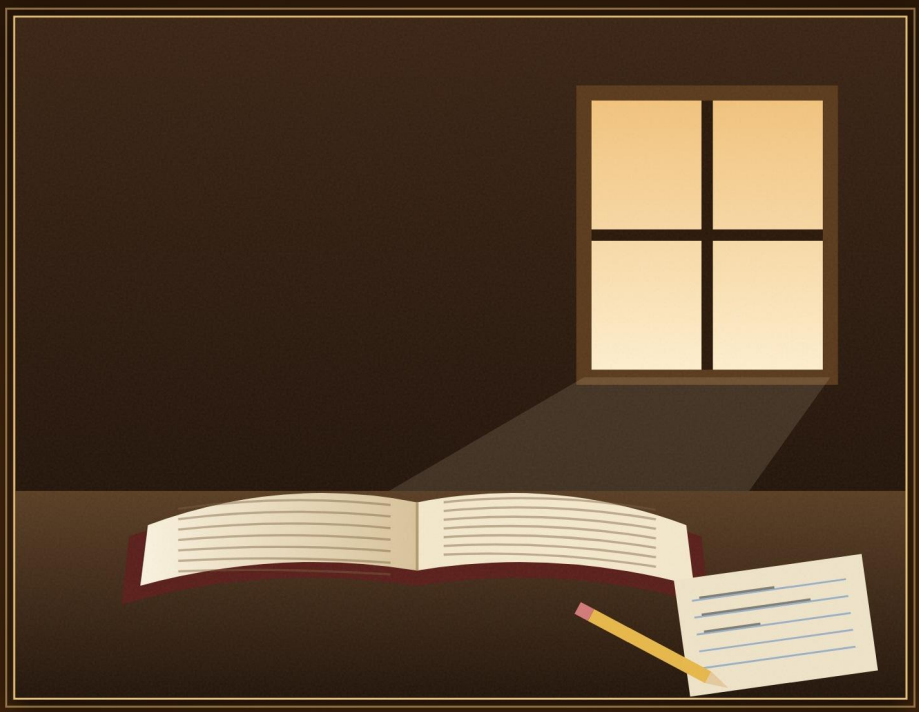
A SHORT BIBLE STUDY

# How to Study the Bible for Yourself

*Short Studies for the Christian Life*



*A simple way to read, understand and live God's Word*

Andrew Dominguez

Trinfinity Enterprises

# How to Study the Bible for Yourself

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**How to Study the Bible for Yourself: A Simple Way to Read, Understand and Live God's Word**

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**A note before you begin.** This book is written to teach the Bible and encourage faith. It shares my understanding of Scripture and is offered for study and spiritual growth. It is not counseling, medical, legal, or financial advice. If you are facing a crisis, a health problem, or a legal or money problem, please reach out to a qualified professional as well as your pastor and church family. To the fullest extent the law allows, Andrew Dominguez, Trinfinity Enterprises, and Andrew Dominguez's heirs, estate, successors, and assigns accept no liability for how this material is used.

# A Note on the Bible Translation Used in This Book

My preferred Bible for personal study, teaching, and research is the Steadfast Literal Bible (SLB). I chose it because it is a word-for-word translation in today's language, built on the ancient Scripture sources: the Hebrew and Aramaic of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New Testament. I prepared the SLB myself, and the Scripture in this book is taken from it.

Where a literal phrase would mislead an English reader, the SLB gives the writer's meaning in plain words. Words added for sense are set in bold italics so you can see what is in the original and what is not.

The complete Steadfast Literal Bible is free to read, search, download, and print at trinfinityenterprises.com/slb. If you want to check a verse in its full setting or read the translation's preface and principles, that is the place to go.

Above all, my desire is not to promote one translation over another, but to faithfully teach the Word of God, encourage careful examination of the Scriptures, and help readers grow in their knowledge, understanding, and relationship with the Lord.

May every page of this book direct attention not to the translation itself, but to the truth of God's Word and the One whom it reveals.

