

# Good S.O.I.L. Bible Study Method

Mark 4:1-20 - Jesus' Parable of the Soils: God's Word is the seed, you are the soil.

*"And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing ... those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit...."*

*Mark 4:8, 20*

## Scripture = What will I read?

Choose a part of the Bible to read. Ideally, pick a book of the Bible to read through completely. Various Bible reading plans are available online or through apps: bible.com/reading-plans or biblegateway.com/reading-plans. Keep track on your Bible reading record checklist, or keep a journal.

You may just be reading it devotionally--meditating on it, mulling it over, even re-reading it to let it sink in. Maybe read it out of two or three translations. But to study it, now you're going to ask some further questions:

## Observation = What does it say?

Explore the context--historical, cultural, literary, and grammatical.

A good Study Bible will help with the 5 W's: **Who's** writing & to what audience? **What's** going on when this book is being written? **When** and **where** is this taking place? **Why** is this book needed?

## Interpretation = What does it mean?

Take a closer look to understand God's intended meaning. Apply the basic rules of language (hermeneutics) - not reading into the text what you want it to mean or what subjectively sounds good ("eisegesis"), but reading out of the text ("exegesis") to discover what the author objectively meant and what would it have meant to the original audience.

- Let Scripture interpret Scripture  
(within the immediate context and the context of the whole Bible)
- Interpret Scripture literally unless it's clearly meant otherwise.

## Live it = How do I apply it to my life?

Bible reading isn't complete until you ask, "Now what?" Each passage has only one correct interpretation, but it can have a range of applications and significance to the reader. How can I live out what I'm learning? What can I do with this truth? Are there any changes I need to make? What's a principle God wants to teach to me? Is there a sin I need to confess? Is there a promise I need to claim? Is there a truth I need to believe? Who can I share it with?

Every time you read Scripture, you may discover something you hadn't seen before because the Bible is so rich and powerful, you'll spend the rest of your life reading it over and over, learning new things as God meets you where you are to speak truth, life, help, and wisdom into your current situation.

*"...Blessed are those who hear the word of God, and keep it." Luke 11:28*

**Further resources: [OnlyGodCanHelp.com/Bible](http://OnlyGodCanHelp.com/Bible)**