man's testimony of a changed life.

Can you articulate your personal testimony of how Christ saved you out of your sin? We want to help you learn to share your personal testimony in a concise and articulate manner. But before we get into that, let's look at a few of the verses from the Bible on being a witness for Jesus Christ.



Biblical Motivation

We are commanded to be ready to give an answer for the hope that we have.

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect," (1 Peter 3:15 NIV)

We are Commanded to witness to others. We are Commanded to witness to others.

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." (Mark 16:15 NIV)

"But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry." (2 Timothy 4:5 NIV)

We are Commissioned to witness to others. We are Commissioned to witness to others.

"On the contrary, we speak

as those approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please people but God, who tests our hearts." (1 Thessalonians 2:4 NIV)

"That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation." (2 Corinthians 5:19 NIV)

We should be concerned about the souls of those who are Lost. We should be concerned about the souls of those who are Lost.

"For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race," (Romans 9:3 NIV)

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven. What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish." (Matthew 18:10-14 NIV)



Caution

Before we launch into developing your own testimony, it is imperative to remember that the best "testimony" is the life lived for Jesus Christ, as a child of the King, not what we say.

There is a good saying: *People would rather SEE a sermon than HEAR one.*

We must never forget:

"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that

Personal Testimony Development

they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)



Getting Launched

At its essence, your personal testimony tells of how you came to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. Sharing how you became a Christian can be one of the best ways of witnessing. It is particularly helpful in presenting Jesus Christ to relatives and close friends who have seen a change in your life as a result of being Born Again.

Let's begin.

1. Before you begin writing, pray for God's help. Look to Him for wisdom and insight as you work on your testimony.

Let's jump in with a few questions:

2. Think about why should we develop our own personal testimony according to 1 Peter 3:15?
3. Read Acts 26. This is Paul's personal testimony before Agrippa.

How long did it take you to conversationally read Paul's testimony?

Was Paul preaching to Agrippa or sharing? What is the difference?

Do you notice any breaks in the testimony or shifts in emphasis during the testimony?

Now let's write out your story. Try writing it down the way you would tell it to an unbeliever.

4. Accumulate brief notes about your life on three separate sheets of paper labeled:
 - A. Before – What your life was like before you were born again. For many people who were raised in a Christian home, this can be ambiguous. If this represents you, write about what your life was like before you really got serious in how you lived your life for Christ. Some people would call this the point of yielding completely to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
 - B. How – Here write about how you came to Christ, to trust in

Him. Did a friend lead you to Christ? Did you undergo a set of circumstances that brought you to a saving relationship in Christ? Again, if you were raised in a Christian home, write about what event transpired in your life to lead you to a Lordship decision to commit wholeheartedly to Christ.

- C. After – Write about what your life has been like since you trusted Him and fully committed your heart to him.
5. Write out your first draft using your notes form the three sheets of paper. (It will usually take about five minutes to read it.)
6. Make any necessary improvements.
7. Cut your draft down to between two-and-one-half and three minutes when you read it.
8. Outline your “three minute” presentation on a 3 x 5 card or small piece of paper.
9. Learn to give your testimony without the outline.



Remember — Helpful Hints

- A. Make it sound conversational.
- B. Say “I” and “ME”, not “YOU”.
- C. Avoid religious sounding words, phrases or jargon.
- D. Generalize so more people can identify with your story.
- E. Include some humor and/or human interest.
- F. One or two word pictures increases interest.
- G. In the “BEFORE” include both good and bad aspects of your life.
- H. Is the Gospel communicated clearly?
- I. Are my opening and closing definite or are they wishy-washy? Avoid dogmatic statements.

J. Sound adult, not juvenile.

K. Remember:

1. It is designed for a non-Christian.
2. It is best suited for sharing one on one or in a small group.
3. It is to be a “door opener,” not a convincing tool.



Continuing Further

Now that you have your personal testimony written out, let's refine it somewhat.

1. Take your three sections of your testimony and work to come up with a one-sentence summary of each section. Come up with one sentence that summarizes your life before Christ (before lordship); one sentence summarizing how you came to trust in Christ (how you committed to His lordship); and one sentence that summarizes what your life has been like since you fully trusted in Him. Basically, a 3-sentence testimony.
2. Using the 3-sentence testimony above, develop a one-minute testimony. This will help you focus your testimony to highlight the key components of your conversion.
3. Now develop your testimony into a 10-minute version, as if you are giving a speech for school. Write it out as if it were an essay (autobiography).
4. Pray that God would give you opportunity to share your testimony.



Remember — Some further reminders

- Maybe set a goal of once a day or once a week. Trust God, and step out in faith.
- Keep Christ central. Always highlight what He has done for you.
- Use the Word of God. A verse or two of Scripture will add power to your story. Remember that the Word of God has a keen cutting edge.

Personal Testimony Development



Further Study

To go deeper on this topic, do a study of Paul's testimony in Acts 26.

Read through Acts 26 a couple of times, and then answer these questions:

1. What were two possible objectives for Paul's speech?
2. What is the significance of verse 3?
3. Attempt to divide verses 4 through 23 into three separate sections, and attempt to give a title to each division.

4. What characterized his background (verses 4-5, 9-11)?
5. How did Paul explain the Gospel?
6. What did Paul ask Agrippa? Why is this question important?
7. What was the outcome of Paul's speech?
8. What general guidelines from Paul's testimony can you use to mold your personal testimony?

Another avenue for going deeper is to read some biographies and/or autobiographies of great Christian men and women. Here is a very

short list, but any Christian bookstore will have many more titles.

- "George Mueller: Young Rebel in Bristol" by Faith Coxe Bailey.
- "Charles Finney" by Basil Miller.
- "Through the Gates of Splendor" (about Jim Elliot) by Elisabeth Elliot.
- "John Wesley" by Basil Miller.
- "Daws" (about Dawson Trotman) by Betty Lee Skinner.
- "Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret" by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor.
- "Just as I Am," autobiography by Billy Graham.

Mastering the Gospel Presentation

Welcome to the section on Mastering a Gospel Presentation. This may be the most important thing that you do and you need to be able to do this as you grow in your Christian walk. You may be the only Gospel someone reads and if that is the case, you are going to have to present the Gospel when the time comes.

What is the Gospel?

What is your personal testimony?

To whom are you the only Bible they will ever read?



Biblical Motivation

Why is making a Gospel Presentation so important? Jesus commanded all of us to be witnesses. Mark 16:15 tells us to **"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."**

Mastering a Gospel presentation is very important because faith comes by hearing the Words of the Gospel. If we do not tell others, then no one may tell them. Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ. (Romans 10: 17)

The good news is that we will not do this in our own strength because Acts 1:8 reminds us that:

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and

in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Finally, we are in complete agreement with God in this effort because John 3:16 and 2 Peter 3:9 tell us that God loved the world and does not want anyone to perish.



Getting Launched I

Pray, Pray, Pray. Start with prayer. Cover every encounter with prayer. End with prayer.



Getting Launched II

Read and meditate on God's Word daily. "Study to show yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15)



Getting Launched III

You must live a lifestyle that reflects the Christian walk:

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they

put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16 NIV)

Step 1 – Understand why we do must master making a Gospel Presentation:

1. We do it as we follow the commands of Christ
2. We may be the only Christian contact with the one we want to witness to
3. One-on-one encounters bring results

Step 2 – What are some of the requirements to master the Gospel presentation.

1. We must know Christ as our personal Savior
 - a. We must know that our sins are forgiven
 - b. We must know that the only reason we can enter Heaven is because of the blood of Jesus
2. We must love the lost
3. We must have a knowledge of the plan of Salvation and a logical step-by-step manner of presenting it

Mastering the Gospel Presentation

Step 3 – What are the opportunities for Presenting the Gospel

1. They are everywhere.
2. The Holy Spirit will lead you to the right person



Suggestion

Here are several plans that you can use to lead others to Christ:

Campus Crusade for Christ has a plan called the 4 Spiritual Laws

There is a plan called the Roman Road to Salvation

CMF has a tract entitled Welcome to the Family

Any of these will enable you to lead a friend to a walk with Christ as he or she follows Christ.



Caution

Preparation is key! I have used the Romans Road and will give you an example of how to prepare. The Romans Road to salvation is a way of explaining the good news of salvation using verses from the Book of Romans. It is a simple yet powerful method of explaining why we need salvation, how God provided salvation, how we can receive salvation, and what are the results of salvation.

Step 4 – End result is to lead to a decision.

First, understand the order of these verses:

The first stop on the Romans Road to salvation is Romans 3:23:

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

We have all sinned. We have all done things that are displeasing to God. There is no one who is innocent.

The second stop on the Romans Road to salvation is Romans 6:23, that teaches us about the consequences of sin:

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The punishment that we have earned for our sins is death. Not just physical death, but eternal death!

The third stop on the Romans Road to salvation continues with the remaining thought from Romans 6:23, “but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:8 declares:

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Jesus Christ died for us!

Jesus’ death paid for the price of our sins. Jesus’ resurrection proves that God accepted Jesus’ death as the payment for our sins.

The fourth stop on the Romans Road to salvation is Romans 10:9:

“that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Because of Jesus’ death on our behalf, all we have to do is believe in Him, trusting His death as the payment for our sins - and we will be saved! Romans 10:13 says it again:

“for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sins and rescue us from eternal death. Salvation, the forgiveness of sins, is available to anyone who will trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

The final aspect of the Romans Road to salvation is the results of salvation. Romans 5:1 has this wonderful message:

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Through Jesus Christ we can have a relationship of peace with God. Romans 8:1 teaches us:

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

Because of Jesus’ death on our behalf, we will never be condemned for our sins. Finally, we have this precious promise of God from Romans 8:38-39:

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Final Step

Prepare to present the Gospel.

The first thing that I did was to have the first verse address memorized because I knew that I will take the person to Romans 3:23. If I forget everything else, I would not forget that step. I knew that I will have the person read the verse out loud from my Bible. Then I will go to the next verse which is Romans 6:23. So that I do not forget, I have written upside down so that I can look at it while the person is reading Romans 3:23. This prevents me from having to worry about what comes next and frees me to be able to explain the verse that we are on. I have each verse written upside down to the end and know that I will end with Romans 8:38-39.

Do not forget about your personal testimony. You need to make the Gospel relevant in this century. You also need to be able to explain why you became a follower of Jesus. Some have a dramatic moment and some do not. However, each testimony can explain why you invited Jesus into your life. Some say keep this to a minute or so to enable the listener to concentrate on the Gospel.



Remember

You need to earn the right to present the Gospel by the life you live and the relationships that you develop.

Each Gospel presentation must end in a decision to receive Christ as Savior.

Here are a couple of thoughts concerning receiving Christ as Savior:

Mastering the Gospel Presentation

1. Invite the person to accept Jesus Christ as his Savior. If he says yes, then pray the sinner's prayer with him.
2. If the person says no, ask him if you can simply pray for him. Remember it is the Holy Spirit who convicts the person of his sin and will work the ground that you have sewn with seeds of the Gospel.

There are many Sinner's Prayers. Here is an example of a Sinner's Prayer:

I confess to God that I am a sinner and I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for my sins and was raised 3 days later. I do now receive and confess Him as my personal Savior. In the Name of Jesus, Amen.

Now that you have studied this topic, you should be ready to lead someone to Christ. Have you discovered that the Gospel message is the Good News that Jesus died for our sins and that He is our personal Savior and are ready to share it? Have you thought about your personal testimony? God Speed in your efforts to share the Gospel one person at a time.

Assurance of Salvation

Welcome to the section on the Assurance of Salvation.

This may be one of the most important topics because you have to know that you know that you are saved. You have to have an answer to the most important question, "If you would die tonight, would you go to Heaven?" And you have to be able to answer the follow-up question, "When God asks you why you should enter into Heaven, what would you say?" Let's find the answer by going into God's Word.

How about some questions to get us going:

Is it possible for you to know that your sins are forgiven?

Can you be sure that you are on your way to heaven?

What about the fear of judgment and the frightening possibility of going to hell?

Can you know without any doubt that God has saved you from the eternal consequences of sin?



Biblical Motivation

Our biggest struggle in our life is in believing the Word of God when our mind says that man's ways are different. The only way to Heaven is through believing that Jesus died for our sins. That is enough because we can do nothing more.

Jesus told us: Jesus told us:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but

have eternal life." (John 3:16 NIV)

"Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life." (John 5:24 NIV)

"For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day." (John 6:40 NIV)

The Apostles told us:

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23 NIV)

"I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:13 NIV)

Jesus told the thief on the cross: Jesus told the thief on the cross:

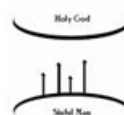
"One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: 'Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!' But the other criminal rebuked him. 'Don't you fear God,' he said, 'since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing

wrong." Then he said, **"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."** Jesus answered him, **"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."** (Luke 23:39-43 NIV)

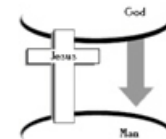


Getting Launched

Our biggest struggle in our life is in believing the Word of God when our mind says that man's ways are different. The only way to Heaven is through believing that Jesus died for our sins. That is enough because we can do nothing more.



Step 1 – The first thing to understand is that sin separates us from a holy God. Not only that, the penalty of the sin is death.



Step 2 – Then we have to understand that God gave us His Son that we might have eternal life.

Step 3 – We have to understand that God cannot lie, nor does He change His mind. This was true in Old Testament times as well as today.

"Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD himself, is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation." (Isaiah 12:2 NIV)

Make sure that you have accepted Christ as your personal Savior.

Assurance of Salvation

There are several plans:

Campus Crusade for Christ has a plan called the Four Spiritual Laws.

There is a plan called the Roman Road to Salvation.

CMF has a tract entitled Welcome to the Family.

