



Benefit from Reading the Bible – How?

How can I do a 14-day test?

*Dear Andrew,**

Maybe you once planned on studying the most widely read book in the world for yourself - the Bible. Some have started studying, but then quickly abandoned their plan. Probably because they hadn't found the right way to start. May I recommend a proven 14-day test? But would you first like to read about how the test went for Larry?

A Fascinating Test

Paul and Larry were roommates during their time at the university. Larry watched Paul for several months. Then he said to him: "Every morning you read your Bible with joy. And sometimes when I wake up during the night I see you on your knees beside your bed praying for someone. Tell me, how do you do it?" "Larry, God helps me. If you would like to know how that works, then do the following test. I recommend that you read in the Bible and pray for 15 minutes every day for two weeks. Then something significant will happen

in your life. I know that it is true, because God has promised in James 4:8 (NKJV): *"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you ..."*

When we take a small step towards God, then He takes a giant step towards us. It is a joy to try this out.

If nothing happens in these two weeks, then forget believing, because God hasn't kept His promise. You don't need to serve Him then. Because in that case He is simply too small. When you go to Him, then He will come to you like He has promised."

Larry responded, "Good, then I will try it and see what happens." The next day he got up a half hour earlier and read in the Bible. After a week Larry said to Paul, "Half the time is past. If nothing happens during the next week, then I can throw my Bible away, because you and God are liars." A few days later Larry said, "Paul, in three more days the two weeks are over. I have read in the Bible and prayed for

* This name was selected to remind us of the biblical Andrew, who led his brother Peter to Jesus (John 1:40-42).

15 minutes every day and still nothing has happened.” – “Only one more day and the two weeks are up.” The last day arrived. The two weeks had passed. Larry didn’t say anything. The next day he got up and read in the Bible. And he did the same the next day. A whole week went by and he didn’t say a word about it. But he continued to read in the Bible. One morning as Paul was having worship, Larry said to him, “You know that the two weeks are over. Over the past few days I have discovered that I can’t live without God anymore.”

Living with God

Whoever finds a personal relationship with God, doesn’t want to go through life without God.

We simply cannot and will not live without God. Life is full of disappointments, guilt and stress, when we don’t have God. I hope you make the same discovery that Larry did. If you aren’t sure of your salvation, when your life with God isn’t what it should be, then try it for two weeks: Spend at least 15 minutes a day in close contact with God. Start to establish a personal relationship with God. Especially concentrate on the power of the Holy Spirit. (See Letter to Andrew No. 14 – Life in God’s Strength – How?) [Taken from the series of lectures from Paul Volk in Nürnberg on “Christianity” – topic 11]

Some may want to implement some of their own ideas into this 14-day test. However, if someone is still searching for ideas for their personal worship, then I would like to recommend a diary for your quiet time.

This is how I use this diary: I write in a notebook the date, the Bible passage (for example Psalm 92:1-7) and main thought – what is the passage about? Then I write down my answers, but no longer than 4 lines.

Next, I start a new paragraph and title it – personal application – what conclusion should I draw for myself? Again, I write down my answer using no more than four lines.

This diary for your quiet time is a valuable help for enthusiastic Christianity. It can help you to have a daily quiet time with God. It should foster your spiritual growth and teach you to study God’s word from personal motivation and to seek and foster daily fellowship with God.

What are the benefits of a “quiet time”?

A quiet time (personal worship) is the most important part of the day for a follower of Jesus. When you spend a specific part of the day with God, then you will discover that there will be positive changes in your thinking and your life:

- › The Word of God will become meaningful to you.
- › Your prayer life will become more vibrant and more purposeful.

- › You will receive greater ambitions for your life.
- › In difficult times you will have a sound and stable foundation.
- › You will become closer to Jesus Christ and He will become dearer to you.

Practical Tips for a “Quiet Time”

What is the most favorable time?

