



Page 3-1

Disciplemaking 1 Abiding in His Word

BIBLE STUDY

"It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4

THE PREMINENCE OF THE SCRIPTURES. No other book is like the Bible. No other book has had more copies published. No other book has been translated into so many languages. No other book has been so widely distributed. No other book has so positively changed so many lives. The Bible is the most important book ever written because it is God's message to us. It is more than inspiring. It is inspired. It is God-breathed. The authors of the Bible were carried along by the Holy Spirit as they wrote. Therefore the Bible is true ... it is accurate ... it is pure ... it is eternal ... and it is powerful. The Bible is more than man's message about God ... it is God's message to man. It is a book from God ... not simply about God. It is the preeminent Book. It is the supreme and final authority in what we should believe and in how we should live. The Bible is The Book ... it is The Book to study.

THE PRIORITY OF STUDY. The verse quoted at the top of this page records the great commitment that Jesus had to God's Word. These were His words during His temptations in the wilderness. God's Word was more important to Jesus than physical food was ... even after 40 days without eating. The Bible is provided for our spiritual nourishment. The availability of His Word gives us the great privilege and serious life-long challenge of Bible study. If we really want to learn and to grow ... then we must invest both time and energy in the process of Bible study. There are no shortcuts. We must commit sufficient regular time to studying God's Word.

THE PROGRESS OF STUDY. Peter used a newborn baby's focused attention on its need for milk to illustrate what our desire for God's Word should be ... *"Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation."* 1 Peter 2:2. Then, as we grow, we need to move on to the solid food of deeper study, Hebrews 5:11-14. It is important to set realistic goals for regular study ... starting with the easier sections of the Bible ... and increasing the quantity and complexity of study as we grow. Throughout this life-long process of study, our continual prayer should be like that of the Psalmist, *"Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Thy law."* Psalm 119:18.

Page 3-2

THE BOOK TO STUDY. The Bible is the most important book. It is God's message to us, and that makes it different from all other books. It is the most important book to study because...

The Bible is inspired (God-breathed).

"All Scripture is inspired by God." 2 Timothy 3:16

The Bible is true.

"Sanctify them in the truth, Thy word is truth." John 17:17

The Bible is accurate.

"For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished."
Matthew 5:18

The Bible is pure.

"The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times." Psalm 12:6

"The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."
Psalm 19:7-8

The Bible is eternal.

"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."
Isaiah 40:8

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away."
Matthew 24:35

The Bible is powerful.

"For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."
Hebrews 4:12

THE COMMAND TO STUDY. The Bible is very clear that the man or woman of God is committed to His Word ... to learning it and applying it. There is no option for us ... it is a command.

To be a disciple ... abide in (live in ... not just visit) the Word.

"Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine.'" John 8:31

To be approved ... study the Word.

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15

To be a good parent ... teach the Word to your children.

"You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul ... and you shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up." Deuteronomy 11:18-19

THE BENEFITS OF STUDY. The Word is powerful and eternal. God blesses us as we study it. The accumulative benefits are overwhelming.

The Bible makes us equipped.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17

The Bible helps us not sin.

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word ... Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee." Psalm 119:9, 11

The Bible gives us guidance.

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105

THE BENEFITS OF STUDY (continued)

The Bible gives us wisdom.

"Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever mine. I have more insight than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged, because I have observed Thy precepts ... The unfolding of Thy words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple." Psalm 119:98-100, 130

The Bible helps us through difficulty.

"This is my comfort in my affliction, that Thy word has revived me ... It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Thy statutes." Psalm 119:50, 71

The Bible provides hope.

"For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." Romans 15:4

The Bible gives peace.

"Those who love Thy law have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble." Psalm 119:165

The Bible gives joy.

"Thy words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; for I have been called by Thy name." Jeremiah 15:16

The Bible offers conditional blessings.

"Praise the Lord! How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments." Psalm 112:1

"The one who despises the word will be in debt to it, but the one who fears the commandment will be rewarded." Proverbs 13:13

"But He said, 'On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it.'" Luke 11:28

THE PROCESS OF STUDY

Pick a regular time and place to study. Develop the habit of study. Pick a primary time and an alternate time for daily Bible study to guarantee that you will study every day.

Put what you read in context. A phrase or verse seldom contains enough information to draw a conclusion. It is necessary to understand what is in the surrounding verses ... and how it is woven into the bigger picture of what God is saying. The answers to the following questions will give understanding to any verse.

