

KEYS TO YOUR OWN “GOD & I TIME”

Make sure you have a:

- ❖ Set time
- ❖ Set place
- ❖ Set study

Bring the proper materials:

- ❖ Bible
- ❖ Notebook
- ❖ Pencil
- ❖ Plenty of time

Principles to Follow:

- ❖ Begin with prayer. Ask God to open your eyes. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law* (Psalm 119:18). The Holy Spirit is the only One who can “open our eyes” to spiritual truth. By praying, I demonstrate my dependence on God. I need God’s help!
- ❖ Be willing to stay in a passage or a study until God changes you. Give God time to work in your heart.
- ❖ Look for God in every page of Scripture. What He writes reveals His character, His likes/dislikes, His will for us, etc.
- ❖ Ask questions as you study the passage: What do I learn about God, about Christ, about the Holy Spirit, about sin, about pleasing God? Be a good “hearer” as God speaks to you. Keep a journal of everything you learn.
- ❖ Be a good “doer” of what God shows you in His Word (James 1:22-25). Consider how this truth affects your personal life. Ask God to show you how you need to change to become more like Christ.
- ❖ End your daily time in prayer. Thank God for the privilege of getting to know Him.
- ❖ Throughout your day, apply what you learned in your “God & I Time”!

The Wilds

Christian Camp and Conference Center

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BIBLE STUDY AT-A-GLANCE

PREPARATION: Getting My Heart Ready to Meet With God

God wants me to ask Him to “open my eyes” to His truth. I need God’s help to understand His Word. Through prayer I demonstrate a humble heart and dependence on Him. Begin your time in the Word each day by thoughtfully praying these words of Scripture back to the Lord:

- **Psalm 119:18** *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.*
- **Psalm 119:34** *Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.*
- **Psalm 25:4-5** *Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.*
- **Job 34:32** *That which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Get out your Bible, a notebook, and a pen. Settle into a quiet place and dig in.

Write out in full the portion of Scripture you plan to study.¹

Use a journal to record insights and observations. Ask these “three big questions” each time you read the Word:

OBSERVATION: What Does It Say?

Start with the most obvious, simple observations about the text, and then probe more deeply for further understanding.

Simple Observations:

- ❖ Ask observation questions:
 - Who* wrote it? said it? about whom? speaking to whom?
 - What* happened? What are the main events? the major ideas? the theme?
 - When* was it written? Did the events take place? Will it yet happen?
 - Where* did this happen?
 - Why* was this written?
 - How* did it happen? Is it done?

¹ This Bible study method is taken from Chapter 9, “Getting the Word into You,” in *A Place of Quiet Rest* by Nancy Leigh DeMoss.

- ❖ Use a Bible commentary or a study book to study:
 - A book of the Bible (Read the book through a couple of times before you start.)
 - A woman or man of the Bible (Ruth, Mary, Hannah, Joseph, Daniel, Esther, Dorcas, Abigail, David)
 - The virtuous woman of Proverbs 31
 - A doctrine you don’t understand such as sanctification, baptism, or the Holy Spirit’s work (A Christian high school doctrine’s book is very helpful.)
 - A familiar passage: i.e., the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5), biblical love (1 Corinthians 13), communication (Ephesians 4:15-32), the joy chapter (Philippians 4), the tongue (James 3)
 - The Good Shepherd and His sheep (Phillip Keller’s *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*)
- ❖ Read Psalms regularly:
 - As part of your daily devotions
 - On the weekends as a change or to prepare you for Sunday
 - To help you know the character of your God
 - During times of trial for comfort and strength
 - Memorize a Psalm (e.g., Psalm 100, Psalm 19, Psalm 34:1-9, Psalm 139) and repeat it often: when you wake up in the morning, around the house, while driving, before church, etc.
 - During a difficult time read or quote Psalm 23 five times a day for a week: when you wake up, after breakfast, after lunch, after supper, before bed.
- ❖ Study issues that are pertinent in your life:
 - How to lead someone to Christ; how to raise your children biblically; how to be a godly wife, daughter, friend, etc.
 - Problem areas: anger, depression, lack of contentment, bitterness, pride, lying, selfishness, worry, fear, envy, family problems, guilt, etc.
 - Issues: abortion, addictions, cults, divorce, homosexuality, music, politics
- ❖ Purchase a Bible study book or a published devotional guide. Be careful that you get one that helps you study the Bible. Sometimes even good books get us away from studying our Bibles. Examples of good devotional guides from The Wilds:
 - *God & I Time Treasures I and II* by Ken Collier & Rand Hummel
 - *6-Week Bible Studies* (James, Joseph, Colossians, Titus, Philippians, 1 Peter, New Testament Postcards, etc.) by Rand Hummel
- ❖ Ask other Christians for their favorite Bible study ideas.

