



How to Read the Bible and Understand It Yourself

As a young boy, all I knew about the Bible was that it was written in hard to understand English and there was a lot of pages. Reading the Bible can be a daunting task, but understanding the Bible can seem like an impossibility. However, it doesn't have to be that way.

You can read and understand the Bible for yourself without having a PhD in Theology or a seminary degree. You may have an outstanding Sunday school teacher who knows the Bible better than most pastors and feel like you could never match his or her knowledge of God's word, but I can guarantee that your confidence level will rise if you put into practice what I have written in this article.

This article is not designed to make an argument against teachers or preachers speaking into your life through God's word. On the contrary, I believe wholeheartedly in the preaching and teaching of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:1-4:5). I believe there is a place for this in every believer's life, but I also believe that we have attempted to make disciples by entirely relying on preachers and teachers from pulpits to classrooms to videos. Most of these teachers have wonderful knowledge, excellent communication skills and have been used by the Lord to teach millions. However, many have not intentionally equipped people with the tools for them to read the Bible on their own with confidence, insight and a vision to be a multiplying disciple of Jesus Christ. As a result, people guess what the Bible says, contribute very little in open discussion, get sucked into lies, spend little time discovering what the Bible says and never feel "smart" enough to lead a Bible study on their own.

The following is a way you can use to GROW your daily Bible reading and understanding. Pick a short book (like 1 John, James, Philippians or Jonah), get a journal or notebook and follow this simple outline. Once you get the hang of it, try it with larger books. The key is going at a pace that fits you, praying through your reading asking the Lord to give you insight and then applying the Scripture. Don't look at other passages but only focus on the one at hand.

WARNING: This is simple and may require you to think, meditate through prayer and interact with other people. Side effects could include gained wisdom, the ability to spot false teaching, renewed confidence in your walk with Christ and increased spiritual energy. If any of these side effects occur, immediately thank the Lord and call or text another Christian. Symptoms could be highly contagious.

MY BIBLE READING

Scripture Read: _____ Date: _____

Write down the paragraph or chapter you read

Key Verse(s): _____

This is the verse that really grabbed your attention

Write out the Key Verse(s) in your own words: _____

Using the word GROW, answer these questions:

G - What **Grabbed** Me (what really grabbed my attention)? _____

R - What did I **Realize** about God (His character and conduct revealed)?

What did I **Realize** about people (character and conduct like/unlike God's)?

O - How could I **Own** this passage? (what are the ways I could apply the truths of this passage? _____

W - What is one thing you **Will** apply this week from what you have learned?
(Write out an “I will...” statement and allow someone else to read it and hold you accountable. Use the SMART approach to your I will statement - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely)

I will _____