

THE FOUR "R'S" OF BIBLE READING

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<http://www.jacofc.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Enjoy-your-Bible-Booklet.pdf>

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INTRODUCTION: Have you ever read a chapter in the Bible but then could not remember what you had read? Have you ever fallen asleep while reading? An hour after you read, do you retain what you have read? These problems destroy enjoyment in Bible reading and therefore we must use a method of Bible reading that will solve this problem. See Matthew 13:13-15.

1. READ: To read properly we must be keen observers. We must see words and phrases that stand out while at the same time collecting the whole thought. Remember, the important thing is not how many times you have gone through the Bible, but how many times the Bible has gone through you!

A. READ ALOUD -- but not in a dull way. Read with meaning and feeling. (Note the difference between reading silently, reading aloud but without meaning, and reading aloud with meaning-- Psalm 119:97-104.)

B. READ CAREFULLY -- That is, do not read too quickly. You are not scanning. Be like a traveler who absorbs the sights, sounds, and smells of the countryside. Be a connoisseur of fine food and taste, enjoy! Each word in the Bible has a function, therefore train yourself to see WORDS and their function in the verse.

C. READ REPEATEDLY -- Turn the words over in your mind, meditate. Never conclude you have exhausted the meaning of a verse just because it is familiar to you. John Bunyan said, "Old truths are always new to us if they come to us with the smell of heaven upon them."

D. READ WITH A PENCIL and use colored pencils to highlight and make notations.

2. REFLECT: When God speaks we need to stand still and listen (Hebrews 2:1). Reflection is the mind at work thinking over what the eyes have seen. What was that we read in Psalm 119:97?

A. REFLECT PURPOSEFULLY. Don't read isolated verses separating them from their context or even allowing them to suggest topical studies. You are reflecting on the Holy Spirit's message in this text. Let Him speak to you. 10

B. REFLECT VISUALLY. Visualize the occasion, the setting. Example: Revelation 7:13-17; Luke 13:27-28.

C. REFLECT PRAYERFULLY. Allow the marvelous truths you are learning to cause you to express to God your feelings, your joy, shortcomings and blessings.

D. REFLECT PATIENTLY. Time and patience are the two best instruments of discovery. It takes time to dig out the golden nuggets of God's word.

3. RECORD: What can you do to retain what you see? WRITE IT DOWN! Record your observations as you see them and your mind will be released to look for more. This can be done by chapter summaries or summarizing paragraphs and highlighting key verses to remember. One man said, "The Bible study that is done only in one's head is very apt to get out of one's head."

A. RECORD WITH ORGANIZATION. Get a notebook that is devoted to your observations. It will be a daily record of the profit gleaned from the Holy Spirit.

B. RECORD QUESTIONS. Questions about problems in the text that are difficult to understand. Verbalizing and recording the problem or difficulty puts you halfway to the solution. You will now look for a solution that discussion with others and later reading will solve.

C. RECORD APPLICATIONS. Write down lessons that you have learned for you own life especially things that you see you need to change. Also, write out goals or vows you that you intend to accomplish for God.

4. RESPOND: No amount of Bible reading will profit until we respond or apply the lessons we have learned to our lives. We must use what we have learned.

A. RESPOND WITH CONFESSON of sins and failures to God.

B. RESPOND WITH OBEDIENCE to commands.

C. RESPOND BY PUTTING THE WORDS IN OUR HEART (Deut.6:4-9). Do this by reviewing what you have studied and testing yourself on what was in the previous chapters. During a break in the day, recite what you remember from