
Get Set

Part 3 – The Practice of Reflecting on Scripture

Introduction

Cultures and communities have 'texts' that give voice to shared values and beliefs

Truth is seen as a commodity for the powerful and influential.

As Christians, our 'text' and our view of truth are different to other cultures and communities – it is seen objectively in the Bible.

The Importance of Scripture

But how much do we actually read the Bible?

And how much do we get out of it when we do?

Experience and Understanding.

2 Timothy 3:1-7

Knowledge isn't simply information, but it's also the process or journey of learning that information.

How does scripture effect our relationship with God?

The Power of Scripture

Discipline in any area will allow us to improve our lives and increase our fruitfulness.

If our discipline is reading scripture, it does more for us than disciplined reading of other books.

The Bible talks about the impact and power of reading Scripture.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Romans 12:1-2

Isaiah 55:10-11

Deuteronomy 8:1-3

Hebrews 4:12

Scripture is most transformative in our lives when we spend time reflecting on it.

Reflecting on Scripture

We can't outsource our spirituality or Bible-reading.

We can't allow reading devotional books and Christian literature to replace our Bible reading.

A Simple Model for Reflecting on Scripture: SOAR

- + Scripture
- + Observation
- + Application
- + Response

Scripture: Pick a passage – anything will do!

- + Find a reading plan that can help direct you systematically through sections of the Bible. Riverlife has produced a number of reading plans over the past few years.

Observation: What's happening in the passage.

- + Context – read the verses and chapters surrounding the passage. Read the introduction to the book, finding out the time, place and original audience it was addressed to. Get a good study Bible!
- + Support – Look for other passages that express the same or similar ideas. See how it's expressed there. Allow the different books and authors to help you understand what's being said.
- + Illumination – don't forget that this is all to help us build a real and vibrant relationship! Spend time reading over the passage, praying through it, and asking Holy Spirit to show you what is important and relevant for you from this passage.

Application: Find something that you can apply to your life.

- + As you pray and wait on the passage, ask Holy Spirit to give you something that you can change and apply to your life – it might be in your thinking, actions, relationships or perspectives on life.

Response: Respond to God.

Take all that you've read, learned and reflected upon, and talk with God about it. Bring about some activity that you can adopt that reinforces what you've reflected on.

Ephesians 1:17-19.

Response Action Points

1. Grab a Bible reading plan from the Help Desk, or find one in your Bible or Bible App.
2. Pick a passage to start at, and find a study Bible or online introduction to the book.
3. Grab a notebook or journal, and sit down in a quiet place, and give yourself 15-30 minutes of uninterrupted time.
4. Work through the SOAR process above.
5. Journal down your responses and observations to each of the four parts of SOAR.
6. Do it again tomorrow!
7. Share what you've been reading and learning with people around you – Christian and non-Christian. You'll be amazed at how relevant it can be, even to those who haven't read that passage of Scripture.
8. Stick with it! Some days it will be hard, others easy, but it's a discipline, and it's God's word, so it's worth persevering at.