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Discipline 2: Bible Study

“The basic difference between Bible reading and Bible study is simply a pencil and a piece of paper” - Donald Whitney

Think back to the time when you were learning to ride a bike. You were trying to balance on two wheels when you were accustomed to 3 or 4. You are up off the ground so falling meant hitting something hard. Trying to pedal, steer, and balance all at once felt impossible, especially if you had a parent shouting, “Pedal! Watch where you are going!” Or “lean left!” So many directions and it was up to you to get that bike to carry you forward without falling.

Growing in the Christian life can feel a bit like learning to ride that two-wheeler. This is not just true for people who are new to the faith. There are times when we all feel like we cannot do it or that we don’t have the skills to pray, teach, or study the Bible. Going back to the fundamentals is healthy and can rejuvenate our lagging spiritual commitments.

Get a notebook or create one where you put your sermon notes. There is no special requirement, just pen and paper where you can collect notes (maybe a 3-ring binder to add WeMo sermon notes). As you read your chapter in John, write the following questions in your notebook and answer them based on the verse(s) you read.

1. What does it say?
2. What does it mean?
3. Is there a truth from God I need to recognize or obey?

Answering questions or writing notes as you read turns it from Bible reading to Bible study. You can add some basic Bible study tools (Bible Dictionary, Maps, Commentaries) to your study but to begin you only need a Bible, pen, and paper.

You may want to create a HEAR journal using that acrostic: **H**ighlight, **E**xplain, **A**pply, and **R**espond. Write questions you have and ask God to help you understand an answer to it. Being able to study the Bible gives you time to think and meditate on the scriptures in a way that reading does not. Bible study goes beyond listening to a sermon or Bible lesson. Bible study is a way you don’t just drink the milk that has been prepared by a preacher or teacher but you are taking the meat, chewing it up, and digesting it yourself. This is the path to maturity and to discipling other people.

Would you add to your daily Bible reading the study of God’s Word?