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# Introduction

> *A lamp to my foot **is** Your word, and a light to my pathway.*
>
> Psalm 119:105 (SLB)

Every Bible study I have written assumes one thing. It assumes you will open your own Bible and read it for yourself. My studies can walk beside you, but they can't take the place of God's Word. My words can be wrong. His can't.

Years of technical training work taught me to read the manual carefully and check every detail. Translating the Steadfast Literal Bible taught me the same thing about Scripture. Looking at every word in context opened the Bible in a way casual reading never had. You do not need a seminary degree to understand what God wrote.

A lot of believers have never been shown how to study the Bible. They hear sermons, they read devotionals, and they may read a chapter now and then. But when they sit down with the Bible alone, they don't know where to start or what to look for. They read a passage, close the book, and can't remember what it said. If that is you, this book is for you.

You don't need to know Hebrew or Greek. You don't need a seminary degree or a shelf full of expensive books. You need a Bible, a pencil, a little time, and a willing heart. God gave His Word so that ordinary people could know Him.

## How This Book Works

The first two chapters explain why it matters to study the Bible for yourself and how to get ready. The next three walk through a simple method that many Bible teachers have used for generations: **observe** (what does it say?), **interpret** (what does it mean?), and **apply** (how should I live?). The last chapter puts it all together with one short psalm, so you can see the method at work.

Each chapter ends with questions for personal reading or a small group. At the back is a one-page study sheet you can copy and use with any passage.

# Chapter 1: Why Study for Yourself?

> *Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, who received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures every day* ***to see*** *if these things might be so.*
>
> Acts 17:11 (SLB)

When Paul preached in Berea, the people there did something that might seem rude. They listened to the apostle Paul himself, and then they went home and checked what he said against the Scriptures. They did it every day. Luke doesn't call that rude. He calls it "more noble."

That is the attitude I want to encourage. Listen to your pastor. Read good books. Use my studies if they help you. But check everything against the Bible. Don't take anyone's word for what God said, including mine. Open the Book and see for yourself.

## The Bible Is God's Word

The main reason to study the Bible is that it is God speaking.

> *Every Scripture* ***is*** *God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training which* ***is*** *in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.* (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

"God-breathed" means that Scripture comes from God Himself. He used human writers, with their own personalities and styles, but what they wrote is what He wanted said. Peter says the same thing: "being borne by

the Holy Spirit, holy men of God spoke" (2 Peter 1:21). When I read the Bible, I'm not just reading old religious writings. I'm hearing from God.

And notice what Paul says the Bible does. It teaches, it reproves, it corrects, and it trains. It shows me the right road, shows me when I've left it, shows me how to get back, and helps me stay on it. The goal is that I would be "complete, fully equipped for every good work."

## Protection From Error

The Bible also protects us. Jesus warned that false teachers would come (Matthew 7:15; 24:24), and Paul said a time would come when people would not put up with sound teaching (2 Timothy 4:3-4). Many believers have been led astray because they only knew what somebody told them the Bible said. They never checked.

If you know your Bible, you are much harder to fool. When someone tells you God promises every believer wealth and health, you will know what Paul said about contentment. When someone tells you Jesus was just a good teacher, you will know what John 1:1-14 says about Him.

## Meeting God

But studying the Bible is not mainly about winning arguments or avoiding mistakes. It is about knowing God. The Bible is not a rule book or a textbook first. It is the story of God and His people, and at the center of that story is Jesus Christ. After His resurrection, Jesus walked with two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

> *And having begun from Moses and from all the prophets, He was explaining to them in all the*

*Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*
(Luke 24:27)

All of Scripture points to Him. When we study the Bible, we are getting to know the God who made us and the Savior who died for us. That is why the psalmist could say, “A lamp to my foot is Your word, and a light to my pathway.”

## It Is Worth the Effort

Paul told Timothy to be “a worker not needing to be ashamed, cutting straight the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). The word “worker” tells us study takes some effort. “Cutting straight” pictures a craftsman cutting a straight line, or a road builder laying a straight road. It means handling God’s Word accurately. That takes care and time. But it is worth it.