I enjoy the combination of these which is found in the back of a Gideon Testament:

1. God Loves you. John 3:16 and Romans 5:8
2. All are sinners. Romans 3:23 and Romans 3:10
3. God has a Remedy for sin. Romans 6:23, John 1:12, and 1 Corinthians 15:3-4
4. All may be Saved Now. Revelation 3:20 and Romans 10:13
5. My Decision to Receive Christ as My Savior: Confessing to God that I am sinner, and believing that the Lord Jesus Christ died for my sins on the cross and was raised for my justification, I do now receive and confess Him as my personal Savior.

If you ever prayed this prayer or a similar prayer, then you have accepted Christ as your personal Savior, and one time is enough.



Caution

Step 4 – Rest Assured that you only need to do this once.



Continuing Further

Jesus told the thief on the cross:

“One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: ‘Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!’ But the other criminal rebuked him. ‘Don’t you fear God,’ he said, ‘since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.’ Then he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when

you come into your kingdom.” Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”” (Luke 23:39-43 NIV)

This is important because the thief could do nothing more than believe in Jesus as his personal Savior. He was not able to be baptized, he did not join a local church, and he did not tithe or give to the orphans and widows.

These are important as we live our lives, but they do not add to or subtract from our salvation. That thief was assured that he was with Jesus in Heaven, and we can be sure of this fact as well.

Take Prayer to the Next Level – Use Scripture! We will use John 5:24

“O God, I have heard Your Word and believe in You and in Your Son Jesus Christ. I believe in Your promise of everlasting life. I also trust Your word that I shall not come into judgment, but have passed from death into life.”



Remember

That God Loves you and loved you before the foundation of the world. He would not have anyone perish, but has given us all free will and therefore, some will perish.

Here are a couple of thoughts concerning your Assurance of Salvation:

1. There is nothing we can do to escape the judgment of God. It is only by the Grace and pardon of Jesus Christ that we can be free of the judgment that should be ours because of our sins. Read Zechariah 3:1-5 to see how God rebuked Satan and exchanged the filthy clothes of Joshua the high priest for rich and white garments.
2. 2 Timothy 1:12b tells us:

Yet I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him for that day.

Make a list of all the things that you have entrusted to God.

Examples:

My daily bread:

“And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

My health:

“If you make the Most High your dwelling, even the LORD, who is my refuge, then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent.” (Psalm 91:9-10)

My peace:

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4: 6-7)

Spend a Day or Half-Day Alone in Prayer praising God for His Salvation.

This is a powerful activity to plan into your hectic schedule.

How to go About It – Having set aside a day or portion of a day for prayer, pack a lunch and start out. Find a place where you can be alone, away from distractions. This may be a wooded area near home, or your backyard. An outdoor spot is excellent if you can find it; but don't get sidetracked into nature studies and fritter away your time. Take along a Bible, a notebook and pencil, a hymnbook, and perhaps a devotional book.

Divide the time into three parts: praising God for Who He is, waiting on the Lord, and prayer for yourself.

1. **PRAISING GOD FOR WHO HE IS** – You can begin this by reading the final chapters of Psalms, starting with Psalm 145. This is a time to just be like the angels in Heaven in Revelation 4 & 5 who sing “Worthy is the Lamb.”

Assurance of Salvation

2. WAITING ON THE LORD – You can begin this period of waiting by prayerfully reading through and meditating on a shorter book from the Bible. Consider one of the minor prophets or one of Paul's short epistles.
 - a. To realize His presence.
 - b. To be cleansed.
 - c. To worship Him.
3. PRAYING FOR YOURSELF
 - a. Guidance and wisdom.
 - b. Godliness.
 - c. Concerns and needs.

Two Questions:

The result of your day of prayer should be answers to the two questions Paul asked the Lord on the Damascus road (Acts 22:6-10). Paul's first question was, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord replied, "I am Jesus." You will be seeking to know Him, to find out who He is.

The second question Paul asked was, "What shall I do, Lord?" The Lord answered him specifically. This should be answered or reconfirmed for you in that part of the day when you unhurriedly seek His will for you.

You will be blessed!

A great variation to "Spending a Day or Half-Day Alone in Prayer" is to stay up all night praying.

Get yourself loaded up on coffee and "go for it!" I believe strongly that God will bless your efforts. Some of

my most productive times of prayer have been when I stayed up all night praying.



Suggestion

See what other sites have to say about the assurance of Salvation.

"We know that God's desire is for all men, women, and children to come to the knowledge of the truth that there is only one mediator between Him and the human race: Jesus Christ." (The Bible, 1 Timothy 2:4, 5).

Read one of the following two plans of Salvation to settle it forever for you: Read one of the following two plans of Salvation to settle it forever for you:

Campus Crusade for Christ has a plan called The Four Spiritual Laws.

There is a plan called the Roman Road to Salvation.

CMF has a tract entitled Welcome to the Family.



Further Study

To go deeper, here are some suggestions. Below is a Bible study on the topic of salvation. Follow the suggested study and then work to answer these 3 questions:

1. What do I see? (Observation) - This is always the most challenging portion of Bible study, which most people give only

cursory attention to (unfortunately). The key to doing Bible study is "training the eye to see." Seeing correctly helps you interpret correctly and to be in the correct environment - what it is like to be in the author's shoes.

2. What does it mean? (Interpretation) - What are the implications of what I just observed?
3. How does it work? (Application) - Two things to look for in this process:
 - a. How does it work for me?
 - b. How does it work for others?

If you have the Bible on computer, look up every place in the Bible the word salvation is used and then make observations, interpretations, and applications (see above).



Technical Point

Read what Easton's Bible Dictionary says about "God's Promises are Unchangeable."

Now that you have studied this topic, you should have an answer to the most important question, "If you would die tonight, would you go to Heaven?" And you are able to answer the follow-up question, "When God asks you why you should enter into Heaven, what would you say?" I pray you now know the answer to the first is, "Yes" and the answer to the second is, "because of the Blood of Jesus."

Relational Evangelism

Welcome to the CMF Training page on Relational Evangelism or as it is often called, Lifestyle Evangelism. Unlike "Cold Turkey" evangelism where you approach people you do not know, Relational Evangelism is evangelism you do among family members or close friends, people who know you and see your life on a regular basis.

This type of Relational (Lifestyle) Evangelism is the most effective method of Winning Souls. A believer

involving him/herself in the life of an unbeliever in the context of a friendship makes the greatest difference and has the greatest impact when it comes to sharing personal faith in Christ.

Historical data shows that over 75% (three-fourths) of all conversions occur in the context of a family or personal friendship, suggesting that lifestyle evangelism is the most effective method of evangelism for inviting people into a personal relationship with Christ:

Conversion Responses

A friend or relative	78%
Pastor	06%
Sunday school	05%
Church service or program	03%
Walk-in off the street	03%
Special need	02%
Personal visitation	02%
Evangelistic crusade or TV show	1/2%

Relational Evangelism

(Source: Church Growth, Inc.)

Personal relationships create a nurturing climate for the invitation to Christ to be extended. In this case, an unbeliever feels a sense of belonging before the experience of believing. We feel that an unbeliever is most likely to give a believer the opportunity to share his or her faith when the believer's life has first proven her/his subsequent words to be truthful and life-changing. In this way, people feel Inherent Worth before they open themselves up to the Inspired Word.

This relational evangelism affords the unbeliever the opportunity to see

that faith in Christ affects every part of a person—head and heart, both inside and out. We concede, as mentioned above, that it is not the only method, but we believe it is one of the best. Certainly, different methods work for different people, but we believe lifestyle evangelism is most productive and profitable, and produces not just converts, but disciples, which is what Christ calls us to do (Matthew 28:19).

This Postmodernism culture around us today defies commitment to ideas because it accepts no ultimate truth. Generally speaking, the only

commitment that postmodernism does allow is to a "tribal group," or community, because it is within that tribal group that truth is experienced. In other words, through relationships and community, truth is experienced. Truth is validated in relationship, but initially cannot stand on its own two legs. When it comes to the Truth of Scriptures, people today want to see it lived out and validated in the life of another before they accept it as "valid truth."

That being said, let's jump in....

Deliberate Disciplemaking

Welcome to the section on Deliberate Disciplemaking. This is an important topic because every man needs a Paul, a Barnabas, and a Timothy. The record of the impact of the righteous Grandmother Lois and godly mother Eunice on Timothy is also well documented. Godly women are needed to train young ladies just as Paul trained Timothy and just as Barnabas held him accountable. I have it said that only a man can teach a man to be a man and this truth also applies to women in that only a woman can teach a woman to be a woman.

How about some questions to get us going:

1. Who is the older, wiser person in your life that is discipling you?
2. Who are the accountability partners in your life?
3. Who can you disciple and mentor?
4. What are some of the goals that you have for yourself and that you would like to pass on?

This study will give you the why, the who, and the how. However, it will give an idea for some of the what, but the what will be between you and your mentor or between you and your disciple.



Biblical Motivation

Why is making disciples so important? They were final words of Jesus which we know as the Great Commission:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20 NIV)

Jesus did!

"As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and fol-

lowed him." (Matthew 4:18-22 NIV)

The Apostles did!

"But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord." (Acts 15:35 NIV)

"Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord." (Acts 15:39b -40 NIV)

When Old Testament leaders passed the mantle of leadership properly, there was success. When they did not, there was failure: Elijah passed on the leadership to Elisah and the number of leaders who did not pass on everything to a successor is great – just look at the good and evil kings of Israel and Judah and the good and evil judges of Israel.



Getting Launched I

Pray, Pray, Pray. Start with prayer. Cover every session with prayer. End with prayer.



Getting Launched II

If you have the Bible on computer, look up every place in the Bible the word discipline is used and then make observations, interpretations, and applications (see above).

Deliberate Disciplemaking

1. What do I see? (Observation) - This is always the most challenging portion of Bible study. The key to doing Bible study is "training the eye to see." Seeing correctly helps you Interpret correctly and to be in the correct environment - what it is like to be in the author's shoes.
2. What does it mean? (Interpretation) - What are the implications of what I just observed?
3. How does it work? (Application) - Two things to look for in this process:
 - How does it work for me?
 - How does it work for others?



Getting Launched III

Our most important mission is to reproduce our Christianity because God is a Father and not a Grandfather. According to Acts 1:8, we have different mission fields and we must disciple people in our mission field. In an infantry unit, our mission field may be a squad (Jerusalem), a battalion (Judea), the division (Samaria), and the whole garrison (the uttermost parts of the world). If you are on a ship, you can find the same every expanding areas of influence.

Step 1 – The first thing is to seek God's leading in who will be your mentor, whom you will mentor, and what specific needs should be passed on or gained.

The Who:

Obviously, if you are a new Christian, then you will be in a position to need a mentor, but as you grow in the faith, you will be able to mentor.

Consider this passage from James 3:1 "Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly." Yet, the advantages of being a teacher/mentor are that you will grow in the faith as you prepare to be a mentor.

So, find a person in your sphere of influence and take that person under

your spiritual wings.

The What:

Hebrews 5:8 -10 tells us what Jesus had to do in His humanity. We also need to:

"Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek." (Hebrews 5:8-10 NIV)

We must teach others to discern right from wrong. There will be many things that need to be taught and only you and the disciple will know. These range from the importance of prayer and Bible study, how to be sexually pure, how to be a worker who is not ashamed of his or her works, and many more topics.

Step 2 – Then we have to develop a relationship with that person. A saying is that people do not care how much we know until they know how much we are is very true in mentoring relationships.

The relationship is one of encouraging and confidentiality. The relationship is one that is salt and light in a dark and dreary world. The eventual outcome is the kind of relationship described in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12.

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 NIV)

Step 3 – Carve out a special time to be with that person and be intentional. Remember the fact

that you must be confidential in anything that is shared or you will not be able to proceed very far in the relationship.

The options to find time are unlimited. Some discipleship groups go fly fishing, some motor cycling, some hiking, and some are in reading groups. Whatever is decided must be a mutually interesting and must be a time that is genuine available.

Make sure there is a teaching point for each activity that you will be able to walk away with.



Just In Case

Make sure that your mentee has accepted Christ as personal Savior.

There are several plans:

Campus Crusade for Christ has a plan called the 4 Spiritual Laws.

There is a plan called the Roman Road to Salvation.

CMF has a tract entitled Welcome to the Family.

This will enable you to disciple him or her and go to a higher walk with Christ.

Step 4 – Constantly pray for the Holy Spirit to give you the guidance that is needed.



Caution

The consequences of not passing on the mantle of leadership are great.

Eli did not pass on the mantle of leadership to his sons:

"Eli's sons were scoundrels; they had no regard for the LORD. This sin of the young men was very great in the LORD's sight, for they were treating the LORD's offering with contempt." (1 Samuel 2:12, 17 NIV)

Samuel did not pass on the mantle of leadership to his sons:

"When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as Israel's leaders. The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abi-

Deliberate Disciplemaking

jah, and they served at Beer-sheba. But his sons did not follow his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.” (1 Samuel 8:1-3 NIV)



Continuing Further

Topics for study are wide and varied.

The topics are limitless because the Christian walk has many facets. It is interesting that there are two great commandments and they are to love God and to love our neighbor. Because we wanted to know how to do these two, we have the 10 Commandments with the first 4 telling us how to love God and the second 6 telling us how to love our neighbor. The rest of the Bible tells us how to do these.



Remember

We all want to move toward maturity. Hebrews 5 tells us two things:

1. In verse 12, we have a need for someone to teach us
2. In verses 13-14, we need to move from being a baby with milk to a mature Christian who has senses trained to discern good and evil.

Here are a couple of thoughts concerning Christian maturity:

- A. There is always something we need to learn and then be committed to put it into practice. In fact, the entire book of James tells us how to put our Christianity into actions.
- B. There is always someone who can benefit from our experiences.

Some broad topics that can be covered:

“But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, to keep his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him

with all your heart and with all your soul.” (Joshua 22:5 NIV)

How to go About It. Pick a need or pick a verse. For Example, you may want to look at a general verse that tells how to live. Joshua 22:5 tell us to:

1. Love the Lord
2. Walk in His Ways
3. Keep His Commands
4. Hold fast to Him
5. Serve God with our heart and soul

Specific helps for working through Joshua 22:5.

1. Love the Lord
 - a. How to have a quiet time and the importance of daily devotions.
 - b. Make the Lord central to your life (Matt 6:33 reminds to seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness)
 - c. Learn how to have a personal relationship with God.
2. Walk in His Ways
 - a. Do not turn to the right or left (Joshua 1:7)
 - b. Take the narrow road because wide is the road and broad is the gate that leads to death and destruction. (Matthew 7:13)
 - c. Hide God’s Word in your heart so you will not sin against Him (Psalm 119: 11)
3. Keep His Commands
 - a. Make a decision prior to going into “the real world” to be holy and follow through.
 - b. Go through the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) to know what it means not to:
 - i. Murder
 - ii. Commit Adultery
 - iii. Divorce
 - iv. Make Oaths
 - v. Take Revenge
 - vi. Hate Your Enemy

4. Hold fast to Him
 - a. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. (James 4:8)
 - b. The Lord draws near to all who call up Him, to all who call upon Him in truth. (Psalm 145:18).
5. 5. Serve God with our heart and soul
 - a. The righteous will live by faith Habakkuk 2:4.
 - b. It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man. (Psalm 118:8)

There are countless of books, study guides, Sunday School lessons that can be used as teaching guides:



Suggestion

There are so many books and plans to help you in your study. These 4 books are examples of what can be used as a starting point:

- Kay Arthur - Lord, I want to Know You.
- Rick Warren - The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth am I Here For?
- John Eldredge – Wild at Heart
- Beth Moore – Get out of that Pit

I hesitate to offer these suggestions because I am obviously leaving out many. But the point is that there are many study guides that can be used in a discipleship setting.

God will help us in our quest for spiritual maturity:

“All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained. Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the

Deliberate Disciplemaking

cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ," (Philippians 3:15-20 NIV)



Further Study

You will be blessed because the teacher is taught by the student.

To go deeper, here are some suggestions. Below is a Bible study format for any topic of your own choosing. Follow the suggested study and

then work to answer these 3 questions:

1. What do I see? (Observation) - This is always the most challenging portion of Bible study, which most people give only cursory attention to (unfortunately). The key to doing Bible study is "training the eye to see." Seeing correctly helps you Interpret correctly and to be in the correct environment - what it is like to be in the author's shoes.
2. What does it mean? (Interpretation) - What are the implications of what I just observed?
3. How does it work?

(Application) - Two things to look for in this process:

- a. How does it work for me?
- b. How does it work for others?



Technical Point

Noah Webster's Dictionary

1. (n.) One who teaches or instructs; one whose business or occupation is to instruct others; an instructor; a tutor.
2. (n.) One who instructs others in religion; a preacher; a minister of the gospel; sometimes, one who preaches without regular ordination.

Biblical Prayer

Welcome to the CMF Training page on PRAYER. Prayer for most people in the Kingdom is a matter of discipline. We all wish prayer were as simple as breathing. However, for most of us, if we don't set time aside for prayer, our prayer life is frequently sloppy and very inconsistent. Let's remedy that by going back to the Basics of Prayer.

How about some good quotations to get us going:

"Prayer is a powerful thing, for God has bound and tied Himself thereto." (Martin Luther)

"Avail yourself of the greatest privilege this side of heaven. Jesus Christ died to make this communion and communication with the Father possible." (Billy Graham)

"Prayer is a dialogue between two persons who love each other." (Rosalind Rinker)

"Prayer is fellowship with the Unseen and Most Holy One. The powers of the eternal world have been placed at its disposal. It is the very essence of true religion, the channel of all blessings, the secret of power and life." (Andrew Murray)

Biblical Motivation

Why do we need to be in prayer?



Jesus set the example for us.

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed." (Mark 1:35 NIV)

"Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.' Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. 'Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?' he asked Peter. 'Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' He went away a second time and prayed, 'My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.' When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing. (Matthew

26:39-44 NIV)

Jesus thought it important enough to teach us to pray.

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation,

Biblical Prayer

but deliver us from the evil one.”” (Matthew 6:5-13 NIV)

We make our hearts' desires known to God, both our "wants" and "needs" (examples).

“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.” (John 16:24 NIV)

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9 NIV)

We transfer our burdens to God through prayer.

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. (1 Peter 5:7 NIV)

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7 NIV)



Getting Launched

Our biggest struggle in prayer is simply getting started. It's easy to be too ambitious or try to pray for the "world" and everything in it during our initial prayer session. Follow these simple steps to get going.

Step 1 – The first thing to understand is that prayer is dialogue between us and God. It's simple conversation.



Step 2 – Use this simple acrostic "ACTS" to help guide your

prayer (this follows the outline of the Lord's Prayer):

A – Adoration. Start off by telling God how much you love Him and appreciate Him. If you've ever been in love, remember back to those early conversations of how you expressed your love to each other. Examples from the Bible: Exodus 15:1-21; 2 Sam 22; Psalm 63:1-8; Luke 1:46-55

C – Confession. Cleanse your heart. If you feel like you've been hiding things from God or just feel "dirty" or "impure" before God, get it off your chest. Tell Him you're sorry and ask Him for His generous forgiveness (1 John 1:9). Examples: Psalm 32 & 51; Prov 28:13; Luke 15:17-21; 1 John 1:8-10.

T – Thanksgiving. It's always polite to say "thank you," especially to God. Of the 10 lepers who were healed by Jesus, only one said "thanks" (see Luke 17:11-19). Have you forgotten to tell God "thanks" for what He has done for you? Examples: Dan 6:10; Psalm 105:1; Col 2:7; 1 Thes 5:18.

S – Supplication. After putting God first, cleansing our heart, and being thankful, we can now lay our requests before Him. A good way to group our supplication (or requests) is to pray for others first and then pray for ourselves. Examples: Gen 18:23-32; Psalm 143:8-10; Prov 30:7-9; Phil 1:9-11.

Step 3 – Develop a prayer list or prayer card to record requests and answers. Take a simple piece of paper and draw a line down the middle of it. On the top left write "MY REQUEST," and on the top right write "GOD'S ANSWER." Keep track of what you request in prayer and how God answers you.



Suggestion

Once you get going in prayer, your prayer list can grow quite long. Try this

out:

- Divide your list into 7 categories such as: Christians in the Military, Non-believers in the Military, Christians who are Civilians (friends back home, etc), Non-believers who are Civilians, Family members, People in

Authority, and Personal.

- Use seven 5x7 note cards, one for each category and keep track of your requests this way, one for each day of the week.
- Make a pocket in the back of your Bible and carry your prayer cards with you with your Bible.

Step 4 – Challenge yourself to set aside 10 minutes every day for a week for prayer. After you have experienced success for a few weeks, increase your time to 20 or 30 minutes or even longer!



Caution

Don't be too ambitious. Consistency matters most, soooooo, keep it simple.



Continuing Further

Now that we've taken off, we want to experience sustained flight in prayer.

Take Prayer to the Next Level – Use Scripture! Take Prayer to the Next Level – Use Scripture!

When we want to "take prayer to the next level," the best place to go is to make our prayer Scripture-centered. This springs from 1 John 5:14-15:

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us--whatever we ask--we know that we have what we asked of him. (1 John 5:14-15 NIV)



Remember

Prayer consists of us coming into agreement with the Father. It rarely consists of Him coming into agreement with us. We grow and mature by learning to desire what He desires. Praying through Scripture helps us do this.

Here are a couple of ways to incorporate Scripture into your prayer life.

1. Pray through passages that reflect what's on your heart. Here

Biblical Prayer

are examples:

- a. Feeling like praising God – Psalm 63
- b. Feeling a need for protection – Psalm 91
- c. Feeling hungry for God – Psalm 42
- d. Feeling like your character needs help – Psalm 15
- e. Feeling a need for confession – Psalm 51

You get the idea. As you might guess, the book of Psalms is a great place to go for praying through Scripture.

2. Claim promises to make your prayer life explosive! God tells us, when in doubt, “claim that promise!”

“For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God. (2 Corinthians 1:20 NIV)

Examples:

Need guidance?

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV)

Blessing from giving?

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.” (Malachi 3:10 NIV)

OR

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you

should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:6-7 NIV)

Launching in ministry?

“Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, I will give people in exchange for you, nations in exchange for your life.” (Isaiah 43:4 NIV)

OR

“The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation. I am the LORD; in its time I will do this swiftly.” (Isaiah 60:22 NIV)

Spend a Day or Half-Day Alone in Prayer! This is a powerful activity to plan into your hectic schedule.

How to go About It – Having set aside a day or portion of a day for prayer, pack a lunch and start out. Find a place where you can be alone, away from distractions. This may be a wooded area near home, or your backyard. An outdoor spot is excellent if you can find it; but don’t get sidetracked into nature studies and fritter away your time. Take along a Bible, a notebook and pencil, a hymnbook, and perhaps a devotional book.

Divide the day into three parts: waiting on the Lord, prayer for others, and prayer for yourself.

WAIT ON THE LORD – You can begin this period of waiting by prayerfully reading through and meditating on a shorter book from the Bible. Consider one of the minor prophets or one of Paul’s short epistles.

- a. To realize His presence.
- b. To be cleansed.
- c. To worship Him.

2. PRAY FOR OTHERS

- a. Ask specific things for them.
- b. Use Paul’s prayers for others.
- c. Ask for others what you are

praying for yourself.

3. PRAY FOR YOURSELF

- a. Guidance and wisdom.
- b. Godliness.
- c. Concerns and needs.

Two Questions

The result of your day of prayer should be answers to the two questions Paul asked the Lord on the Damascus road (Acts 22:6-10). Paul’s first question was, “Who are you, Lord?” The Lord replied, “I am Jesus.” You will be seeking to know Him, to find out who He is.

The second question Paul asked was, “What shall I do, Lord?” The Lord answered him specifically. This should be answered or reconfirmed for you in that part of the day when you unhurriedly seek His will for you.



Suggestion

Read one of E.M. Bounds’ books on Prayer. All his books are short and very easy to read. Here’s a list to consider:

- The Essentials Of Prayer
- The Necessity Of Prayer
- The Possibilities Of Prayer
- Power Through Prayer
- Prayer And Praying Men
- Purpose In Prayer
- The Reality Of Prayer
- The Weapon Of Prayer



Further Study

To go deeper, here are some suggestions. Below are 3 Bible studies on the topic of prayer. Follow the suggested study and then work to answer these 3 questions:

1. What do I see? (Observation) - This is always the most challenging portion of Bible study, which most people give only cursory attention to (unfortunately). The key to doing Bible study is “training the eye to see.” Seeing correctly helps you Interpret correctly and so on. environment - what

Biblical Prayer

it is like to be in the author's shoes.

2. What does it mean?
(Interpretation) - What are the implications of what I just observed?
3. How does it work?
(Application) - Two things to look for in this process:
 - a. How does it work for me?
 - b. How does it work for others?



Technical Point

This is what Easton's Bible Dictionary says about "Prayer."

PRAYER is converse with God; the intercourse of the soul with God, not in contemplation or meditation, but in direct address to him. Prayer may be oral or mental, occasional or constant, ejaculatory or formal. It is a "beseeching the Lord" (Exodus 32:11); "pouring out the soul before the Lord" (1 Samuel 1:15); "praying and crying to heaven" (2 Chron. 32:20); "seeking unto God and making supplication" (Job 8:5); "drawing near to God" (Psalm 73:28); "bowing the knees" (Ephes. 3:14).

Prayer presupposes a belief in the personality of God, his ability and will-

ingness to hold intercourse with us, his personal control of all things and of all his creatures and all their actions.

Acceptable prayer must be sincere (Hebrews 10:22), offered with reverence and godly fear, with a humble sense of our own insignificance as creatures and of our own unworthiness as sinners, with earnest importunity, and with unhesitating submission to the divine will. Prayer must also be offered in the faith that God is, and is the hearer and answerer of prayer, and that he will fulfill his word, "Ask, and ye shall receive" (Matthew 7:7-8; Matthew 21:22; Mark 11:24; John 14:13-14), and in the name of Christ (John 16:23-24; John 15:16; Ephes. 2:18; Ephes. 5:20; Col. 3:17; 1 Peter 2:5).

Prayer is of different kinds, secret (Matthew 6:6); social, as family prayers, and in social worship; and public, in the service of the sanctuary.

Intercessory prayer is enjoined (Numbers 6:23; Job 42:8; Isaiah 62:6; Psalm 122:6; 1 Tim. 2:1; James 5:14), and there are many instances on record of answers having been given to such prayers, e.g., of Abraham (Genesis 17:18, 20; Genesis 18:23-32; Genesis 20:7, 17-18), of Moses for Pharaoh (Exodus 8:12-13, 30-31; Exodus 9:33), for the Israelites (Exodus

17:11, 13; Exodus 32:11-14, 31-34; Numbers 21:7-8; Deut. 9:18-19, 25), for Miriam (Numbers 12:13), for Aaron (Deut. 9:20), of Samuel (1 Samuel 7:5-12), of Solomon (1 Kings 8; 2 Chron. 6), Elijah (1 Kings 17:20-23), Elisha (2 Kings 4:33-36), Isaiah (2 Kings 19), Jeremiah (Jeremiah 42:2-10), Peter (Acts 9:40), the church (Acts 12:5-12), Paul (Acts 28:8).

No rules are anywhere in Scripture laid down for the manner of prayer or the attitude to be assumed by the suppliant. There is mention made of kneeling in prayer (1 Kings 8:54; 2 Chron. 6:13; Psalm 95:6; Isaiah 45:23; Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60; Acts 9:40; Ephes. 3:14, etc.); of bowing and falling prostrate (Genesis 24:26, 52; Exodus 4:31; Exodus 12:27; Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:35, etc.); of spreading out the hands (1 Kings 8:22, 38, 54; Psalm 28:2; Psalm 63:4; Psalm 88:9; 1 Tim. 2:8, etc.); and of standing (1 Samuel 1:26; 1 Kings 8:14, 55; 2 Chron. 20:9; Mark 11:25; Luke 18:11, 13).

