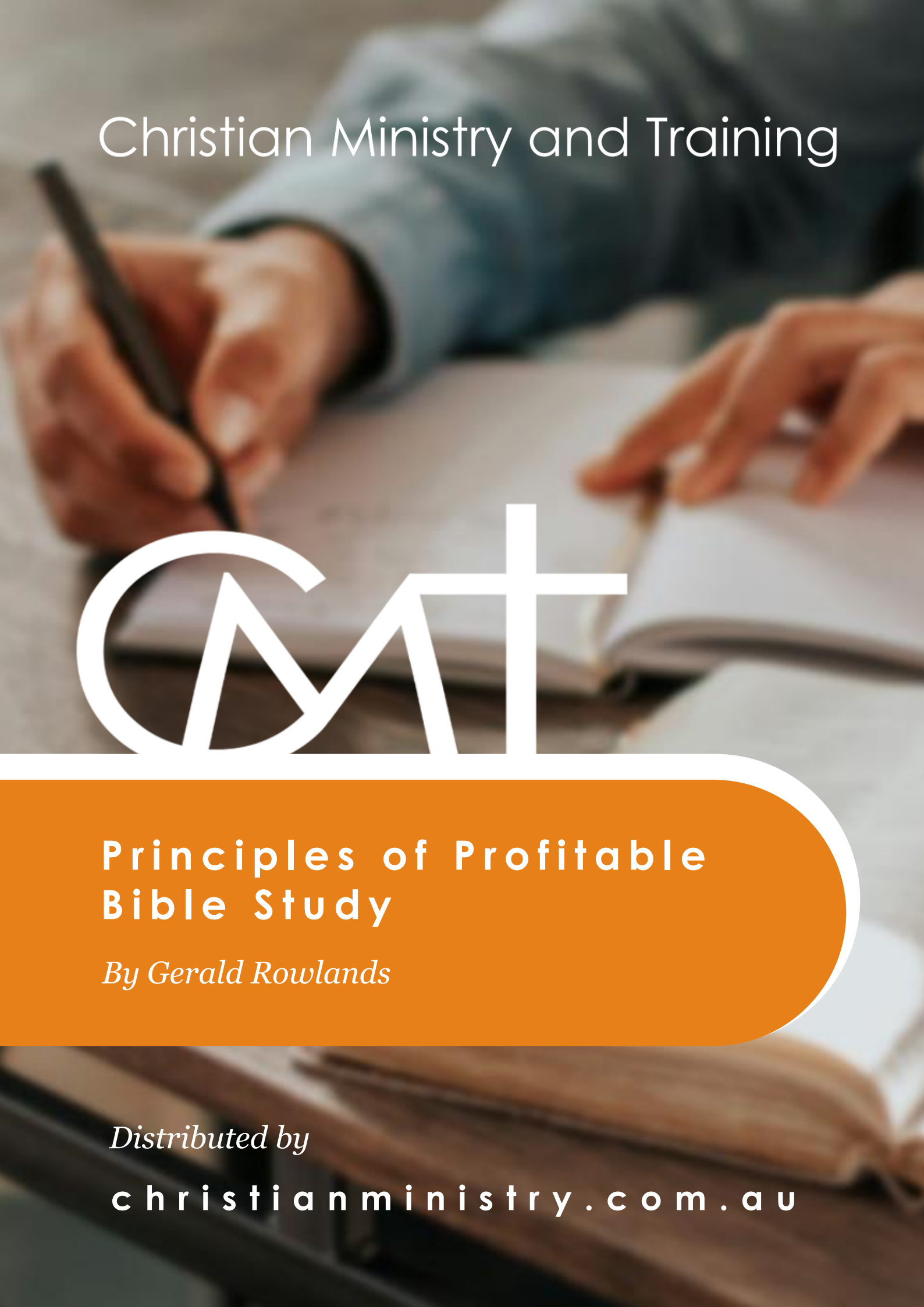

Christian Ministry and Training

Principles of Profitable Bible Study

By Gerald Rowlands

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- Establishing An Effective Prayer Life
- How To Study The Bible Profitably
- Basic Bible Doctrines
- The Art Of Soul Winning
- Building Bridges Of Communication
- Successful Christian Leadership
- The Heart Of A True Shepherd
- Shepherds, Sheep And Sheepfolds
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- Confronting The Challenge Of Change
- The Church Of The Future
- Multiplying Ministries (Team Building)
- Growing A Local Church
- Beating The Burnout Trap

About the Author

During a ministry spanning 50 years, **Gerald Rowlands** of Australia ministered in approximately 70 countries, serving in a wide range of roles including Pastor, Evangelist, Missionary, Christian Radio Teacher, and Bible College Lecturer and Principal. Alongside his wife Elizabeth, Gerald lived and ministered in various parts of the world, including Africa, Asia, and Israel.

