

Letting the Bible transform our thinking

Reading.

Use a reading plan of some sort, that will systematically take you through the whole Bible. Currently I have a list of all the books of the Bible, and I cross each one off as I read it; this way I don't have to read it in order, but still make it through the whole Bible. There are reading plans that will get you through the Bible in a year, or two years, or three years, depending on how much you want to read each day. If you have never read any of the Bible before, start with the New Testament.

Studying.

The biggest difference between reading and studying is that in studying you have a pen and paper in hand. You can write down observations and questions, check for cross-referenced verses, pick a key word from a passage and look it up on a concordance to find other places and ways it is used, or even outline a chapter one paragraph at a time.

Questions to help you apply the text (***SPACE PETS***)

Sin to confess?

Promise to claim?

Attitude to alter?

Command to obey?

Example to follow?

Prayer to pray?

Error to avoid?

Truth to believe?

Something to praise God for?

(special thanks to Bob Stone)

Memorizing.

When you have memorized Scripture, the Spirit can easily bring it to your attention when you need it most. Think of Jesus being tempted in the desert, and responding with Scripture. God also uses it what we've memorized during times with pre-Christians or when we're helping someone through a tough time. And, when you have it memorized, you can meditate on the Scripture any time!

- Choose verses on a topic that God is showing you, or memorize an entire passage.
- It sometimes helps to write it out and think of a creative way to remember it.
- Try to memorize it word for word, with the reference.
- It might help to find someone in your small group to do this with.
- Read them often so you don't forget what you've memorized.

Meditating.

Christian meditation is deep thinking about the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture for the purposes of understanding, applying, and prayer.

- Pick a verse/verses or phrase that struck you during your daily reading. Or, pick a verse/verses that apply to some situation, difficulty, temptation, or area you want to grow in.
- Repeat the verse many times, emphasizing a different word each time (***I*** am the bread of life. I ***am*** the bread of life. I am ***the*** bread of life, etc.)
- Rewrite the verse in your own words. This helps focus your attention, and stimulates your thinking.
- Pray through the text. Talk to God about what you're learning and thank Him for it.