



How to Breathe New Life Into

# Boring Bible Study





## About Logos

In 1992 two young computer programmers created an application to search the Bible on a personal computer. That program became the genesis for Logos, the world's most advanced tool for biblical studies and the seed that grew into Faithlife LLC, the largest developer of Bible study apps and a worldwide leader in multilingual electronic publishing.

Today, the Logos platform includes desktop and mobile apps, original content, Proclaim church presentation software, and more. Our vision is to increase biblical literacy by providing accessibility to the Bible to every Christian around the world. That's why the entire team at Logos is focused on advancing biblical studies through the power of tech and the expertise of the best in biblical scholarship.

Logos. Focus on the Word.

## About the Author

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# Table of Contents

About Logos | 2

About the Author | 2

Table of Contents | 3

Tip 1: Adjust how you approach the Bible | 6

Tip 2: Learn the storyline of Scripture | 7

Tip 3: Study with a plan and a purpose | 8

Tip 4: Study daily | 10

Tip 5: Do original language word studies | 11

Conclusion | 12

Learn more | 13

# Introduction

Many well-meaning Christians know they need to study God’s Word and better understand the overarching story of the Bible. But if asked, many of those same people might admit they find Bible study tedious—if not boring.

Do you flip to a chapter in the Bible and find your mind derailed after a few verses? Do you start reading your Bible with excitement but become uninterested, more lost than inspired?

You aren’t alone.

Bible study can sometimes seem like more of a chore than an exciting time of learning and growing in understanding of God’s Word. But it doesn’t have to be. It shouldn’t be.

If you’ve never studied the Bible—or have been studying God’s Word for years but are finding it dull and lifeless and you long for something more dynamic—this guide is for you.

## Why study the Bible?

Before charging forward with how to make your Bible study un-boring, let’s consider why God wants us to study it in the first place:

- It contains his loving instruction (Prov 4:1-2)
- It reveals the blueprint of God’s plan of redemption (Gen 1–3; 12:1–3; Rev 20–21)
- It offers comfort and hope (Rom 15:4)
- It benefits those who choose to apply what it teaches (Jas 1:22–25)
- It guides believers in how to approach him in prayer (Heb 4:16)
- It provides nourishment for growth (1 Pet 2:2)
- It sanctifies Christians (sets them apart) for spiritual maturity (John 17:17; Eph 5:26)



Most importantly, it's through his Word we come to know God and recognize his voice (Ps 89:1–18; Matt 11:27).

But knowing *about* God is different than *knowing* God.

To truly know him, we must seek God and his character (Exod 34:6) and experience him through trusting his promises. These things can only be discovered by diving deep into Scripture, turning verses and passages around in our minds like bingo numbers in a round, metal cage, and letting them drop from our heads to our hearts.

## **The problem's in the method, not the source**

When Bible study is tedious, people seek ways to spice it up and make it more fun and engaging. Do a quick internet search, and you'll discover all kinds of creative and unique ideas for studying the Bible—drawing it, painting it, journaling about it, even using stickers.

Unfortunately, even the most creative ideas will not make your Bible study better because the root problem is not with the words in the Bible (though some versions might use old language that makes understanding it a bit harder). Your Bible has all the insight, wisdom, and understanding your heart longs for. Instead, the problem may lie in how you approach studying it.

The Bible itself is never boring. It's the balm our sin-sick souls desperately need (Jer 8:22), the refreshment we crave (Prov 3:7–8). Most importantly, it's the blueprint for God's plan of redemption from the beginning to the end of time.

Though they might be helpful for memorization or meditation, two often-overlooked spiritual disciplines, more often than not, studying God's Word in innovative or creative ways doesn't increase understanding. Seeking more exciting "methods" for studying God's Word may be distracting you from the enriching and awesome Bible you're trying to study in the first place. We should find joy and excitement in the Bible's stories and

teachings, not in the method that facilitates study.

Here are five tips to help breathe new life into your tired Bible study routine and transform the words in your Bible from black and white to technicolor.

## Tip 1: Adjust how you approach the Bible

Without realizing it, some people approach the Bible as if it were dead—as if God is no longer speaking through it today. In reality, it is very much “alive and powerful” (Heb 4:12). A. W. Tozer writes of God’s Word:

Much of our religious unbelief is due to a wrong conception of and a wrong feeling for the Scriptures of Truth. A silent God suddenly began to speak in a book and when the book was finished lapsed back into silence again forever. Now we read the book as the record of what God said when he was for a brief time in a speaking mood. With notions like that in our heads, how can we believe? The facts are that God is not silent, has never been silent. It is the nature of God to speak. The second Person of the Holy Trinity is called the Word. The Bible is the inevitable outcome of God’s continuous speech. It is the infallible declaration of his mind for us put into our familiar human words.<sup>6</sup>

If the Bible is the declaration of God’s mind in familiar, human words, perhaps we would fare well to treat it as such. He must want us to understand his thoughts.