Gerald was the founder and president of *Church Planting International (CPI)*. The notes in this book were originally part of the CPI Training Course, designed for prospective church planters and ministry leaders. This course has been used in more than 23 nations, equipping thousands of pastors and leaders around the world.

His vision for CPI was born in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 1980, although the seeds were planted earlier. In 1975, during his first year in Africa, Gerald led numerous large-scale evangelistic crusades, where many “decisions for Christ” were made. However, he quickly realised that the real challenge came after the crusades—integrating new believers into church communities and helping them live out a Christian lifestyle. This deepened his conviction about the urgent need to train local pastors in the principles of church planting and church growth.

In response, Gerald began organising pastors’ seminars throughout Africa. In 1979, he established a Bible College in what was then Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), acquiring an old guest house/motel and launching a one-year training course that later developed into the full CPI Course. Through follow-up visits and continued training, the CPI Course was embraced by 27 denominations across Zimbabwe. It played a central role in a national church planting initiative known as *TARGET 2000*, which saw hundreds of new churches established each year, even in the face of severe national hardship.

Beyond Zimbabwe, CPI was adopted in other African nations including Lesotho, Botswana, Zambia, Swaziland, South Africa, Malawi, Nigeria, and Namibia. In 1992, Gerald received what he called a “Macedonian Call” from Southeast Asia. While based in Singapore, he introduced the CPI Course to over 30 Bible Colleges across Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines. He also hosted pastors’ conferences to promote the training and distribute materials to local leaders.

Gerald’s training resources have been translated into more than a dozen languages and used in Bible colleges in India, China, Israel, and across the former USSR—including Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Siberia, and Russia. While exact numbers are difficult to determine, it is widely believed that tens of thousands of students have completed training using Gerald’s materials, resulting in the planting of hundreds of churches and the transformation of countless lives.

In recognition of his global ministry impact, Gerald was awarded the *Order of Australia Medal (OAM)* by the Australian Government in 2006 for his service to developing nations. Even in his late 70s, Gerald continued to minister through a regular Christian radio program, focusing on biblical teaching about God’s plan in the end times.

Gerald went to be with the Lord in 2021 at the age of 86, leaving behind a legacy that continues to bear fruit across the nations.

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Introduction

The Bible is the greatest book ever written because it is uniquely inspired by God Himself. It is through the Bible that God speaks to mankind. He gives wisdom and instruction for every circumstance of life. He gives comfort in times of sorrow and guidance in times of confusion. Through the Bible God reveals and uncovers sin but He also makes known His desire to forgive and how we can obtain that forgiveness. It contains daily inspiration and the ability to inform and inspire us regardless of what circumstances we may find ourselves in.

The Bible is the authentic, written revelation of Almighty God to mankind. It is a library of divinely inspired instruction and revelation.

Dr. Wilbur M. Smith lists seven things that Bible study will do for us:

1. The Bible discovers and convicts us of sin.
2. The Bible helps to cleanse us from sin.
3. The Bible imparts strength.
4. The Bible instructs us in what we are to do.
5. The Bible is our sword for victory over Satan and sin.
6. The Bible makes our lives fruitful.
7. The Bible gives us authority in prayer.

Through diligent reading and study of the Bible we can discover the answers to the great mysteries of life such as:

- Where did man come from?
- What are the origins of our universe?
- What is the true purpose of life?
- What does the future hold for mankind?
- How can we know the truth about life, death and the future?
- How can we know what God is like?

The Bible:

- Explains the origin of sin.
- Defines the nature of sin.
- Warns us of God's judgements on sin.
- Gives us the Good News of a Saviour, Jesus Christ.
- Explains how we can receive forgiveness and salvation.
- Keeps us clean from further pollution from sin.
- Teaches us how to pray.

