

How do I apply the Bible?

To apply Scripture to my life, I have to ask for help, ask the right questions, and obey it.



TRANSFORMATION
for Adult LifeGroups

James 1:22-25

APRIL 25, 2018/APRIL 29, 2018

TODAY'S TEXT

Text: James 1:22-25 (NIV); Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

FIRST THOUGHTS

Do you consider yourself an expert at anything? What did it take for you to feel that way? Time magazine published an article in 2016 called "How to become an Expert at anything according to the Experts". They identified 8 universal steps that could help you become an expert in any field. Can you guess what any of them were (number 8 was very surprising!)?

What would you like to be an expert at? What if you applied these steps to being an expert in applying the Bible? Not just a Bible expert who knows a lot about the Bible, but a Bible application expert that lives the Bible. Which of these steps would help you most (besides the napping of course)?

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Hopefully this series on the value and impact of the Bible on the world and on our lives has been helpful to you. We want to close with a look at the most important question of all: how do I apply the Bible? If we just stop at reading or knowing the Bible, then we have made little progress. As we discussed last week, the end result of all Bible study and the great purpose of scripture is not to educate us but to change us. It's about Transformation, not Information.

> Read James 1:22-25

- ° How does the Word of God function as a mirror in our lives?
- ° What does it mean that the "perfect law gives freedom"?
- ° What are the greatest obstacles to doing the word of God you have faced?
- ° What is the bigger challenge to you—getting more of God's word in your life or obeying what you already have heard from God's word? Why?

Step 1 in applying Scripture is to ask for help.

Read Psalm 119:18 and John 14:26—Who helps us understand Scripture? So how should we start our study of Scripture?

Step 2 in applying Scripture is to ask the right questions. Rick Warren says "The secret of dynamic Bible Study is knowing how to ask the right kinds of questions."

Here's three questions we can ask of any passage of Scripture, not just to understand it, but to apply it:

1. What did this Scripture mean when it was written?
2. What is the timeless truth behind what God is saying in this Scripture?
3. How does it apply to me now?

Now practice! Try using these 3 questions on one of these passages of Scripture:

- Noah and the Ark—Genesis 6:11-22
- The Shepherd Psalm—Psalm 23
- Jesus and the Children—Matthew 19:13-15

Step 3 in applying Scripture sounds easy but it is the most difficult of all—obey it! You really only believe the parts of the Bible that you obey. Do you believe in sharing Christ with others? Do you do it? Do you believe in loving others? Do you do it? In the end, all of our Bible study methods don't really matter unless we become more like Christ. Remember what He said in Luke 6:46 *"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"*

- ° Why is this the hardest step of all?
- ° How can we help each other with this step?

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

Here's the four questions we've talked about during April. Think about each one and apply it to your life personally. If you want, write down a brief, personal answer to each one.

Why does the Bible matter? _____

Can I trust the Bible? _____

Do I know the Bible? _____

How do I apply the Bible? _____

UPCOMING LESSONS

- Next week we begin a new series about how to use Scripture to share the story of God with others.
- Read the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-32 this week and be prepared to discuss it in LifeGroup.
- Begin praying for God to give you opportunities to connect Scripture to your life and the lives of those around you.

READ THROUGH THE BIBLE

29th - 2 Samuel 4-5; Psalm 139; Matthew 16 | **30th** - 2 Samuel 6; 1 Chronicles 13; Psalm 68; Matthew 17 | **1st** - 1 Chronicles 14-15; Psalm 132; Matthew 18 | **2nd** - 1 Chronicles 16; Psalm 106; Matthew 19 | **3rd** - 2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17; Psalm 2; Matthew 20 | **4th** - 2 Samuel 8-9; 1 Chronicles 18-19; Matthew 21 | **5th** - 2 Samuel 10; 1 Chronicles 20; Psalm 20; Matthew 22