

Bible not like any other book – living – not just text on a page but actually speaking into our lives – So can't read like any other book. A critical need to grow as men of God is to learn to read the Bible.

I. READING THE BIBLE

A. Will have different aims in reading the Bible depending on who we are

1. **Just saved:** getting to know God, feeding our soul, learning to let God speak to us

a. *1 Peter 2:2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.*

2. **Disciple/Pastor:** All of the above, PLUS you need God to speak to us for other people!

a. *1 Kings 3:9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"*

B. As men of God: Several specific reasons we read the Bible

1. **For growth:** Growth (spiritual maturity) comes from the word of God

a. *1 Peter 2:2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.*

1. Not just babes that grow...the point is that ALL GROWTH is connected to the word of God

2. **For direction:** *Psa 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.*

a. God is able to guide a man who is in the word – supernatural element of direction

1. *Never tells us 'turn right at 10:13am – but it tunes our ear to hear the 'still small voice'*

3. **For love:** Critical need is to love the WOG

a. Must be more than just a discipline/work/labor – need to develop a love/craving for the Word of God

1. *1 Pet 2:1-3 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, ² as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*

II. READING FOR THE MAN OF GOD

A. Dangerous when pastors read only 'to get a sermon'

1. Can fall into the trap of 'sermon hunting' Simply flipping pages looking for something that will preach

a. Can happen because we are busy, not prepared, lazy, unexpected circumstances

1. With skill this will work to an extent: There are ways to 'mine' the scripture to get something to preach

2. Certain times when that is how we find the will of God – laboring in the word

a. Key in pastoring isn't getting sermons – it's getting revelation

1. *1 Sam 3:1 Now the boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation.*

a. Samuel had words to say – but not revelation!

b. OT Revelation = communication from God to be communicated to others

1. We need sermons that aren't just true, but are a word from God for our people

c. NT Revelation = revealed, uncovered, disclosed

1. We need sermons that reveal/uncover things: *Sin, truth, vision, opportunity*

3. Very Practical: Revelation comes only from the WOG

a. If it's not from WOG it's our own ideas, cultural clichés, opinions – we need revelation from God!

III. PRACTICAL READING FOR REVELATION

A. Read with Intent – a goal in mind: Read expecting God to speak – so I'm listening!

1. Not just getting my chapters in – sometimes fall short! – I'm reading with an ear for what God is saying

a. Relationship: I'm talking to God, hoping to hear from Him

B. Related: Be willing to let God get your attention

1. *1 Sam 3:9 Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, 'Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears.'*

a. God only spoke Samuel's name, but when he responded God began to speak more

2. Often God may whisper in our reading – but we rush past it – brush it off – assume it's some 'lame idea'

a. But when we say "I'm listening!" – THEN God begins to reveal Himself to us

1. *Every passage speaks: The question is - are you listening?*

C. Be willing to Dig: The labor of revelation

1. *2 Tim 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

a. Revelation very rarely comes fully formed – just a thought/idea – maybe a tug at your heart

1. Then we work to dig it out – find out what God is saying

D. Read with tools in hand

1. You need to always have with you a way to record thoughts

a. *Any thought, idea, puzzling scripture, sermon notes – write it down – become a treasure trove of revelation in time*

2. Digital: Same idea – write everything down – if it's too hard on your phone you won't do it, find another way

a. Later you can take the time to come back and study

Bible Reading Plan

January 1, 2017

Gen 1 (Law)

Josh 1 (History)

Psa 1 (Wisdom)

Mal 1 (Prophets)

Matt 1 (Gospels)

Rev 1 (Epistles)