- Imparts strength to our spirit, mind and body.
- Is a sword to use against our spiritual enemies.
- Teaches us how to live a life that pleases God.
- Makes our lives fruitful.
- Prepares us to spend eternity with God our redeemer.

The Holy Bible is unique amongst all the books in the world. Despite intense opposition from numerous individuals and organisations, both religious and political, the Bible has not only survived, it has maintained its place as the world's best seller. Its uniqueness derives from many factors.

It is not really a book - it is a library of books.
The Bible is composed of 66 books, 39 of them being in the section we call the Old Testament, and 27 comprising the section known as the New Testament. Despite the fact that many human "authors" are involved, the Holy Spirit is the true author, editor, and interpreter. Though written over a period of many years, by numerous writers at different times and in various cultures, the overall theme is uniquely and consistently one. The predominant theme of Divine Redemption runs from Genesis to Revelation. All other themes consistently substantiate, support and harmonize with that major theme.

It is a living book.
Although the Bible "looks" like any other book, printed and published in the usual manner, it is uniquely different having a living quality which no other book has. Jesus said that His words were "spirit and life," (John 6 :63.) meaning that they were not simply audible sounds which register through our auditory system, but spiritual communications which register in our spiritual being. Therefore we should not merely *read* the Bible, we should *imbibe* it spiritually. David said, *"How sweet are your words unto my taste, yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth."* (Psa. 119 :103.)

There are numerous references to God's Word being food, bread, meat, milk, all indications that we should actually eat, drink, feed upon the Word of God. It is our spirit which feeds in this manner. We should never be content or satisfied to merely read, or even study God's Word. We must eat and digest it, feeding and strengthening our spirit in the process. The Word of God was not written primarily to inform our intellect or to educate our mind, but to feed and strengthen our spiritual inner man.

It is uniquely God's book.
The Bible is uniquely and specifically The Word of God. Beneath the surface of every page lies the nature and character of God. His eternal Will and purpose is expressed through every part. We must therefore endeavour to discern what the Bible is conveying to us about God Himself. We must learn to interpret the mind and heart of God which lie behind His words. In this manner we can truly learn to know God and understand His ways.

Having said that the Bible is really food for our spirit we must also acknowledge that feeding upon it requires us to read it carefully, study it diligently, and ask God to reveal His truth through it to our spirit. We need to read, study and meditate on it in our spirits. We need to ask God to take it beyond our natural mind and deposit it deep in our spiritual understanding. But this also requires us to actually study the Bible carefully and faithfully. Therefore we need certain principles we may apply as we study God's Word. Someone has said that if you give a man a fish, you have supplied him with one meal, but if you teach him how to fish he may feed himself indefinitely.

Knowing how to study the Bible can help you to enjoy a never ending supply of spiritual food so I want to share with you some ideas and principles which will help you to study the Bible. Many of these principles can be used and applied day by day and furnish you with a continuing and varied diet which will help to keep your spiritual man strong, faithful and true.

The best way to study the Bible

The most important factor in studying the Bible is to get to know the author and study it together with Him. Begin every session with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to direct your reading and study. Expect Him to guide you and to illuminate the scriptures as you read them.

Read it consistently every day in this manner. Study it prayerfully and carefully and meditate closely. Keep reading until you sense the Holy Spirit revealing some truth to your heart. Keep reading until you sense the Holy Spirit working God's Word into your very spirit. You will feel excited as you realize that God is revealing spiritual truths that will enrich your life and enhance your service for God.

Ask the Holy Spirit to show Jesus to you in God's Word. Expect to "meet" with Jesus in the pages as you study. Let the spirit (life, essence, nature, character) of the Word infiltrate and invade your inner being. Allow the principles and strength of God, through His Word, to make its abode deep inside you to fashion and shape your perceptions of life's issues.

Endeavour to "think God's thoughts" with Him as you read His book. Try to feel with Him His feelings as the Holy Spirit enlightens you to discover the heart of God within the Word.