If we accept the "Lord's Prayer" (Matthew 6:9-13), which is, however, rather a model or pattern of prayer than a set prayer to be offered up, we have no special form of prayer for general use given us in Scripture.

Mastering the Word: Devotional Time/Quiet Time

Welcome to the section on HAVING A MORNING DEVOTIONAL OR QUIET TIME WITH GOD. A morning devotional time or "quiet time" is an intimate time of fellowship between you and God, one-on-one.

Beginning your day with God is a sweet reminder of your unique relationship to the Father. I liken a "quiet time" to my early morning routine with my family, especially with my youngest children. I'll be sitting in the living room reading and my kids will wake up and come stumbling out into the living with their hair askew, still wiping the cobwebs out of their head. They'll crawl up in my lap and snuggle for just a few minutes. Wrap-

ping their arms around my neck, they want to be reassured of my undying love for them and to hear me whisper "I love you" into their ears. Having had this sweet moment of intimacy with their dad, they are now ready to tackle the day.

That's a "quiet time." It's an opportunity to crawl up into God's lap, throw your arms around His neck, and hear Him whisper in your ear, "I love you."

"Beginning your day without connecting to the Throne of Grace is like beginning your day without any direction or like trying to walk through the day without gravity to keep you anchored to earth.

Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. (1 Corinthians 9:26 NIV)

Hearing this sweet reminder anchors me and reminds me what is important in life. It calibrates me for the day and gives me direction. It's important to start FIRST THING in the morning because as the momentum of the day builds, it's very difficult to quiet my heart and be tender for God's sweet tenderness for my soul.

Here's what a quiet time or devotional time is NOT:

It's not Bible Study – Bible Study is

Mastering the Word: Devotional Time/Quiet Time

WORK. I liken Bible Study to Jacob wrestling with the angel in Genesis 32:24-26. He would not let go of the angel, and wrestled him until the angel blessed him. That's Bible Study. We wrestle with a particular passage until God blesses us from the passage. If you're not working hard, then you are probably not doing Bible Study.

A Quiet Time or Devotional Time is a sweet time of tenderness and intimacy.

It's not a Bible reading program — While reading through the Bible in a year or some other goal is absolutely invaluable, the time reading is “goal” and “accomplishment” driven time. In order to get through your “program,” you do not have time to “stop and smell the daisies” along the way. Otherwise, you'll fall behind for that day's goal.

In contrast, the “goal” for a Quiet Time is to hear a sweet word from God.

A Quiet Time/Devotional Time is simply a time of quiet and devotion when you begin in a solitary place by asking God to make Himself known to you as a Friend and Father; you then go to a short passage and read it in a meditative manner, all the while asking God to reveal Himself to you through the passage; and then you pray over the passage focusing on how it can personally affect you and your walk with God.



Biblical Motivation

In the spirit of “tithing” to God our “firstfruits” of our day, we should give God the firstfruits of our day as a special time together.

“Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.” (Proverbs 3:9-10 NIV)

God's Word is so important that it must become a part of our day that begins with the beginning of the day.

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 NIV)

“Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile.” (Jeremiah 29:12-14 NIV)

Morning time alone with was important to Jesus, David, and the prophet Isaiah. They modeled this behavior for us.

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.” (Mark 1:35 NIV)

“In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.” (Psalms 5:3 NIV)

“The Sovereign LORD has given me a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being in-

structed.” (Isaiah 50:4 NIV)

By getting God's Word in my life early in the morning, I am able to meditate on it throughout the day.

“Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” (Joshua 1:8 NIV)



Getting Launched

The two biggest mistakes people make when trying to get launched in having a regular time with God in the morning is, first, they are too ambitious starting out. They try to “bite off” too much too soon. Second, they don't set conditions for success. You “set conditions for success” by thinking through where you'll spend the time and how you'll structure the time. Follow these simple steps to get going:

Step 1 — Structure your time in a reasonable way. Don't try to radically change your schedule by getting up an hour earlier for your initial quiet times. Shoot for 10 or 15 minutes. We can normally get up a few minutes early without too much disruption to our sleep habits. Remember, the goal early on is to experience success and establish a habit through consistency. [You may need to buy an extra alarm clock to make sure you get up in the morning.]

Think about where to have your quiet time. If you have a roommate, you may want to go out of your room so as to not disturb him. When I was in college first having quiet times as a new believer, I used to go down the hall to the bathroom and have my quiet time in one of the bathroom stalls. I was certainly NOT disturbed, and sitting on a cold toilet seat will quickly wake you up in the morning.

Speaking of “waking up,” DO NOT try to have your quiet time while sitting on your bed. The fabled “rack monster” will pull you back on your pillow too easily. Get away from your bed.

Mastering the Word: Devotional Time/Quiet Time

For folks new to the Kingdom of God, use a Bible translation that's easy to read like one of the following: The Living Bible, The Good News Bible or The Message.

Step 2 – Use a simple format for your time:

1. Pray for the time that God would open your heart to His personal message to you.
2. Read a short passage and then think about it, what we call "meditation." Ask some questions about the text:
 - a. What do I observe happening?
 - b. What did it mean back then in the context of when it was written or when it occurred?
 - c. What does it mean to me today?
3. Write one or two thoughts down from your time of meditation.
4. Pray over the text and whatever God just showed you.

Step 3 – Develop a prayer list or prayer card to record requests and answers. Take a simple piece of paper and draw a line down the middle of it. On the top left write "MY REQUEST," and on the top right write "GOD'S ANSWER." Keep track of what you request in prayer and how God answers you.



Suggestion

Use this simple acrostic "ACTS" to help guide your prayer (this follows the outline of the Lord's Prayer):

A – Adoration. Start off by telling God how much you love Him and appreciate Him. If you've ever been in love, remember back to those early conversations of how you expressed your love to each other. Examples from the Bible: Exodus 15:1-21; 2 Sam 22; Psalm 63:1-8; Luke 1:46-55

C – Confession. Cleanse your heart. If you feel like you've been hiding things from God or just feel "dirty" or "impure" before God, get it off your chest. Tell Him you're sorry and ask Him for His generous forgiveness (1

John 1:9). Examples: Psalm 32 & 51; Prov 28:13; Luke 15:17-21; 1 John 1:8-10.

T – Thanksgiving. It's always polite to say "thank you," especially to God. Of the 10 lepers who were healed by Jesus, only one said "thanks" (see Luke 17:11-19). Have you forgotten to tell God "thanks" for what He has done for you? Examples: Dan 6:10; Psalm 105:1; Col 2:7; 1 Thes 5:18.

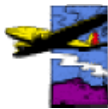
S – Supplication. After putting God first, cleansing our heart, and being thankful, we can now lay our requests before Him. A good way to group our supplication (or requests) is to pray for others first and then pray for ourselves. Examples: Gen 18:23-32; Psalm 143:8-10; Prov 30:7-9; Phil 1:9-11.

Step 4 – Somehow track your progress at being consistent. Use a calendar or some other type of visual aid to check off the days you have quiet times. This is a great tool to help you develop the habit of beginning each day with God. Once you are up and running, you will probably no longer need this help.



Caution

Don't be too ambitious. Consistency matters most, soooooo, keep it simple.



Continuing Further

Now that we've taken off, we want to experience sustained flight in quiet times.

Here are a few ways to go further in your quiet time disciplines.

1. Keep a Quiet Time notebook. A simple spiral notebook or 3-ring binder works fine. Here's a suggestion on how you might organize it: For each daily entry list the following:
 - Day of the week and date
 - Passage to read
 - Key truth/thought from passage
 - How it impressed you
2. Consider reading a short classic on drawing close with God in intimacy. There are many to

choose from, but here's a short list to get you started (your chaplain, pastor, or minister might have favorite book as well):

- a. "The Pursuit of God" by A.W. Tozer
- b. "The Practice of the Presence of God" by Brother Lawrence
- c. "When I Saw Him" by Roy Hession

If you want to "bite off" a little more, try "Hinds' Feet on High Places" by Hannah Hurnand.



Suggestion

Some of the books of the Bible can be a little difficult to figure out if you are not familiar with who wrote them and the context of when they were written and why. We recommend you pick up a Bible Handbook for yourself. A Bible Handbook will tell you things like who wrote the particular book and why, to whom was the book written, and what was going on at the time. It will also provide an outline to the book that can be helpful. Both Zondervan and Unger have good, easy to read Bible Handbooks.

3. Consider spending a day or half-day alone with God. Sound intimidating? Here's a way to go about it:

How to go About It – Having set aside a day or portion of a day for an extended quiet time and prayer, pack a lunch and start out. Find a place where you can be alone, away from distractions. This may be a wooded area near home, or your backyard. An outdoor spot is excellent if you can find it; but don't get sidetracked into nature studies and fritter away your time. Take along a Bible, a notebook and pencil, a hymnbook, and perhaps a devotional book.

Divide the day into three parts: waiting on the Lord, prayer for others, and prayer for yourself.

1. **WAIT ON THE LORD** – You can begin this period of waiting by prayerfully reading through and meditating on a shorter

Mastering the Word: Devotional Time/Quiet Time

book from the Bible. Consider one of the minor prophets or one of Paul's short epistles.

- a. To realize His presence.
- b. To be cleansed.
- c. To worship Him.

2. PRAY FOR OTHERS

- a. Ask specific things for them.
- b. Use Paul's prayers for others.
- c. Ask for others what you are praying for yourself.

3. PRAY FOR YOURSELF

- a. Guidance and wisdom.
- b. Godliness.
- c. Concerns and needs.

Two Questions

The result of your day of prayer should be answers to the two questions Paul asked the Lord on the Damascus road (Acts 22:6-10). Paul's first question was, "Who are you, Lord?" The Lord replied, "I am Jesus." You will be seeking to know Him, to find out who He is.

The second question Paul asked was, "What shall I do, Lord?" The

Lord answered him specifically. This should be answered or reconfirmed for you in that part of the day when you unhurriedly seek His will for you.



Further Study

To go deeper, here is a suggestion. Below is Bible study on the topic of having a daily quiet time. Study the recommended passages (and add some of your own) and then work to answer these three questions:

1. What do I see? (Observation) - This is always the most challenging portion of Bible study, which most people give only cursory attention to (unfortunately). The key to doing Bible study is "training the eye to see." Seeing correctly helps you Interpret correctly and so on. Environment - what it is like to be in the author's shoes.
2. What does it mean? (Interpretation) - What are the implications of what I just observed?
3. How does it work?

(Application) - Two things to look for in this process:

- a. How does it work for me?
- b. How does it work for others?

Recommended passages on spending intimate time with God:

Deut 6:4-9
 Joshua 1:8
 Psalm 5:3
 Psalm 16:1
 Psalm 19:7-11
 Psalm 27:4
 Psalm 42:1-2 (or the whole Psalm)
 Psalm 63:1-6
 Psalm 119:129-131 (or the whole Psalm)
 Psalm 139:23-24
 Psalm 143:8
 Prov 3:9-10
 Isaiah 50:4
 Jer 29:13
 Jer 31:3
 Hosea 6:6
 Matt 4:4
 Mark 1:35
 John 15:4
 Rom 12:1-2
 Phil 3:7-8
 Heb 4:16
 Rev 3:20

Bible Study

Welcome to the section on BIBLE STUDY. A great way to begin our discussion and training on Bible Study is to look at the import of the Bible.

THE BIBLE

This Book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the Way of Salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers.

Its doctrines are holy; its precepts are binding, its stories are true; and its decisions are immutable. Read it, to be wise; believe it, to be safe; and practice it, to be holy.

It contains light to direct you, food to sustain you, and comfort to cheer you.

It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter.

Here Paradise is restored, heaven is opened, and the gates of hell disclosed.

Christ is its grand object, our good its design, and the glory of God its end.

It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet.

Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully.

It is the mind of wealth, a paradise of glory, a river of pleasure.

It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the laborer, and condemns all who trifle with its contents.

A.W. Tozer said of God's Word:

"The great need of the hour among persons spiritually hungry is twofold: first, to know the Scriptures, apart from which no saving truth will be vouchsafed by our Lord; the second, to be enlightened by the Spirit,

apart from whom the Scriptures will not be understood."

Our challenge as believers is to become master workmen of God's Word who correctly understand it and apply it to daily living. Bible Study is the key and requires us to place ourselves in a training mindset that will work to discover God in His Word.

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15 NIV)

I. A TRAINING MINDSET

To appropriate truth in an experiential way requires discipline and effort on our part.

"Have nothing to do with

Bible Study

godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly." (1 Timothy 4:7 NIV)

"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." (Philippians 4:8 NIV)

2. GOD IS FOUND IN HIS WORD

God wants us to know Him, and to know Him, we must know His Word. He is found in His Word.

"But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31 NIV)

"Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." (John 17:3 NIV)

"If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." (John 14:7 NIV)

Bible study – Roll Up Your Sleeves
– Study so as to master

"For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the LORD, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel." (Ezra 7:10 NIV)

This is where you roll up your sleeves and wrestle with God until he blesses you from the Word. We exhort you to be like Jacob who continued to wrestle with the angel until the angel blessed him. Bible Study is wrestling with God's Word until the particular passage "blesses you."

This requires effort, discipline, and **WORK.**

"That night Jacob got up and

took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered. Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome." (Genesis 32:22-28 NIV)



Biblical Motivation

Why do we need personal Bible Study? Our faith must have a solid foundation which is God's Word.

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." (Matthew 7:24-27 NIV)

We must discover truth for ourselves. All of Romans 14 speaks to this. We also have the example of the

Bereans!

"Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true." (Acts 17:11 NIV)

Wisdom from God's Word is to be pursued and sought after!

"Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget my words or turn away from them. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding. Cherish her, and she will exalt you; embrace her, and she will honor you. She will give you a garland to grace your head and present you with a glorious crown. Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life." (Proverbs 4:5, 7-9, 13 NIV)

We must study so as to be Christ's disciple.