Choose a time of day, which is the most favorable for you. The most suitable time is the quietest time in your day. Usually, these are the morning hours. Our thoughts are still fresh and receptive then.

When you start your day with God,
then you have the possibility of
placing the coming day under God’s
guidance and consecrate yourself to
Him for the day.

May I suggest that you reserve your chosen time for your quiet time and make it a priority over everything else. This will pay off.

How do you have worship?

Say a prayer of consecration. It could go something like this:

“Great God, I consecrate myself to You today with everything I am and have. Please guide me with Your Holy Spirit. And lead my thoughts as I read Your word. Thank You. Amen.”

Prayer

Read a short portion of God’s Word and contemplate on it: At the end of this letter you will find selected portions of scripture for a 14-day test. There are also some questions included to give you a good start. Questions help you to immerse yourself in the topic in the passage. Jesus compares His Word with food without which we cannot live (Matthew 4:4). The more you fill your thoughts with God’s Word, the more you will learn to think and act as God would want in different situations in your life.

How can I find the selected Bible passages?

Every Bible has a table of contents in the front for both the Old Testament and the New Testament. You will find the selected passages in the Psalms, Joshua and Isaiah in the Old Testament and Luke and Romans in the New Testament.

Is there a reliable aid for effective contemplation?

- › Yes, answer the two questions in writing, preferably in your own words. But the answers shouldn’t be too long. Only one or two main thoughts, three or four lines maximum for each question. This “forces” us to think. Do you want to try it out? A corresponding form for several days is included here. It can be either copied or simply written by hand in a notebook.
- › Reflect on what you have read and think about what God wants to tell you in this text. But remember that you won’t understand everything right away. But don’t let that discourage you. God will make the things clear that He wants to tell you.

- › Every day, try to share with another person what God has shown you in your quiet time. This can be beneficial for you as well as for the other person.

Concluding your Worship

I recommend a time of prayer at the end, in which you bring your thoughts about what you have read and your requests for the day to God. When you have made progress in your spiritual life, then it worthwhile to include worship, thanks, confession, requests and intercession in your prayers.

What should I do after the test?

If you are looking for additional ideas on how to read the Bible, you can find more from an outstanding Bible expert, Ellen G. White in:

- *Steps to Christ*, Chapter 10: A Knowledge of God

- *Education*, Chapter 20: Bible Teaching and Study

If you have the time, then I would love to hear about your experiences. You can write me at: helmut@haubeil.net. With my whole heart I wish you a fulfilled life of faith and an intimate personal relationship with God.

With warm greetings,

Helmut

Date: _____ **Bible Passage:** _____

Main Thought

What is this passage about?

What topic or main thought is in these verses?

Personal Application

What does this Bible passage mean for my life?

What conclusion should I draw for myself?

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Questions for the selected Bible passages for the 14-day test

First day: Psalm 23:1-6

What relationship does God have with His children? What does He do for them?

Second day: Psalm 1:1-6

I can be blessed, when I...

Third day: Joshua 1:6-9

What commands are given? What is promised?

Fourth day: Luke 19:1-10

What did Zacchaeus want to do after he became a believer? Why did Jesus come?

Fifth day: Isaiah 43:1-5

What promises does God give us here?

Sixth day: Isaiah 53:4-6

What was to happen to Jesus and for whom?

Seventh day: Luke 15:11-24

What happened because of the younger son's conduct? What attitude did the father have?

Eighth day: Psalm 25:1-7

What does David request of God?

Ninth day: Psalm 25:8-15

What is promised to those who fear God?

Tenth day: Psalm 91:1-7

What is God for those who believe in Him?

Eleventh day: Psalm 91:8-16

What does God want to do for those who love Him, know Him and call upon Him?

Twelfth day: Psalm 92:1-7

What is good to do? Why?

Thirteenth day: Psalm 92:8-15

How are the just described?

Fourteenth day: Romans 8:31-39

What can separate us from the love of God?

In whom does our strength lay in order to be able to prevail over anything?



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