

Mark It Up!

How to Get More from Your Bible Reading

Come Ready To Read It Again

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / March 9, 2025

I. Come Ready To Read It Again And Again

The cumulative effect of reading God's Word over and over is that it starts to renew your mind, so that you think like God thinks. That's when it begins to change what you feel, what you do, and who you are.

This happens because what gets repeated gets remembered, even if you didn't mean to memorize it.

You don't have to sit down and try to memorize God's Word. Just read it every day for the rest of your life and you will know huge chunks of it by heart.

One of the life-changing features of God's Word is the staying power that it has. It can stand up to repeated exposure like no other book! After decades of reading it, you can still see new things.

II. Look For Jesus!

Look for either predictions of Him or explanations about Him, because the Bible is all about Jesus! There is one main character on center stage and His name is Jesus!

The Old Testament is a big finger pointing forward saying, "He's coming! He's coming! He's coming!" from **Genesis** to the end of **Malachi**.

The New Testament from **Matthew** to **Jude**, is a big finger pointing back saying, "He came! And here's what He did for us that you could never do for yourself."

The Old Testament is anticipation, the New Testament is explanation, and that last book of the Bible, **Revelation**, is a celebration of what's coming next!

If you want to get more out of your Bible, read it through the lens of Jesus. Look for Jesus, because Jesus Himself said that even the Old Testament is about Him!

John 5:39-40 "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me, ⁴⁰yet you refuse to come to Me that you may have life."

NLT "... the Scriptures point to Me!"

Message "You have your heads in your Bibles constantly because you think you'll find eternal life there. But you miss the forest for the trees. These Scriptures are all about Me!"

III. Look For The Sovereign Power And Control Of God

A. He's In Control Of Who's In Control

Isaiah 44:28 (p. 1008) "Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, and he shall perform all My pleasure, saying to Jerusalem, "You shall be built," and to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid."'"

Isaiah 45:1, 4 (p. 1010) “Thus says the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held... ⁴I have named you, though you have not known Me.”

Isaiah 45:13 (p. 1011) “I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways; he shall build My city and let My exiles go free...”

Ezekiel 29:19-20 (p. 1220) “... thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Surely I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon... ²⁰ I have given him the land of Egypt for his labor, because they worked for Me,’ says the Lord GOD.”

B. He's In Control Of How Long They're In Control

Jeremiah 29:10-11 (p. 1107) “For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word... ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

Jeremiah 27:7 (p. 1104) “So all the nations shall serve him and his son and his son's son, until the time of his land comes; and then many nations and great kings shall make him serve them.”

C. He's In Control Of Where You Are Today

Psalms 31:14-15 “But I trust in You, O LORD; I say, ‘You are my God.’ ¹⁵ My times are in Your hand...”

IV. Look For Clarifying Insights That Change What You Expect Or Do

A. Trusting God Is Not A Feeling But A Choice

Psalms 11:1 (p. 75) “In the LORD I put my trust...”

Psalms 56:3-4, 10-11 (p. 454) “Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You. In God (I will praise His word), in God I have put my trust... In the LORD (I will praise His word), in God I have put my trust...”

Psalms 73:28 (p. 621) “But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD...”

“For many years in my own pilgrimage of seeking to come to a place of trusting God at all times-I am still far from the end of the journey-I was a prisoner to my feelings. I mistakenly thought I could not trust God unless I felt like trusting Him (which I almost never did in times of adversity). Now I am learning that trusting God is first of all a matter of the will, and is not dependent on my feelings. I choose to trust God and my feelings eventually follow.”

- Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God*

B. You Can Experience Greater Intimacy With God

Psalm 103:7 (p. 905) “He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.”

C. God Doesn't Always Deliver Us But Is With Us

Daniel 3:17-18 (p. 1263) “... our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. ¹⁸ But if not... we do not serve your gods...”