

Three New Ways to Read the Bible

Week 4

IDEA #1 - Lock It in Your Mind and Heart!

A great way to engage with God's Word is going over one passage or verse over and over until it is deep in your soul. There are many ways to do this. Consider some of the following ways to lock God's Word in your soul:

- Pick a passage you love, or that convicts you, or that you really want to remember.
- Read it over and over in the course of a couple of weeks. Maybe you can make it a screensaver or put it on cards you will see around your house, in your car, and other places.
- Read it out loud over and over and really emphasize a different word or idea each time.
- Pray the passage...make it the cry of your heart!
- Make it into a song...make up your own tune.
- Share it with a few people. Recite it for them and tell them what it means to you.

IDEA #2 - Character Study

Choose a biblical character you want to learn more about. It could be David or Esther, Josiah or Mary, Isaiah or Ruth. Do a google search on (Best passages in the Bible about-NAME). Pick the top twenty or thirty passages and read them over the course of a week or two. As you do, ask some of the questions below and journal or gather your personal insights.

- What is his/her story?

- What was his/her relationship with God like?
- What good examples of faith do I learn from this person's life?
- What bad examples should I learn from this person's life and how can I avoid this pitfall?
- What primary characteristics marked this person's life?
- How did they relate with other people?
- What is one way I can live a better life for Jesus if I follow one example of this person?
- Other questions you have...

IDEA #3 - Topical Study

Choose a topic in the Bible that you are really interested in. It could be: Love, peace, grace, forgiveness, holiness, fear, anxiety, conflict, or any number of topics. Once you have picked a topic, follow this simple process:

1. Do a google search on (Best Bible passages about- YOUR TOPIC).
2. Read and reflect on the top 30-40 passages that come up in a couple of these lists (there will be a lot of overlap).
3. Keep notes of the key themes and lessons you learn about this topic from the passages you read.
4. Identify three to four "Mega Themes" that come up over and over.
5. Write down 2-3 lessons and life applications you want to live out from what you learned.
6. Share your insights with one trusted Christian friend and ask them to pray for you as you seek to live out what you learned from your topical study. Invite them to check in after a couple of weeks and see how you are living out these new insights in your daily life.

Week 3

IDEA #1 - Four Ideas to Make Bible Engagement Come Alive

1. Read a passage, chapter, or section of the Bible. Then, right after you read it, listen to the same passage using a Bible app. Take note of what pops out when you listen, that did not strike you as you read the same passage.
2. Decide on a certain Bible passage study. Then read it and really study it using a study Bible, a good commentary (ask a pastor for ideas. Also, the church has many commentaries you can borrow), then use the internet to learn more about the context of the world when that specific passage was written. This will give you a deep look at your passage.
3. Read a chapter in four or five different versions of the Bible and see if it helps you fully understand the passage. Most Bible Apps have many different translations available for free.
4. Get your mind in the right place before you read or listen to your Bible. Pray that the Holy Spirit of God will enlighten you to the truth of Scripture and the exact passage you are about to read. Ask the Spirit to show you real and life-changing ideas for application of what you learn from God's Word. (Pastor David)

IDEA # 2- Sprinkle the Bible through your week

1. Use the audio Bible feature and have it read while you are driving instead of listening to music or talk radio. This gives some good Bible time as brackets around work, school, or other activities.
2. Bring some headphones and do the same while out for a hike or walk. There is something about reflecting on the Psalms and other books of the Bible while enjoying God's creation
3. Put the audio Bible on as you lay down for the night and listen to God's Word as your eyes close for the day. Again, Psalms is my favorite for this.
4. Set a lunch time every week to go away from work and go somewhere quiet to read and meditate on God's Word.
5. Set a time to meet in person or Google Meet with another follower of Jesus to discuss what you are reading together from God's Word. Accountability goes a long way! (Pastor Shawn)

IDEA #3 - Dig Into The Book in Community

Join a Small Group or Bible Study where you and others can go deeper into studying God's Word. Ask hard questions, get the insights of other believers, and learn from their wisdom.

The Bible is relational. When we read it we are meant to meet and know God better. The Bible also leads us into community. Let's learn to read it with other believers. As we interact with the text of the Bible we get to know God better and we grow in community with His family. (John Broom, L-Team Member)

Week 2

IDEA #1- Read the Bible With Confidence and Take Action!

Don't fall for the lie that "the Bible is too difficult to understand so why bother." 2 Timothy 3:16,17 tells us that scripture trains all believers for the purpose of equipping them for every good work. Once we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we have the degree and credentials to be his hands and feet. According to this powerful passage, it is Scripture that equips us to be effectively prepared for all kinds of service. John 16:13-15 tells us that the Holy Spirit guides us into all truth and reveals the things of God to us. When we are willing to dig in and really study his word, God's Spirit will reveal what he wants us to know and understand.