25 Basic ideas for bible study

1. Get a version you can easily understand

There are many versions of the Bible available today, some of them are much easier to understand than are others. This is frequently because the language is more modern and therefore more easily understood. There are many versions of the Bible available in print and on the internet. Bible Apps and on-line Bibles often give you the option of choosing which version you want to read. You may wonder which one to choose. The main thing is to try to get a Bible that is written in modern language and is therefore more easily understood. Do not make the mistake of thinking that because a particular version is written in old fashioned language it is therefore more holy.

2. Read it regularly

Reading your Bible is rather like eating your food, you need to do it regularly and consistently to ensure good health and strength. It is also good to program regular times when you will read the Word. If you do not eat regularly your body will grow weak. If you do not read the Bible regularly, your spirit will become weak. If you do not program this into your regular daily schedule, you are likely to overlook it.

3. Begin your day with Bible reading

Ideally it is good to start your day with personal Bible reading. Generally the mind is refreshed first thing in the morning and can apply itself to reading and study. Also, when you discover something in your morning reading you can think about it throughout the day. You can toss it around in your mind as you go about your daily tasks, and discover many more truths in what you have read. Don't just trust these to your memory though. When you discover some good truths jot them down in a small note book otherwise you are likely to forget some of the little gems you discover.

Isa 50:4-5

"The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned. The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back." (KJV)

4. Start with simpler portions

There are many profound and complicated portions in the Bible. It is not wise to tackle these until you have built a good foundation of basic truth. Be content to read, study and master the simpler themes first before you begin to tackle some of the more profound or prophetic portions. It is also advisable to begin with the Gospels, advancing later into the epistles and endeavouring to gain a strong grasp of the New Testament before you attempt to tackle the more complex themes of the Old Testament. The New Testament is much more relevant to the Christian believer than is the Old. Concentrate on the teachings and principles of the New Testament first for it is here that the story of Jesus, His atoning death and resurrection are most clearly told. It is in the New Testament that the birth of the early church is recorded and the concise history and development of that church is given.

We also have the epistles, written to some of those early churches and applicable to all churches. In these the doctrines of the New testament church are taught and although we live in a different time period and in a different culture we can apply the principles of those teachings to our local church situation.

5. Personal and pastoral (devotional and doctrinal)

By devotional reading and study I mean reading the Scriptures for your own spiritual good and well being, to feed your own soul. As such, it is the most important kind of study

because if this is neglected then the whole life becomes spiritually shallow and any ministry engaged in will also be shallow and superficial.

Studying the Bible devotionally is studying it personally, in the presence of Jesus, learning to hear His voice and be obedient to it. This type of study enriches the inner man. It frequently enables us to hear the voice of God telling us we may more perfectly do His will and live a richer and more rewarding Christian life.

Always remember that the primary purpose for reading God's Word is that He might speak to you personally and that you might feed your inner spiritual man. One of the subtle dangers in the ministry is to become so concerned with getting food for your congregation, that you neglect the primary essential need to feed your own soul. A minister can become so locked into "looking for sermons," that he neglects the need to feed his own soul. This is an extremely dangerous attitude. It will lead to personal spiritual poverty and has sometimes been a contributing factor to spiritual suicide.

Always make the feeding of your own spiritual man the first priority. As a leader of God's people you need to maintain your spiritual strength and integrity. You are not only a shepherd, you are a role model for many of your people. In any case, "shallow ministry comes out of a shallow soul." You will never lead your people into spiritual depths which you yourself are not experiencing.

Doctrinal study is when we study the Bible for the purpose of preparation for ministry. As we read and study we wait upon God for thoughts and subjects that He may want us to preach or teach on.

6. Don't just read it, eat and devour it

The Bible is not simply a book to be mentally absorbed, it is spiritual food to feed on. Never be content to merely read or study the Scriptures. Make sure that you get something to actually feed your soul upon. Don't simply "read your portion for the day." Stay before the Lord with your Bible open until your soul has been fed. Keep reading until you find something which really speaks a word to your soul. Then eat it, digest it, feed upon it until your inner man knows that he has truly been fed.

Matt 4:4

“But Jesus answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” (KJV)

Job 23:12

“Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.” (KJV)

7. Read it aloud

It is a great blessing to read the Scriptures aloud to yourself. This exercise has many benefits:

- It keeps your mind awake and alert, better able to concentrate.
- The Word enters your ear gate as well as your eye gate.
- It reinforces what enters your spirit.
- This practice helps you to better memorize what you read.
- The Word of God becomes your verbal confession.

