

# The Bible For Life

Practicing Personal Bible Study

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# Questions

- Does it seem difficult to apply your personal Bible reading to your daily life? Do sermons seem easier to apply?
- Do you feel you need a devotional guide in order to profit from your time with God?
- Is it a rare occasion for you to be convicted of sin during your personal Bible reading?
- Do you secretly wonder why the Bible seems dry to you, but so vibrant to other Christians?
- Do you ever wonder what you're supposed to be looking for when you read the Bible?

# Answer: Yes

- Life-changing personal Bible study is rare among believers.
- We know we should be good at applying personal Bible reading to our own lives. But in general, we aren't.
- The author of Hebrews says this is a problem.

# Hebrews 5:11-14

About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

# Hebrews 5:11-14

- What has he been talking about before?
  - Christ's priesthood (order of Melchizedek)
  - He is disappointed he can't delve deeper.
- What is the author's bigger concern?
  - spiritual under-development
    - *you need someone to teach you again*
    - *You need milk, not solid food*
    - *he is a child*

# Hebrews 5:11-14

- How is he measuring spiritual maturity?
  - ability to teach the Word
    - *you ought to be teachers...you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God*
  - skill with the Word
    - *everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness*
  - discernment in applying the Word
    - *solid food is for...those who have their powers of discernment trained...to distinguish good from evil*

# Hebrews 5:11-14

- Are we skilled in the Word?
  - Do you always need someone to teach you the Word in order to understand it?
  - Do you understand things in God's Word enough to teach them to a younger believer?
  - Are you skilled at using God's Word to discern good from evil in your daily choices?
- How do we gain this needed skill?
  - *constant practice*

# Needed: Method

- If we are to develop our skill with the Word by *constant practice*, we need a method for studying the Bible.
  - That method of Bible study cannot be limited to one devotional book or teacher.
  - That method must rise from the nature of Scripture itself.
  - Scripture tells us what we need to know to develop our method of Bible study.



## II Timothy 3:15-16

...and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

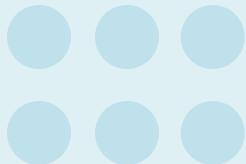
# II Timothy 3:15-16

- What is the Bible in essence?
  - *sacred writings*
  - *words breathed out by God*
  - in other words, literature
    - written in another time and culture
    - written for an original single purpose
    - written to be read
- If we are to become skilled with the Word, we must begin by **observing** the specifics of God's Literature.

# Personal Bible Study Method

## 1. OBSERVE

*"What has God recorded here in the literature?"*



BIBLE TIMES

# II Timothy 3:15-16

- What is the Bible good for?
  - *able to make you wise for salvation*
  - *profitable for teaching, for reproof...*
- What must we assume about this ancient book if God says it can *profit* us?
  - that the specifics of the literature point to truths that are ultimately timeless

# II Timothy 3:15-16

- What kind of timeless truths?
  - truth about man's needy condition
    - *reproof, correction*
  - Scripture ultimately reveals truth about God, Who is always the solution to man's needs.
- If we are to become skilled in the Word, we must observe the literature carefully enough to extract its timeless truths.
- We call this **Interpretation**.

# Personal Bible Study Method

## 1. OBSERVE

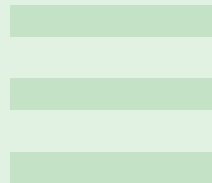
*"What has God recorded here in the literature?"*