## Study Questions

1. What did the Bereans do in Acts 17:11, and why does Luke call them “more noble”?
2. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. What four things does Scripture do for us?
3. How does knowing your Bible protect you from false teaching?
4. According to Luke 24:27, who is at the center of all Scripture?
5. What has kept you from studying the Bible on your own? What could help?

# Chapter 2: Getting Ready

> *Uncover my eyes, and let me look at wonderful* ***things*** *from Your law.*
>
> Psalm 119:18 (SLB)

A little preparation makes a big difference. Here are a few things to set in place before you start.

For years I used the NASB 1995 for my studies. Now I use the Steadfast Literal Bible, and I use J.P. Green's Interlinear Bible for in-depth study and to confirm the text. I read a passage several times before I open a commentary. Reading other people's opinions first can make you miss plain details. Reading the text first lets Scripture speak (Psalm 119:18).

## Start With Prayer

The Bible is a spiritual book, and we need God’s help to understand it. Paul says the natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually examined (1 Corinthians 2:14). Jesus promised His disciples that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all the truth (John 16:13). That promise was first given to the apostles who would write the New Testament, but the same Spirit lives in every believer and helps us understand what He inspired.

So begin with a short, honest prayer. The verse at the top of this chapter is a good one to pray: “Uncover my eyes, and let me look at wonderful things from Your law.” Ask God to show you what the passage says, to help you understand it, and to give you a willing heart to obey.

## Choose a Bible You Can Read

Use a Bible in language you understand. A word-for-word translation is best for careful study, because it stays close to what the original writers wrote. All of my books quote the Steadfast Literal Bible, which is free to read at trinfinityenterprises.com/slb. If you want to know more about how translations differ, my free book *Which Bible, Which Books?* explains it in plain words.

If you can, use a Bible with wide margins or a notebook beside you. Writing as you read will help you see more and remember more.

## Choose a Time and a Place

Pick a regular time, even if it's only fifteen or twenty minutes. Many people like the morning, before the day gets busy. Others do better at lunch or before bed. The best time is the one you will keep. Find a place where you can think without the TV or your phone pulling at you.

Don't try to do too much at first. It is better to read one short passage carefully every day than to read ten chapters once a month and remember none of it.

## Choose What to Read

If you are new to Bible study, start with a Gospel. Mark is short and moves fast. John was written "so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31). After a Gospel, try a short letter like Philippians, James, or 1 John, or a book of wisdom like Proverbs. Study one book at a time, from beginning to end, a passage at a time. That is the best way to learn what a book really says, because you keep it in its setting.

## Simple Tools

You don’t need many tools, but a few can help.

- **Cross-references.** Many Bibles list other verses on the same subject in the margin. They help Scripture explain Scripture.
- **A concordance.** This lists where words appear in the Bible. Free online versions let you search any word.
- **A Bible dictionary.** This explains people, places, customs, and words.
- **Maps.** Many Bibles have maps in the back. They help you see where things happened.
- **A study or commentary.** Use these after you have studied the passage yourself, not before. Let God’s Word speak first. Then see what faithful teachers have said. My free studies cover every book of the Bible and are made to be used this way.

## Study Questions

1. Why is prayer the right place to begin Bible study?
2. What time and place would work best for you to study?
3. Which book of the Bible would you like to study first? Why?
4. Why is it wise to study a passage yourself before reading what others say about it?
5. Which of the tools listed would be most helpful to you?

# Chapter 3: Step One: Observe

> *And they read in the book, in the law of God, making **it** clear and giving the sense, and they understood the reading.*
>
> Nehemiah 8:8 (SLB)

The first question is the simplest, and it's the one most of us skip. What does it say? Before I can understand what a passage means or how to live it, I need to see what is actually there. Most mistakes in Bible study come from rushing past this step.

In technical training, the first lesson is to observe everything before jumping to conclusions. The same is true with the Bible. Asking who, what, where and when turns a familiar chapter into fresh truth. Careful observation keeps you from missing what the text actually says.

## Read It More Than Once

Read the passage slowly. Then read it again. If you can, read it out loud. You will be surprised how much you notice the second and third time that you missed the first. Read the verses before and after it too, so you know where it fits.

