**"GIVE ME THE BIBLE"**

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**How I Read The Bible**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. In this series (**"Give Me The Bible"**), thus far we have covered...
	1. The Problem Of Biblical Illiteracy
	2. Why I Read The Bible
	3. Why I Believe The Bible
	4. Why I Love The Bible
	5. Why I Obey The Bible
	6. Why I Study The Old Testament
2. In the final two lessons, I want to share thoughts related to...
	1. How I Read The Bible
	2. How I Study The Bible
3. For many years I have engaged in daily Bible reading...
	1. Most years, reading through the Bible entirely
	2. Every time I find reading the Bible a pleasurable and beneficial experience

[You might say that I have developed the habit of daily Bible reading. I'll go further and say that I am positively addicted! How does one read the Bible with such enjoyment? First, it helps to remember...]

1. **WE NEED TO CREATE A GOOD HABIT**
	1. **THE ROLE OF HABITS...**
		1. We either have good habits or bad habits
		2. If we have not developed the good habit of daily Bible reading...
		3. Then we have developed the bad habit of NOT reading the Bible daily!
	2. **THE REALITY OF TIME...**
		1. As illustrated by James, our time on earth is brief - **[Jm 4:14](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%204.14%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**
		2. If we have not developed the good habit of daily Bible reading...
		3. ...our time on this earth will one day catch up with us
			1. We will have spent our lives on this earth without utilizing the benefits provided by daily reading of God's Word
			2. Many will have to face God having never read through His Word once!

[Assuming that we all desire to develop the good habit of daily Bible reading...]

1. **WE NEED TO CREATE A POSITIVE ADDICTION**
	1. **WHAT IS A POSITIVE ADDICTION...?**
		1. Usually when we hear the word addiction, we think of negative addictions
			1. Which is simply another phrase for bad habits
			2. Such as smoking, swearing, drinking, gambling
			3. When something bad for us:
				1. Becomes "second nature"
				2. We do it without much effort or thought
			4. We become dependent on it, either emotionally or physically
			5. When we try to do without it, we experience various degrees of discomfort
		2. Positive addiction is when you become dependent upon a good habit
			1. For example, exercise can become a positive addiction
				1. Those who have made exercise a pleasurable and frequent experience soon become "addicted" to it
				2. So that if they go a few days without exercise, they feel uneasy, depressed, irritable
				3. Of course, if they go without exercise long enough, the discomfort will eventually pass
			2. So a positive addiction is a habit which is:
				1. Good for you, either physically, mentally, or spiritually
				2. A source of pleasure and satisfaction
				3. One that should you neglect it, begins to give you "withdrawal pains"
	2. **WHY CREATE A POSITIVE ADDICTION TO BIBLE READING...?**
		1. It will help you maintain the practice of reading the Bible
		2. Should a few days go by without reading the Bible, the "discomfort" experienced will help motivate you to get "back on track"
		3. Most people who have tried to read the Bible daily and did not keep it up...
			1. Never experienced a positive addiction to reading God's Word
			2. Rather than a pleasurable experience, it was a chore
			3. So when they fell behind in their goals, there was little motivation to catch up

[Having explained what I mean by "positive addiction", here are some thoughts on...]

1. **HOW TO CREATE A POSITIVE ADDICTION FOR BIBLE READING**
	1. **PRINCIPLES ARE THE SAME FOR CREATING ANY ADDICTION...**
		1. You must make the experience a pleasurable one
			1. This is where many people fail when it comes to "exercise"
			2. Going about it the wrong way, the daily workouts are painful and miserable
			3. Therefore any excuse not to exercise prevents them from keeping it up
		2. The same applies to reading the Bible
			1. To many, they try to do too much too soon
			2. The experience soon becomes little more than "marking a checklist"
	2. **SUGGESTIONS RELATED TO BIBLE READING...**
		1. **Make Bible reading a pleasurable experience**
			1. An addiction requires a pleasurable habit
			2. The goal: "I rejoice at Your word As one who finds great treasure." - [**Ps 119:162**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ps%20119.162)
		2. **Start slow, with small goals**
			1. Many try to start by reading through the Bible in one year
				1. An admirable goal, but most never make it past Exodus or Leviticus
				2. Before Bible reading has become a positive addiction, they run into difficult passages of Scripture
				3. They are like beginning joggers who try to run a mile the first time out
			2. I would recommend starting with making the New Testament a yearly goal
				1. This requires no more than a chapter a day
				2. The material is easier, more edifying at the outset
			3. Once you have read the New Testament in a year a couple of times
				1. You might read through the Old Testament one year
				2. Then begin reading through the entire Bible each year
		3. **Begin each session with prayer**
			1. Like that found in **[Psa 119:18](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ps%20119.18%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**: "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your Law."
			2. This puts us in the most receptive frame of mind - cf. **[Jm 1:21](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%201.21%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**
		4. **Read slowly, carefully**
			1. This prevents reading without comprehending what you read - cf. [**Ps 1:1-2**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ps%201.1-2)**;**[**119:15-16**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ps%20119.15-16)
			2. Reading out loud, as though you were reading to someone else, often helps
		5. **Make use of Bible study aids**
			1. Especially a Bible dictionary, and Bible maps
			2. Don't observe the "pass over", passing over...
				1. Words you don't understand
				2. Names you don't know
				3. Places unfamiliar to you
			3. Every time you do, there is that much more of the Bible you don't understand, don't get anything out of it
			4. Take a moment to look them up in the references
		6. **Discuss what you read with others**
			1. Encourage others to follow the same program of reading
			2. Share your discoveries, the passages that encourage you
		7. **Read with the intention to do what it says**
			1. Otherwise, you are wasting your time! - **[Jm 1:22-24](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%201.22-24%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**
			2. The true joy comes in the application of God's Word (another "positive addiction" to develop) - **[Jm 1:25](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/James%201.25%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**
		8. **End each session with prayer**
			1. Like that expressed in [**Ps 119:5-6**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ps%20119.5-6)
			2. Or the one found in [**Ps 119:10-11**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ps%20119.10-11)

**CONCLUSION**

1. Following these suggestions, the practice of reading the Bible becomes one of great joy:

**"I rejoice at Your word as one who finds great treasure." -**[**Ps 119:162**](https://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ps%20119.162)

1. Done on a regular basis, a positive addiction for daily Bible reading quickly develops which helps one to keep up this wonderful habit
2. Streaks are very popular these days – let me challenge everyone here to create a streak of reading god’s word every day for the rest of our lives!
3. I hope that in some way I have encouraged everyone...
	1. To begin if they have never done so
	2. To continue if they are doing so
	3. To try again if they tried in the past and failed

For there is so much to gain, and there is so much to lose...!