

## 4 R Method for Everyday Bible Study

The 4 R Bible study method is a basic way to dig a little deeper into any biblical passage. This “inductive” method uses careful observation (record) to discover what the passage *says*. We start with observation, so we can more accurately interpret (reflect) God’s meaning. Personal *application* (respond) is our last step and end goal. You don’t need extra tools or resources. All you need is your Bible, a pen, a notebook or journal, and a humble, teachable attitude. The “R” repetition makes it memorable! You can take it anywhere!

*For more on solid Bible study methods, visit [www.KathyHoward.org](http://www.KathyHoward.org)*

- 1. Read** - A reading plan will help with consistency and context. Choose one that is manageable with the time you have.
  - **Read prayerfully** – Ask God to give you understanding and to help you be willing to apply His truth.
  - **Read multiple times** – It’s easy to miss details and even deep truth with just one reading.
  - **Read in different translations** - Reading in different translations will increase understanding.
- 2. Record** - Before we can understand what a passage *means* we must know what it *says*. Our goal in this step is to carefully observe the passage and record what we find. See Appendix Two: “10 Things to Observe in a Bible Passage” for specific help.
- 3. Reflect** – Look back over your recorded observations to help you recognize and understand God’s original meaning of the passage. God’s Word has one original meaning, but endless application. Be sure to consider how the literary genre, the historical, cultural and literary contexts, and Scripture’s Meta-Narrative (big picture) impacts the meaning. Identify eternal truths and timeless principles for application.
- 4. Respond** - Knowledge of God’s Word is never the end game. Application that leads to spiritual transformation is always our goal. So, once we’ve read and understood, let’s ask God to show us how to apply these truths to our lives. God tells us some of the ways He wants to use His Word in our lives. In the following passage we see four broad categories for life application:

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable **for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness**, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 ESV*

- Teaching (doctrine) – Correct our thinking. God wants us to hold correct beliefs about Him, salvation, His church, and His kingdom. Correct thinking leads to correct behavior.
- Reproof (rebuke) – Repent of any sin in our lives. God’s Word reveals what’s wrong and call us to stop wrong behavior.
- Correction (obedience) – God’s Word also instills right behavior by giving us commands and principles to follow.
- Training (spiritual growth) – God uses Scripture to shape our character and underlying attitudes.