## Ask the Reporter's Questions

A good reporter asks six questions about every story. They work for Bible study too.

- **Who?** Who is speaking? Who is being spoken to? Who is being spoken about?
- **What?** What is happening? What is being taught or commanded?

- **Where?** Where does this take place? Where were the first readers?
- **When?** When did this happen? What came before and after?
- **Why?** Does the passage give a reason or a purpose?
- **How?** How is something done or how should it be done?

Not every question will have an answer in every passage. That's fine. The point is to slow down and look.

## Look for Key Things

As you read, watch for these and mark them in your Bible or notebook.

- **Repeated words and ideas.** When a writer says something more than once, he wants you to notice. John uses the word "believe" again and again in his Gospel. That tells you something about why he wrote it.
- **Commands.** What does the passage tell someone to do?
- **Promises.** What does God say He will do?
- **Contrasts.** Watch for words like "but," "rather," and "not so." They show two things set side by side.
- **Connecting words.** "Therefore," "because," "so that," and "for" show how ideas fit together. An old saying among Bible teachers goes, "When you see a 'therefore,' ask what it is there for."
- **Lists and comparisons.** Words like "like" and "as" often mark a picture or a comparison.
- **What it says about God.** This is the most important thing to notice in any passage.

## Write It Down

Write down what you see. You don't need fancy notes. A list of observations is enough. "Verse 1: three things the

blessed man does not do. Verse 2: what he does instead. Verse 3: he is like a tree." Writing slows you down and helps you remember.

## Don't Rush to Meaning

It's tempting to jump straight to "What does this mean to me?" But if I haven't carefully seen what the passage says, my answer may come from my own ideas instead of from God. When Ezra read the Law to the people in Nehemiah 8, the Levites helped them understand by "making it clear and giving the sense." Clear reading comes first. Understanding follows.

## Study Questions

1. Why is observation the step most people skip?
2. Pick a short passage, such as Psalm 23, and ask the six reporter's questions. What did you notice?
3. Why do repeated words matter?
4. What connecting words can you find in Romans 12:1-2?
5. What is the most important thing to notice in any passage, and why?

# Chapter 4: Step Two: Interpret

> *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker not needing to be ashamed, cutting straight the word of truth.*
>
> 2 Timothy 2:15 (SLB)

Once I have seen what a passage says, I ask what it means. This is where many people go wrong, so I want to give you a few simple rules that keep us on the right road.

Jeremiah 29:11 gets pulled out of context all the time. Read the verse right before it, and you see God was speaking to exiles facing seventy years in Babylon. That makes His promise of hope even stronger. Reading every verse in context keeps us from making Scripture say something it never said.

## Context Is King

The most important rule is context. A verse means what it meant in its setting. Pull it out of its setting, and you can make it say almost anything. Think of context as a set of circles, each one larger than the last.

- **The verses around it.** Read the paragraph or the whole chapter.
- **The book it is in.** Who wrote it, to whom, and why?
- **The part of the Bible it is in.** Is it before or after the cross? Is it written to Israel under the Law, or to the church?
- **The whole Bible.** What does the rest of Scripture say about this?

Here is an example. Many people love Jeremiah 29:11.

> *For I, I know the plans which I am planning concerning you,' declares the LORD, 'plans of welfare and not for calamity, to give you a latter end and a hope.* (Jeremiah 29:11)

It is a wonderful verse. But read the verses around it. God was speaking to Jewish exiles in Babylon. In verse 10, He told them the exile would last seventy years. Many of the people who first heard this promise would die in Babylon. The promise was for the nation, that God would bring them home in His time. It shows God's faithful heart, and believers can take real comfort from His character. But it is not a promise that every plan I make will succeed next month. Context keeps me from taking a promise that wasn't made to me and missing the truth that was.

## What Kind of Writing Is It?

The Bible contains many kinds of writing. Reading each kind the right way helps a lot.

