

January Discipleship Practice – Sacred Study

- New Year and a renewed commitment to be disciples who make disciples.
- Sacred Study (Sacred - set apart for God's purposes)
- Simple study technique – Cross Referencing

Reading of God's Word daily is not the same as a practice of studying God's Word. Every believer should take time to study the Bible. This is not something that we should leave to the pastors and teachers – every believer should develop methods to study the Bible.

I often hear people say, "But, I'm not an academic." And that may be true. But you are not studying to teach others, you are studying to learn and grow (and naturally you will share your insights with your group and probably others as well.)

Every follower of Jesus can learn to study Scripture because God has made it so by sending the Holy Spirit.

25 "All this I have spoken while still with you. **26** But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. " (John 14:25-26)

The Holy Spirit who inspired the Scriptures is the same Holy Spirit who lives in you and will teach you.

The law of the LORD is perfect,
refreshing the soul.
The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.
(Ps 19:7)

So, today I want to walk you through one simple study technique that will help you study the Bible – Cross Referencing.

1. Set aside the time to study (1-2 hours, once or twice a week.)
2. Always begin with prayer (Invite the Holy Spirit to teach you)
3. Choose a passage of Scripture to study (Not too long – we will use Gal 6:7-10)
4. Read the passage over a few times and gain a general understanding. Perhaps, read it in a different translation. Take notes: What are the main ideas or topics? What questions do you have? Other initial thoughts.
5. Look up other Biblical references related to one of the topics. This is called Cross Referencing – using Scripture to interpret Scripture.

Two ways to cross reference a verse:

- If you have a Reference Bible, follow the references (not the same as the footnotes).

- Use a Bible Concordance (or Google) and look up key words and related words.

Sample Cross Reference of Galatians 6:7-10

- Verse 7 says, “A man reaps what he sows.”^a
- Look in the reference notes under 6:7 and find the letter ^a – It will give you 2 Cor 9:6
- Turn to 2 Cor 9:6 – “Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.”^o
- Add these thoughts to your thinking and ask, “How do they go with Galatians 6:7?”
- Notice that 2 Cor 9:6 also gives a reference letter ^o – Following this path will take you to Proverbs 11:24-25, 22:9, and back to Galatians 6:7-10
- Proverbs 11:25 says, “A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.”ⁿ
- Add these new thoughts to your thinking. And notice another new reference for verse 25ⁿ – Follow this path and it will take you to Matt 5:7 and back to 2 Cor 9:6-9
- Matt 5:7 says, “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.”

Now you have these topics (reaping and sowing, mercy, good works, generosity). If you want to keep studying, look in a concordance or on Google for other verses on the same topics. Remember to follow the references for each new verse. Or, you can return to Galatians 6 and look at the other references (^b to ^g). Just in these few verses there is loads more to study.

Your time will fly by. After a few hours, conclude by summarizing what you have been learning and by thanking God for all that he has taught you.