


How to Study the Bible for Application | Application

This application provides various practical ways to implement the truth of Scripture in everyday life. If these practices are new to you, rather than become discouraged or overwhelmed, persevere by asking God to equip and enable you to be successful in this training, trusting you will reap many benefits.

Method 1: TEACHING, REBUKING, CORRECTING, TRAINING

 **READ: 2 Timothy 3:16-17**

Since it is the Word of God that thoroughly equip us for every good work, it is important that we take the time to study it for application.

 **ACTION:** Practice studying the Bible for application by walking out the steps below:


1. Consider whether each of the following verses is trying to teach, rebuke, correct, or train.
2. Then, write out practical applications next to the corresponding verses.

Joshua 23:6-8


Psalm 89:1-2

1 Corinthians 15:1-2

Method 2: DO

 **John 15:14; James 1:22-23**

A person who practices biblical truth is a “doer” of God’s Word. A way to help recognize application and obedience to truth is by using the letters D and O in the word “DO”. The letter D stands for the word difference, and the letter O represents the word obedience.

 **ACTION:** As you study God’s Word, ask yourself two questions regarding difference and obedience:

1. First, what difference, or needed change, should knowing this truth make in my personal life? How should it change the way I think, talk, act?
2. Second, what steps do I need to take in order to walk in obedience to God’s truth?

Let’s practice this method, using **Hebrews 13:8** - *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

Difference: Unlike the world, Jesus is unwavering, constant, true. In the same way that God was faithful to His people throughout the Bible, He will prove faithful to me today.

Obedience: I will choose to remain steadfast, trusting fully in Jesus and His word rather than be influenced by the ever-changing culture around me. I will place my hope more fully in Jesus who never fails.

Psalm 139:13 - *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.*

Difference:

Obedience:

Psalm 27:1 - *The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?*

Difference:

Obedience:

Method 3: PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION

Another way to effectively study God's Word for application is to personally identify with the characters involved.

✦ Read the Scripture passages that follow, asking the Lord to show you the lessons He wants you learn from the people in each story.

Daniel 1:8-16

Exodus 4:10-13

Habakkuk 3:17-19

Method 4: IF/THEN

Deuteronomy 11:26-28

The Lord desires His best for His children, and His Word always reflects His best. God's best is for us to follow His directives so, in turn, we will experience His blessings. As you study Scripture, you can often identify God's specific, desired action for obedience and the blessing that will result from that obedience.

Because obedience precedes blessing, it is valuable to train yourself to identify both the desired act of obedience and the promised blessings resulting from obedience found in God's Word. (God's desired expectations for obedience are sometimes noted in Scripture by the word "if", and blessings are, at times, identified following the word "then".)

- ✦ Use the Bible passages below to first identify a divine expectation, then the promised blessing as it applies today. (The first one has been completed as an example for you to follow.)

Deuteronomy 11:22-23 *If you carefully observe all these commands I am giving you to follow—to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways and to hold fast to him—then the Lord will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations larger and stronger than you.*

- **Divine Expectation/Choice:** Whether or not to carefully and intentionally observe each and every one of the Lord's commands by walking in all His ways and holding fast to Him without wavering.
- **Promised Blessing:** Almighty God will go before me, driving out all obstacles that are in the way of possessing what He desires for me to have.

Romans 12:2 *Do not conform any longer 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.*

- **Divine Expectation/Choice:**
- **Promised Blessing:**

Romans 8:12-13 *Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.*

- **Divine Expectation/Choice:**
- **Promised Blessing:**

Method 5: CHAPTER and VERSE

Keep in mind that application of truth is the primary goal of Bible study. This means that even though you may be studying a large section of Scripture, you'll want to break the passage into smaller groupings of verses to more easily recognize application. When studying the Bible, particularly in this fashion, it can be valuable to first consider the individual book's author, the time and surrounding circumstances in which it was written, and who the book was written to or about. This information will assist you in studying Scripture in its correct context and is included in many Bibles at the beginning of each book.

As you read a chapter from the Bible, think about the overall subject or theme and write it on a piece of paper. Then, consider how the chapter could be divided into smaller sections or groups of verses by identifying a change in thought or direction. (Since personal application of the same Scripture passage may differ from one person to another, the outline God provides you may be different from someone else's.) Distinguish each section by providing a short theme that describes the general subject matter it contains. Then, write each theme with its corresponding verses under the original chapter theme.

Further examine these smaller sections of verses individually by relying on the Holy Spirit for insight into personal application. Using either statements or questions, write out what the Spirit reveals to you. Then, put into practice what you've learned. This may seem like a lot to do in order to study a chapter. Yet, finding specific principles within a larger context of Scripture will reveal application.

To understand this method of study, let's examine what it might look like to separate the first chapter of the Book of Jonah into smaller sections, identify themes, and then create statements and questions that could be used for application.

Theme: Jonah's Journey Begins

Jonah 1:1–3 Jonah Tries to Flee from the Lord (*section theme*)

- What are my typical reactions when God reveals His will to me? Do I try to run from the Lord?
- Since my actions reveal my heart motive, I should invite the Lord to consistently evaluate my heart motive.

Jonah 1:4–7 Jonah's Rebellion Results in Distress (*section theme*)

- What do my actions say to others concerning my relationship with God?
- My individual choices can affect others. Therefore, I should choose to act under the authority of Christ.

Jonah 1:8–14 Challenging Circumstances Lead to Questions (*section theme*)

- In what ways might God use trying times to prompt me to consider my spiritual condition?
- God uses undesired consequences to move me to repentance.

Jonah 1:15–16 Jonah's Disobedience Results in Undesired Consequences (*section theme*)

- What is my typical response when I recognize disobedience in my life?
- When I choose to disobey, I miss the opportunity to honor God. When I recognize disobedience in my life, my response should be immediate repentance.

Jonah 1:17 God Is Eternally Faithful (*section theme*)

- Do I easily recognize and acknowledge God's supernatural provision in my life?
- Even when I fail, the Lord is faithful. God's provision is unlimited. God will orchestrate circumstances to encourage me to stop and prompt me to think.

In discipling others, advise them that this method is particularly helpful for visual learners who benefit from writing out thoughts and seeing steps presented on paper, and also for those who like to grasp an overall picture prior to

examining details. Even though the person you're mentoring may study a large passage of Scripture at one time, encourage them to take the necessary steps to apply each individual lesson within the passage.

➡️ **FISHING FOR MEN:** How would you explain to others the difference between merely studying the Bible and studying the Bible for application?

➡️ In what practical ways will you encourage those you disciple to focus on the blessings that result from following God's instructions rather than the time and effort it takes to do so?

✦ Teach each person you disciple a variety of methods of studying the Bible for application. Then, encourage them to use those methods that are most beneficial to their individual learning style and spiritual development.

⚡ **TO ENCOURAGE:** Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. **(1 Timothy 4:16)**