- **History** (Genesis to Esther, the Gospels, Acts) tells what happened. Not everything it records is approved by God. It tells us what people did, good and bad.
- **Law** (much of Exodus to Deuteronomy) gave Israel God's commands under the old covenant. We learn from it about God's holiness, but we read it in the light of Christ, who fulfilled it.
- **Poetry and wisdom** (Job to Song of Songs) use pictures and feelings. Proverbs are wise sayings about how life usually works, not promises for every case.
- **Prophecy** (Isaiah to Malachi, Revelation) often speaks of things to come. Many prophecies were fulfilled in Christ's first coming; others wait for His

return. I take them literally unless the text itself shows a symbol, and Scripture often explains its own symbols (Revelation 1:20).

- **Letters** (Romans to Jude) teach churches and believers directly. They are often the clearest place to learn what Christians believe and how to live.

## Let Scripture Explain Scripture

God does not contradict Himself. When one passage is hard to understand, look at clearer passages on the same subject. Use the cross-references in your Bible. A hard verse should be read in the light of the clear ones, never the other way around. Peter warns that "no prophecy of Scripture comes from private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20). The Bible is not a book where every person gets to decide his own meaning.

## What Did It Mean to Them?

Before asking what a passage means to me, I ask what it meant to the people who first heard it. Paul wrote to real churches with real problems. Moses spoke to Israel in the wilderness. Knowing a little of the history and customs helps. A Bible dictionary or a good study can help here.

## One Meaning, Many Applications

A passage has one meaning: what God meant through the writer. It can have many applications to many lives. When someone says, "This verse means one thing to me and something else to you," they usually mean it applies differently. That's true. But the meaning doesn't change from person to person. God said what He said.

## When You Get Stuck

Some passages are hard. Peter admitted that some things Paul wrote are hard to understand (2 Peter 3:16). That's all right. Write down your question, keep reading, and come back to it. Ask your pastor or a mature believer. Check a good study. And be humble. There are some things God has not told us (Deuteronomy 29:29). Hold your conclusions on hard passages gently, and hold the clear teachings of Scripture firmly.

## Study Questions

1. What are the four circles of context? Why does each one matter?
2. Read Jeremiah 29:10-14. How does the context help you understand verse 11?
3. Why is it important to know what kind of writing a passage is?
4. What does it mean to let Scripture explain Scripture?
5. What is the difference between a passage's meaning and its application?

# Chapter 5: Step Three: Apply

> *But be doers of **the** word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*
>
> James 1:22 (SLB)

The goal of Bible study is not to fill my head. It is to change my life. I can know my Bible well and still not obey it. James says that kind of hearing is self-deception.

> *But be doers of **the** word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. Because if anyone is a hearer of **the** word and not a doer, this one is like a man observing the face of his birth in a mirror; for he observed himself and has gone away, and immediately he forgot what he was like. But the one who looked intently into **the** perfect law, the **law** of freedom, and continued **in it**, this **one**, having become not a forgetful hearer but a doer of work, this one will be blessed in his doing.*
> (James 1:22-25)

James pictures a man who looks in a mirror, sees that his hair is a mess and there is food on his face, and walks away without doing anything about it. That is how foolish it is to hear God's Word and not do it. The blessing is promised to the doer, not just the hearer.

When I wrote New Beginnings, my Scripture-based 12-step course, I learned that head knowledge means nothing until it changes how you live on Monday morning. One honest step of obedience beats a notebook full of notes you never use (James 1:22).

## Questions That Lead to Application

After observing and interpreting a passage, ask questions like these.

- Is there a **truth about God** I need to believe or remember?
- Is there a **sin** I need to confess or turn away from?
- Is there a **command** I need to obey?
- Is there a **promise** I can trust?
- Is there an **example** to follow or a warning to heed?
- Is there a **prayer** I should pray?

Not every passage has all six. Pick the one or two that stand out.

## Make It Specific

"I should love people more" is a good thought, but it is too general to change anything. "I will call my brother this week and apologize for what I said at Thanksgiving" is an application. Ask, "What will I do, and when?" Then write it down.

## Keep It Personal

It's easy to apply a passage to everyone else. "My wife needs to hear this." "I wish my boss would read this." The first person who needs to apply God's Word is me. Start with your own heart.