"To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, 'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'" (John 8:31-32 NIV)



Getting Launched

As we launch, it is helpful to have a common definition of what we mean by the term "Bible Study."

Dr. Howard Hendricks (Dallas Theological Seminary) has 3 components of Bible study:

1. Must be in written form.
2. Must require outside preparation.
3. Must have a forum of discussion.

What should be understood is that Bible Study is work!

Bible Study



Technical Point

I Recommend you read the primer on knowing why it's important to have a Scriptural foundation for what you believe. (see appendix)

Step 1 — Understand the principles of personal Bible study:

Bible Study forces you to validate your presuppositions from your youth. A presupposition is something you believe beforehand, in this case, it means something you believe before validating it for yourself in God's Word.

“When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.” (1 Corinthians 13:11-12 NIV)

When doing Bible Study, you must rely upon the Holy Spirit.

“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.” (John 16:12-15 NIV)

Bible Study must include outside preparation, have a written form, and have forum for discussion (H. Hendricks definition). There is something miraculous that occurs when you wrestle with God one-on-one over His Word. This concept is captured in the aforementioned wrestling with God until blessed by Word (Gen 32:22

-28).

Step 2 — Understand three simple goals of Bible Study.

1. Seek to honor Christ and His Word by making the Scriptures the source and foundation of our conclusions. What does this mean? It means avoiding commentaries and other sources outside the Bible at all costs. If you are having a trouble with a passage, keep wrestling with it asking God to help you figure it out. Believe that God's Holy Spirit will guide you into the Holy of Holies to find Truth.
2. Let the Scriptures stand alone as authoritative. God's Word is completely authoritative by itself. If you are having trouble understanding a passage, go to other passages in the Bible to figure it out. The Bible is the best commentary on the Bible.
3. Make sure your conclusions are Biblical. Seems like a dumb thing to say, but it is easy to take a narrative portion of the Bible where God is telling the story of what happening and then develop a conviction from the narrative rather from a doctrinal passage.

Example: Solomon was supposedly the wisest man in the Bible and he had multiple wives. Therefore it is okay to have multiple wives. However, Genesis is clear that God designed one man to become one flesh with one woman. Good examples of doctrinal passages are the Sermon on the Mount or Paul's Epistles. Look at what's being said by whom in what context for what reason.

Step 3 — Join (or even start your own) Bible Study. Some Bible Studies do not require you to do outside preparation, but we encourage you to prepare before each group gathering. This simple principle will make the Bible come ALIVE in newfound ways.

When starting out in Bible Study, it might be a good idea to start out with a study that is already developed that provides you questions and then has

you look up verses and answer questions. This is a good way to get used to searching through the Scriptures to answer questions.



Caution

Don't take short cuts. In Bible Study, the process of personal studying (wrestling) is as important or even more important than drawing conclusions. The exercise is what makes you strong.



Continuing Further

Now that we've taken off, we want to experience sustained flight in Bible Study.

Here are some things to try:

1. As you begin doing Bible Study, you will want to start building a Bible Study library of “helps” to help you correctly discern God's Word. These can found online or at a local Christian bookstore. We recommend you purchase them in the order presented, but do what serves your purposes. There is also Bible study software available that provides much of this same background information.
- Bible Dictionary
 - Bible Handbook
 - Exhaustive Concordance
 - Expository Dictionary (Vine's is the most common)
 - Topical Bible
- Don't forget to stay within your budget!

Two of the most common Bible study software programs are:

- Logos Bible Study Software
<http://www.logos.com>
This is a very sophisticated software package that comes in a variety of sizes.
- E-Sword
<http://www.e-sword.net>
This one is free to download and is very easy to use. There are a great many inexpensive add-ons available at <http://estudysource.com>
There are many free user created resources available at <http://BibleSupport.org>

Scripture Memorization

about the verse. Barrage the verse with questions.

- C. Look at the context of the verse.
- D. Paraphrase verse in order to fully grasp its meaning.
- E. Pray through the verse as you meditate.



Caution

Don't forget to REVIEW the verses you have previously learned. IN FACT, the key to successful Scripture memory is to Review, Review, Review.

3. Personal Daily Review

- A. Establish a review system that works for you.
- B. Review! Review! Review! Diligent daily review is a must. Repetition is the best way to engrave the verses on your memory.

4. Reviewing Memory Verses with Someone Else

- A. One person hold the other person's verse card and read the reference of the card. The other person then repeats the reference/topic and goes on to quote the entire verse, with the reference/topic again at the end. Then go to other verses in the same way.
- B. Make it your goal to repeat each verse word-perfect.



Continuing Further

Now that you have the basics down of Scripture Memory, let's go further.

- 1. The first thing to consider doing is to incorporate Scripture memory into your Bible study.
 - A. Every week you do Bible study, pick one or two verses from your Bible study that really capture the essence of what you studied or are the source of inspiration for a good application.
 - B. Memorize these verses.
- 2. Consider working through a Scripture memory program. There are many developed, but a good program to start with is The Navigator's "Topical Memory Program." You can

find this program at your local Christian book store or at the NavPress web page(<http://www.navpress.com/>).

3. Another suggestion is to begin memorizing Scripture on key topics that will help you live the Victorious Christian life. here are some suggestions:

- A. Controlling your Tongue/ Language: Proverbs 10:19; Proverbs 17:27; Proverbs 25:15; Eccles. 5:1-7; Ephes. 4:29; James 3:9-10.
- B. Walking in Purity: Romans 6:13-14; Romans 6:19; Romans 13:12-14; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Cor. 6:12-13; 1 Cor. 6:18; Ephes. 5:1-5; 1 Thes. 4:3-4; 1 Thes. 4:7.
- C. Being a Good Financial Steward: Psalm 50:9-10; Proverbs 3:9-10; Proverbs 11:24-25; Proverbs 22:7; Proverbs 30:7-9; Malachi 3:8,10; 2 Cor. 9:6-7.

4. The most important thing you can do to continue on in Scripture memory is to set up a good Review System. (see Scripture Review System later on in this guide)



Remember

We encourage you to avoid these Mental Blocks to successful Scripture Memory:

Block #1: Expecting Scripture Memory to be some sort of secret formula to spiritual success. It certainly helps us live the Victorious Christian life and share our faith, but the Christian life involves more than a memory program. We must always remember the importance of Bible study, prayer, and obedience, among other things.

Block #2: Thinking you should set Goliath-size Scripture Memory goals. Stay conservative starting out and grow into more ambitious goals. Maybe a verse a week is a good place to start. Steady plodding will bring success.

Block #3: Failure to include a simple review system. Why memorize only to forget? Set time aside each day to review.



Further Study

For further study, we encourage you to consider memorizing entire books of the Bible or larger portions of Scripture.

Memorizing large sections of Scripture can give us new understanding of God's Word as we immerse ourselves in large contexts instead of the single ideas of isolated verses.

See next section to learn how to memorize large sections of Scripture.



Caution

If Memorizing Scripture Becomes Too Routine:

Don't get discouraged if your Scripture memory work begins to seem too routine. The process of recording Scripture on your mind and heart does have a mechanical aspect. It requires certain methods and a great deal of perseverance. But as long as the process of imprinting God's word on your heart is moving forward, the Scriptures will be continually be available for life-giving work.

There are helpful things you can do, however, if your Scripture memory program begins to seem lifeless. Try spending more time going over your verses in prayer and meditation. Also begin using the verses in your conversations or in letters. New freshness can come through sharing the Scriptures with others. Keep in mind that memorizing and meditation on the Scriptures is a practical way of making them available to the Holy Spirit to use in your life.

How to Memorize Large Sections of Scripture

Ready for a challenge? Here's one that will stretch your mind and your patience—but your spiritual life will prosper richly.

Memorizing entire books of the Bible can give us new understanding of God's Word as we immerse ourselves in large contexts instead of the single ideas of isolated verses. Accepting the challenge can rub off on other areas of our lives, and can deepen our love for God and His Word.

Here are some suggestions to help you adopt this engaging, fruitful discipline.

Getting Started

First, if Scripture memory hasn't been a significant part of your life in the past, don't try to dive right into memorizing whole books of the Bible. Start by memorizing a hundred or so individual verses on various topics. That will give you a well-rounded understanding of the Bible as a foundation for life, and will help you establish the discipline in your life before you take on the bigger challenge.

Second, don't take up Scripture memory to impress others. Your pride will show through, and the passages you memorize will have little effect on your life. If you tend to be proud, memorize and meditate on ten or twenty verses about pride, humility, and arrogance as part of your personal preparation for Scripture memory. Ask God to conform your heart and life to the lessons of those verses.

As you begin this process of memorizing large sections of Scripture, pay special attention to three prerequisites: intention, initiative, and interest.

Cultivate the intention to remember passages forever, not just temporarily. If you don't intend to remember them forever, you probably won't. This intention will help provide some of the motivation necessary to carry out the sometimes difficult, time-consuming procedures of memorizing large passages.

You must take the initiative to do this kind of Scripture memory. You'll need to exercise the spiritual fruit of self-control and, by the grace of God,

get yourself started. One reason people never complete a project like this is that they never begin.

Select a book or passage in which you have strong personal interest. It might be a favorite book, or one in which you already know a significant number of isolated verses. In any case, if you're not interested in the passage of Scripture, the chances of your memorizing it are slim.

Memorizing whole books of the Bible is no "quickie" exercise. Plan to spend one to three years on the project, even if it is a short book. You're not just learning words, you're trying to understand the content and integrate it into your life. That takes time. Since you're going to have to spend so much time in this book or passage, you need to select something that truly interests you.

Procedures and Practices

There are many ways to memorize Scripture. The following suggestions are intended to help you find ways to make memorizing large sections of Scripture more effective for you.

1. Get an Overview

Through a variety of methods, get an overview of the book you plan to memorize. This overview will help familiarize you with the content as well as the context of the book. Here are several methods I to get an overview:

- A. Read the book several times per day, or at least once each day, for the first few weeks after you decide to memorize it.
- B. Read the book aloud during some of your reading sessions. This way you'll incorporate more of your physical senses in the learning process: you'll see it, speak it, and hear it simultaneously.
- C. Listen to the book on a tape that you record. It helps to hear it in your own voice more than in someone else's. You can listen to it while driving, exercising, shaving, or at other free moments. In fact, try to do this daily throughout the entire memorizing process, not just during the

overview phase. You'll discover that the verses you memorize after listening to the book fifty to one hundred times are easier to memorize than the ones you memorized earlier in the project. And you'll find this tape very useful in the systematic review phase after you finish memorizing the book.

- D. Use Bible study techniques. Divide the book into natural divisions. These will probably be chapters or paragraphs. Do an inductive study of each division until, after several weeks or longer, you have carefully studied the entire book. This way you'll pick up the overall flow of the author's thought, and that flow will often help you remember what comes next when you're memorizing the book.

2. Memorize a "Skeleton"

During the overview phase, you'll probably discover some verses that seem to be keys to the book. Identify them and memorize them early in the project. If any other verses are special favorites of yours, memorize them. Or memorize verses that begin new paragraphs or chapters. Be sure to learn the references for these verses. You'll find later that these verses help you to know where you are when you're filling in other verse.

Visualizing the locations of your key verses on the pages of your Bible can also help you keep the units in proper sequence. You might photocopy the pages from your Bible and mark where the verses are on the pages. The photocopy will be easier to carry around than your entire Bible, and you'll still have the benefit of visualizing those pages when you memorize and review.

3. Fill in the Remainder

Once the skeleton is well-developed, pile on the meat. Consider each of the natural divisions that you studied in the overview phase as an individual unit, and memorize it as such. It is not necessary to memorize the verses in the units in sequence, that is, verse one before verse two. But when the unit is complete, be sure

How to Memorize Large Sections of Scripture

the verses are in proper sequence.

Neither is it necessary to memorize the units in sequence. You can memorize them whenever you like. But be sure that the units are in proper sequence when you finish the book. The skeleton that you memorized will help you keep the parts of the book in order. So will reading or listening to the entire book each day.

Make a list of all the verse reference numbers in the book. As you memorize them, mark them off your list. Not only will this help you know what's left to be done, but also it will be a great encouragement as you see the number of marked verses growing and the number of unmarked verses getting smaller.

4. Don't Rush

If you were in a big hurry, you might memorize a chapter a week. You might complete the book in less than a month. But would you really understand it? Would you have internalized it? Would it stay with you for the rest of your life? Would it be reshaping your life? Probably not.

I spent almost three years memorizing Ephesians. I averaged under a verse per week. But my goal wasn't to show others how much I could memorize (and hide from them how much I'd forget soon thereafter). It was to appreciate, understand, and practice the wonderful Word of God. That meant taking time.

5. Avoid a One-Track Mind

While memorizing a book of the Bible, keep up with other forms of Bible study and reading. Don't just memorize the book: read it, examine it, analyze it, and meditate on it. And pay attention to other portions of the Bible, too.

6. Aim at Word-Perfect Memorization

If I only memorize what I think, at a given time, are the ideas in a passage, then I'm limited to just those ideas until I make a fresh study of the passage. But passages of God's Word are infinitely rich in meaning and application. Knowing their exact wording will make us more receptive to all the ideas and applications we can get

from them.

Sometimes we'll go for years thinking that a particular passage has such-and-such a meaning. And then, one day, by noticing a certain turn of phrase or repetition of words in the passage, our understanding of it can be drastically changed. If we memorize the passages precisely as they stand in the Bible, we'll be prepared to notice that special detail that unlocks riches. If we only memorize the general impact of the passage on our minds, we're less likely to think it through objectively in the future.

7. Use Periodic and Systematic Review

As you work your way through a book, review regularly what you've accomplished. Set aside individual days, at regular intervals, when you'll work only on review, not on memorizing new verses. When you've completed the book, wait for at least a few months before you begin another. During those few months, review the book every day, either in its entirety or in units. And after you've begun a new book, go back to the other one often to review it again. Reciting it aloud can be especially helpful in this phase of the project.