- ❖ Read Proverbs.
 - Study the different types of people found in Proverbs. Make a page for each one (e.g., the fool, the scorner, the wise man, the virtuous woman, the sluggard).
 - Study through Proverbs, verse by verse, recording everything you learn about a specific topic (e.g., friends, the tongue, work, wisdom, the fear of the Lord).
 - Study everything God says about the family: obedience to parents, listening to instruction, giving instruction, rearing children, husband/wife relationship, etc.
 - The book of Proverbs has 31 chapters. Read one proverb for each day of the month.
 - Find a life principle that applies and write it in a notebook and meditate on it.
- ❖ Study various Bible doctrines (e.g., sanctification, abiding, salvation).
- ❖ Read a passage once a day for a full month (e.g., James, 1 John, Titus).
- ❖ Write your own commentary on a passage. Fill a notebook with everything God teaches you as you study.
- ❖ Read through the Bible.
 - Read a certain number of chapters a day.
 - Use a One Year Bible that has assigned daily readings: a passage in the Old Testament and a passage in the New Testament, plus part of Psalms and Proverbs.
 - Read through the Bible chronologically.
 - A good study Bible is very useful in helping you understand difficult passages or words.
- ❖ Read through a specific book of the Bible. Use a single-volume commentary or the introduction to the book in a study Bible to try and learn the overall theme of a book before reading it; then read with colored pencils in hand looking for one specific theme. Examples:
 - Jeremiah - pluck up/destroy; build/plant
 - Isaiah - predictions of the Messiah
 - Hosea - Trace the story line of his wife's adultery and the comparisons to God and Israel.
 - Zechariah - character traits of God seen in the book
 - Leviticus - holy, holiness, set apart, sanctified
 - Minor Prophets - the wrath of God; the purpose for His wrath
 - Philippians - joy
 - Galatians - law and grace
 - 1 & 2 Peter - suffering and glory; how they relate
 - Hebrews - the preeminence of Christ
 - 1 John - "know"; evidences of salvation

- ❖ Outline the chapter, labeling the major sections with your own title. Try to locate the key verse.
- ❖ Look for patterns—repeated words or phrases (and mark them with colored pencils) to help you understand what the author intends to emphasize.

Deeper Digging:

- ❖ Use Hebrew and Greek dictionaries to look up the meaning and usage of various words in the passage.
- ❖ Look for cross-references.
- ❖ Read the passage in various translations.
- ❖ Paraphrase the passage, putting it into your own words.
- ❖ Consult commentaries and study Bibles only after you have done your own reading, meditation, and study of the passage.

INTERPRETATION: What Does It Mean?

Ask the following kinds of questions to help understand the implications of the text:

- ❖ What does this passage teach me about God?
- ❖ What does this passage teach me about Jesus?
- ❖ What does this passage teach me about man?
- ❖ Are there any promises to claim?
- ❖ Are there any commands to obey?
- ❖ Are there any examples to follow?
- ❖ Are there any sins to avoid?

APPLICATION: What Should I Do?

Record your responses to the Word of God. Plan to use what you learn!

