



Chapter 5: Walk with the Word as an Individual Study Guide

The common characteristic of all the people in the Bible standing as prominent spiritual examples is a strong, personal commitment in their daily walk with God of which God's Word was absolutely essential.

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

—Matthew 7:7-11

Concert pianists are created from 30 minutes of practice a day. In the lives of such spiritual giants as Abraham, Joseph, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Peter, John, Paul, etc., are the results of a daily commitment to God. Spiritual “giants” are made a day at a time from hearts that are determined to seek and submit to God in daily devotion to Him. It’s an application of Christ’s teaching in action,

“Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.”

—Matthew 23:12

If you clear a few minutes each day from your schedule you’ll find that God will bring your schedule under control and you’ll be walking in all the right things.

Adopt a Reading Plan

At its most, the Walk with the Word reading schedule is a couple of chapters a day and often far less. Even a whole section of 11 chapters usually takes only 20 minutes to read in a single sitting. It's a decision that comes down to spending a half hour or so a day committed to God rather than something else. Consider Jesus' teaching that **nothing** can take precedence over Him:

"He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it."

—Matthew 10:37-39

When combined with prayer and meditation, the reading becomes 2-way communication between you and God and enjoins the process of finding new life in Christ. Especially when employing the *Inductive Bible Study Method* described in the next chapter, the ultimate result is the application of Scripture to your life on a daily basis. Spending 20-30 minutes a day in this manner is the critical first step to relinquishing **personal** control in favor of **divine** control that results in a Christ-led, Christ-inspired life.

Weekly Bible Study

The weekly studies available for download on this site can serve as a weekly, personal exploration of a section of the overall reading. You can subscribe to the Walk with the Word newsletter to receive them in your email inbox each week. These can serve as guides revealing how the Inductive approach can work for you. The main point is to **NOT** read for the sake of reading or just for information; read to hear God's voice speaking to you personally through His Word and seek how to apply it to your walk with Him.

If you come across a difficult passage, word or phrase, go to your Bible dictionary. Follow the verse references printed within your Bible

to examine similar passages or even check a concordance. First allow yourself the opportunity to examine Scripture seeking the Spirit's guidance before seeking a mature fellow Believer's counsel. Use commentaries only as the last resort. This advice is intended to allow *you* to gain insight into God's Word with as few presuppositions—yours or others—as possible and to not hear what God has said to *other* people but what He is *now* saying to *you*.

Seriously consider keeping a journal as described in more detail later. Jot down just one thought a day concerning something in the reading that spoke to your heart and how you intend to use it to make a difference in your personal walk.

Enhance Another Study

The odds are pretty good that the Walk with the Word reading schedule and email Bible studies won't parallel activities in your local church. But if your pastor is, say, preaching through a particular book of the Bible, you can download Walk with the Word studies from the same general sections of Scripture to enhance such studies and make personal application of same. When you pay attention to the themes or sections of Scripture that are being covered by your local ministry, and supplement the study with personal application, the sermons and lessons you experience are enhanced and more personally meaningful because you're now *actively* involved in what the Spirit is communicating.

If you're not involved in a small group ministry, consider starting one to take your study to the next level involving sharing, fellowship, and accountability. Using the guidelines and studies available on Walk with the Word makes it very easy to facilitate a weekly Bible study at home, work, or school.

The Example of David

For believers it's an indisputable fact that the Psalms, the majority of which were written by David, are a tremendous source of comfort and

connection with God. Have you noticed how often David refers to God's Word, to meditating on His Word, to receiving joy and comfort from God's Word? (You might have noticed the numerous quotes throughout this web site that come from Psalm 119, a work wholly devoted to the benefits and blessings of God's Word.) But have you stopped to consider what "God's Word" exactly was in David's time?

As of David's time, none of the prophets were even yet born whose 17 books are part of our Old Testament. There were no books from Solomon (Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes), and the events of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther were many hundreds of years away. It's doubtful that during David's life there was much more than the first five books given through Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) , Job—a work handed down to each generation from around Abraham's time—and perhaps Joshua. David would most certainly be aware of the content that would become Ruth, Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, but those sections of God's Word were most likely assembled after David's lifetime. He not only did not have the whole Bible as we have it today, but he didn't even have the whole Old Testament.

So the "testimonies", "way", "precepts", "statutes", "commandments", "judgments", "ordinances", and all the other terms David uses in the Psalms to describe God's Word are primarily from David's personal study of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament and Job!

If you're like most Christians, the books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy in particular can be difficult on the surface. But consider that it's these very books into which David constantly gazed from which he created the Psalms, expounding the power, joy and comfort of "God's Word".

David's Psalms might be thought of as his own journals, detailing what God spoke to him through the Word. Further, we might not really

understand the true nature and power of God's character that is revealed to us through the Law given through Moses if the Psalms did not serve as the "commentary", so to speak, of how the Law is supposed to change our life, bond us in love with our Creator, change relationships.

David's legacy to us is the supreme example of what occurs when we daily and diligently look into God's Word seeking to hear Him speak to us personally and then applying same to our walk.

*How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners,
Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!
But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season
And its leaf does not wither;
And in whatever he does, he prospers.*

*The wicked are not so,
But they are like chaff which the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,
But the way of the wicked will perish.*

— Psalm 1

The key difference between the righteous and the wicked? One is committed to God's Word, the other is not.