

## The Devotional Method

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Week 3  
Bible Study Methods  
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### Introduction

As we have already learned the past two weeks, the ultimate goal of Bible study is **APPLICATION**. Since God wants to change our lives through His Word, it is important to learn how to apply scripture to our lives, before learning any other methods of Bible study.

The techniques we cover today will be used in each of the following methods.

Regardless of which Bible Study method you use, at the end of each study you will need to make practical steps of application.

### Definition

The *Devotional Method of Bible Study* involves taking a passage of the Bible (short or long) and prayerfully meditating on it until the Holy Spirit shows you a way to apply its truth.

### Let's go through the Form

#### *Pray for Insight on How to Apply the Passage*

Ask God to help you apply the scripture and show you specifically what he wants you to do. In your prayer, reiterate to God your commitment to obey and apply this passage in meaningful way.

#### *Meditate on the Verse*

Meditation is the key to discovering how to apply Scripture to your life. Meditation is essentially "thought" digestion. You take a thought that God has given you, put it in your mind and think on it over and over again.

Meditation may be compared to rumination; a cow chewing its cud. Eats grass, sends it to its stomach, brings it back up to chew on it some more, swallows again. Repeats 3 times.

#### *Some practical techniques:*

1. Imagine the scene of the story

Put yourself into the character you are reading's shoes.

Try to see yourself as active participant.

"How would I feel?" "What would I do?"

2. Emphasize different words in the passage

Read through the verse aloud several times, each time emphasizing a different word, and watch new meanings develop.

Ex) Phil. 4:13

3. Paraphrase the passage

Rewrite the passage in your own words.

4. Personalize the passage

Replace nouns and pronouns with your Name and I, Me, etc...

Ex) John 3:16 – "For God so love Randy, that he gave...that if I believe in him, I will not perish..."

5. **PACE** your **STEPS** acronym. Are there any...

Promises to claim? Is it a universal promise? Have I met the condition(s)?

Attitudes to change? Am I willing to work on a negative attitude and begin building a positive one?

Commands to obey? Am I willing to do it no matter how I feel?

Example to follow? Is it a positive example for to copy or a negative one to avoid?

*your*

Sin to confess? Do I need to make any amends?

Truth to believe? What new things can I learn about God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, or other Biblical teachings?

Error to Avoid? Is there any problem that I be alert to, or beware of?

Prayer to pray? Is there anything I need to pray back to God?

Something to praise God for? Is there something here I can be thankful for?

6. Pray the verse back to God

Put the passage back into first person singular, turn it into a prayer and pray it back to God.

Ex) Psalm 23

Which one to you use when studying? The one that fits best, or a combination of them.

**Application is necessary**

1. You can't really **KNOW** the Word of God unless you apply it to your life.

Jesus often encountered the Pharisees and the Sadducees during his ministry. These people were the religious scholars of his day. One time, the Sadducees attempted to trap Jesus in a doctrinal debate by asking a "trick" question. Jesus responded:

**Matt. 22:29** - "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or power of God

While the Sadducees (and the Pharisees too for that matter) had intellectual knowledge, they did not apply the principles. If you study the Word of God, but don't put it into practice, you are no better than a Pharisee.

2. Studying the Word of God can be **DANGEROUS**

The Bible says knowledge puffs up...leads to arrogance. The Devil knows the Word intellectually and we know that he is puffed up with pride and is arrogant.

**I Cor. 8:1** – "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up."

Time and again we are told that knowledge requires action.

**James 1:22** – "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

**Matt. 7:24** – "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice [action] is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

**Psalm 119:59-60** – "I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes. I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands."

Knowledge increase **RESPONSIBILITY**. If you get serious about studying the Bible, you will be held more accountable.

**James 4:17** – "Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do, sins"

When you start studying the Bible, God shows you areas of your life that need changing and calls you to greater responsibility. If you don't plan on applying what you learn, you may as well not study at all.

## Application is Hard Work Because...

1. It Requires **SERIOUS THINKING**

Sometimes it takes a long period of meditation (concentrated, prayerful thinking) before we see a way to apply a truth of Scripture.

Sometime it means looking beneath a temporary rule to see a timeless principle.

Sometimes it means looking beyond a local custom to see a universal insight.

2. Satan **FIGHTS** it viciously

Satan knows that as long as you are content with merely have head knowledge of the Word, you are not much of a threat.

3. We naturally resist **CHANGE**

Often we don't "feel" like changing. We live by our emotions, rather than our wills..and thus we are content to stay the we are.

Feeling has nothing to do with the Christian life, for feelings come and go.

The key to spiritual maturity is to live for Jesus, not because we feel good, but because we know it is the right thing to do.

## Characteristics of an Application

1. My application should be **PERSONAL**

You should write it out in the first person singular. Use personal pronouns I, ME, MY, and MINE.

2. My application should be **PRACTICAL**

It ought to be something you can do. Plan a definite course of action. Make is as specific as possible because generalities can make you feel helpless and produce little action.

3. My application should be **POSSIBLE**

It should be something you can accomplish. Otherwise you will get discouraged. Sometimes we get to idealistic here.

4. My application should be **PROVABLE**

You must set some sort of follow-up to check up your success in your application. It has to be **MEASURABLE** so that you will know that you have done it.

## Memorize

## LET'S GO THROUGH AN EXAMPLE