

HOW TO PRAY-READ SCRIPTURE

IMMERSE TRAINING PROGRAM - TOOLS FOR THE PRAYER ROOM

—BRIAN BEESON

How To Pray-Read Scripture

I. TEACH US TO PRAY (CONVERSE WITH GOD)

- A. Every believer has felt the yearning to grow with God in prayer. After witnessing the vibrant prayer life of Jesus, the disciples asked Him, “Teach us to pray.” (Luke 11:1) As God is putting a culture of prayer in the Church and the extended hours of corporate prayer growing, this issue becomes more apparent: *How can I grow in prayer?*
- B. For some of us it is easy to know many facts concerning the Bible and study it thoroughly—but we have yet to personalized the information we read so our thoughts and emotions become transformed. The information has remained mostly theoretical. Neither have the truths about God found in Scripture deeply impacted how we experience God or talk with Him as we know they could.
- C. The Pharisees in Jesus’ day thought they could have life in God through studying the Scriptures. They could not find life because they were not willing to come to the One the Scriptures testified of, the One who *is* life. They only approached the study of the Scriptures academically with their minds, but Jesus says of them that true love for God was not in their hearts.

You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. (John 5.39)

- D. The Bible is living and active (Heb. 4:12) and every word, God-breathed (2 Tim. 3:16). When we engage with Him in prayer using His words, we allow Him to discern our hearts, instruct and correct us, even reprove us.
- E. The Holy Spirit living in us, desires to escort us into the knowledge of God as we engage Him about God. He can take our conversation into greater depths through impressions and internal whispers (2 Cor. 2:8-12; John 14:16; 16:12–15).

II. ENCOUNTERING JESUS: JOURNALLING AND PRAYER-READING

- A. The following is a practical aid to help give our heart to God and to receive from Him. The purpose of this is to show how to use the Scriptures as a springboard of inspiration for our heart. The following is a way to express our devotion to the Lord:
 - 1. As we read through the Scriptures, we should pray the actual Bible passages back to God.
 - 2. Journal the things that the Lord puts on your heart. Consider the following suggestions as a method of prayer reading. The idea is to turn Bible passages into meaningful conversation and dialogue with Jesus.
- B. In Scripture, there are two broad categories of truth.
 - 1. First, truths that exhort us “***to believe***” God’s Word.
 - 2. Second, truths that exhort us “***to obey***” God’s Word.

⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me. ⁴¹ And Jesus

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answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha...⁴² ... one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:40–42)

C. Truths exhorting us “*to believe*” God’s Word.

1. We respond by **thanking Him** for a particular truth.
 - a) The Holy Spirit, on occasions, will tenderize our heart by such simple declarations of thanksgiving for particular truths.
 - b) Take time to say thank you in a specific way. Don’t get in a hurry. We must be patient and speak slowly in our heart to God.
2. We respond by **asking Him to more fully reveal** this particular truth to us.
 - a) For example, when the Lord declares that we have ravished His heart as His sister and Bride (SS 4:9), we respond by asking Him for a greater heart revelation of this truth.
 - b) Be persistent. Ask Him to open the eyes of your heart like Paul prayed in Eph. 1:17–18. The Holy Spirit will cause your insight to gradually increase (1 Cor. 2:9–12).
3. When reading the passage where Jesus says to the Bride, “Your love is better than wine” (SS 4:10), stop and say “thank You, Jesus, that my love, be it weak but sincere, moves you more than anything else.”
4. Then take it the next step and say, “Reveal this truth to me. Give me a spirit of revelation concerning the truth that my weak but sincere love, freely given and shown through small but meaningful acts moves you.”

D. Truths exhorting us “*to obey*” God’s Word. For example, the Lord exhorts the Bride to arise in obedience to follow Him to the mountains of hardship and risk, leaving the comfort zone (SS 2:8-10). The Holy Spirit exhorts us to obey a truth like this.

1. We respond by **committing yourself to obey** Jesus in the way described in a particular passage. Specifically speak to Jesus the intent of your heart to obey the passage. Making sweet resolutions to obey Him in a specific way will strengthen your obedience over time.
2. We respond by **asking the Lord to empower your heart to obey** a particular truth. Specifically, ask Jesus to empower your heart to obey the passage. Such requests for divine aid to obey will result in a growth in grace over time.
3. In the passage where Jesus exhorts us to arise in obedience to follow Him to the mountains of hardship and risk, stop and say, “*I commit myself to obey the challenge You have set before me.*” And then take it the next step and say “*empower me by Your Spirit to obey this truth set before me.*”

E. Take time to record your thoughts, prayers and meditations as you “pray-read” through the Scriptures. The simple exercise of writing your ideas will help you turn the Scripture into a glorious prayer dialogue between your heart and Jesus. We must approach the Scripture as much more than just an intellectual exercise. Informing the intellect is only a starting point much like studying the menu at a good restaurant. The point of studying the menu is to eventually enjoy the dinner.