## Depend on God's Strength

When God shows us something to change, we may feel we can't do it. Often we can't, not on our own. But God doesn't ask us to change by willpower. Paul said, "God is the One who is working in you both to will and to work for the sake of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). Ask Him for help, take the step, and trust Him for the result.

## Meditate on It

Joshua was told to keep God's law in his mouth and meditate on it day and night, "so that you may take care to do according to all that is written in it" (Joshua 1:8). Meditating isn't emptying your mind. It's filling it with God's Word and thinking it over, the way a cow chews its food more than once. Carry the verse with you through the day. Think about it at red lights and in line at the store. That is how God's Word moves from your notebook into your life.

## Study Questions

1. In James 1:22-25, what is the difference between a hearer and a doer?
2. Which of the six application questions do you find most helpful?
3. Why is a specific application better than a general one? Give an example.
4. Why is it tempting to apply the Bible to other people first?
5. Read Philippians 2:12-13. How does God's work in us help us obey?

# Chapter 6: Putting It Together: Psalm 1

> *This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, and you shall meditate on it by day and night, so that you may take care to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your ways successful, and then you will prosper.*
>
> Joshua 1:8 (SLB)

Let's walk through the whole method with one short psalm. Read it slowly two or three times before you go on.

> *How blessed **is** the man who has not walked in the counsel of **the** wicked, and in the way of sinners has not stood, and in the seat of mockers has not sat! But rather his delight **is** in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates by day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by streams of water, which gives its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither; and all that he does prospers. Not so **are** the wicked, but rather **they are** like the chaff which **the** wind drives away. Therefore **the** wicked will not stand in the judgment, and sinners **will not stand** in the congregation of **the** righteous. For the LORD knows the way of **the** righteous, and the way of **the** wicked will perish.* (Psalm 1:1-6)

## Observe

Who is this about? Two kinds of people: the blessed man (the righteous) and the wicked. Who wrote it? The psalm doesn't say. It stands at the front of the whole book of Psalms like a doorway.

What do I notice? Verse 1 has three verbs: walked, stood, sat. The blessed man has not walked in the counsel of the wicked, stood in the way of sinners, or sat in the seat of mockers. It's a downward slide: walking past, then stopping, then settling in. Verse 2 starts with "But rather," a contrast. Instead of the counsel of the wicked, his delight is in the law of the LORD, and he meditates on it "by day and night."

Verse 3 gives a picture, introduced by the word "like." He is like a tree planted by streams of water. It gives fruit in season, its leaf doesn't wither, and all that he does prospers.

Verse 4 begins "Not so are the wicked," another contrast. They are like chaff, the light husk that blows away when grain is thrown into the wind. Verse 5 starts with "Therefore." The wicked will not stand in the judgment. Verse 6 gives the reason, with the word "For." The LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Repeated words: "way" (verses 1 and 6), "wicked" (verses 1, 4, 5, 6), "stand" or "stood" (verses 1 and 5). The man who would not stand in the way of sinners will stand when the wicked cannot.

## Interpret

What kind of writing is this? Poetry and wisdom. It uses pictures: a tree and chaff. It shows how life works in God's world.

What does it mean? There are only two ways to live. One way listens to the wicked and drifts away from God. The other way delights in God's Word and is rooted in it. The first way looks attractive for a while but ends in

judgment. The second way is stable, fruitful, and known by God.

What does “prospers” mean? Read in the light of the rest of Scripture, it doesn’t promise that a righteous person will never suffer or will always get rich. Job, Jeremiah, and Paul all suffered. The picture is of a tree that bears fruit “in its season.” Its life holds up because its roots reach water. Psalm 73 shows that the wicked may seem to prosper for a while, but their end is ruin.

What does “knows” mean in verse 6? In Scripture, God’s knowing often means more than awareness. It means a close, caring relationship. Jesus will say to false followers, “I never knew you” (Matthew 7:23). God watches over the way of the righteous.

Where is Jesus in this psalm? He is the only Man who perfectly fits verses 1 and 2. Every believer who trusts Him is counted righteous in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21) and is being made more like Him.

