

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 17:3

Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

2 Peter 1:3, 5-8

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ... For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 2:1-6

My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Colossians 3:9-10

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

Ephesians 4:11-13

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

An excerpt from *A Guide to Prayer*
By Reuben P. Job and Norman Shawchuck

That which sets scripture apart from all other writing is its universal and its singular appeal. It speaks to persons of every tribe and generation as though it were written for each individual alone. In order to accomplish this it was written in symbolic language.

A symbol is a representation of a greater reality. The symbol is not the reality but points to it. In order to grasp the truth of a symbol one must not look “at” it but through it to the greater reality which is waiting to be discovered by the one who has eyes to see and ears to hear (Matt. 11:15.)

Jesus wanted his teaching to have universal and singular appeal, and for that reason he taught through parables. To the person who carefully searches each Bible story it will reveal hidden truth suited for that person’s situation-in-life. For the person who does not dig deeply, the symbols will remain nontransparent.

To help you to see through the story we suggest a two-step process for reading the scripture. First, read the passage with an open mind and heart letting words flow into your being. Then respond to the scripture. Be aware of the scripture in relation to your own history, actions, and desires. Enter into dialogue with the scripture with your heart, mind, and emotions. Read it not as a portion of a book written for everyone, but as a letter written just to you—the message of one thinking only of you when writing.

Through analogies, metaphors, parable, and “plain talk,” enter into a personal dialogue with God-as-author. Then, it will help to make the passage uniquely yours if you search for insight into certain questions: (1) What is this passage telling me about God? (2) What is this scripture telling me about myself? (3) What does this scripture have to say to me about my ministry at this time?

It may be that you will want to read only one verse or a few verses, and that you will want to stay with those few words for several days. You can do this, knowing the Holy Spirit has still more to say to you out of the passage.

The point is to stay with each passage for a day or longer, until it builds for itself a nest in your heart from which it may speak to you all day long. What we are suggesting is that you prayerfully ponder the passage—that you meditate upon it in such a way that it may flow into and through your life like oil through a sieve that leaves its essence upon every fine part of the sieve long after the last visible drop is gone. This is meditation.

Suggestions

- When you sit down to have your time with God, pray that he will reveal himself to you and expect him to show up.
- Personalize your reading of the Bible by inserting your name in appropriate places.
- Pray scripture.
- Read the same psalm or the same passage of the Bible every day for an entire week and see how God's message to you through it changes from day to day.
- Memorize verses of scripture that speak to you personally.
- Pay close attention to your circumstances and see what God is saying to you through them, always using scripture as a filter.
- Read the writings of others and listen to the experiences of others and see what God has to say to you through them.
- Keep a journal in which you write your impressions of what God is saying to you during your devotional time.

Personal Observations

- For me, the two conditions that are important for nurturing a consistent devotional life are solitude and silence.
- God occasionally reveals himself and his will for me in a spectacular way but he primarily reveals himself and his will for me over a long period of time through regular, consistent time spent reading the Bible.
- Realize that God speaks to you through the Bible and through creation.
- If you want to experience God's continued guidance in your life you must obey.
- When something irritates you about someone else, look at your own life.
- God's revelation of himself to you is not meant for you alone but it is meant to share with others.
- If you want to move your relationship with God from your mind into your heart, you must be willing to move from the realm of intellect to the realm of emotion.