8. Ask the holy spirit to be your interpreter

Let the Holy Spirit be your constant companion as you read the Scriptures. Talk to Him about what you are reading. Ask Him questions. Listen to His still small voice within your spirit as He shares inspiration and enlightenment with you. Let the Holy Spirit "feed you with food which is appropriate for you." In addition to asking the Holy Spirit to interpret the Scriptures to you should also be aware that there are certain principles, or laws of interpretation of which you need to be conscious as you try to understand the Bible. Here are a few of them:

Always be mindful of the immediate context, i.e. the verses before and following the one you are reading. Avoid taking the text out of its context.

Endeavour to find the correct meaning of each word in the text.

Interpret the Scripture in the light of parallel passages which deal with the same subject.

Be mindful of the particular setting and circumstance in which the verse is given.

9. Practice Biblical meditation

Biblical meditation is extremely insightful and penetrative. It is mentioned and encouraged in the Bible on numerous occasions.

Joshua is instructed to meditate in God's Word day and night in order to achieve the good success God wants him to experience (Josh.1:8).

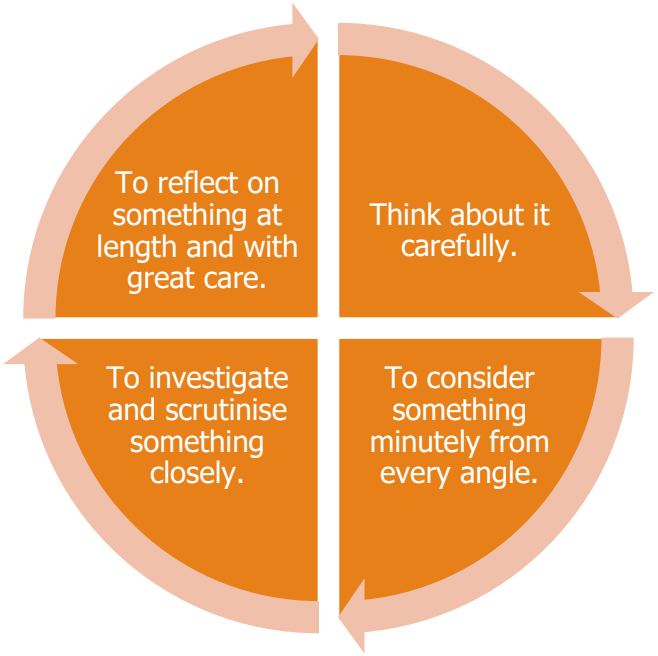
The "Blessed man" of Psa.1. also meditates in God's Word day and night (Psa.1:2.).

King David frequently refers to his meditation in God's Word. (Psa. 77:12. 119:15, 78, 99).

In Psa. 19:14. David says, “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in your sight O Lord my strength and my redeemer."

Timothy is instructed to meditate on all he has been taught, to give himself entirely to them that his spiritual progress might be recognized by all (1 Tim. 4:15.).

To meditate means to:



The concept of meditating infers:

- Getting away from all outward distractions.
- Spending time in quiet personal contemplation.
- Reading the Bible in private without distractions.
- Being still within your soul while deeply considering spiritual truth.
- Learn how to listen quietly to the voice of God in your spirit.
- Practise those things that God reveals to you.
- Becoming a “doer of the Word,” and not simply a hearer.

10. *Interrogate the scriptures*

Don't merely read the Scripture, interrogate and investigate it actively.
As you consider a particular portion ask yourself leading questions.
Ask the Scriptures leading questions and then search diligently for the answers.

Ask yourself such things as:

- WHO is speaking?
- WHAT did he say?
- WHEN did he say it?
- TO WHOM did He say it?
- WITH WHAT RESULT?
- HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO ME?
- WHAT MAY I LEARN FROM THIS?

You can also ask:

- What does this passages teach me about Jesus?
- Is there some sin mentioned that I need to confess?

- Is there some command that I need to obey?
- Is there a promise that I can claim?

11. Memorise the scriptures

Memorising the Scriptures has many benefits.
The Scripture goes with you wherever you are.
You may meditate on it at any time.
It becomes part of your thought processes.

In order to effectively memorise Scripture you should:

Read the Scripture aloud.

Repeat it to yourself many times.