In his book [How to Study the Bible and Enjoy It](#), Skip Heitzeg recommends two bits of advice on how to approach studying the Bible:

1. Read it like any other book.
2. Read it *unlike* any other book.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> A. W. Tozer, [The Pursuit of God: The Human Thirst for the Divine](#). “The Speaking Voice.” (WingSpread, 2006), 69.

<sup>7</sup> Skip Heitzig, [How to Study the Bible and Enjoy It](#). (Tyndale, 2002), 32.



He writes, “[The Bible] is, after all, the living Word of God and should be treated as such. We must interact closely with this ‘book of books,’ allowing our lives to be examined by the piercing white light of its probing truth.”<sup>6</sup> Doing so is not always easy, but it is the key to transformation.

God longs for us to seek him in his Word:

Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know. (Jer 33:3 NASB)

The Bible is full of profound mysteries that God reveals to those who love him (Dan 2:28). It’s like a lottery ticket; underneath the silver coating is a prize waiting to be discovered—only God is the one “scratching” off the silver coating and revealing truth that has been there since the beginning of time (Isa 46:10).

Proverbs 2:1–4 says that if you come to Scripture seeking insight and understanding as if hunting “for hidden treasure,” God will pour out wisdom that will be “pleasant for your soul” (Prov 2:10).

Approach Bible study with this in mind—that God has truth he wants you to discover, mysteries he wants to share. Ask him to reveal “great and mighty things you do not know” (Jer 33:3) every time you open your Bible.

He just might answer.

## **Tip 2: Learn the storyline of the Bible**

The books of the Bible are a collection of stories connected to a much larger narrative—but this is where people sometimes get lost. They often skip the Old Testament altogether, jump into a New Testament book, and become confused because unfamiliar words, Jewish concepts, or ancient Old Testament customs cloud their understanding—or they interpret ancient concepts through a modern lens and miss what the author was saying altogether

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<sup>6</sup> Heitzig, *How to Study the Bible*, 32.

It's like coming into a Broadway play at intermission and wondering why you can't figure out what's going on.

The Bible is like a puzzle. Once you have a basic understanding of its overarching storyline, you'll better understand how the "pieces" (books, chapters, and passages) fit into that story when you study them.

The New and Old Testaments are interconnected from the first words of Genesis to the end of Revelation with a common thread: the redemption of the world through God's Messiah, Jesus (i.e., the gospel).

As you read and marinate in a book of the Bible, truths hidden in its pages will become more evident. You'll begin to recognize common threads and connect parts to the whole. Your Bible will come alive!

It will also help you gain a biblical worldview—the correct lens through which to view the world and all activity in it—and help recognize false ones. And without a proper biblical worldview, it's impossible to be an effective witness to the gospel.

Ultimately, when you study the storyline of Scripture, you end up finding Jesus—every time.

### **Tip 3: Study with a plan and a purpose**

If your current approach is haphazard, what Heitzig calls "reading and raking," where you scratch the surface of the Scriptures and pay attention to whatever strikes your fancy, your results will also be random and haphazard. No doubt, this is why people often find themselves drifting off while attempting to study it.

The apostle Paul instructed us to "correctly handle the word of truth" in 2 Timothy 2:15—meaning to "dissect it correctly."

One solid way to do this is through inductive Bible study.



## **Inductive Bible study**

[Inductive Bible study](#) involves four steps: the ABC's, or considering the Author, Background, and Context of a passage, followed by Observation, Interpretation, and Application.

### **Observation: What does this passage say?**

Observation involves discovering what the passage is saying. This first step includes asking questions like:

- When did the author write the book?
- What ancient cultural influences may have shaped the passage?
- How does the passage connect with what comes before and after it?
- Do the answers to these questions impact how to interpret the passage?

### **Interpretation: What does this passage mean?**

While observation helps you discover what a passage is saying, interpretation is the process of discovering what the original writers meant. After observing the passage, look for cross-references in the Bible and seek insight from other resources like dictionaries, encyclopedias, and commentaries.

