

- Becoming committed to reading the Bible daily isn't an easy task. It not only takes discipline, but it also take strategy to keep us hungry and thirsty for God Word. Keeping the habit of reading is one thing, but making the most of our reading is a completely different animal all together. I'd dare say that there have been many Christians who have read the Bible for many years, but they don't feel like they have much to show for it. Or they might read on a regular basis but feel as if they aren't able to find any sort of practicality from the reading. This is something that every Christian needs to have in their reading. Reading is great and needed, but we also need to gain something from our reading of God's Word.
- My friend, Mark Roberts (Twitter Handle: Mark44Roberts), has been sharing his daily Bible reading on social media (Facebook & Twitter) over the past month or so. He just sits down and for around 10 minutes he reads the Bible with those who watch his videos. In one of these videos, he mentioned the PATH Bible study method. This isn't something crazy, but just a very simple and practical method that can be used in reading the Bible. So for this evening, I'd like to share this study method with you in hopes that we might be able to enhance our daily Bible reading even more. These 4 simple questions can help turn a basic reading into a reading that opens our eyes and causes us to think about God even more as we go throughout the day because we have considered many great things about Him in our reading. This method forces us to look for certain things as we read and it can help us greatly in our spiritual growth and daily walk. To show how this works, we will consider and read **Acts 14** together and answer the questions that go along with this Bible reading approach.

I. Praise: What in this text causes me to praise God?

A. We ought to be a "praisey" people because God is certainly worthy of our praise.

1. We can praise him in our prayers, our song, and our thoughts for the many wonderful things He does for us on a daily basis.
2. He provides our very life to us. He provides the many necessities of each day. He has provided the forgiveness of sins.
3. There are many things that makes God worthy of our praise and we want to put some effort into finding things in our daily reading that we can praise God for.

B. In **Acts 14**, I see God's healing power as a reason to praise Him. (**vv.8-10**)

1. This man had been lame for all his life. He came to have faith in the words of Paul, and Paul recognized that this man's faith could make him well. Paul heals the man of his lameness.
2. We see this often throughout the Gospels and the book of Acts. Jesus healed many people and the Apostles do the same thing. These healings were to show God's power and His power goes far beyond make the body whole. He can also make our spirits whole.
3. We can be made well again, spiritually, through faith in Jesus Christ.
4. Our sin has separated us from God and we are spiritually dead because of our sin. (**Rom. 5:12**)
5. But through faith and obedience we can be made whole again and resurrected to life through Christ Jesus. (**Rom. 6:17-22**)

II. Admonish: What in this text admonishes (warns or reprimands) me to do better?

A. There are times when we need to be warned and reprimanded through God's Word.

1. God's Word is most useful to use as a means of warning us from potential dangers or bad behaviors.
2. Paul makes the point that Word of God is good for many things including warnings. (**II Tim. 3:16,17**)
3. There are times that we see great warnings throughout our read of God's Word and we need to take notice of those things.

B. In **Acts 14**, I see a great warning for us to make sure that we do not elevate any individual man or group of people to a position that is greater than they are. (**vv.11-18**)

1. It can become easy for us to elevate great leaders among us as something special.
2. Likewise, it can be really easy for leaders to see themselves as something that is special. (**Matt. 23:5-12**)
3. Too many people are too interested in the fame and honor that comes with being in a position of leadership.
4. We must remember that we are all human and we all have our flaws. Our goal should be to serve just as our Savior did while on the earth. (**Phil. 2:3-5**)

III. Trust: What in this text causes me to trust God even more?

- A. The Lord has promised many things to His people and we need to be reminded from time to time that it is wise to trust in Him. There are words throughout the Text that remind us to trust in Him.
 - 1. The wise man Solomon knew that trusting the Lord would be for the good of man. (**Prov. 3:5**)
 - 2. God has said time and time again through His wWord that He will prevail and His plan will progress.
 - 3. He can use us to accomplish His purposes, and we need to trust in Him to do so. (**Phil. 2:12,13**)
 - 4. We might not always see or know how God does this, but we can still trust in Him to do what He knows to be best through us. We can continue to trust by looking for reasons to trust in Him throughout our reading.
- B. In **Acts 14**, I see God's will be accomplished even when things look bad. It looks like Paul might be done for, but he bounces back and continues to go and preach in other places. (**vv.19-20**)
 - 1. Paul suffered through a lot of difficult situations in this life. (**II Cor. 11:23-27**)
 - 2. He knew that he only made it through it all because the Lord was with him. (**II Tim. 4:17**)
 - 3. We can trust in God and know that the Gospel's job will be accomplished. It may seem like things are looking really bad, but we can trust that God's Will will be accomplished. He will prevail.

IV. Help: What in this text helps me to persevere in this life?

- A. There will be difficult times in this life. We can look to God's Word and see thing that can encourage us to overcome the difficulties of this life.
 - 1. One of the most encouraging passages of Scripture is that of **Joshua 1:9**. The Lord is preparing Joshua to lead the people and He gives him so strong and encouraging words to help in have the faith an courage to do as the Lord has commanded him to do.
 - 2. As Jesus was preparing His Apostles for His leaving them, He gives them encouragement by telling them that even though they would suffer, they would overcome because He had overcome the world. (**John 16:33**)
 - 3. Paul took major confidence from Christ, knowing that he could do anything that Christ expected of him because He would strengthen Him. (**Phil. 4:13**)
- B. In **Acts 14**, we see Paul encouraging the souls of the disciples. (**vv.21,22**)
 - 1. He encourages them to continue in their faith. He knew they would suffer through tribulations and he let them know as much, but he also told them that they would be of the Kingdom of God through those tribulations.
 - 2. We know they would go on to have some troubles by the Judaizing teachers trying to bind circumcision.
 - 3. Seeing the end result of that ordeal in **Acts 15** can help encourage us to keep on going. Yes, things might get rough, but God is faithful and we can keep pushing towards the goal for Him.

In all things we should want to do them the best way possible. You might be a person who reads daily, but you feel as if you're just not getting a lot out of it. I hope that this PATH approach might help you feel as if you're getting the absolute most out of your daily reading of God's Word. May God help us to grow as we read His Word more often, and may we take full advantage of every tool presented to us that can help us to be better for the Lord.