

■ GUIDELINES FOR FILLING OUT DEVOTIONAL STUDY FORM

(Please see page 8 for the study form)

Step One – Prayer for Insight on How to Apply the Passage (Ephesians 1:17-23)

You already know that God wants you to do two things:

- i. Obey his Word
- ii. Share it with others.

In your prayer tell God that you are ready to obey what he will show you and that you are willing to share that application with others.

Step Two – Meditation (Joshua 1:8)

Meditation is the key to discovering how to apply Scripture to your life. Meditation is essentially thought digestion. You take a thought God gives you, put it in your mind, and think on it over and over again.

- i. **Visualize the scene of the narrative in your mind**

Put yourself into the biblical situation and try to picture yourself as an active participant. Whether you are reading the historical books of the Old Testament, the Gospels, or the book of Acts, imagine yourself in that historical context.

■ *Ask yourself how you would feel if you were involved in that situation. What would you say? What would you do?*

Example:

Imagine yourself as the apostle Paul in prison writing the letter we know as 2 Timothy. Picture yourself in that roman jail, condemned to death and awaiting execution, and alone except for Luke. Feel the loneliness Paul must have felt, but also feel the triumph he must have felt as he wrote, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7).

- ii. **Paraphrase the passage under study**

Take the verse or passage you are studying and rephrase it in your own words. As you think on it, use contemporary words and phrases to express timeless biblical truths.

Tip: The Living Bible and Eugene Peterson's The Message are two examples of paraphrases of Scripture.

iii. **Personalize the passage you are studying**

This can be done by putting your name in place of the pronouns or nouns used in Scripture.

Example:

John 3:16 would read, "For God so loved Aliu Obi that he gave his one and only Son that if Aliu believes in him he shall not perish but have eternal life."

iv. **Use the S-P-A-C-E P-E-T-S acrostic.**

This acrostic is a useful aid to meditation. Each letter represents a question that can help you apply the passage to your life. If you memorize the nine questions that this acrostic represents, you will have them available every time you want to meditate on a passage.

This acrostic asks: Is there any...

- **S**in to confess? Do I need to make any restitution?
- **P**romise to claim? Is it a universal promise? Have I met the condition(s)?
- **A**ttitude to change? Am I willing to work on a negative attitude and begin? Building toward a positive one?
- **C**ommand to obey? Am I willing to do it no matter how I feel?
- **E**xample to follow? Is it a positive example for me to copy, or a negative one to avoid?
- **P**rayer to pray? Is there anything I need to pray back to God?
- **E**rror to avoid? Is there any problem that I should be alert to or beware of?
- **T**ruth to believe? What new things can I learn about God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, or other biblical teachings?
- **S**omething to praise God for? Is there something here I can be thankful for?

Step Three – Write Out an Application (Habakkuk 2:2)

Write an application of the insights you have discovered through your meditation. Writing your application out on paper helps you be specific. If you don't write something down, you will soon forget it. This is particularly necessary when you are dealing with a spiritual truth. If you can't put it down on paper, you haven't really thought it through. It's been proven that if you write something down, you will remember it longer and be able to express to others what you have learned.

- i. **Your application should be personal**— you should write it in the first person singular. Use the personal pronouns I, me, my, and mine throughout.
- ii. **Your application should be practical** — it ought to be something you can do. Plan a definite course of action that you intend to take. Design a personal project that will encourage you to be a “doer of the Word.” Make your applications as specific as possible. Generalities can make you feel helpless and produce little action.
- iii. **Your application should be possible** — it should be something you know you can accomplish. Otherwise you will get discouraged.
- iv. **Your application should be provable** — you must set up some sort of follow-up to check up on your success in doing it. It has to be measurable so you will know that you have done it. This means you will have to set some kind of time limit on your application.

Example:

Of these four factors is taken from Ecclesiastes 6:7. The passage reads, “All man’s efforts are for his mouth, yet his appetite is never satisfied.” The four factors in the written application would look as follows:

- a. Personal: “I need to...”
- b. Practical: “I need to lose some weight.”
- c. Possible: “I need to lose 10 pounds.”
- d. Provable: “I need to lose 10 pounds before the end of the month.”

Example

DEVOTIONAL STUDY FORM

DATE: July 10

PASSAGE: Judges 6:1 – 18

1. PRAYER:

2. MEDITATION:

This passage is on the call of Gideon.

Lessons (truths to Believe)

- When God wants to accomplish something, he looks for people to use.
- God often uses the most unexpected people.
- God can show his strength best through our weaknesses.
- God's power in us is the answer to our inadequacies.

Sin to confess/attitude to change

Lord, forgive me for not being willing to be used by you. I've felt that you couldn't use me because of my weaknesses. I've used my inadequacy as an excuse for laziness. Help me remember that trusting in myself will cause failure, but relying on your strength in me will bring victory. Use my weaknesses to bring glory to yourself.

3. APPLICATIONS:

I've been afraid to accept my church's invitation to teach a Sunday school class. I've made up excuses for not taking the position because I felt inadequate. But I know God wants me to teach that class, so I'm going to tell my pastor I'll accept the responsibility.

4. MEMORIZATION:

Remember what God told Gideon: "I will be with you" (v. 16).

DEVOTIONAL STUDY FORM

DATE:

PASSAGE:

1. PRAYER:

2. MEDITATION:

3. APPLICATIONS:

4. MEMORIZATION:

Reference Material

- Rick Warren (1981) *"Rick Warren's Bible Study Methods: 12 Ways You Can Unlock God's Word"* Zondervan