Study Bibles—like the [Faithlife Study Bible](#)—will help you discover background information about passages to help bridge the gap from ancient context to life today. ([Logos Basic](#) includes this resource, plus 20 digital books—including the [Lexham Bible Dictionary](#) and [The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge](#)—as well as reverse interlinears for word studies. And it's FREE.)

In [DIY Bible Study](#), John D. Barry compares interpreting the Bible to appreciating a Monet painting. He writes, “At first, everything is a bit blurry, but once you stand farther back, you see how all the blurry shapes fit together into something beautiful.”<sup>6</sup>

And who wants the story of the Bible to be blurry?

## **Application: How does this passage apply to me?**

As you interpret a passage and are confronted with truth, you must decide how to respond.

In this step, you take responsibility for putting into practice all you’ve gleaned from your Bible study. What truth did you discover that you did not know or understand before? Ask yourself what that new truth means for your life, priorities, and decisions.

Paul taught that God inspires all Scripture, which is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness, “so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16–17). Not only will you be better equipped, but turning these nuggets of biblical truth over in your mind is also how transformation begins to take root as the Word of God starts to direct and inform your actions. What you’ve stored in your mind and heart will begin to form who you are—and change you to become more like Christ (Rom 8:29).

Take the time to dive into the application step. It’s worth it.

## **Tip 4: Study with a plan and a purpose**

Sometimes Bible study is something we do on the side, perhaps a few hours once a week to prepare for a small group. The rest of the week we might read a nice devotion in the morning or if we’re lucky, a verse or two. But studying daily?

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4 John D. Barry, [DIY Bible Study: \(4 vols.\)](#), (Lexham Press, Bellingham, WA), 2014), 1



That takes work. And time.

But incorporating a daily study routine into your schedule might be the hinge that changes how you feel about studying the Bible. It can help [breathe new life into your time with God](#). Christian radio host and author Nancy Leigh DeMoss writes:

No matter how much or how little you read, get into God’s Word every day. I really believe the benefits and results of biblical intake—like healthy eating—are not so much what you get from it that day but how you grow in the long term. . . . Bible study doesn’t always have to look the same, but you need consistency.<sup>6</sup>

Proverbs 2:4 says that if we look for God’s wisdom as silver and “search for it as for hidden treasures,” then we will “understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.”

For example, you could take 15 minutes before your day starts, during your lunch break, or before you go to bed to study the next paragraph in the book of the Bible you’re marinating in. You could spend 5 minutes reading the passage and 10 minutes on observation, interpretation, and application. Even such a short amount of time can make a difference in your walk with God and everyday life.

Try it. Even for one week. Making this small and manageable commitment each day might just be what kick-starts your spiritual growth—and keeps you deeply connected with God.

## **Tip 5: Do original language word studies**

The purpose of an original language word study is not to appear biblically astute but rather to discover the themes of biblical thought. It involves looking up English words in the original language the Bible was written in—Greek for the New Testament and Hebrew for the Old (and a small section of Aramaic in Daniel)—to discover the meaning behind the English words.

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from [How to Study the Bible from 12 Trusted Leaders: A Quick Free Guide from Trusted Leaders](#) (Faithlife Corporation, Bellingham, WA).



I realize I may have just lost you. *How am I supposed to study my Bible in Greek or Hebrew when I don't know the language, you ask?*

You don't have to. Today's Bible students have the benefit of resources called concordances that list the English word under various Hebrew and Greek words, called "transliterated" words. Concordances make it possible to discover the meaning behind words that—though identical in English—are many times different in the original.

Bible software like the Logos Bible app makes this easy. With Logos you're only a click away from the Greek or Hebrew underlying the English Bible text. You'll find studying an English word in its original language is like finding a little treasure, a "gem" in the biblical storyline that makes you go "aha!"

## Conclusion

The Bible can transform your life if you let it. But it takes work, and sometimes it's, well—hard. But your time in the Word should never be lackluster. The God of the universe is speaking, beckoning you through every single word (genealogies included!) to draw near to him and know him more.

Author and founder of [desiringGod.org](http://desiringGod.org) John Piper says we should marvel and stand in awe of this fact:

By this voice, he speaks with absolute truth and personal force. By this voice, he reveals his all-surpassing beauty. By this voice, he reveals the deepest secrets of our hearts. No voice anywhere anytime can reach as deep or lift as high or carry as far as the voice of God that we hear in the Bible.<sup>6</sup>

God is speaking today. At this moment. All you need to do is commit to diving deep into the written Word—perhaps with a few adjustments using the tips in this guide—so that you, too, can "hear" what he's saying.

Why wait?

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-morning-i-heard-the-voice-of-god>

**See how the Logos Bible app  
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