

*To the end that you may grow in the Christian life, do you promise that you will diligently read the Bible, engage in private prayer ...? (from Question 5 of the Covenant of Communicant Membership)*

I. Practical Instructions

- A. If you're not a skillful/avid reader
- B. If you're easily distracted
- C. If you don't know what to read in the Bible
- D. If the Bible seems too difficult to understand
- E. If you don't know what to pray for

II. Why don't we read the Bible or pray?

- A. We think we are fine on our own.
- B. Bearing good fruit
- C. Good fruit
- D. We bear good fruit when we abide in Christ, and he abides in us.

III. "Abide in me"

- A. "And I in you ... my words abide in you" (see 1 Peter 1:11)
- B. "Ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you" (see 1 Peter 3:7; Colossians 3:19; Psalm 66:18-19; Matthew 6:12, 14-15; Mark 11:25)
- C. "My Father is glorified in this, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples." (see Psalms 63:1; 42:1-2)
- D. The good news is this ... God did not wait for mankind to reach out to him (see Isaiah 65:1-2; 59:15a-16)

Can't get enough preaching on this stuff?

"Prayer - Private or Otherwise"

<http://reformedvoice.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=917121611280>

"Private Reading of Scripture"

<http://reformedvoice.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=9171216960>