## Apply

A truth about God: He knows and watches over the way of those who belong to Him, and He will judge the wicked.

A warning: Whose counsel am I listening to? What am I letting shape my thinking, whether shows, websites, friends, or habits? Am I sliding from walking to standing to sitting?

Looking back on how I slid into heavy drinking while still functioning at work, I see the downward slide of Psalm 1:1. After a hiking accident in 2014, I used alcohol to deal with the pain, a little at first and then a lot. It did not start with a crash. It started with getting comfortable

with a wrong habit and settling into denial. Staying rooted in God's Word keeps a believer from drifting down that path.

A command, by example: Delight in God’s Word. Meditate on it day and night.

A specific step: “This week I will read Psalm 1 every morning and think about it during my drive to work. I will turn off one show that mocks God and spend that time reading instead.”

A prayer: “Lord, make me like a tree planted by streams of water. Give me a love for Your Word. Keep me from the counsel of the wicked.”

## Now It Is Your Turn

That is the whole method. Observe, interpret, apply. It works with any passage. You won’t see everything the first time, and that’s fine. The more you do it, the more you will see. Start small, stay with it, and enjoy it. God is speaking.

## Study Questions

1. What three verbs in Psalm 1:1 show a downward slide? Have you seen that in your own life?
2. What two pictures does the psalm use, and what does each one show?
3. How should we understand “all that he does prospers” in the light of the rest of the Bible?
4. Which application from Psalm 1 speaks most to you?
5. Choose another short psalm (such as Psalm 15, 23, or 121) and use the three steps on your own.

# A Closing Word

> *But rather his delight **is** in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates by day and night.*
>
> Psalm 1:2 (SLB)

I hope this little book has taken some of the fear out of studying the Bible. It isn't only for pastors and scholars. God gave His Word to His people, all of them, so that we could know Him and walk with Him.

Start where you are. Pick a book, pick a time, say a prayer, and open your Bible. Observe what it says. Ask what it means. Decide how you will live it. Then do it again tomorrow.

If you want help along the way, my free Bible studies cover every book of the Bible, a passage at a time, with questions at the end of each chapter. They are free at trinfinityenterprises.com. Use them after you have looked at the passage yourself. And if you have never trusted Jesus Christ, the One the whole Bible is about, start with my free book *The Road Home*.

I have written a study on every book of the Bible, and I still find something new every time I open Scripture. You never graduate from needing God's Word. Keep a simple notebook and show up each day. God will meet you in its pages.

# Bible Study Sheet

Copy this page and use it with any passage.

Pastor Jimmy Carter led me to Christ when I was a boy in Victorville. He did not just preach on Sundays. He took time with a neighborhood kid who mowed his lawn. The best Bible study tool you will ever have is a faithful life backing up the Word.

| Step | Question | My Notes |
|---|---|---|
| Pray | Lord, open my eyes to see what is in Your Word. | |
| Observe | Who, what, where, when, why, how? | |
| Observe | Repeated words? Commands? Promises? Contrasts? | |
| Observe | What does it say about God? | |
| Interpret | What is the context before and after? | |
| Interpret | What kind of writing is it? | |
| Interpret | What did it mean to the first readers? | |
| Interpret | What do other passages say? | |
| Apply | Truth to believe? Sin to confess? Command to obey? Promise to trust? | |
| Apply | What will I do, and when? | |
| Pray | Turn what you learned into a prayer. | |

# About This Book

*How to Study the Bible for Yourself* is a short guide for anyone who wants to read the Bible on their own and understand it.

It explains why studying God's Word for yourself matters, how to get ready, and a simple three-step method used by Bible teachers for generations: observe what the passage says, interpret what it means, and apply it to your life. The last chapter walks through Psalm 1 using all three steps, so you can see the method at work.

Each chapter ends with study questions for personal reading or a small group. A one-page study sheet at the back can be copied and used with any passage.

All Scripture quotations come from the Steadfast Literal Bible, which is free to read at trinfinityenterprises.com/slb.