BIBLE TIMES

## 2. INTERPRET

*"What timeless truths about God and man are here?"*



TIMELESS

# II Timothy 3:15-16

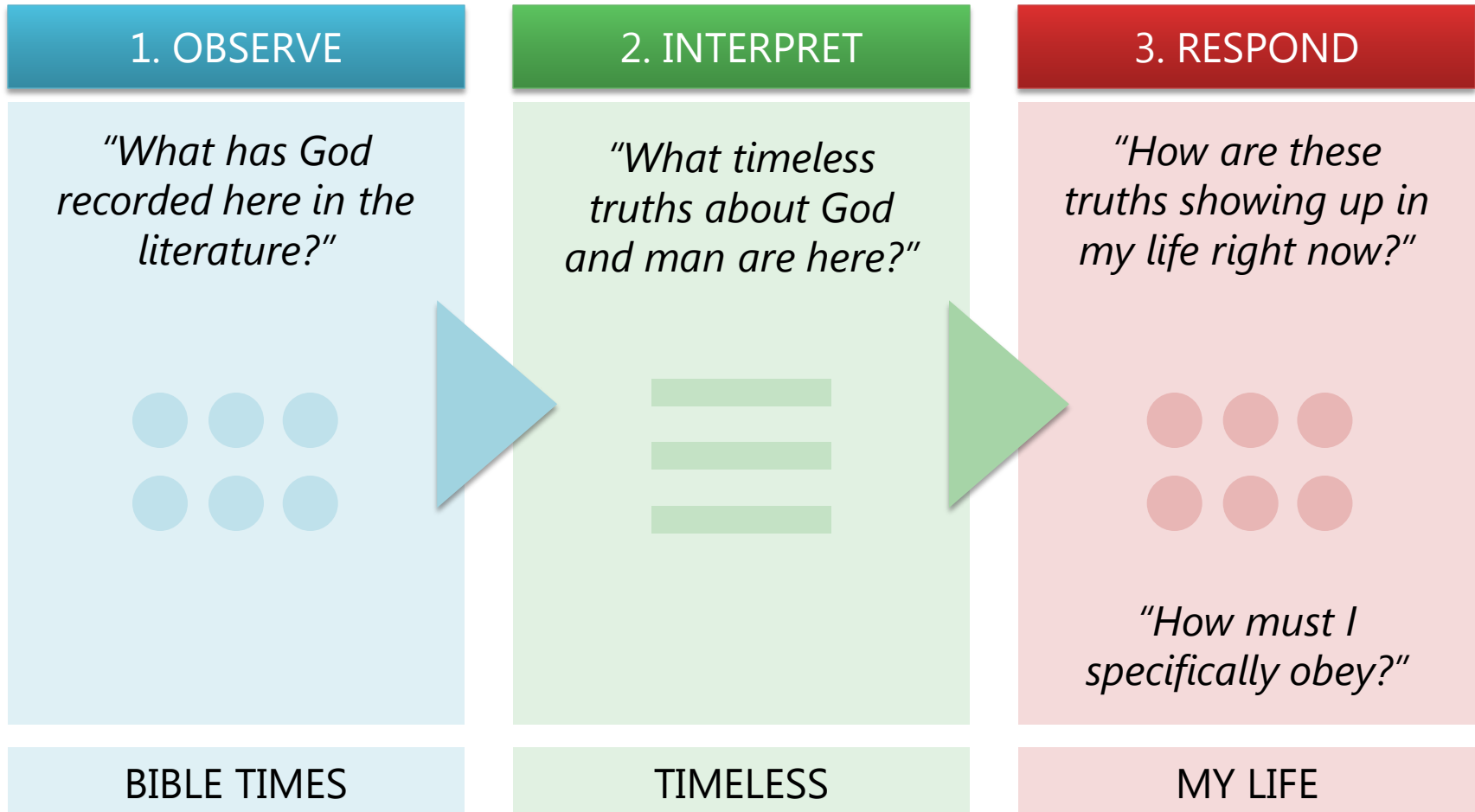
- How far can the Bible go with its timeless truth?
  - *for training in righteousness*
  - *that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work*
  - in other words, all the way into everyday life

# II Timothy 3:15-16

- If the Bible's timeless truths are to change our behavior, we must **respond** in two ways:
  - Apply: Discover how those timeless truths are showing up in our current life circumstances.
  - Obey: Commit to specific steps of obedience in those areas of our lives.



# Personal Bible Study Method



Adapted from *Living By the Book* by Howard & William Hendricks.

# Psalm 1:1-3

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

# Psalm 1:1-3

- We long to be mature, steady, fruitful Christians.
- Life-changing personal Bible study is rare among believers.
- But God's Word is such that with *constant practice* and the help of the Holy Spirit, we can become *skilled in the word of righteousness*.
- Personal Bible study can change our lives.

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