

REAP: Bible Reading

The Bible can often appear to be a large and confusing book. There are 66 books written by over 40 authors across economic and national lines, with one woven thread throughout 4,000 years of history.

Unlike most books, we don't read the Bible simply for information or entertainment, but for personal transformation. To quote John Ortberg *"It's not about getting through the Bible, it's about the Bible getting through you."* So how do we encounter God and experience life change?

One way to think about how you read the bible is **R.E.A.P.** (Read, Explore, Apply, Pray)

READ

Pick a place to start, you can follow along by reading through the sermon passages, pick up a reading plan from the info center, Find a reading plan on the bible app, or check out some of our recommended plans at erbc.ca/biblereading. Once you've picked a passage, pray for God's guidance and wisdom and begin reading. Focus on what stands out to you, highlight or underline key phrases and other areas that resonate with you.

EXPLORE

Spend some time processing what you have just read. Keeping a journal or notepad can be extremely helpful as you dig deeper into the bible. Write down any questions you may have and any key observations or verses that stood out to you.

Read and re-read the passage asking questions like:

- Who did the author write this too?
- What are the circumstances in which this was written?
- Why did the author write this passage?

A resource like a study bible or bible handbook can help you understand the context of the passage in greater detail.

APPLY

After you have read and made observations of the passage you can begin processing how it might apply to your life. Ask yourself these questions:

- How does this passage invite or inspire me "view" God? Is there anything that reveals God is ...
 - Great?
 - Glorious?
 - Good?
 - Gracious?
- How would I see my life differently if I saw God this way?
 - Myself
 - Circumstances
 - My Relationships
- What 1 or 2 things might God be wanting me to do today to show I believe this?

PRAY

Pray about the passage and your application. Ask God to change your heart and mind to be more like his, and to shape you through you're reading and reflection

An example of R.E.A.P.

READ

1 Corinthians 12

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ... Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. “

(1 Cor 12:14,27 ESV)

EXPLORE

Paul is writing to a church that is riddled with division. People are struggling with pride over their roles and looking down on others. Other individuals are so against others that they want to separate and be their own entity. Paul reminds the Corinthians that all Christians are part of one church and that only together can we be the fullest expression of the church Body

APPLY

I need to surround myself with other believers as I journey to know Christ. Each of us has been created and gifted differently and in the same way that the church is stronger together, I will be strengthened when I am surrounded by a diverse group of other believers.

PRAY

God, forgive me of any pride I've had when I've tried to journey on my own. I know you have given me the opportunity to engage in a community of faith and to serve you. Help me to see the value and abilities of others as you see them and to encourage people to serve as they were created to be. Help me to be better connected with my community and to live as a part of the church body every day.

Amen