

STUDY GUIDE QUESTIONS:

Help...I Want to Read the Bible But I Don't Know How

Chapter 1:

1. Does it bother you that there are many things in the Bible that will remain confusing if you don't understand the culture and context of the passage? Why?
2. Many people take the "this is what it means to me" approach in reading the Bible. What can you see in this approach that could make it a dangerous way to read the Bible? What can you see in this approach that has some positive aspects? What suggestions do you have for minimizing the dangers while maintaining the positive aspects?
3. Explain in your own words what the author's "good news" is saying in the section "Here Is the Good News."
4. What have you found in your own personal experience that has helped you in reading the Bible? What has made it difficult for you?

Chapter 2:

1. What does it mean to read the Bible as a "story about us?" In what way is the Bible a story about God rather than us? Why is this significant to understand when reading the Bible? Why do you think we tend to read the Bible as if it is a story "about us?"
2. What does it mean to say, "everything became broken?" How have you seen this in terms of your own life experience?
3. The author says, "The cross/resurrection event doesn't just allow us to be forgiven, it creates a whole new life and unleashes the very power of heaven into our hearts and, through us, into the world." What does that mean to you?
4. Why is a restored relationship with God the key to having the "broken become new?" Describe what kind of relationship this restored relationship is and why it is so key to everything.
5. Why do we tend to turn the Bible story into a list of rules or activities we must do?

6. How is “be faithful” significantly different than “try harder?”
7. What does it mean to say, “you are being invited into His story?”

Chapter 3:

1. The author says in his opening sentence, “You are going to discover God’s power and presence in especially significant ways when you learn to trust in His character and purposes.” How is experiencing God’s power and presence tied to learning about His character and purposes?
2. The Bible’s primary message is about how God is taking what is broken and making all things new. Why are the three questions given in this chapter significant to this primary message?
3. Explain in your own words the importance of connecting the trilogy of “Scripture---life---prayer.” Can you provide some examples or illustrations of this? What things tend to prevent or hinder us from reading Scripture this way?
4. In the last paragraph of the chapter, the author says, “As your relationship with God develops, your faith and trust will grow stronger.” Why is this true?

Chapter 4:

1. Explain in your own words what it means to “have the right heart” as you read the Bible. Why do you think this is such an important aspect to reading the Bible?
2. What hinders us from having such a heart as we read the Bible?
3. What do you think is the key to having or developing such a heart?

Chapter 5:

1. What do you personally find useful in this chapter in helping someone to begin reading the Bible?

2. Imagine you are talking to someone who has never read the New Testament but has recently become a Christian. How would you summarize the “overall story” of the Bible in one simple paragraph that will help guide them as they read?
3. Keeping in mind that “overall story” that you just shared with this new Christian, what one piece of advice would you give them as they start to read? You can only give one piece of advice and you should be able to say it in one sentence. Why did you offer this particular piece of advice?

Chapter 6:

1. The author says the greatest benefit in reading the Bible is that we come to know God’s heart. What does this mean to you and why do you think this is so important our Christian life and growth?
2. Why is the truth of Jeremiah 17:9 so relevant to our reading God’s Word? Can you provide some possible examples that illustrate this truth?
3. What does it mean “to make God in our own image?” How do we tend to do that today? How does this concept relate to our reading the Bible?
4. Do you have any examples you can share of how God’s Word had made a difference in your life?