

# The Spiritual Disciplines



*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory just as from the Lord, the Spirit. ~2 Corinthians 3:18*

## Introduction: The Spiritual Disciplines

## **Lessons from Luke 10:38-42, the story of Martha and Mary**

1. A \_\_\_\_\_

2. A \_\_\_\_\_

3. A \_\_\_\_\_

## **Lessons from 2 Corinthians 3:18**

1. A \_\_\_\_\_

2. The \_\_\_\_\_

3. A \_\_\_\_\_

4. A \_\_\_\_\_

# Making the Most of Your Bible Reading

1. Have a plan.
2. Be flexible.

## Should I be reading the whole Bible?

## How often should I try to read through the whole Bible?

## What Bible should I choose to read?

- For the majority of your Bible reading, I recommend that you choose an accurate translation rather than a paraphrase so that as much as is possible you are reading what God has said and not what others have interpreted God to have said.
  - King James Version – KJV
  - New King James Version – NKJV
  - New American Standard Bible – NASB (1995)
  - English Standard Version – ESV
  - Legacy Standard Bible – LSB

A wide margin Bible is helpful for taking notes.

- I also suggest you have a Study Bible handy as a ready reference to questions you might have.
- Sometimes it might be helpful to vary the Bible that you're reading such as:

- A different version
- In a foreign language that you readily understand
- The ESV Reader's Bible (Leaves out chapter and verse references)
- A Harmony of the Gospels
- A Chronological Bible

### **What is the best plan for reading the whole Bible?**

- Read straight through from Genesis to Revelation.
- Alternate reading books from the Old and New Testaments.
- Alternate reading sections from the Old and New Testaments. For example, read through the Pentateuch and then read the four Gospels and so on.
- Use the M'Cheyne schedule, reading a chapter from several different books each day.
- Being as I'm a New Testament believer, I like to read the New Testament twice for every one time I read the Old Testament.
- Using a Bible Reading Schedule and marking off each chapter as you read can be very helpful in keeping track of what you have read. There are a variety of Schedules available.
- Sometimes read books or portions of books in chronological order. Example: Ezra, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, Nehemiah.
- Read books or portions of books in chronological order. Example: Ezra 1-4, Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra 5, Esther, the rest of Ezra and then Nehemiah.

## Is it necessary to mark in my Bible?

1. The Benefits
  - It will aid in your understanding of what you are reading.
  - It will make your Bible more personal.
2. Recommendations for marking your Bible.
  - Use ink pens that won't bleed through the pages. I recommend the Micron .005 tip. (Sold in the bookstore.)
  - Write in all UPPERCASE letters with a straight edge. Use very small but readable letters. This method saves space and keeps things looking "somewhat" neat.
  - Highlight important words and phrases with art-quality colored pencils. (Sold in the bookstore.)
  - Develop your own color code for your various markings.
3. Your Bible can become your own commentary, a spiritual diary, and a prayer journal.
  - Your own commentary:
    - Establish the setting of each book and keep in mind as you read.
    - Consult the introductory material for each book you're reading in a Study Bible such as *The MacArthur Study Bible*. Write down at the beginning of the book the things you want to remember every time you read through that particular book. Who wrote it, who was it written to, themes, problems addressed, etc.
    - Take notes from sermons that help you understand the passage.
    - Note your own observations as you read.

- Mark down cross references that are not noted in the printed cross references.
- Use colored pens or pencils to highlight important words or phrases that are repeated in a book or chapter.
- A Spiritual Diary: Record a thought, a personal response, or a personal application by a verse or passage that speaks to you.
- A Prayer Journal:
  - Write a person's name and the date by a verse that you prayed them.
  - Write the date by a verse you prayed for yourself.
  - Jot a prayer beside a verse or passage that your heart responds to

## **How do you read difficult parts?**

### **Journaling Your Bible Reading**

1. Keep a separate journal or notebook.
  - A place to record your own understandings, thoughts, and applications.
2. *God's Word to My Heart* journal.
  - I use a separate journal reserved only for this.
  - As you read, copy verses in your journal that especially speak to your heart. Don't try to "look" for something.

Just wait until something stands out. It might happen a couple of times in a week or once in six months.

- Have a separate section for Old and New Testament verses.
- When your mind and soul are weighed down and you don't feel like you can read your Bible, this collection of verses can become precious in those times of special need.

In order to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever,  
I must **know** and **worship** Him  
In spirit and in truth.

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