If you don't review frequently and systematically, you'll probably lose part of the book. At the very least you'll lose the sharpness: It will no longer be word perfect.

You might do the review by reciting the book aloud to someone else and having him stop you to correct any error, no matter how small. Or you might write it out by memory and then compare what you've written with what's in your Bible.

Problems and Predicaments

You will undoubtedly encounter obstacles during this adventure in Scripture memory. The Enemy wants to thwart your progress, but the Holy Spirit wants you to put more of the Sword of the Spirit into your mind and heart. What are some of the obstacles, and what can you do about them?

1. I'm Bored!

It sounds almost sacrilegious to say

that you will likely become bored with the book you're memorizing. But don't be surprised when it happens. Memorizing a book in the Bible can be such a lengthy process that the content occasionally seems to lose its appeal.

Try pressing on anyway. Perhaps after several weeks of persevering through this obstacle, your interest will revive. The very boredom might have a positive effect: it might clear your mind of your preconceptions about the book and ready you for new insights. And when those new insights come, they can put new thrills into your memory work.

If your lack of interest continues, set this project aside for a few weeks and study something else. During these weeks it's still a good idea to read the book regularly, or listen to it on tape, so that you don't lose much of what you've already memorized.

After these few weeks, go back to the book you're memorizing, and take up the work where you left off, being sure to check the accuracy of your memory of what's gone before and to correct it if need requires. You may find that you have new and fresher interest in the book after your short time away from it.

2. I Don't Understand This Part!

You're bound to encounter, in any book of the Bible, some sections that you have trouble understanding. Memorize them anyway. Maybe you'll begin to understand them while you meditate on them. Or you might postpone memorizing them until you've memorized the rest of the book. Then your knowledge of the rest of the book will help you understand those difficult passages and make memorizing them easier. Or the passage may simply not make sense to you for years to come. Memorize it anyway: your chances of understanding it someday are much greater if you've memorized it than if you haven't.

Another thing you can do to increase your understanding of a passage is to pray for that understanding. God gives us this advice through Solomon:

"My son, if you accept my

How to Memorize Large Sections of Scripture

words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of Cod. For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding” (Prov. 2:1-6).

God promises understanding, but He puts a condition on the promise: that we “store up [His] commands within” us and search for the under-

standing as we would for silver. A prayer for understanding unaccompanied by diligent study and searching is empty.

3. I Can't Do It

If you begin by telling yourself you can't do it, and if you continue saying that in your mind, you'll begin to believe it. But my own experience and my observations of others tell me that many people can memorize whole books of the Bible, if they're willing to do the work necessary.

Instead of having the self-defeating attitude of the person who says, “I can't do it,” adopt the attitude of the Apostle Paul, who wrote,

“I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (Phil. 4:13).

Scripture Review System

A. Making your Scripture Memory Review Plan

1. Collect a box, some cards, and 39 dividers. (Any blank cards will do, but index cards or blank business cards work well.)
2. Write “New Verses” on one divider.
3. Write “Sunday” on one divider, “Monday” on another divider, and so on until you have one divider for each day of the week.
4. Use the remaining 31 dividers to write the numbers 1-31 on so that you have one divider representing each day of the month.
5. If you are memorizing by topics, each number can refer to a different topic (i.e., 1-Jesus Christ, 2-Holy Spirit etc.)
6. When you are first setting up your box, you will probably only have enough verses in the “New” and maybe the “Sunday” and “Monday” sections. (It depends on how many verses you have memorized.) Over time you will fill the remaining weekly sections up as well as

the 1-31 topics.

B. Working your Scripture Memory Review Plan

1. Daily (example)

If today were Thursday, February 8, you would take the verses from the “new” section and review them. You would then pull the verses from the “Thursday” section and review them. And lastly, you would take the verses from the section marked “8” and review them. The next day, Friday, February 9, you would again take the verses from the “new” section and review them, followed by taking the verses from the “Friday” section and review and finish with reviewing the verses from the section marked “9”.

2. Weekly

Establish a specific time and place each week to not only review your verses for that day but to “work your system.” To work your system, follow these steps:

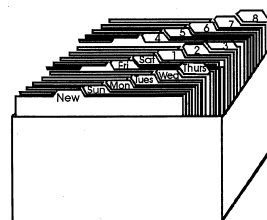
- a. Take the verses from your “Saturday” section (or which ever section is your last weekly section) and disperse them throughout the days of the month sections. Note: If you are memorizing by

Memorize the Word and Grow

The phases of the memorization process that I've suggested aren't distinct steps, each completed before moving on to the next. They blend and overlap. Some-times you'll be doing one phase with one portion of Scripture and another phase with another portion. Be flexible and persistent, and it will work.

Memorizing large passages of Scripture, or entire books, can help in your own spiritual growth and in your ministry to others. Why not start now? Which book would you choose?

by Ray Crawford of Baptist Student Union (originally published in “Discipleship Journal,” 1986).



topics then you can put the card in the appropriate number according

to the topic.

- b. Take the verses from your “Friday” section and move them to your “Saturday” section.
- c. Take the verses from your “Thursday” section and move them to your “Friday” section.
- d. Follow this progression until you have shifted each section of verses under a weekly heading to the next appropriate day of the week.
- e. When you have shifted the weekly sections, Sunday” (or your first weekly divider) will be empty. Take the verses that have been in the “New” section and put them in the “Sunday” section.
- f. Write down the new verses you want to memorize for that week and place them in the “New” section to be reviewed daily.

Bible Study

2. Up to this point, you have probably been doing a "fill in the blank" type of study that uses some type of workbook or guide with questions and space for answers. The next step will be for you to try doing one of these more in-depth types of studies. Check the appendix for examples explaining how to do each type of study. We encourage you to have a small group of folks with you to undertake each type of study.
 - ABC Bible Study
 - Character Bible Study
 - Topical Bible Study
3. Another option for you is to

visit the Christian Military Fellowship Website Bible Study page to complete one of our provided studies.



Further Study

To go deeper, attempt to do an Inductive Bible Study. This type of study can be the most rewarding study to conduct. However, they are not for the faint of heart. The study builds around 3 questions:

1. What do I see? (Observation) - This is always the most challenging portion of Bible study, which most people give only cursory attention to (unfortunately). The key to

doing Bible study is "training the eye to see." Seeing correctly helps you Interpret correctly and so on. Environment - what it is like to be in the author's shoes.

2. What does it mean? (Interpretation) - What are the implications of what I just observed?
3. How does it work? (Application) - Two things to look for in this process:
 - How does it work for me?
 - How does it work for others?

Scripture Memorization

Welcome to the section on SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION. For so many Christians, the prospect of memorizing Scripture seems quite intimidating; yet, it produces unlimited blessing. It nearly goes without saying that to be consistent in Scripture Memory takes discipline and tenacity. Many people start well, but soon peter out.

We want to encourage you to fully internalize God's Word through the blessed discipline of hiding His Word in your heart through Scripture memorization. If taken slowly and methodically, ANYONE can experience success! The key is to set reasonable goals and stick with it. Soon, it will become a habit that will bear untold benefit for your walk with God.

Believers in the Risen Lord want to know God fully through His Word. We want Him to dwell richly in our hearts and take up residence in every aspect of our lives. Yet, the world seeks to squeeze us into its own mold.

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Romans 12:2 NIV)

We can fight against the pull of the world by renewing our mind by letting the Word of Christ dwell richly in us.

"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." (Colossians 3:16 NIV)

Our struggle becomes letting God's Word dwell richly in us. I have a theory about how to go about this. If we merely hear the Word spoken to us in church or at some other location, we retain about 5-10% of what was shared. If we read the Word, we retain a little more, probably up to 10-30%, depending upon your reading comprehension. If we really study the Word, we retain much more of it, possibly up to 50-60% of what we studied. Yet, if we memorize the Word, we retain 100%! Wow—that's significant!

Are you convinced yet? Let's look at some passages from the Bible that speak to hiding God's Word in your heart through Scripture Memorization.



Biblical Motivation

What does the Bible say

about Scripture Memorization?

God commands us to know His Word and to incorporate it into our hearts.

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates." (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 NIV)

Scripture memory can help us lead obedient and holy lives apart from the world's sinfulness.

"How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." (Psalms 119:9, 11 NIV)

Scripture Memorization

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2 NIV)

Scripture memory is extremely beneficial in evangelism as God calls us to master His Word.

“As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:10-11 NIV)

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12 NIV)

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15 NIV)

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,” (1 Peter 3:15 NIV)

God’s Words are our lives; they are the gateway to a wonderful walk with Christ as we keep them close to our hearts. God’s Words are our lives; they are the gateway to a wonderful walk with Christ as we keep them close to our hearts.

“He said to them, “Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you—they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.”” (Deuteronomy 32:46-47 NIV)



Getting Launched

How that we have a Biblical basis for memorizing God’s Word, let’s figure out the basics of how to do it.



Remember

The two essentials of a successful Scripture memory program are:

- A. Consistently memorize new verses each week.
- B. Follow a daily program of reviewing the verses you have already memorized. (we’ll discuss a review program in the “Continuing Further” section (below).
 1. Memorizing a Verse
 - a. Write the reference of the verse on one side of a card. (index card, blank business card.....)
 - b. You can give the verse a topic title if you want to memorize by topics
 - c. Write the verse itself on the other side of the card.
 - d. Learn the reference and topic first.
 - e. After learning the reference/topic, learn the first phrase of the verse. Once you have learned the reference and first phrase and have repeated them correctly several times, add more phrases one by one.
 - f. Always include the reference/topic as part of the verse as you learn and review it. Repeat the refer-

ence both before and after the verse.

Scripture Memory Topics

1. Jesus Christ
2. Holy Spirit
3. God the Father
4. Salvation/Assurance
5. Eternal Life
6. Lordship/Obedience
7. Spirit-filled Life
8. Knowing God
9. Quiet Time
10. The Word
11. Scripture Memory/Meditation
12. Prayer
13. Fellowship
14. Purpose
15. Use of Time
16. Dealing with Sin/Temptation
17. Burden for the Lost
18. The Gospel
19. Spiritual Warfare/Battle
20. Promises
21. Walking by Faith
22. Evangelism
23. Great Commission/Vision
24. Discipleship/Modeling
25. Accountability
26. Leadership
27. Finances
28. Return of Christ
29. Relationships
30. Christ-like Character
31. The Tongue

2. Meditation — Key to fully acquiring the verse and allowing it to renew our minds is to meditate on the verse. You do that by dwelling on the verse in your mind and in your heart.

- A. Word by word examination. Look at every word in the verse and ask yourself, “Why did God place that word there?”
- B. Ask questions—who, what, when, where, why, and how

Stewardship

Welcome to the section on Being God's Steward in Finances and Possessions. This is important because Jesus said that where your treasures are, there also is your heart. As a result of this lesson you will be able to prioritize your possession to put God first. This will not be easy and some thoughts jump out.

How about some questions to get us going:

What does being a good steward mean?

What do I have to offer? Time, Talent, Finance, and more.

What is my role and what is God's role?

Am I content in the situation that God placed me in?



Biblical Motivation

Treasures in Heaven

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21 NIV)

Treasures in Heaven

"Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them." (Matthew 25:14 NIV)

God Owns It Anyway

"For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills." (Psalms 50:10 NIV)

Jesus was very interested that His followers placed their trust in heaven and not in their worldly possessions.

What is on your calendar and what is in your budget describes your priorities? Would you say that your priorities are on earth or in heaven by what is on these two documents?

But what if you only have a little? God can multiply that little to make it enough for His purpose. Just ask the lad in Matthew 14.

Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."

"We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered. "Bring them here to me," he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. (Matthew 14:16-20 NIV)



Getting Launched

The following website has readings on the following topics and more:

<http://www.GiveWithJoy.org>

I would like to highlight and give comments on the first week's readings.

God is the Owner of everything.

God is the Provider of every good thing in your life.

Your role is to be the trustee, manager and steward of 100% of what God entrusts to you during your lifetime.

Don't become prideful about anything God has entrusted to you.

Even the poor are to give to God from what they have.

Set up a plan to faithfully give 10% OR MORE of your financial resources to the Lord's work.

God is the Owner of Everything

We have heard many times that God is the owner of the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10), but it is interesting to me that God had time to manage the affairs of two cows in a pagan country. Read 1 Samuel 6:7-12 to see how God directed these

cows. So, if God can direct these two cows, how much more will He direct the things that pertain to you? In fact, read Ephesians 3:20 to find that He is more than able to accomplish everything that pertains to you. This thought should give you great comfort.

God is the Provider of every good thing in your life.

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights." (James 1:17a, NIV)

What is praise is the rent we owe God for what we have? If that is the case, we should be thanking God, the Provider, for what we have. I would like to give an Old Testament and a New Testament Scripture to support this. God became known as Jehovah Jirah in Genesis 22:14 when He provided the lamb for Abraham. In Philippians 4: 19 we find that God will provide for all of our needs according to His riches in glory.

Your role is to be the trustee, manager and steward of 100% of what God entrusts to you during your lifetime.

This responsibility started in the Garden of Eden at the Creation (Genesis 1:29-30) and extends today. We are the hands and feet of God and He uses us to accomplish His mission. When we live under our salary we can have funds to support God's work. When our lifestyles exceed our salaries, we do not have any capability to support this important work.

Don't become prideful about anything God has entrusted to you.

God has blessed each one of us in many ways and we need to give him the glory and praise for each and every thing He has entrusted into our care.

Even the poor are to give to God from what they have.

Jesus told a story in Luke 21:1-4 of a widow who gave out of her poverty and gave everything she had to live on to the temple treasury. 1 Kings 17 tells of how a widow with no means was able to feed Elijah for a long

Stewardship

time. There are so many other stories of people being faithful and God providing for their needs.

Set up a plan to faithfully give 10% OR MORE of your financial resources to the Lord's work.

There are many Old Testament Scriptures that speak of the tithe. Four of the most quoted ones are listed.