Always look for personal application when you are reading Scripture. Hebrews 4:12 tells us God's Word will judge the thoughts and intentions of our hearts. The knowledge of God's Word and living it out are two different things. Even Satan knows what God has said. Be willing to examine your own life and live out what He teaches you every time you read the Bible. Live according to what you have learned from God. In Psalm 119:97-104 we learn that God's commandments (His Word) make us wise, restrain our feet from every evil way, and keep us from turning aside from God's ways. With this in mind, read the Bible every day confidently that God will speak to you. Then, commit to live out what God teaches you. (Barb Pina, Shoreline Member and Bible Teacher)

IDEA #2- Engage your Eyes, Hands, Mind, and Heart

AS you read your Bible (or listen to it), get engaged on multiple levels. Take time to journal what you are learning and what you will do. This can be on paper or on a phone or computer. When you do this, your hands and mind engage. I've found journaling to be a powerful way of engaging God's Word. I don't want to imply that I'm a prolific journal writer-

I'm not. But when I do journal, I start by writing the specific verse(s) from my devotion that really struck me. Then I write my reflections in this simple format:

"God, You said"...

"Lord, this is what I heard..."

By doing this, I engage on a more personal level as I read God's Word.

It is also helpful to visualize what we are reading or listening to the Bible. In addition, asking good questions engages our hearts and mind. When I read stories in the Bible, I try to visualize myself in the events - what would I have been thinking or feeling? For instance, I love visualizing the account of Peter walking on the water in Matthew 14. If I was one of the other disciples, what would I have been thinking? What would I have been saying to Peter? What would my reaction be when he actually got out of the boat or when Peter and Jesus got back in the boat? What would have prompted me to step out of the boat or what might have kept me from stepping out as Peter did? Each time you engage with the Bible, make it personal and use your hands, mind, eyes, imagination, and heart and the Scriptures will come alive! (Craig Evans, Shoreline Member and Bible Teacher)

IDEA #3- Read in Community and Read for Victory!

One way to read the Bible that has a high rate of success is doing it in tandem with someone you know. Set up a section of Scripture to read each day of the week. Agree to when you will do your reading (together or on your own). Then, check-in with each other daily until your Bible reading goal has been reached. Doing this will help you read thoroughly and thoughtfully since you know you will be discussing what you learned and what God said to you through His Word.

AS you read your Bible, there are times when it is really helpful to read and focus on small, bite-size pieces. If your goal is to read five chapters of the Bible a day, it is easy to get discouraged. If you set a goal to read one chapter, or really reflect on a few verses, success comes quicker and this establishes what is called a "victory hierarchy." This is a progressive reward for success that leads to wanting more. Remember, reading a small but focused portion of Scripture every day is better than setting massive goals and just giving up. Try reading in community and setting yourself up for a victory. (Pastor Dennis)

Week 1

IDEA #1- Neighborhood Bible Listening

Try using a mobile study tool like [Bible Gateway](#) to listen to God's Word. While you are walking your neighborhood, you can be listening to the Bible and praying for your neighbors. At the same time, you will be enjoying the beauty of God's creation...flowers, trees, birds, and people! Make mental notes of areas of scripture you want to go back and study further at a later time. What was a passage that spoke to you and you want to dig in and highlight in your own Bible? Let the message and truth of the Bible guide your prayer for your neighbors and our community. (Shared by Leadership Team Member, John Broom)

IDEA #2- A Daily Rhythm

Set aside the right time of day you are more likely to consistently read the Bible. It is important to set a goal of an amount of time that is reasonable for the stage of life that you are in, knowing that it is better to be consistent. It might be 5 minutes or it could be 30 minutes. The key is to set yourself up for success and consistency.

Consider using a good [Study Bible](#) to aid in your Bible reading. Be sure to read the notes in small print at the bottom of the page any time you don't know the meaning of a word, concept, or want historical context.

If you have time, you might want to collect a few journal notes from your study. You can keep these notes in your phone, a physical journal, or even in the margins of your Bible. Sometimes just a few sentences can capture key lessons and life-application.

As a bonus, you might want to challenge a family member or friend to be reading the same portion of Scripture and then you can share insights with each other and encourage one another to follow through on life applications. (Shared by Spiritual Formation and Discipleship Director, Sherry Harney)

IDEA #3- Learn to Listen

Spend time listening to the Bible through your day. Download a good [Bible App](#) that will read the Bible to you. Choose a portion of the Bible like Psalms, Proverbs, the Gospels... Then, use this audio Bible feature through your day and have it read:

- When you first wake up in the morning,
- As you get ready for your day,
- As you are driving to and from work (instead of listening to music or talk radio),
- Use some headphones and listen to the Bible while you hike, walk, or exercise,
- Finally, put the audio Bible on as you lay down for the night and listen to God's Word as your eyes close for the day.

(Shared by Shoreline Executive Pastor, Shawn Stroud)