

How to Study Your Bible - Practical

When it comes to studying the Bible there are many tools that can help you do this. But often times the first question we get is, "What version of the Bible should I read?"

When it comes to translations of the word there are three main types of translations:

1. Word For Word
2. Thought for thought
3. Paraphrase.

[Word-for-Word] ----- [Thought-for-Thought] ----- [Paraphrase]

Interlinear – NASB – ESV – KJV/NKJV – CSB – NIV – NET – NLT – GNT – Message – Living Bible

The NLT is a good place to start reading the Bible because it is easier to understand.

Tools to Use:

There are so many tools out there that are free to use for people to get in and really dig into the Bible.

- YouVersion

- This is a free app that has the Bible in pretty much any translation that you could imagine.
- This app is loaded with bible studies that you can do. This helps with your daily engagement. They also have short devotionals that you can read and be encouraged.
- You can partner up with friends and hold each other accountable every day to reading.

- Bible Hub

- Side-by-side translations, commentaries, Strong's concordance, Greek/Hebrew Tools, Timelines, and maps.
- This is a free websites that you have access to.
- You can use this to compare translations, do word study, read different commentaries, and overall get a better understand of the word.

- Matthew Henry Commentary

- A **Bible commentary** is a resource that explains the meaning of Bible verses and passages. It's written by scholars, pastors, or theologians to help readers understand the **context, background, and interpretation** of Scripture.
- **A good commentary will:**
 - Break down verses phrase by phrase
 - Explain cultural and historical context
 - Clarify difficult or confusing passages
 - Offer theological insight
 - Sometimes include maps, charts, or timelines
- **How to use a commentary**
 - **Read the Bible Passage First**
Don't start with the commentary—read the passage yourself and write down what you observe or questions you have.
 - **Use the Commentary for Clarity**
After reading, open the commentary to see what it says about the passage. Focus on:
 - Key words
 - Historical notes
 - Themes or doctrine

- **Apply What You Learn**

Ask: What does this mean for my life, faith, or understanding of God?

- **EXAMPLE:**

- Lets Use John 3:16-17

This is what the commentary says:

Christ here discourses of the *great design of his own coming into the world, and the happiness of those that believe in him*, [v. 14-18](#). Here we have the very marrow and quintessence of the whole gospel, that *faithful saying* ([1 Tim 1 15](#)), that Jesus Christ came to seek and to save the children of men from death, and recover them to life. Now sinners are *dead men* upon a twofold account:— (1.) As one that is mortally wounded, or sick of an incurable disease, is said to be a *dead man*, for he is dying; and so Christ came to save us, by *healing* us, as the brazen serpent healed the Israelites, [v. 14, 15](#). (2.) As one that is justly condemned to die for an unpardonable crime is a *dead man*, he is *dead in law*; and, in reference to this part of our danger, Christ came to save as a prince or judge, publishing an act of indemnity, or general pardon, under certain provisos; this saving here is opposed to condemning, [v. 16-18](#).

But before we get this snippet into 14-18 he is giving us full context into what is happening. Starting with how that last chapter closed and giving important insight into what is happening now.

Then on top of this, he references other scriptures that help bring clarity and understanding to this particular passage.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Commentaries are not the word of God. They are used to help give you perspective, context, and correlation. They are an educational tool. Use it as such.

- **The Bible Project**

- If you're more of a visual learner, this is for you.
- Beautiful animated videos, podcasts, and reading plans explaining the Bible's big picture.
- This gives you the context of each books, helps you understand the different themes of writing with in the Bible, and gives you a good basic understanding of the word.
- They have individual classes you can take over each book of the Bible to really dig in.

- **Openbible.info**

- Topical Bible — enter a topic and it gives you a list of verses.
- You can search a variety of topics to find out what the word has to say about anxiety, stress, depression, love, and everything else.

- **Google**

- **Chat GPT or Grok**

Methods Of Bible Study

S.O.A.P.

Soap stands for Scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer. This is a good tool to get you engaged with the Bible. It makes you think about what you are reading and how you can take a practical step with it.

Here is an example:

S:

John 3:16-17

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

O:

God loves the world and because of this he gave Jesus. This gives us the chance to believe in him which in turn gives us eternal life. And he did this not to bring shame but to save us.

A:

I need to understand that God loves me and the people around me, so much so that He sent Jesus to save me. And when I believe in Him I can have eternal life because He has saved me.

P:

Lord help me to understand your love better. I believe in you. Help me to understand your salvation and not walk in condemnation.

Inductive Bible Study Template

This is similar to the SOAP method but gives you more questions to ask. This helps you dive into the context in more a deep way. This allows you to understand what going on, so you know how to take whats being said and apply it more directly.

Observation – What does the text say?

- Who is speaking?
- Who is this about?
- What's happening?
- Where and when is this taking place?
- Are there any commands, promises, repeated words, contrasts?

Interpretation – What does the text mean?

- What is the main idea?
- What does this teach about God or people?
- Are there cultural/historical insights that help?

Application – How should I respond?

- What truth should I live out?
- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a sin to confess?
- What will I do differently today?