“And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.” Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything. (Genesis 14:20 NIV)

Abram did this out of his heart, with no written guidance.

“Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year.” (Deuteronomy 14:22 NIV)

The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives.

“Do not hold back offerings from your granaries or your vats. “You must give me the firstborn of your sons.”” (Exodus 22:29 NIV)

You must be prompt in giving.

“Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the LORD Almighty. (Malachi 3:8-11 NIV)

However, many think that this ap-

plied to the Old Testament time only because Jesus said the following in Luke 11:42:

“Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.” (Luke 11:42 NIV)

Jesus was equating justice and love of God with the tithe.

10 BIBLICAL REASONS TO GIVE 10% OR MORE OF YOUR INCOME TO THE LORD'S WORK

By Brian Kluth, Pastor and founder of:
<http://www.MaximumGenerosity.org>
<http://www.GenerousLife.info>
<http://www.GiveWithJoy.org>

As materialism and consumerism have continually infiltrated our lives in recent decades, many people have drifted from any biblical moorings concerning their Christian giving. Here are 10 biblically-based reasons to make giving 10% or more of your income your highest financial priority in life.

1. It is a proven pattern of giving done by Christ followers for many generations.

In 1899, a bibliography was compiled of books related to systematic Christian giving. There were over 500 books listed in this bibliography from over 100 years ago, and yet many Christians today do not understand the importance of faithful giving.

Scriptures: Genesis 14:17-20, 28:16-22, Leviticus 27:30, Proverbs 3:9-10, Malachi 3:7-15, Matthew 23:23

2. It will help you reverence God more in your life.

If you showed me your check book records, I would be able to quickly tell you who or what you feel is important. By giving the best of what you have been given to God, you are expressing your allegiance to Him and you will grow in your respect for the Lord and His working in your life.

Scriptures: Deuteronomy 14:23, Malachi 1:6-8

3. It will bring God's wisdom and order to your finances.

If I get dressed in the morning and get the first button out of place on my shirt, all the rest of the buttons will be messed up. When it comes to finances, the first button to get in place is your giving. When you get this area in order, everything else follows. Giving is also the only known antidote for “affluenza” (the desire for more things) that permeates our world today.

Scriptures: Matthew 6:19-21, 24-34; Luke 12:16-21, 1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19; Ecclesiastes 5:10

4. It will serve as a practical reminder that God is the Owner of everything in your life.

By faithfully giving the Lord 10% or more of all you ever receive, you are actively acknowledging His ownership in your life. As someone once told me, “God owns it all and God loans it all.” We are not owners, only temporary possessors and managers of what God entrusts to us during our lifetime.

Scriptures: 1 Chronicles 29:11-18, Psalm 24:1-2, 50:10-12, Haggai 2:8

5. It will allow you to experience God's creative provisions.

One of the most amazing things about learning to faithfully give to the Lord is the joy so many people have experienced in receiving unexpected blessings in their lives. When you acknowledge God's ownership through your generous giving, you begin to experience His creative provisions in amazing ways.

Scriptures: 1 Kings 17, Proverbs 3:9-10, Malachi 3:7-15, Haggai 1:4-11, 2:15-19; Luke 6:38, Deuteronomy 28, Philippians 4:15-19, Mark 12:41-44

6. It will encourage your spiritual growth and trust in God.

There will be times when you will decide to be a faithful giver of what is in your hand, even when you have no idea how you will make it through the coming day, week, or month. But by going ahead and giving to God, your

Stewardship

trust in the Lord will grow and you will grow in your ability to see Him provide.

Scriptures: Deuteronomy 14:23, Proverbs 3:5-6, Malachi 3:8-10, Haggai 1:4-11, 2:15-19; 2 Corinthians 8:5

7. It will ensure you of treasure in heaven. Jesus encourages you to store up treasure in heaven.

The only way to do this is to live generously now. Someone once said, "We can't take it with us, but we can send it on ahead."

Scriptures: I Timothy 6:18-19, Matthew 6:19-21, Hebrews 6:10, III John 8, I Samuel 30:22

8. It will strengthen the work of your local church.

Many churches struggle for lack of finances. However, when people in a congregation gain a vision for being faithful givers to God at their local church, the whole spirit of a church begins to change – needs are met, people are cared for, more outreach begins to take place, and long-awaited improvements start to happen. God-given momentum builds as people honor the Lord through their giving at church.

Scriptures: Acts 2:42-47, 4:32; 2 Corinthians 9:12, 13

9. It will help provide the means to keep your pastor(s) and missionaries in full-time Christian.

It has always been God's plan that his servants are taken care of by his people. Across America and the world, many pastors and missionaries are struggling financially or are even leaving the ministry because of a lack of adequate finances. Your faithful giving can make sure this doesn't happen among the pastors or missionaries you know.

Scriptures: I Corinthians 9:9-11, 14; I Timothy 5:17-18, III John 5-8, Philemon 4:15-19, Galatians 6:6, Luke 8:3, II Kings 4:8-10

10. It will help accomplish needed building projects and renovations.

Some of the most exciting times in the life of a church or ministry occur when facilities are being improved or

expanded. But for building projects to succeed, large extraordinary gifts are needed. Building projects only happen well with special gifts that are "above and beyond" people's normal giving.

Scriptures: 2 Chronicles 24:4-14, Exodus 35:36; II Kings 12:2-16, Ezra 1:4-6, I Chronicles 29:2-19

Copyright Brian Kluth GiveWith-Truth: Used by permission

What do I have to Offer?

We have our very lives to offer as we are witnesses wherever we are. (Acts 1:8) However, to be more specific, we have time, our talents, and our tithes.

The time is important because everyone only has a certain amount of time and how we use our time is indicative of our priority. Do we have time for daily devotions and prayer? Is there time for volunteering to meet the needs of our community? Do we make time to attend church and church-related activities?

We all have a talent that can be used in the service of our Lord. We can help in the various areas of church from greeters to child care to helping maintain the facility. We can be part of the prayer teams and of the choir. The opportunities to serve are limitless.

The tithe and offering are very important. We can give of our resources to benefit the local and global programs of our church. Our giving shows that we put our service to God in an important role in our lives.

What is my role and what is God's role?

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said that where your treasures are, there is also your heart. We need to use our treasures and not hide them or store them in barns.

"Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.' "But God said

to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'" (Luke 12:18-20 NIV)

Another role that we have is to be content in whatever circumstance we are in. (Philippians 4). If we can be content, then we can be in a position to receive more blessings. However, if we are complaining, we may rob God of the opportunity to bless us.

God has a responsibility as stated in John 10:10 to give us an abundant life. This means different things to different people, but an abundant life is definitely a life that is exciting to live. God has the responsibility of Philippians 4:19 to supply all of our needs according to his riches in glory.

Finally, we are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus (Romans 8:37). What a great series of things God will do for those who are called according to His purpose.



Suggestion

Jesus has promised that if you seek first His Kingdom and His Righteousness, that all other things will be added to you as well. What a great promise.

Always begin every budget or planning session with Prayer and invite the Holy Spirit to help you stay on track.

I have some practical tips that worked well for me in the military. We have a very steady paycheck and we are able to plan our income much more assuredly than can salesmen, farmers, and many other professions. In fact, when we budget, we make conscious decisions concerning where our money will be used. It becomes easier to live on 90% with God than on 100% without God.

1. My wife and I made a tithe to be part of my salary early on in our marriage. Because of the unique funding of the chapel program, I did not give the entire tithe to the chapel, but funded other religious organizations. We tithed off of the gross paycheck. Some tithe off

Stewardship

of the net salary. I do not think that it matters as long as you do it with your heart and not out of obligation.

2. I gave the first fruits to the Lord. My first month's pay raises was given as a first fruit offering. This is not necessary, but something that we wanted to do.
3. In addition to my tithe, we gave offerings as required by the local body of believers.

Summary

Your calendar and your budget are very important indicators of how do serve the Lord and whom you love first.



Caution

We have discussed many blessings of tithing. Yet, the Bible does not always guarantee that we will have physical blessings that accompany our tithes.

Here are a couple of thoughts con-

cerning making God first even when the circumstances do not indicate great blessings. First, we worship God for Who He is and not what He gives. The verses in Habakkuk remind us of that. Second, God will redeem that which is lost if we are faithful. That might not happen tomorrow, but it will happen and the verses in Joel remind us of that fact.

“Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior.” (Habakkuk 3:17-18 NIV)

Joel 1:1 describes a woeful situation for the farmers.

“Despair, you farmers, wail, you vine growers; grieve for the wheat and the barley, because the harvest of the

field is destroyed.” (Joel 1:11 NIV)

But Joel 2:25-27 describes how the Lord has redeemed the situation.

“I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten—the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm—my great army that I sent among you. You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed. Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the LORD your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed.” (Joel 2:25-27 NIV)

Hopefully this study has helped to understand your responsibility to be good stewards for the possessions God has given you.

Appendix — Appendix — Appendix — Appendix — Appendix — Appendix

A Primer on What You Believe (Convictions) and Why

I ASK THE QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE AND WHY DO YOU BELIEVE IT?

Many of us often move through life doing things or saying things that really have little Scriptural basis in our own lives.

Example: Our views on –

- Drinking
- Dancing
- R rated movies
- Abortion
- Taxes
- Politics

We can find ourselves having beliefs and convictions that are based upon opinions and mainstream religious viewpoints. What's missing? These beliefs and convictions, while potentially “on target,” are not anchored in

God's Word.

We do not want it to be said of us what was said by Jesus of the Sadducees?

Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.” (Matthew 22:29 NIV)

Without God's Word anchored in our lives, we do not have a solid foundation. House built on THE SAND V. THE ROCK.

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation

on the rock.” (Matthew 7:24-25 NIV)

Our faith is weak and shallow; we do not have spiritual staying power! The PARABLE OF THE SOWER – Speaks to Spiritual Peril:

Then he told them many things in parables, saying: “A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good

A Primer on What You Believe (Convictions) and Why

soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. **Whoever has ears, let them hear."** (Matthew 13:3-9 NIV)

"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown." (Matthew 13:18-23 NIV)

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE AND WHY DO YOU BELIEVE IT? DO YOU OWN ALL THAT YOU SAY YOU BELIEVE?

What are your convictions? Your convictions dictate what you believe and how you live your life. Let's look at a couple of Greek words to understand this better.

Ginosko v. Epiginosko

Let's explore this idea of your convictions – and the relationship of what you know and how you live your life.

You must learn and know God's Word. Your faith and beliefs must be based upon God's truth.

There are two basic words for "knowing" in the New Testament.

Compare:

<<ginosko>> - to know (verb), or <<gnosis>> - (the word of) knowledge. Defined as to be taking in knowledge, to come to know, almost a scientific appreciation of fact, "head knowledge" or "book knowledge."

And <<epiginosko>> - to know (verb), or <<epignosis>> - experiential knowledge. Defined as to observe or fully perceive; sometimes implies a special participation in the object known, and gives greater weight to what is stated; lays stress on participation with the truth.

epignosis; gen. epignoseos, fem. noun from epiginosko (G1921), to recognize. It is more intens. than gnosis (G1108), knowledge, because it expresses a more thorough participation in the acquiring of knowledge on the part of the learner. In the NT, it often refers to knowledge which very powerfully influences the form of religious life, a knowledge laying claim to personal involvement. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary, General Editor: Spiros Zodhiates, Th.D)

Examples of each from Scripture:

<<gnosis>>

"For although they knew <<gnosis>> God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened." (Romans 1:21 NIV)

"For in him you have been enriched in every way--with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge <<gnosis>>" (1 Corinthians 1:5 NIV)

"Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that "We all possess knowledge <<gnosis>>." But knowledge <<gnosis>> puffs up while love builds up." (1 Corinthians 8:1 NIV)

<<epignosis>>

"And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge

<<epignosis>> and depth of insight," (Philippians 1:9 NIV)

"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge <<epignosis>> of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives," (Colossians 1:9 NIV)

"I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in 'deepening your understanding' <<epignosis>> of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ." (Philemon 1:6 NIV)

When we think, therefore, of experiential knowledge, we think being active in the appropriation of truth, such that it becomes a part of our lives. This is our goal in the Christian life, to not only have head knowledge (which is important), but to also have that knowledge fully embedded into our hearts through experiencing this knowledge by living it out.

OUR CHALLENGE

Our challenge is, therefore, to know God experientially. How?

In sports, we gain proficiency through the process of combining skills/knowledge and training.

The same is true spiritually. We need to:

1. Go into training (requires disciplined effort and a training mindset)
2. Acquire knowledge; All knowledge of God begins in His Word. The best way to do this is through personal Bible study.

"Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly." (1 Timothy 4:7 NIV)

How to Do the ABC Bible Study

“When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, LORD God Almighty.” (Jeremiah 15:16 NIV)

Today, centuries later, personal Bible study allows us to experience the joy and delight in God's Word which Jeremiah spoke of.

The ABC Bible Study plan is one of the most basic tools for analytical Bible study, and gives the Holy Spirit opportunity to speak to you directly from the Scriptures. It is best in this basic Bible study format not to refer to commentaries or other reference materials. Learn to glean truth from the Scriptures on your own. You may refer to other reference materials later.

Getting Started

Choose a passage or chapter from the New Testament for your study. Before you do any writing, prayerfully read the chosen study portion at least three times. You may read silently, then aloud, then pausing at the end of each verse to reflect on what you have read.

It is better to do the entire ABC study in rough draft form first. Then organize it neatly under the five following sections, each identified by a letter of the alphabet. The sections need not be done in the order shown.

A. A Title

You may want to write your title after you have finished the rest of your study. In choosing a title, jot down two or three titles that come to mind as you study; then either select the best one from this list or form a new one from a combination of your suggestions. The titles should fit the chapter and be as complete as possible.

Your aim is to look for a title that clearly identifies the passage's content, not for one that's catchy. It should not exceed eleven words and may be just one or two.