Read it over numerous times.

Include the reference, chapter and verse.

12. Mark your Bible and make notes

If you have printed Bible you may not want to write in in because out of respect. Some people feel they may be defacing or spoiling their Bible by writing in it. However, you can actually enhance your Bible's value to you personally by making helpful and important notes in it. Over some years your Bible can become a source of even greater inspiration because of the insights which you carefully note in it. Try to write neatly and legibly.

Many students have discovered the value of marking their Bible with coloured pencils. They underline important verses or passages with a colour that seems significant to that theme.

13. Keep a spiritual diary or journal

I have discovered, along with many others, that your memory cannot cope with all the thoughts that may come to you whilst you study the Bible. Even those wonderful revelations which thrill you so much at the time, can desert you later if you do not make a written copy of them. So it is a good idea to have a notebook with you whenever you read the Scriptures. Put down the day and date. Make brief notes of all that comes to you. Add to these the ideas which may come later as you further meditate on them.

If you do this in a diary it will afterwards provide you with a solid reminder of the manner in which God has been leading you through the scriptures. You will be able to look back and go over again everything that He has shown you through your daily study of the Bible.

14. Apply the word to your life

2 Tim 2:15

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (KJV)

The word that is translated "dividing" is the Greek word *"orthotomeo"* which bears a direct reference to the world of the architect and builder. It refers primarily to the necessity to correctly interpret a blue print in order to ensure that the building is erected properly. The word might better be translated, "correctly applying the word of truth."

The Bible is not simply a book to be studied in some academic sense. It is a constructional handbook, to enable us to build our lives correctly according to the manufacturer's manual.

15. Practice what you learn

It is better to know one thing and practice it than to know many things and not apply them. The Bible is not primarily for our intellectual appreciation but for our spiritual growth and advancement. The method by which Jesus trained His disciples was by learning and ***doing*** and this is how God wants us to grow too. Jesus said that the difference between a wise man and a foolish one was that the wise man practised the things he read and learned but the foolish man, though he read and knew the truth, did not practise it.

Matt 7:24-29

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law." (NIV)

16. Study it chapter by chapter

The best way to eat the Word is in bite size pieces. One chapter can often constitute such a suitable piece. Choose an appropriate book and begin to read it one chapter at a time. Concentrate on that chapter. Read through it several times. Read it slowly and carefully, examine it minutely. Look for significance in every word. If your printed Bible has a "cross reference system," follow through on every significant word. Many internet Bible Apps and on-line Bibles have great Bible study aids and support material attached to them.

In the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, there are 1,189 chapters. In a little over three years a person could study the whole Bible by reading one chapter each day. Perhaps you can manage to complete one chapter each day, or one chapter may take a week or more. Whatever the case you will learn a great deal from this method of study.

17. Read through an entire book

Many Bible books are short enough to read through in one session. This is true of numerous Old Testament books, and it is certainly true of each of the New Testament Epistles. This method helps us to get a grip on the purpose of the whole book. It is like reading a letter from beginning to end. It is usually helpful to do this several times with a particular book before you begin a chapter by chapter study.

Reading an entire book in one session has numerous advantages. It enables one to feel the mood and emphasis of that book. Ideally, you should re-read it several times, asking yourself important questions as you read.

- What is the central theme and main emphasis of this book?
- What does it teach me about God?
- What can I learn about myself?
- How may I apply these teaching in my life?

18. Plan to read through the Bible in one year

For a serious student of the Bible it is very possible to read through the entire Bible in a period of one year. Many guides have been published to help one do this, suggesting which chapters might be read each day. However, you can also devise your own method which you would need to plan ahead. In doing so it is advisable to read a little each day from several sections of the Scriptures. E.g. a portion of Old Testament history, a Psalm, and several chapters from the New Testament.

19. Reading Psalms and Proverbs

For your devotional life and spiritual development there is a tremendous wealth of materials in both the Psalms and the Proverbs. The Psalms are inspirational, whilst Proverbs is instructional. Both are extremely powerful for character building. Irrespective of whatever else you read each day, I would suggest that you should read something from each of these.

Since there are 150 Psalms and 31 chapters in Proverbs, it is very feasible to read 3 Psalms and 1 Chapter of Proverbs every day. These portions of Scripture help enormously in the development of Christian character and devotion.