- ❖ How does this truth apply to my life? to my situation?
- ❖ In view of this truth, what changes need to be made in my life?
- ❖ What practical steps can I take to apply this truth to my life?
- ❖ Do I need accountability in this area?

Write out your response in the form of a prayer expressing your commitment to the Lord.

IDEAS FOR GETTING TO KNOW YOUR GOD

Compiled by THE WILDS Staff

One of the keys to successful Bible reading is keeping your mind engaged; always be looking for something as you read. Also, remember that every page of Scripture reveals God, so always be looking for Someone as you read!

- ❖ Choose a Bible passage and ask the following questions (write the answers in a notebook):
 - What do these verses teach me about God?
 - What do these verses teach me about Jesus Christ?
 - What do these verses teach me about the Holy Spirit?
 - What do these verses teach me about Satan's lies?
 - What do these verses teach me about others?
 - What do these verses teach me about myself?
 - Is there a command for me to keep?
 - Is there a sin that I need to avoid or confess?
 - Is there a promise for me to claim?
 - Is there a way my thinking or my actions need to change?
- ❖ Create a notebook on the character of God; this is called a *Biography of God*. You simply read the Bible and seek to answer the question: *What do I know about my God?* (Study guide and book by Mardi Collier are available.)
- ❖ Study the names of God.
- ❖ Study different aspects of God's character (His attributes) in depth (e.g., His omniscience, omnipresence). (Use the *Renewing Guide* by Ken Collier.)
- ❖ Study the character of God. (*Knowing Your God* study guide by Pat Berg is available.)
- ❖ Choose a Gospel (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John) to read through. Look for one specific truth about Christ as you read (topics listed below). Keep a notebook of everything you learn about Christ in that specific area. As you study the life of Jesus, consider how you can be more like Christ—applying what you learn to your personal life.
 - How did Jesus spend His time?
 - How did Jesus treat others? Who did He associate with?
 - How was Jesus an example of a servant?
 - How did Jesus demonstrate humility? What did Jesus teach about pride and humility?
 - What did Jesus teach that He wants me to do in my life?
 - What characteristics did Jesus have that I should have in my life?

- What does Jesus hate? What does Jesus love?
 - What did Jesus have to say about my relationships (to Him and others)?
 - What did Jesus say about Himself? What did He say about His relationship to the Father?
 - What do we have in Jesus? What has He given to me? What is He to me?
- ❖ Study the “I Am” statements of Christ. (John 4:26; John 6:35; John 7:37-38; John 8:12, 23, 58; John 9:5; John 10:7, 11, 36; John 11:25; John 13:13; John 14:6; John 15:1; Revelation 1:8, 17)
 - ❖ Study through the Epistles. Make a list of everything you have “in Christ.”
 - ❖ Study 1 Corinthians 13. (Study guide by Ken Collier is available.)
 - ❖ Read through the New Testament marking all of the references to prayer. Catalogue the references in a journal. Apply what you learn to your life.
 - ❖ Read through Jeremiah marking any reference to pride (in word, action, or thought) in one color and any reference to humility (in word, action, or thought) in a contrasting color. Catalogue the references in a journal. Consider which characteristics you display in your life.
 - ❖ Do a biographical study on different characters in the Bible (e.g., Joseph, Ruth, Daniel).
 - What can I learn about God from their lives and circumstances? (Joseph's God, Ruth's God, etc.)
 - Record what *they* knew and believed about God and how that affected their lives.
 - What can I learn from observing their lives? (situation/reaction/outcome)
 - ❖ Do a word study on an area of needed growth in your life.
 - Use an exhaustive concordance such as Strong's or Young's to find many references to that word.
 - Study verses on a particular topic that you especially struggle with (i.e., selfishness, joy, contentment, trust, complaining, serving, the “one anothers,” prayer, pride/humility, the tongue, praise). Answer the question: What does God say about this issue? Record what God teaches you and how you will change.
 - Work on getting to the “heart” of your spiritual struggle with *The Renewing Guide* by Ken Collier.