

Don't Just Read Your Bible—Study It!

Principle #1: Pray for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit before you study.

Principle #2: Apply what you learn.

Question starters: Who, What, When, Where, Why, Whose, Which, How

5 P's

1. Choose a verse to study that has a life principle—a rule that governs a person's behavior.
Example: "Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another."
2. Take your verse through the following steps:
 - A. Principle: Write down your chosen principle.
 - B. Paraphrase: Restate the verse in your own words.
 - C. Personal Struggles: Write down areas where this has been a challenge to you personally.
 - D. Profit/Loss: List all the blessings you'd experience by following the principle.
List all the possible consequences if you disobey.
 - E. Plan of Action: Decide how you are going to carry out this principle.

Relational

1. Choose a passage of 1 or more verses.
2. Go verse by verse, asking yourself *What does this passage tell me about God?*
Write down your answers.
3. Read through the whole passage again, asking yourself:
What does this passage tell me about myself? Write down your answers.
4. Using a different color, add any impressions that come to you.
5. End by doing one or both of the following:
 - Write down what you believe God is telling you in these verses.
 - Write a personal application.

3 Passes

1. Choose a short passage.
2. Read it through once. Write down the main message you get from it.
3. Read it through a second time. Write down a different message.
4. Read it through a third time. Write down a different message.
5. End by doing one or both of the following:
 - Write down what you believe God is telling you in these verses.
 - Write a personal application.

3 Questions

1. Choose a verse or short passage.
2. Write down 3 questions for each verse.
3. Try to answer your questions. (You may not be able to answer all of them.)
4. Identify what you believe God is telling you in these verses.

6 Searches

1. Choose a passage.
2. Read the verses (or chapter) 6 times, each time searching for 1 thing.
Search 1: What I like
Search 2: What I don't understand
Search 3: What I learned about myself
Search 4: What I learned about God
Search 5: New thoughts
Search 6: What I should do

Q & A's

1. Choose a passage of 1 or 2 verses. Note: Avoid verses with questions.
2. Write down questions that can be answered by the text.
3. Use words from the text to answer the questions.
4. In a different color, write down any impressions that come to you.
5. End by doing one or both of the following:
 - Write down what you believe God is telling you in these verses.
 - Write a personal application.

Example: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

When were the heavens and the earth created? In the beginning.

Who created the heavens and the earth? God

How different society would be if people believed the first 5 words of the Bible.

What did God do in the beginning? Created the heavens and the earth.

What did God do to the heavens and the earth? Created them

Which heavens is this talking about?

What did God create? The heavens and the earth

Why is it that in studying science, some people are drawn to God, while others reject God and believe in evolution?

Message for me: If God can create the heavens and earth, He can create a new heart in me.

DPO's

1. Choose a passage or chapter to analyze.
2. Read one verse at a time, writing down--
 - A. Discoveries- What thoughts come to your mind?
 - B. Principles- General rules of life.
 - C. Questions- What do you wonder about? What isn't clear?
 - Put a ? in front of each question to make it easy to locate.
 - Leave a blank line after a question so you can add the answer later.
3. After you have finished **DPQing** the passage, look for answers to your questions in a commentary, concordance, or another reference book.
*Use a different colored pen for your answers.
4. Do one or more of the following:
 - Identify what you believe God is telling you in these verses.
 - Write a personal application.

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Example: Genesis 37:2-4 (The beginning of the story of Joseph)

37:2	There's tension between Joseph and the other brothers.
	"These are the generations of Jacob." The statement doesn't make sense to me
	since the next chapters are all focused on Joseph.
37:3	Jacob added to the problem by being partial to Joseph.
?	Joseph was not the youngest son. So why was he favored? Jacob enjoyed the
	companionship of Joseph, whose amiability and ideals made him so different
	from his brothers-- BC 1-428
	Parents should not show partiality toward their children.
37:4	Tattling on his brothers made Joseph part of the problem.
	The brothers envied Joseph, but Joseph and Benjamin's mother was dead.
	Message for me: I shouldn't envy others. I don't know what pain and
	problems they have gone through.
	Application: When I'm tempted to criticize someone, I should pray for them
	instead.

Biographical Study

1. Choose a person to study and decide on a complete or partial study.
2. Using the concordance, write down all the texts that refer to him.
3. Read the texts and write down your DPQs as you go along.
4. Using the **Character Qualities** below, identify the good/bad qualities he exhibited.
 - A. In a short study, identify the qualities in each verse adding an explanation.

For example:

Mt. 26:35	Determined	Peter said he'd never deny Jesus.
	Arrogant	He overestimated his ability to stay strong.
	Loving	He loved Jesus and wanted to be loyal to Him.

B. In a long study, you may want to just pick out his top 10 qualities and explain how he illustrated each.

6. Answer the **Analysis** questions on the next page.
7. **Main Lessons:** What are the main lessons you learned from this person's life?
8. **Personal Applications:** How can you apply this information to your own life?

