

Discovering
BIBLE
STUDY

KEN FLEMING



Developed as a study course by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

Discovering Bible Study

Ken Fleming

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PO Box 1028
Dubuque, IA 52004-1028
phone: (563) 585-2070
email: ecsorders@ecsministries.org
website: www.ecsministries.org

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STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

Personal Bible study, like every skill or worthwhile project, requires personal discipline—but it’s worth it! This “hands-on” course teaches you *The 7 Question Method* as a way to study the Bible.

In the core portion of the course, Ken Fleming applies this method to different types of Bible passages (narrative, poetry, characters, etc.), walking you through the process, and in this way equipping you to learn a skill that will help you to understand God’s Word and apply its truths to your life.

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Course Components

This course has two parts: this study course and the exam booklet.

How To Study

This study has ten chapters, and each chapter has its own exam. Begin by asking God to help you understand the material. Read the chapter through at least twice, once to get a general idea of its contents and then again, slowly, looking up any Bible references given.

Begin studying immediately, or if you are in a group, as soon as the group begins. We suggest that you keep a regular schedule by trying to complete at least one chapter per week.

Exams

In the exam booklet there is one exam for each chapter (exam 1 covers chapter 1 of the course). Do not answer the questions by what you think or have always believed. The questions are designed to find out if you understand the material given in the course.

After you have completed each chapter, review the related exam and see how well you know the answers. If you find that you are having difficulty answering the questions, review the material until you think you can answer the questions. It is important that you read the Bible passages referenced as some questions may be based on the Bible text.

How Your Exams Are Graded

Your instructor will mark any incorrectly answered questions. You will be referred back to the place in the course where the correct answer is to be found. After finishing this course with a passing average, you will be awarded a certificate.

If you enrolled in a class, submit your exam papers to the leader or secretary of the class who will send them for the entire group to the Correspondence School.

See the back of the exam booklet for more information on returning the exams for grading.

DISCOVERING BIBLE STUDY

The Alpha Omega Club was a group of Christian High school students in Seattle, WA, led by Lorne Sanny, then a young worker with the Navigators. Ten of us met in his office downtown on Tuesday evenings. It was from Lorne that I learned some of the most valuable lessons and skills of my Christian life. He was a model to us of a committed Christian. He was a mentor who held us accountable for our progress in witnessing, prayer, Bible memory, and meditation. *Lorne's greatest contribution to my Christian life was to motivate me to study the Bible.* He taught me not only how to do it, but how to discipline myself to do it. Thus the study of Scripture became the key factor for me in knowing God, walking with Him, and serving Him. That experience established the Bible as central to my Christian life.

The Role of the Bible in Our Lives

The importance of the Bible in a Christian's life is demonstrated by the similes or figures of speech we read in the Bible itself that describe its role in our lives.

The psalmist likens God's Word to a *lamp and a light* (Ps. 119:105). The *lamp* was a small clay oil lamp sometimes secured to the sandal on one foot. It lighted the next step so its owner would not slip or trip. The *light*, or torch, was larger. It was held high to show the way on the path ahead. We all need God's Word as both a lamp and a light to illuminate our individual steps and the path in life we are treading.

James pictures the Bible as being like a *mirror* into which a believer may look and discover how God sees him. In this way he is able to adjust his life accordingly (James 1:23-25).

God Himself is recorded in the book of Jeremiah likening His message to His people to *fire* and a *hammer* (Jer. 23:29). Jeremiah had been faithfully proclaiming that God was going to discipline them for their chronic unrighteousness and worshiping of idols. But false prophets had been reassuring them, “You shall have peace,” and “No evil will come upon you” (Jer. 23:17). God condemned these prophets for giving false hope to the people. His *true* word of the coming destruction of Jerusalem and their exile to Babylon was designed, like fire, to burn into their hearts, and, like a hammer, to shatter their illusion that God would tolerate their sin—in other words, to convict them to repent.

In Hebrews 4:12 the Word of God is compared to a *two-edged sword* (the Greek word used indicates the size of a dagger) that pierces deeply and precisely into areas of our personal lives that need “spiritual surgery.” God intends for us to respond to what He has said to us. When we hear biblical truth and exercise faith in applying it to ourselves (Heb. 4:2), God’s Spirit does His good work of revealing to us both the problem and what needs to be done to remedy the situation.

To summarize, the Bible is

- a *lamp* to keep our feet from slipping.
- a *light* to guide us on the pathway of life.
- a *mirror* to help us see our lives as God sees them and then respond appropriately.
- a *fire* that convicts and a *hammer* that shatters false ideas.
- a *two-edged sword* that digs deeply into the recesses of our thoughts.

These six descriptions of the Bible give us confidence that the Bible will provide light, guidance, instruction, conviction of sin and error, and practical discernment.

Blessings from Bible Study

Psalms 1 declares that the man whom God blesses is the one who delights in His Word, who keeps it in his thoughts day and night. King David discovered that the Holy Scriptures brought him great joy and satisfaction. In Psalm 19:8 he wrote, “The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart.” He also said, “I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, as

much as in all riches” (Ps. 119:14). The prophet Jeremiah said it this way, “Your words were found, and I ate them, and Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart” (Jer. 15:16).

Your Enjoyment of Bible Study

What David and Jeremiah found to be a joyful experience can be yours as well. By the word *joyful* we mean pleasurable and delightful. You look forward to opening your Bible, and you anticipate that God has something special for you. When you open your Bible, pray Samuel’s prayer, “Speak, for your servant hears” (1 Sam. 3:9-10). Having prayed for God to speak, you will be listening like Samuel listened. As you listen you will hear God “speak” to you from His written Word. A verse or a phrase will become especially meaningful to you. It may be a word of encouragement, or a challenge to take a new step of faith in your walk with God. It may also be a new insight about God’s care or grace that will cause you to worship. You will be aware that God has spoken. Then, share it with a fellow believer.

Why Study the Bible?

Consider some of the benefits that personal Bible study will bring to your life. Knowing them will motivate you to make Bible study a high priority. When you realize its value to enrich your spiritual life and to experience a closer relationship with the Lord, you will eagerly anticipate a regular study time in the Bible.

1. Personal Bible Study Trains Us in Righteous Living (2 Tim. 3:15-17)

Shortly before his death, Paul wrote to his disciple Timothy. In his letter he encouraged Timothy to make full use of the Scriptures in serving the church at Ephesus which was at that time being plagued by false teachers. Paul reminded him that all Scripture was given by “inspiration of God”—literally, “God-breathed.” He went on to suggest four beneficial functions of the Bible which convey its authority to God’s people. First, it contains *doctrine*, the foundational truths necessary for growth in Christ. Second, it *reproves* us when we sin and refutes any error being espoused. Third, it *corrects*, or sets straight, those who have been diverted from the path of truth by falsehood. Fourth, it *instructs us in righteousness* so that we can walk and live out in word, deed, and attitude the holy character of God.

2. Personal Bible Study Strengthens Our Lives in Christ (Acts 20:32)

Bible study provides spiritual food to make us grow strong in our spiritual lives. Moses reminded the Israelites, “Man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD” (Deut. 8:3). Spiritual life is sustained by living in dependence on what God says just as our physical lives are sustained by our dependence on physical food.

There is life-building food in the revealed Word of God to meet all our spiritual needs. For the newly saved there is basic Christian truth relating to such things as the assurance of salvation, the necessity of prayer, the value of reading the Bible and the wonder of knowing the character of God, etc. The Bible also contains “solid food” for those who are more mature in Christ (1 Cor. 3:2). Solid food refers to the great doctrines concerning God the Father, God the Son, salvation, sin, the Holy Spirit, Satan and angels, future events, etc. It is sad when believers who have known the Lord for many years still need “baby food” when they ought to be profiting from “solid food” (Heb. 5:12-14).

3. Personal Bible Study Teaches Us to Obey God’s Will (John 14:21-24)

The Bible is God’s message to His people. He rightly expects that those who call themselves His people will honor Him as their sovereign Lord—that as they learn what God wants them to do they will be obedient and do it as soon as they can and as well as they can. Jesus said to His disciples, “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. . . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word . . . He who does not love Me does not keep My words” (John 14:21-24). “Whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him” (1 John 2:5). Our obedience should be motivated by our love for God, the One who has done so much for us. We want to do what pleases Him, and we learn what that is in the Bible.

4. Personal Bible Study Leads Us to Victory over Sin (Matt. 4:1-11)

Paul wrote to the believers at Ephesus on how to defend themselves against the attacks of their spiritual enemies, the unseen forces of Satan.

Several types of personal armor are mentioned, but only one weapon—the “sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:17). In this passage, the Greek term for “word” is the *spoken* word. Speaking words from the Bible is effective in driving back the enemy’s attacks. The Lord Jesus did so when countering the devil’s attempts to thwart His God-ordained mission. Three times the devil tempted Him, and three times the Lord’s response was, “It is written . . .” He quoted verses from the Scriptures, and in doing so He set us the example to follow when we face temptation to sin. Check the references both in Matthew 4:4, 7, 10 and in Deuteronomy 6:16, 8:3; and Psalm 91:11-12.

5. Personal Bible Study Cleanses Us from Sinful Lives (Eph. 5:26)

God uses His Word to convict us of sin in our lives. When we confess the polluting effects of sinful thoughts, words, deeds, and attitudes, He cleanses us from them (1 John 1:9). God uses His Word to reveal His holiness and His holy requirements. We then see ourselves through the mirror of His Word and are convicted of sin. When we confess our sins—that is, agree with God that they *are* sin—He forgives us. The cleansing agent is the Word itself (Eph. 5:26). The Lord prayed that the disciples might be sanctified by the word of God, which is truth (John 17:17).

6. Personal Bible Study Makes Our Lives Fruitful (Ps. 1:3)

The first psalm speaks of the man who applies the wisdom of the Scriptures to every aspect of his life. The result of his meditation on Scripture is described here. “He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper” (Ps. 1:3).

7. Personal Bible Study Empowers Our Prayers (1 John 5:14-15)

Another benefit of personal Bible study for our consideration is the place that it has in our prayer life. Jesus said to His disciples in the Upper Room, “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you” (John 15:7). Jesus told them that they could have confidence their prayers would be answered on the condition that they “abide” (reside) in Him and His words abide in them.

Many years later, the apostle John wrote, “Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything *according to His will*, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him” (1 John 5:14-15, italics added). We can conclude, therefore, that when we ask God for something according to God’s will (which we have discerned from studying His written Word), we can have confidence that our prayers will be answered. We can have power in prayer, and it is based on our knowledge of biblical truth.

8. Personal Bible Study Enhances Our Worship (Rev. 4:11)

Man’s worship of God can only be fully realized when it is generated by our knowledge of our triune God. We can understand something of the enormity of God’s power and wisdom through observing the complexity of His creation and the wonders of the natural world in all its variety and beauty. Our response of worship should be, “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things” (Rev. 4:11). But when it comes to God’s attributes of love, grace, mercy, goodness, justice sovereignty, holiness, glory, etc. we can only know of them through what He has revealed in His written Word. And it is through the Word that we learn the redemptive purpose of God in saving lost men and women through sending His Son to be the Lamb whose sinless sacrifice was sufficient payment for our sin. Then we can join those heavenly hosts in worship saying, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing” (Rev. 5:12).

Conclusion

Bible study, like every skill or worthwhile project, requires personal discipline of your time, your priorities in life, your pleasures, and your choices. But what may seem to be a cost in the beginning will turn out to be incomparable joy.

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EXAM BOOKLET
AK '13 (2 UNITS) DBS

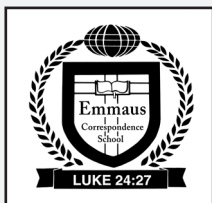
STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

COURSE GRADE: _____

INSTRUCTOR



Exam developed by Emmas Correspondence School, founded in 1942.

A NOTE ON THE EXAMS

The exams are designed to check your knowledge of the course material and the Scriptures. After you have studied a chapter, review the exam questions for that lesson. If you have difficulty in answering the questions, re-read the material. If questions contain a Scripture reference, you may use your Bible to help you answer them. If your instructor has provided a single page Answer Sheet, record your answer on that sheet. This exam contains the following types of questions:

MULTIPLE CHOICE

You will be asked to write in the letter of the correct answer at the space on the right. Here is an example:

The color of grass is

- A. blue C. yellow
B. green D. orange

 B

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Questions headed this way are designed to help you express your ideas and feelings. You may freely state your own opinions in answer to such questions.

RETURNING THE EXAM

See the back of this exam booklet for instructions on returning your exam for grading.

DO NOT PHOTOCOPY THESE EXAM PAGES

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NOW I HAVE A QUESTION . . .

As you complete the exams, you may have additional questions about the course material that have not been answered. In the below area, you may ask any question you have related to the chapters you have studied. Your instructor will respond to your questions as best as he or she can.

CHAPTER 1 EXAM

DISCOVERING BIBLE STUDY

EXAM GRADE

Before starting this exam, write your name and address on the front of this Exam Booklet.

Directions: Read each question carefully and write the letter of the correct answer in the blank space on the right. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.

1. Personal Bible study
 - A. comes naturally to a Christian
 - B. requires discipline as well as technique
 - C. is relatively unimportant in life
 - D. takes too much time to do effectively

2. Psalm 119:105 describes God's Word as

A. a lamp and a light	C. a fire
B. a mirror	D. a sword

3. The Bible is helpful to us as a mirror because
 - A. it reflects God's beautiful creation
 - B. it reveals heavenly glories
 - C. it exposes the failings of others
 - D. it shows us how God sees us

4. Paul told Timothy that because the Bible _____ it has value for us.
 - A. was written by very godly people
 - B. is "God-breathed"
 - C. is very old
 - D. is easy to understand

5. The Bible is compared to food because
 - A. it has sustaining power to meet our spiritual needs
 - B. it is necessary to retain our salvation
 - C. it is presented in various ways to make it attractive
 - D. it requires preparation to be usable

6. In the Bible we learn what pleases God. We want to please and obey Him because _____
- A. we fear Him
 - B. we love Him
 - C. it is the only way to be saved
 - D. it makes us feel comfortable around other believers
7. The Lord Jesus gave us an example of how to defeat temptation by _____
- A. arguing with Satan, the tempter
 - B. ignoring the temptation
 - C. quoting verses from Scripture
 - D. exerting His own power to do right
8. God uses His Word to _____
- A. assure us that we are not bad people
 - B. help us resolve unwarranted guilt
 - C. restore our self-esteem
 - D. convict us of sin in our lives
9. Psalm 1 assures us that meditation on Scripture will produce _____
- A. a financially successful life
 - B. a fruitful life
 - C. assurance of our salvation
 - D. a place of power in the church
10. We can know God's will by _____
- A. pleading with Him to reveal it
 - B. talking with others about it
 - C. studying His written Word
 - D. fasting as well as praying

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

At this point in your Christian life, what is motivating you to study the Bible?
