**IN**

**Experiencing the Bible in New Ways**

What it is:

*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.  Romans 15:4*

We all know that we should read the Bible but sometimes it is hard to find ways to bring it to life.  Interacting with our Bible’s in different ways can help us find meaning and keep it fresh and applicable to our life.

How to do it:

Here are some ways that we can experience the Bible differently:

            Character/Topical Study with Small Group

[Bible Journaling](http://www.lifeway.com/Article/how-to-start-bible-journaling-in-six-easy-steps)

            Writing Scripture- Check out this monthly plan: [Sweet Blessings](http://www.swtblessings.com/)

            The Bible App devotionals

            Listen to an Audio version of the Bible

[The Bible Project](https://thebibleproject.com/) –great videos and other resources to compliment your Bible reading!

Mark up your Bible – write notes, underline, mark moments when something spoke to you

Above all, the Bible comes alive when we share it with each other.  We all have different stories and backgrounds and have connected to the Bible in different ways.  Share your perspective with a friend or a group of friends and you will experience the Bible in new and powerful ways!

**APEST**

What it is:

Discovering your spiritual gifts is an important step in more fully understanding how you can contribute to the church and community.

A – Apostolic

P – Prophet

E – Evangelist

S – Shepherd

T – Teacher

How to do it:

[Take the test](http://fivefoldsurvey.com/) to learn more about how God wired you! Learn more [here](http://theforgottenways.org/apest/).

**How to Confess Sin and Offer Grace**

What it is:

*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9*

When we have sin in our lives, we often want to avoid God, fearing He will be angry. But God is not human. While humans often want revenge, God’s desire is to restore our relationship with Him and for us be free of the burden. He already knows our action and is longing for us to agree with Him about sin and help us resist it.

*Jesus kept saying, “Father, forgive them, because they don’t know what they’re doing.” Luke 23:34*

How do I forgive others when they hurt me? It helps to understand that often people who hurt, are acting out of the pain they have experienced; pain that breaks God’s heart. God doesn’t want any one created in His image to live a life of pain and hurt, that was never His plan for anyone.

How to do it:

Offering grace to yourself: Ask God for the desire to change. Consider sharing with a trusted friend what sin you are confessing and ask them to pray for you.

Offering grace to others: Ask God to help you see the person through His eyes and for the desire to forgive. Ask Him to give you love, perception, and compassion that will help you respond in a way that imitates Jesus.

**S.T.O.P. Method for Bible Study**

What it is:

A method for helping you understand what you are reading in the Bible.

How to do it:

What does it **SAY**?

Think about what the words actually say and look up the meanings of any words you don’t know.

What were the **TIMES**?

Consider what the times were like when the passage was written. What was the time period in history? What events were happening? What was important to the people at that time? It’s a great idea to look up this info in a reliable source.

What did it mean **ORIGINALLY**?

Consider what the Bible passage meant when it was written. Think about who wrote it, who it was written for, and what it would have meant to people then.

What does it mean for me **PERSONALLY**?

Think about what the Bible passage means for you personally. Knowing what you learned in the other steps, what can you learn and act on in your own life?

**Study through Prayers and Creeds**

What it is:

Using historical church literature, such as prayers and creeds, in order to connect to the broader Christian Church and God. It is something done with a group of people as a form of corporate worship. Often prayers and creeds are recited as a group. There can also be call and response readings. Lectionaries can be utilized for church services as well. A lectionary is a book of scripture readings by week for a service throughout the year.

Incorporating prayers and creeds into worship encourages Christians to join together in voice and unity around central parts of faith. Participants are able to connect to the present Body of Christ, and the rich history of the Christian tradition.

How to do it:

Examples and Resources

[The Lord’s Prayer](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+6%3A9-13&version=NIV)

Read Psalms together

[Nicene Creed](http://www.theopedia.com/nicene-creed)

[Apostles Creed](http://www.theopedia.com/apostles-creed)

[Book of Common Prayer](http://www.bcponline.org/)

[Revised Common Lectionary](http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/)

[Some prayers to pray and study together](http://www.relevantmagazine.com/god/5-prayers-changed-world) (Many more can be found with a little searching online)

**Communion**

What it is:

Communion is an act of worship that helps us remember the work of Christ and look forward to his return to make all things new.

How to do it:

Prepare both the cup and the bread for a time of communion. You can get thoughts on different ways of taking communion [here](http://www.rustyparts.com/wp/2006/01/29/how-to-take-communion/). You don’t need to have any special ability or knowledge to lead a time of communion. You can simply read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 and then pass around the elements. You can add prayers, devotional thoughts or music as you feel comfortable.

**LIGHT**

What it is:

A simple acronym to help us check on how we are doing at living as missionaries where we live, work, and play.

How to do it:

L: Listen to the Holy Spirit

Make it a daily practice to listen to what God has to say to you

I: Invite others to share a meal

You eat 21 meals a week. Make a plan to share 1-3 of those with people who don’t know Jesus.

G: Give a blessing

Look for ways to care about someone. It could be a neighbor who needs help with yard work or a coworker who could use a meal.

H: Hear from the Gospels

Read some words from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John to learn from Jesus how to be like Jesus.

T: Take inventory of the day

At the end of each day, spend a few minutes reflecting on how your day has gone. Where did you meet with the Spirit? Where did you miss opportunities to meet with the Spirit?

**Observations and Questions**

What it is:

Making observations and asking questions about the Bible as you read it to help you gain understanding and insight.

How to do it:

As you read through a passage of Scripture, write down things that you notice. It could be other parts of the Bible that relate to what you are reading, things about God, repetition of words, or anything else. Reread the passage and write down anything you have questions about. It could be about a person, a word, geography or anything else. If you are reading the same passage as someone else, share your observations with them and work together to answer your questions.