20. Reading the words of Jesus

An extremely interesting and beneficial exercise is to read the actual words of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels and elsewhere. Some versions of the Scriptures or of the New Testament have been published with the words of Jesus printed in red ink. This makes the exercise much simpler. It can be immensely challenging and enlightening to pursue this method.

21. Study the life of a major biblical character

The Bible is filled with the life stories of dozens of interesting characters. Each of them have vital lessons from which we can learn. These lives also make excellent biographical studies from which we can teach a congregation some of the great principles of Godly living.

1. Take some of the characters which most impress you.
2. Follow their life story through the Scriptures.
3. Learn as much as you can from their experiences.
4. What did they do which brought blessings into their lives?
5. What did they do which displeased the Lord?

Each life is like a book in itself. These are stories from real life and there are so many important principles we can learn from the. We can often benefit from the experiences of others. It is easier and less painful, to learn from the mistakes of others than to make those same mistakes yourself. Each character is fascinating and completely absorbing both for yourself and for those you are responsible to teach.

22. Study a topic or theme

If you have a printed Bible it is important that it has good “margin notes” and a “cross referencing” system for this method of study. It involves tracing a particular theme or subject right through the entire Bible to discover all that God has to say on that theme.

On-line Bible Apps or just doing and internet search can assist with this.

Prior to the internet it was essential to have a good “Topical Bible”. They are still available in print and electronic form today. A Topical Bible will assist you in finding all the relevant references to various important biblical subjects or topics referred to in the Bible. For example, you could look up “Marriage” in a Topical Bible and find all (or many) of the verses in the Bible that refer to marriage.

Another useful Bible study aid for researching a topic or theme is a “Concordance”. This book will list every scripture that uses a particular word. For example you could look up

the word “faith” in a Concordance and find a list of every verse in a particular version of the Bible that uses the word “faith”.

Following through on such themes can be very educational. You learn so much about the Mind of God by studying what the Bible has to teach about important subjects.

23. Study the miracles of the bible

From beginning to end, from Genesis to Revelation, the Bible is filled with miracles. It is a book of constant miracles. A miracle is something which God does which transcends natural principles. It is a supernatural act. By carefully studying all the recorded miracles you can learn so much about God. You will also be greatly inspired to believe for the supernatural in your life and ministry. You will discover principles which cause miracles to happen and your life will be enriched by these truths.

Whilst the children of Israel observed the acts of God, including many great miracles, Moses also learned much about God’s ways, His attributes and character, from studying those acts.

Psa 103:6-8

“The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.” (KJV)

24. Doing a word study

Even one word in the Bible can be like a gold mine. So much truth can be obtained from careful diligent study of one such word. Obviously a Concordance is also very useful for this style of study because it lists Bible verses that use that word. A good Concordance will also identify what word in Hebrew or Greek (or another old language) the English word we are studying in our Bible came from. For example, the English word “love” is translated from three different Greek words. Each Greek word could have a slightly different meaning. For example for when we “love” ice-cream, “love” to play cricket, or “love” people. A good Concordance will show which of the three different Greek words for “love” the English word “love” in our Bibles came from.

In addition to a Concordance, other Bible study books that help with getting more information about the original meaning of words, or the culture or history behind the Bible passage in which the words are found include a:

Bible Commentary	Bible Dictionary	Bible Lexicon

Once again, there are many ways in which we can get background information about the words in the Bible through internet research.

But even without these more sophisticated helps you can still learn a great deal from the diligent study of one word.

25. Studying types and shadows

Much of the Bible is written in Allegories or Parables, many of which have hidden spiritual meaning and significance. Often we find prophetic significance beneath the surface of an apparently innocent Scripture. Many Old Testament characters were Types of Christ such as:

- Moses
- Joseph
- David

Study one of these lives. Find the parallels between them and Messiah.

This style of study can be extremely fascinating but it must also be approached with some measure of caution. We must not allow human imagination to intrude. Scripture must be faithfully compared with Scripture. The student must be extremely careful not to "wrest" the Scriptures, i.e. lift them out of their context, distorting their meaning and making them say something which is not implicit in them. There are many other matters to consider in establishing a habit of Bible reading to enrich the soul and to make one a competent expositor of God's Word.