



Rick Warren's Bible Study Methods

By Rick Warren

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“The Spirit of God uses the Word of God to make us like the Son of God.”?Rick Warren in The Purpose Driven® Life You were created to become like Christ. This is one of the five God-ordained purposes for your life described in The Purpose Driven® Life by Rick Warren, and it’s why studying the Bible is so important. The Bible’s truths will transform you, aligning you with the character and ways of Jesus as you encounter him in the Scriptures. This easy-to-understand book shows you how to study the Bible Rick Warren’s way. It gives you not just one, but twelve methods for exploring the riches of God’s Word. At least one of them is exactly what you’re looking for?an approach that’s right for you, right where you’re at. Simple step-by-step instructions guide you through the how-tos of the following methods:• Devotional • Chapter Summary • Character Quality • Thematic• Biographical • Topical • Word Study • Book Background • Book Survey• Chapter Analysis • Book Synthesis • Verse Analysis Thousands of individuals, small groups, churches, and seminary classes have used this practical manual to unlock the wonderful truths of Scripture. You can too. Written by America’s pastor, Rick Warren, Rick Warren’s Bible Study Methods will help you develop a customized approach to studying, understanding, and applying the Bible.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

As founding pastor of Saddleback Church with his wife, Kay, Dr. Rick Warren leads a 30,000-member congregation in California with campuses in major cities around the world. As an author, his book *The Purpose Driven Life* has been called the bestselling non-fiction hardback in publishing history by *Publishers Weekly*, having sold more than 33 million copies. As a theologian, he has lectured at Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, University of Judaism, and dozens of universities and seminaries. As a global strategist he advises world leaders and has spoken to the United Nations, US Congress, Davos Economic Forum, TED, Aspen Institute, and numerous parliaments. Rick has also founded the Global PEACE Plan, which Plants churches of reconciliation, Equips leaders, Assists the poor, Cares for the sick, and Educates the next generation in 196 countries. You can listen to *Pastor Rick's Daily Hope*, his daily 25-minute audio teaching, or sign up for his free daily devotionals at PastorRick.com.

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As we have already seen in the introduction, the ultimate goal of all Bible study is application, not interpretation. Since God wants to change our lives through his Word, it is important to learn how to apply Scripture to our lives before learning any other methods of Bible study. In fact, the techniques you learn in this chapter will be used in each of the following study methods. Regardless of the method you choose to use, at the end of each study you will need to make practical steps of application concerning the things the Lord shows you. (In this book, every time we talk about application, refer back to this method for an explanation.) When you use these techniques by themselves (and not with another method), it is called 'The Devotional Method of Bible Study.' This is the type of simple study that you can use in your quiet time.

Definition The Devotional Method of Bible Study involves taking a passage of the Bible, large or small, and prayerfully meditating on it until the Holy Spirit shows you a way to apply its truth to your own life in a way that is personal, practical, possible, and provable. The goal is for you to take seriously the Word of God and 'do what it says' (James 1:22).

Why Application Is Important The Bible was given to us to show us how we can have a relationship with Almighty God and how we are to live our lives his way in this world. It was given to change our lives to become more like that of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul declared that it is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training the believer in righteous living (2 Tim. 3:16). The Bible is a practical book, for it is concerned with practical godly living. Bible study without personal application can

be just an academic exercise with no spiritual value. The Bible was written to be applied to our lives. In his succinct way Howard Hendricks has said, 'Interpretation without application is abortion!' We want to note here that application is necessary for our Christian lives, that it is hard work, and that good applications are possible if we follow some basic principles. Application Is Necessary for Our Lives Study of the Word of God should lead to its application in our lives, with the result that the Scriptures change us to conform more with the will of God. Step One --- Pray for Insight on How to Apply the Passage Step Two --- Meditate on the Verse(s) You Have Chosen to Study Step Three --- Write Out an Application Step Four --- Memorize a Key Verse from Your Study 1. You can't really get to know the Word of God unless you apply it to your life. During his ministry Jesus had a number of encounters with the religious leaders of his time. These were primarily the Pharisees, the acknowledged scholars of the day; the scribes, legal and religious experts in Jewish law; and the Sadducees, the liberalizing element in Jewish society at that time. On one occasion the Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection from the dead, asked Jesus a trick question. Jesus' answer is indeed interesting. He said to them, 'You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God' (Matt. 22:29). The Sadducees had an intellectual knowledge of the facts of the Jewish Scriptures (our Old Testament), but they did not apply these principles in a personal way. You can be a walking Bible encyclopedia, with your head crammed full of biblical knowledge, but it won't do you any good if you don't apply it practically in daily living. If you study the Word of God without applying it to your life, you are no better off than the Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus' day. You really don't know the Scriptures until you put them into practice. 2. Studying the Word of God can be dangerous if you merely study it without applying it. Bible study without application can be dangerous because knowledge puffs up. The apostle Paul stated, 'Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up' (1 Cor. 8:1). The Greek word translated 'puffs up' contains the idea of being inflated with pride that in turn leads to arrogance. The Bible tells us that the devil knows the Word intellectually (see his temptation of Jesus --- Matt. 4:1 -- 11), and we also know that he is puffed up with pride and is arrogant. When you correctly apply the Word of God to your life, you eliminate the danger of being puffed up with pride. Bible study without application can be dangerous because knowledge requires action. What a man knows should find expression in what he does. James declared, 'Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says' (James 1:22). God's commands are not optional. He doesn't say, 'Please won't you consider doing this?' He commands, 'Do it!' And he expects us to obey. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus compared an obedient disciple to a wise man: 'Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice [action] is like a wise man who built his house on the rock' (Matt. 7:24). When the trials of life came along, the wise man's life stood firm while the foolish man's --- the one who did not practice what he knew --- came crashing down (Matt. 7:25 -- 27). Also, King David was known as a man after God's own heart because he applied the Word to his life and practiced what he knew. The psalmist wrote, 'I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes. I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands' (Ps. 119:59 -- 60). You, too, need to put what you know into action. Bible study without application can be dangerous because knowledge increases responsibility. If you get serious about studying the Bible, you will be held more accountable than the average person, because with added knowledge comes added responsibility. James wrote, 'Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins' (James 4:17). With a deeper knowledge of the Scriptures comes a stronger judgment if you fail to apply them. When you start studying the Bible, God begins showing you areas of your life that need changing and calls you to greater responsibility. If you are not planning on applying the lessons you receive from your Bible study, it would be better for you to not study the Bible at all! You will just be heaping more judgment on yourself! John Milton, a great Christian poet, is reputed to have said, 'The end of all learning is to know God, and out of that knowledge to love and imitate Him.' That sums up what we are talking about in applying our study of Scripture: we are to know God, love him, and then be like him. Application Is Hard Work It would seem that applying the Bible would be fairly simple, but actually it is the hardest part of Bible study. Why is that? Application doesn't happen by accident. We have to plan for it, or it will never come about. Three things that make applying Scripture to our lives so difficult are that it requires thinking, the devil fights it viciously, and we naturally resist change.

Users Review

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