

# LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

---

## Lesson 3 w/Answers

## The Discipline of Study

We continue our Christian Living study by looking at the discipline of Study. In the past two lessons, we have examined meditation and prayer. So, in this lesson, we will add this third "inward discipline" to our portfolio. For many, studying God's Word can seem daunting, and it can appear to require a college degree. But that is far from God's truth. His Word is written for all of us to understand and apply in our lives. Accordingly, we will identify some ways to improve and facilitate how we study the Bible.

---

***Let's begin by performing the following exercises and considering what they tell us about the Discipline of Study.***

---

1. Describe the following study aids:
  - a. Bible Commentary
    - i. ANSWER: An exposition of the scriptures, normally verse by verse, by a biblical scholar.
  - b. Bible Handbook
    - i. ANSWER: A comprehensive overview of each book of the Bible. It normally also contains other helpful study aids such as outlines, commentary on key themes, illustrations, maps and photos.
  - c. Bible Dictionary
    - i. ANSWER: Comprehensive Bible dictionaries will contain summary definitions and explanations on a variety of subjects. Many will also contain teaching outlines, maps, photos, charts, and tables; along with illustrations, scale reconstruction drawings and even an atlas.
  - d. Bible Atlas
    - i. ANSWER: Normally maps are just the beginning of a good Bible Atlas. The good ones will also contain stories and articles on a variety of subjects, pictures, drawings, charts and tables, along with concise descriptions and definitions.
  - e. Bible Concordance
    - i. ANSWER: This aid will take every word found within the Bible and identify all of the verses that each word can be found in. This enables the Bible student, for example, to look up the word "love" and find everywhere that it is mentioned in the Bible.
2. There are a variety of ways that we can study the Bible—verse-by-verse is only one of them. Using our Concordance, we can study by subject, such as "love" or "forgiveness"; or we can learn from Jesus by reading all of his teachings in the New Testament; within that topic, we could focus our study even further by examining how Jesus led, for example, and in doing so, we could learn Christian principles for good leadership. Read the following verses, which identify traits we need to see or develop in ourselves, in our leadership, and in our church; and then answer questions that follow.
  - John 10:1-14, 27-28
  - John 1:14
  - Isaiah 55:4
  - Psalm 23.
  - a. What are the dangers mentioned in these verses that the shepherd who leads must protect against?
    - i. ANSWER 1: The stranger who acts like a friend, but wants to lure us away from God.
    - ii. ANSWER 2: The thief who seeks to rob us.
    - iii. ANSWER 3: The hireling who cannot be trusted.
    - iv. ANSWER 4: The wolf that wants to cause us harm.
  - b. How does the Good Shepherd protect his flock?
    - i. ANSWER 1: He feeds his sheep.
    - ii. ANSWER 2: He lays down his life for his sheep.

3. Another way that we can study God's Word is through applying our own experiences and not simply relying on books. We need to be aware of what is happening around us and pay closer attention to these events when we are studying and seeking to know God's Word. The disciples had some difficulty doing this. They would be with Jesus every day, experiencing miracle after miracle, but never learning from it. Read Mark 8:1-21. What can we learn from the disciples' experience about studying God and His Holy Word?
  - a. ANSWER 1: In spite of all that the disciples had seen and experienced, Jesus had to ask them "Do you not yet understand?".
  - b. ANSWER 2: The disciples suffered from something that we are also guilty of—they saw, but did not see; and they listened, but did not hear. Their hearts were not open to seeing and hearing the truth. They were looking for understanding intellectually, rather than considering their more tangible experiences with Jesus.
  - c. ANSWER 3: From these verses, we can also learn that God is the source of all that we need; we will never lack by trusting in Jesus.
  - d. ANSWER 4: We should pause to ask ourselves what lessons God is trying to teach each of us today, through the things in life that we are experiencing.
4. Obviously, we can also learn by studying scripture. Read Romans 8:24-35. What is the core teaching found in this passage?
  - a. ANSWER: This passage conveys the truth that—no matter what—we are secure in Christ. Nothing, absolutely nothing, can separate us from Christ—ever.
5. As a closing exercise, gather as many of the following that you have access to: a Commentary, a Bible Dictionary, a Bible Handbook, a Concordance, and an Atlas. Many of these resources can be accessed in the Online References section of [www.Daniel222.com](http://www.Daniel222.com), found under Study Aids. Also, referenced in this section is an online web site named BibleStudyTools.com, which contains an extensive library of many of these study tools as well. Using the various tools that you have access to, research the passages, subjects, and events cited in Acts 6:5 and Acts 11:19-30. Summarize what you learned via use of the various study aids in conjunction with these verses.
  - a. ANSWER: Hopefully, you discovered that across this set of reference books, different pieces of the puzzle came together. For example, the Bible identifies the seven men cited in Acts 6:5 to be the first set of deacons, and that they came from Antioch. However, unless you explored an additional reference or two, you may have not have known that the seven men were all Greek—which makes sense, given that the deacons were needed to minister to the Greek Jews. Also, if you looked up the various towns and regions mentioned in the Acts 11 passage, you found that Tarsus was not only the birthplace and home of Paul, but in 41 BC it was also the place that Cleopatra met Antony on her golden barge.

---

The purpose of the last exercise above was two-fold: first, to provide you exposure to some of the study aids that exist; and secondly, to demonstrate that by using several or more different aids, a much broader and deeper understanding of the context and meaning of many of these passages becomes evident—and our overall practice of the discipline of Study is enhanced as a result.

Thanks for your faithfulness in studying with us!

In Christ

**Wes**