Character Qualities

Positive

accepting	faithful
brave	fearless
calm	forgiving
caring	friendly
cautious	generous
cheerful	gentle
co-operative	hard-working
compassionate	helpful
considerate	honest
contented	humble
courageous	impartial
creative	industrious
dedicated	kind
dependable	loving
determined	loyal
devoted	meek
diligent	merciful
discerning	moral
disciplined	obedient
encouraging	observant
enduring	patient
energetic	peacemaking
enthusiastic	persistent
fair	positive

reliable
resolved
resourceful
respectful
reverent
self-controlled
self-sacrificing
sensitive
serving
sincere
submissive
sympathetic
thankful
thoughtful
trustworthy
uncomplaining
understanding
unwavering
upright
wise

Negative

angry	flattering	revengeful
arrogant	foolish	rude
bitter	forgetful	sarcastic
blasphemous	gluttonous	self-righteous
boastful	greedy	self-sufficient
brutal	harsh	selfish
careless	hypocritical	sly
coarse	idolatrous	stingy
cold	immoral	stubborn
complaining	impulsive	thoughtless
conceited	inattentive	timid
contriving	indifferent	undisciplined
covetous	insulting	unfair
cowardly	jealous	unfaithful
crafty	lazy	unforgiving
cruel	legalistic	unkind
deceitful	manipulative	unreliable
dishonest	mean	unthankful
disloyal	paranoid	untruthful
disobedient	power hungry	vain
disrespectful	prejudice	violent
doubting	proud	wavering
envious	rebellious	
fearful	resentful	

Biographical Study continued

Analysis

Background

1. What can you discover about his family and ancestry?
2. What was the condition of his country politically and spiritually during his lifetime?
3. What was his occupation?

Significant Events

4. Was there any great crisis in his life? How did he handle it?
5. What is he remembered for?
6. What crucial decisions did he have to make? How did they affect him/others?
7. Did any particular problem keep recurring in his life?
8. Where did he succeed?
9. Where did he fail?
10. What part did he play in the history of God's plan?

Tests of Character

11. What was he trying to do?
12. How did he respond to success?
13. How did he respond to difficulties?
14. What do you think he believed about life?

Relationships

15. How did he get along with others?
16. Who were his enemies?
17. What influence did he have on others? On his nation? On other nations?
18. Did his friends and family help or hinder him in serving the Lord?

Personality

19. What type of person was he?
20. Did his life show any positive growth over time?
21. In what area was his greatest battle: appetite, covetousness, or pride?
22. What were his particular sins and weaknesses?
23. What were the results of his sins and weaknesses?
24. Did he ever get victory over his sins and weaknesses?
25. Why do you think God wanted this person to be mentioned in the Bible?

Focus on Jesus

1. Pick a passage or chapter from the gospels where Jesus appears.
2. Answer the following questions:
 - A. **Background**-What has happened in the previous chapter and/or preceding verses?
 - B. **Setting**- Where is your chosen story taking place?
 - C. **Message/Action**- What did Jesus say or do?
 - D. **People's Response**- How did the people respond to Jesus?
 - E. **Jesus' Response**- How did Jesus respond to the people? What do you think He was feeling emotionally?
 - F. **Take-Away** - What did you learn about Jesus in this passage?

Parables

1. Pick a parable to analyze.
2. Consider the time and the place where the parable was given and what it would mean to the hearers.
3. Remember--Your conclusions should go along with the rest of the Bible.
4. Identify the following:
 - A. **Plot**- Write out the series of events that took place.
 - B. **Background**- What common practices of that time would apply to the story?
 - C. **Audience**- Who is listening to the story?
 - D. **Clues**- Are there any clues in the surrounding chapters/verses as to why Jesus gave this parable?
 - E. **Basic Lesson**- What lesson was Jesus trying to get across?
 - F. **Insight**- What additional or deeper truth does the Holy Spirit lead you to? (You may want to check a commentary to see if your ideas are similar to what others have found.)
5. Try illustrating the parable (**Picture It**) on a separate page- See if that brings out any further truth.
6. **Main Truth**: What message do you feel God is sending you through this parable?
7. **Personal Applications**: How can you apply this parable to your own life?

Picture It

After studying a verse or passage, illustrate or chart it any way you'd like. If you can, use colored pencils or pens. By using a more creative part of your brain, you may be surprised at what new ideas come to your mind.

Short Story Study

1. Choose a passage that contains a story.
2. Answer the following questions:
 - A. **Background**-What has happened in the previous chapter and/or preceding verses?
 - B. **Setting**- Where is the story taking place?
 - C. **Characters**- What individuals are part of the story?
 - D. **Plot**- Summarize briefly what happened.
 - E. **Conflicts**- List as many conflicts as you can. Conflicts can be--
 man vs. man man vs. nature man vs. self
 - F. **Resolution**- For each conflict listed above, decide how each was resolved (or not).
 - G. **Irony**- What was ironic about the story? (Irony is the unexpected twist.)
 - H. **Insight**- What lessons did you discover in this story?

Principles

1. Choose a passage to study.
2. Write down all the principles you discover.
3. Choose one to incorporate into your life over the next 24 hours.

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	5 Min.	15 Min.	30 Min.	1 Hour
5 P's	✓	✓		
Relational	✓	✓	✓	
3 Passes	✓			
3 Questions	✓			
6 Searches		✓	✓	
Q & A's	✓			
DPQ's		✓	✓	✓
Biographical Study			✓	✓
Focus on Jesus		✓	✓	
Parables	✓	✓		
Picture It	✓			
Short Story Study		✓	✓	
Principles	✓	✓	✓	✓

Credits: A number of Bible study methods were adapted from *Learn to Study the Bible* by Andy Deane. The biography method was taken from *Rick Warren's Bible Study Methods*.