B. Best Verse or Basic Passage.

Decide whether you are choosing a

Best Verse or a Basic Passage. Write the reference of the verse or verses under the section heading.

The Best Verse is a single reference that seems most outstanding to you as you read through the passage or chapter, even though it may not contain the central theme. The Basic Passage is a verse or a group of verses (no more than three) which includes the central message or is the key to the contents of the passage.

C. Challenge

As you work through the passage this time, ask God to challenge your heart in a personal way from some portion of what you are studying. Your purpose now is to accept this challenge and apply its truth in a definite way to your life. It may be something that God wants you to do or stop doing, or an

attitude to develop. A habit may need to be formed or broken. You may need to incorporate some truth into your thinking.

Under the heading CHALLENGE, begin with the number of the verse or verses from which you are taking your challenge. First state in your own words the truth of the verse. Then tell how this challenge applies to you—what needs it reveals in your life, what shortcomings, transgressions, or neglects it indicates, or what new appreciation or understanding it opens up to you. Since the challenge is personal, use pronouns “I,” “me,” “my,” and “mine” in your writing.

Then state clearly what you plan to do about it. Tell what specific action you will take to correct the weakness, to build the needed quality in your life, or to increase your understanding of this truth.

Choose something practical you can do in the following week, instead of a long-term project. Your next Bible study will bring another challenge that you will want to work on.

This action step may be one of many things, such as writing a letter, memorizing a verse of Scripture on the subject, praying about a special need, doing a kindness, making an apology

and asking forgiveness, or carrying out a short-term project. Remember to depend on the Holy Spirit, who enables us to truly grow in our Christian life.

D. Difficulties

Consider each verse in your study passage. Does it speak of anything you could not explain to another person? If so, under the heading DIFFICULTIES write down the number of the verse and the question or problem it raises in your mind. Do not merely say, “I don't understand” or “Please explain,” but state the specific difficulty it presents to you.

If a difficulty can be answered by a little research (such as looking up a word in a dictionary), do the research and record the answer. Then you can share it with someone in your discussion group who might have a similar question.

E. Essence

In the last section of your study, you may choose to summarize or outline the passage under the heading ESSENCE. In either case, you should record only what the passage says, not what it means.

Rather than interpreting it, simply put in your own words what the Scripture actually says.

The summary is a brief condensation of the passage. You should summarize all parts of the passage equally, not giving too much space to one part and slighting another. One way to do this is to write one sentence in your rough draft for each successive thought in the passage, using your own words instead of the words of the text. Then condense your summary into fewer words, combining your sentences, and making them shorter. You should aim for an average of two to eight words per verse.

An outline divides a passage into its natural paragraphs and gives a brief title or heading to each section. Write down the verses included in each section (see below). List as many sub-points under each of the main headings as you need to define its content. As in the summary, include all parts of the

How to Do the ABC Bible Study

passage in good proportion. An outline may look like this:

- I. Main Heading or Title of This division (1:1-8)
 - A. Subpoint (verses 1-3)
 - B. Subpoint (verses 4-8)
2. Main Heading or Title of This Division (1:9-21)
 - A. Subpoint (verses 9-10)
 - B. Subpoint (verses 11-16)
 1. Sub-subpoint (verses 11-13)
 2. Sub-subpoint (verses 14-16)
 - C. Sub-subpoint (verses 17-21)

A Final Note

Again, your ABC Bible Study should include the following parts:

A TITLE

BEST VERSE or BASIC PASSAGE

CHALLENGE

DIFFICULTIES

ESSENCE

EXAMPLE PAGE

BOOK: Colossians STUDY PASSAGE: 3:1-11

A. TITLE: The Christian's New Life

B. BEST VERSE: Colossians 3:3

C. CHALLENGE :

VERSE OF THE CHALLENGE: Colossians 3:2

TRUTH OF THE CHALLENGE: My mind is to be occupied with godly thoughts and desires, not wanting what the world has to offer.

PERSONAL APPLICATION OF THE CHALLENGE: It's easy to think I must have certain things or live a certain way in the world's eyes to be happy. The world's propaganda seems to get to me. Then I get anxious when I don't get these things. This verse reminds me I need to set my mind to think God's way with God's values. This happens only as my mind is filled with His Word. I need to develop the habit of meditating on Scripture. This week I'll take one verse I have memorized and concentrate on using it to meditate on all week. I'll use 1 Corinthians 15:58.

D. DIFFICULTIES:

Vs. Difficulties

1. How has the Christian been raised with Christ?
What are the "things above" I am to seek?
2. How do I "set" my mind?
5. How can I "put to death" my earthly nature?
Do I do this actively, or does God bring it about in my life?
10. Why is it necessary to have my new nature "renewed in knowledge"?

E. ESSENCE

The New Life (Colossians 3: 1-11)

1. Centered in Christ (1-4)
 - a. Raised with Christ
 - i. Seek things above (1)
 - ii. 2. Set my mind on things above (2)
 - b. Appearing with Christ
 - i. I have died—my life is hidden with Christ (4)
 - ii. I will appear with Christ 4.
2. Contrast of old and new (5-11)
 - a. Old
 - i. The old character—put it to death (5-6)
 - ii. Old practices—put them away (7-9)
 - b. New
 - i. The new self in God's image (10)
 - ii. 2. No partiality in Christ (11)

How to Do a Bible Character Study

The Bible is alive with personality. It includes numerous accounts of the lives of individuals, and we can read about their relationships both to God and to one another. This inspired and infallible record has been preserved for us through the centuries, and is still a great source of teaching for us today. The Apostle Paul wrote,

“For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.” (Romans 15:4 NIV)

These Bible characters were real everyday humans like us. Even Elijah, one of the greatest men of all time, is described in this way:

“Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.” (James 5:17 NIV)

It was his life lived in obedience to God that made him great.

There is much to learn by studying how the lives of these individuals were touched by God, how they responded to God, what kinds of persons they became, and what mark they left on their times.

Getting Started

Follow these directions:

Scriptures Used

Once you have selected the person for your Bible Character Study, list the character's name (and any limitations on your study of that character) under the heading PERSON STUDIED. Then choose and list the passages of Scripture you will use for your study. A good Bible dictionary or encyclopedia or an exhaustive concordance will tell you where the person is mentioned. The index in a study Bible may also help. It is best to do your study in rough draft form first, and later to neatly organize it into final form.

Some people in the Bible have little written about them, and you will want

to include every reference to them in your study. Others, such as David, have so much written about them that you will have to select the passages you think are most significant. Use scratch paper as you look up various references; eliminate some and keep the others. When you have decided on the passages you will use, list them, and add a key thought for quick identification of each reference.

Biographical Sketch

Read each of your selected Scripture passages several times and meditate on them. Then begin writing a brief biography of the person. This will be mainly the facts of the character's life, without interpretation. Include such things as the meaning of his name, when and where he lived, and his family background. Record any unusual influences or environmental factors which shaped his life and thinking, as well as his occupation and his contemporaries and associates. What were the major events in his life? Mention the growth of his relationship with God, his crowning achievement and contribution, his influence on his nation and family, and anything else of interest about him.

When you have included everything you think belongs in his biographical sketch, rewrite it, condensing and rearranging parts as needed to make a one- to three-paragraph summary of his life.

Key Verse

Choose from your list of Scriptures a key verse for your subject's life. This will be a verse, or pair of verses, which more than any other sums up his life.

If you cannot find such a verse, then choose one which speaks of his outstanding characteristic. For example, a key verse summarizing Noah's life might be Hebrews 11:7, while one characterizing the life of Mary of Bethany could be John 12:3.

NOTE: A summary verse will probably come from your Scriptures chosen for study, while you may want to look elsewhere for a characteristic verse (Psalms or Proverbs, for example).

The key verse from your study might well be one you will want to memorize.

Leading Lesson

Read through your Scriptures and your biographical sketch again. What do you see as the leading lesson of this person's life?

Perhaps your key verse holds a clue to the leading lesson. It might be positive or negative, something worthy of following or something that should be avoided. The leading lessons in the lives of two women mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus Christ, for instance, might be the reward of faith for Rahab and the deceitfulness of idols in the case of Rachel.

When you have decided on the leading lesson for your subject, write it down and give a little background of the passage from which you chose it. Then tell why you think this is the leading lesson to be learned from this person's life.

Problems

As you study, some things may cross your mind that are problems to you—either about your subject or about God's dealings with him. List these things under the heading PROBLEMS.

Don't try to resolve them now; just write down the nature of your questions. Later you can track down some answers, or perhaps discover that God has not made the answers available to us.

Application

Review the other parts of your study and go back over the Scripture passages. Ask the Lord to show you some principle you should apply or some characteristic you need to build or strengthen—or avoid—in your life.

Write under the heading APPLICATION the principle or characteristic you have decided on through prayer, and include the Scripture passage from which it is taken.

Add a sentence or two about what needs to be corrected or improved in your life along the lines of this principle or characteristic. If you can refer

How to Do a Bible Character Study

to a specific example of the attitudes or actions you need to change, this will clarify your application and also help you see the changes in your life as you look back later.

Now record what you plan to do in cooperation with the Holy Spirit to help conform your life more into the image of Christ. Your part is to yield your will to Him and take steps to obey what He has shown you in His Word.

Your step of action might be to do more Bible study on certain subjects, spend a stated time in intercessory prayer, visit the sick, do something practical for the needy, or any number of things, according to the need you have recognized. If, for example, your need is for self-sacrificing care for others, you might plan to deprive yourself of funds, leisure time, or privileges in order to spend those resources on someone who cannot repay you. Ideas for carrying out your application will come as you seek them.

Summary

Your Bible Character Study should include these headings:

PERSON STUDIED

SCRIPTURES USED

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

KEY VERSE

LEADING LESSON

PROBLEMS

APPLICATION

Character Study can be most rewarding when worked out individually and later discussed in a group.

Groups of two to eight persons are best; more than eight could become unwieldy. Jot down any good ideas from others' studies that you can use in the future and share yours with them.

EXAMPLE OF CHARACTER STUDY

PERSON STUDIED: Nehemiah

SCRIPTURE USED:

Vs.	Key Thought
1:4	Intense feeling for the distress of his people
1:9	Claimed God's promise
2:5-9	Trusted God, yet planned in detail
2:20	Gave God credit for success
4:14	Taught fearful people to remember God and family
5:15	Set an unselfish example out of reverence for God
6:13	Enemies devised a plot to ruin his reputation
8:10	Encouraged the people to rejoice in God
13:14	Expressed desire for God's recognition
13:25	Harsh in dealing with sin among the people

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:

Nehemiah, whose name means "comfort of God," lived during the reign of the Persian King Artaxerxes. The events recorded in the Book of Nehemiah occurred around 445 to 433 B.C. Nehemiah was a cupbearer to King Artaxerxes, a job which required him to test the King's food for poisoning (International Standard Encyclopedia, p. 2131).

The city of Jerusalem had been destroyed to the point that the protective walls of the walls of the city needed reconstruction. Nehemiah was granted permission and all necessary provisions by Artaxerxes to rebuild the city. Under his direction, the wall was completed. During the time that Nehemiah served as governor in Jerusalem, he also challenged the Jews on such issues as unjust business practices and marrying foreign wives.

KEY VERSE: Neh. 2:17

Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace."

LEADING LESSON:

James 2:17 "In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."

Nehemiah is an example of a man who demonstrated his faith by his works. He believed God could overcome all obstacles in the way of rebuilding Jerusalem, and was willing to step out and act in light of that belief.

PROBLEMS:

Vs.	Identifying Questions
Nehemiah 4:5	Jesus taught us to pray for our enemies, not against them. Nehemiah prayed against his enemies. Was that right?
Nehemiah 13:25	How often is such harshness needed in dealing with sin?

APPLICATION:

Nehemiah was a man of action. He saw a need and even though it was costly and dangerous he took the opportunity to help meet the need.

I felt as I read the account of his life that willingness and availability make the difference. Though Nehemiah was a cup bearer and not a construction foreman, he was available to help build the wall at Jerusalem.

As an application, I am going to evaluate my attitudes and schedule in light of

How to Do a Bible Character Study

being available to needs. I realize I am not responsive to needs it they appear too big or difficult. But to trust God is to rely on His sufficiency and ability to overcome obstacles.

I now have some opportunities to help others, yet I haven't been very

available. This week I will prayerfully evaluate my schedule and make whatever changes are necessary to be free to help.

The opportunities for helping which I will consider include:

1. Joining the evangelism program at church.
2. Spending more time with Harry and Jim.
3. More involvement with the people in my Sunday School class.

How to Do a Topical Study

PURPOSE

A topical study is a study of what God's Word has to say regarding a specific topic. The advantage of a topical study is that it gives you the total picture of what the Word of God has to say on a particular subject.

PROCEDURE – Choose a topic. It may be one you've previously wanted to research, or it may be a current issue or problem on the job that you would like to see improved, changed or resolved.

1. Look up every relative passage on the subject you are studying
 - A. Use concordance, topical Bible, chain reference system in your Bible
 - B. Remember to look up related words. For example, if you are studying prayer, then also look up intercession, supplication, and petition.
 - C. Look for major topical passage and where it is first mentioned in the Bible.
2. As you read each passage, put down key verses on your notes with the truths you have gleaned from them.
 - A. Study each passage thoroughly.
 - B. Check context.
 - C. Determine main truths taught in this passage.
 - D. Record observations, new insights.
 - E. List key thoughts. Make a note of the references that generated your thoughts.
 - F. Define key terms.
 - G. Summarize.
 - H. Select a key verse. Write out,

then memorize, either your favorite verse or the one that best sums up the topic.

3. Organize material into an outline

Example: Spiritual Gifts

- A. Definition
- B. Purpose
- C. List of Spiritual Gifts and Their Definitions
- D. How to Discern Your Gift
4. Application – Make a personal application. Ask:
 - A. How do these truths apply to me?
 - B. What is my specific game plan?
 - C. What kind of checkup will I use to ensure I do what I want to?