1. What does the whole sentence say?
2. What does the paragraph or section teach?
3. What is the chapter about?
4. How is that woven into the whole Bible?

Cross references, study Bibles, and commentaries can provide help in understanding the overall context.

Pray for wisdom to understand and apply what you study.

Look for the answers to the following questions.

1. What does it say?
2. What does it mean?
3. How do I make this part of my life?

Pick it apart by looking for ...

Main thoughts.
Grammar.
Cause and effect.
Comparisons and contrasts.
Connectors.
Repetition.
Promises and conditions.
Commands - do's and do not's.
Illustrations and parables.
People, places, and time.

Put it in usable form. Write notes and thoughts in your Bible and/or a notebook. Memorize key verses ... write them in your mind and heart.

Put it into practice. The goal of Bible study is a full life ... not a full notebook. Always approach the study of God's Word with a heart open to His working in and through your life.

WHAT STUDY TOOLS DO I NEED?

The most important tool for studying the Bible is a good Bible. Begin with a good translation. Plan to mark it up. A single-column page may give more space for writing your own notes in the margins. Think before you write or underline anything on the pages of your Bible ... be sure that it will be meaningful. Remember that commentaries, paraphrases, study Bible notes, books, messages, and teaching tapes give you God's Word secondhand. Invest the bulk of your study time directly in your Bible.

Which Bible should I use? There are three types of Bibles. The best for study is a good **translation**. It is the most accurate and precise because it closely follows the original language word for word ... more than paraphrases and dynamic equivalents do. Good English translations include the *New American Standard (NASB)* and the *New King James*. A **paraphrase** is a much more readable text ... but it is not as accurate as a translation is. Paraphrases are better at conveying the ideas than they are at translating the details. *The Living Bible* and *The Message* are popular English paraphrases. A **dynamic equivalent** is more of a thought-for-thought than word-for-word translation. The *New International Version (NIV)* is a dynamic equivalent. Dynamic equivalents and paraphrases are not as good as translations for detailed study. A great starting point would be a study Bible in a good translation.

What books would help? As the need arises, build a personal study reference library from the following.

1. A study Bible containing notes, outlines, cross-references, maps, and an abridged concordance ... such as The Ryrie NASB.
2. A concordance for use as a word and verse finder ... available in abridged or complete (exhaustive) versions ... be sure it matches your Bible version.
3. A Bible dictionary for facts and details about the people, places, things, and times referenced in the Bible.
4. A commentary giving verse-by-verse and section-by-section interpretation of the Bible.

What about Bible Study software for my computer? This is a great way to get many resources at a reasonable price. A CD-ROM is essential for any Bible program beyond the very basic ones. Ask a friend or send an e-mail request for a recommendation to contact@MyDisciplemaker.org.

(Page 3-7)

Name:

Date Started:

Date Finished:

MY STUDY OF _____

*"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable
for **teaching**
for **reproof**
for **correction**
for **training in righteousness**
that the man of God may be adequate, prepared for every good work."
2 Timothy 3:16-17*

COPY/PRINT THIS SHEET. Develop a notebook of your study of the Word. Print or copy this page for a cover page for each book, chapter, or subject of your Bible study. Print multiple copies of page 3-8 for your daily study ... one for each day's study.

STUDY TIPS. Study daily. Pray and think as you study. Review yesterday's notes as you begin today's study. Read today's chapter or section of the Bible once, then read it again, filling in the appropriate categories on your copies of the *Daily Study Sheet* (page 3-8). You may want to recruit a study and accountability partner to encourage one another.

SUGGESTED READING. Begin with shorter books such as Colossians, 1 John, and 2 Timothy. Then move on to books such as Mark, John, Ephesians, and Philippians. Progress to the more complicated ones such as Romans and Hebrews. Vary your reading in the Old and New Testaments, seeking the full counsel of God's Word.

OTHER HELPFUL MATERIALS. Visit www.ActsOneEight.org for information about other study helps on our other Web sites.

(Page 3-8)

ACTS ONE EIGHT - DAILY STUDY SHEET

Date:

Today's study of _____

has been profitable ...

In **teaching** me these truths, facts, and promises to believe:

For **reproof** in convicting me of these sins of attitude, action, and inaction:

For **correction** in helping me get back on course by:

For **training** me to obey these commands, to apply these principles, and to follow these good examples:

In giving me this **key verse or thought** for today: