

Overview Of David Helm, *One To One Bible Reading: A Simple Guide For Every Christian* (Kingsford, Australia: Matthias Media, 2011)

(The numbers in parentheses with “Loc” before them are Kindle locations)

Chapter One: Some People You Know

Reading the Bible one-to-one is good for non-believers, new believers, established believers, and developing leaders.

Chapter Two: Why One To One?

In a quote from *The Trellis And The Vine* (Loc. 540) Helm highlights that it would be great for Christians to be caught up in a web of regular Bible reading...privately...with children...with spouse...with non-believers...with new believers...with mature Christian friends.... It is “profoundly simple and within reach of all.”

There are at least four tangible benefits to reading one-to-one (Loc. 59-91), which include helping to accomplish the following: Salvation, progressive sanctification, training Christian life and leadership, and the deepening of relationships with those reading together.

Who would want to read? Ed Stetzer (Researcher with Broadman/Holman) reveals that the following statement was put to 1,000 twenty somethings in a U.S. and Canada poll, “I’d be willing to study the Bible if a friend asked me to,” 61% said, “Yes.” For those thirty and above (500 polled) 42% said, “Yes.” (Loc. 91-95)

Bottom-line we engage in one-to-one Bible reading because of convictions about the power of God’s Word to save and grow people.

Chapter Three: Who Is It For?

It is for Christians (new, growing, leaders-to-be).

It is for non-believers.

“I encourage you to write the names of a few people you know and might consider inviting to start reading one-to-one, and then begin praying for that opportunity.” Try to write names in each category. (Loc. 140)

Chapter Four: How Do I Get Started?

(1) Pray. “the gospel-writer Luke doesn’t want us to miss the fact that prayer is the instrument God uses to ready us for his revelation.” (Loc. 150) See also the extended quotes that follow this section.

(2) Invite. See the key quotes about how to do this and also the lies to fight before doing it. (Loc. 163-179)

(3) Plan to meet. (Loc. 179f.)

Chapter Five: What Will A Typical Meeting Look Like?¹

In one sense there is no typical meeting since all situations and relationships will be unique. However, most meetings will follow a broad pattern. (Loc. 191)

- (1) Praying and reading: Ask God to help you understand the passage and apply it. Read the passage aloud together, alternating between the two of you. (Loc. 194)
- (2) Talking together about the passage: Both must participate. Don't talk at the other person.
 - a. "As an aid, remember that questions and open-ended statements usually offer a good way to sustain discussion." "The four most important words in a Bible discussion are often, 'What do you think?'" (Loc. 203-206)
 - b. "Also, don't be afraid of not having all the answers." (Loc. 206)
 - c. "But one of the greatest virtues of reading the Bible one-to-one is that it allows people to discover faith in Jesus Christ for themselves [as opposed to being merely 'spoon fed'], and giving pat answers to difficult questions does not help them do this." (Loc. 211)
 - d. Remember that in any one-to-one meeting there will be a tendency to do only relationship (e.g. talk about what is happening in your life, etc.) or do only study (e.g. read the Bible). Both should be present. (Loc. 214)
- (3) Applying the message to everyday life. (Loc. 214)
"Good applications should always spring out of the text or the context." (Loc. 218)
- (4) Praying (230): "Conclude by praying again, based on the passage you've read."
- (5) Confirming calendars for next time. (Loc. 230)
- (6) Please remember your first meeting will probably look a little different. (Loc. 239)

Chapter Six: Preparation.

Should you prepare in advance of a meeting or not? There are advantages for each approach. (Loc. 254)

To prepare may maximize discussion and may benefit—especially if both are new to Bible reading.

Not to prepare also has advantages (Loc. 262): Makes clear it is not a teaching session, but instead a discussion; it also demonstrates Scripture's clarity—all can understand much of it even without extensive preparation; both of you will start from the same place; and finally it may help a weaker partner to learn how to read and understand as you work through it "from scratch" together.

¹ For an easy way to apply this chapter see the tool provided at the end of these notes.

The rest of the chapter gives pointers on how you might make the decision to prepare or not and if you do decide to prepare, just how to do that (Loc. 270-279). Steps to prepare:²

- (1) Pray for understanding and for the upcoming meeting.
- (2) Read through the assigned passage.
- (3) Following the COMA method, write down what you observe—esp. with a mind to what you will discuss.
- (4) Pray about what you have read and also for your upcoming meeting.

Chapter Seven: A Personal Experience.

In this chapter David Helm shares about a friend he read the Bible with one-to-one. This man was a scientist. He eventually received and rested upon Christ alone for salvation and grew significantly. This would be a great story to share with a Bible Fellowship (small group), a Christian friend, or a Christian family member in order to show them the benefit of reading the Bible one-to-one.

Chapter Eight: The Simple Frameworks For Bible Reading

In this chapter he shares two different methods to use in order to read and understand the Bible:

- (1) The Swedish Method.
- (2) The COMA Method.³
 - Context
 - Observation
 - Meaning
 - Application

We will mostly utilize the COMA method since this is what we have taught at MEFC and it is also the method Helm follows in the pdf tool he provides on-line for questions to ask when reading different kinds of Bible books.

Chapter Nine: Books Of The Bible For Different Situations.

For all suggestions a breakdown is provided for each meeting's reading assignments.

Non-Christians:

- Mark's Gospel
- Genesis 1-12
- *I would also add the Gospel Of John

New Christians:

- Any of the New Testament letters

² For an easy way to apply these steps see the tool provided at the end of these notes.

³ For help with how to ask questions in each one of these areas see the pdf tool provided at matthiasmedia.com/rd.html?sku=eotobr.

Specifically mentioned as helpful are: Colossians, Philippians, Titus, 1 John

Established Christians:

Romans
Selected Psalms
Micah

Chapter Ten: Help With Reading Different Genres.

This Chapter covers different COMA questions for each kind of Bible book.

Here is where the person reading Helm's book and applying it will learn by practice good Bible interpretation principles.

For help on how to apply this chapter in reading the Bible see the pdf tool provided at matthiasmedia.com/rd.html?sku=eotobr.

Chapter Eleven: Eight Weeks Through Mark's Gospel

This chapter provides a schedule for how to read the Gospel of Mark one-to-one.

Simple Tool For Application Of This Book (Available under "Bible" on-line at mindenefree.com/articles) or as a bookmark):

Please follow this guide as you prepare for a meeting or while you meet.

Request God's help to understand (as you start) and apply the passage (as you end). (While preparing pray that God will guide your preparation and help in the upcoming meeting)

Examine the passage together, which starts by reading it out loud and then includes talking together. (While preparing do this with a view for how you will discuss the passage with the other person)
Consider the following four areas (a guide for this as applied to different kinds of Bible books is available as a pdf at matthiasmedia.com/rd.html?sku=eotobr)

Context

Observation

Meaning

Two of the simplest questions: "What does the passage say about God?" "What does it say about me or other people?" (Not found in the book)

Application

Two of the simplest questions: "What should I do with what the passage says?" "With whom can I share this message this week?"

Apply the passage daily to life by sharing with each other ways you plan to do this. (While preparing do this with a view for how you will discuss the passage with the other person)

Determine the time of your next meeting together.