



## BIBLE STUDY ESSENTIALS WITH PRISCILLA SHIRER

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### DEVOTIONAL TIME

- For church leaders, it is essential to separate your devotional time from your study time. Here are a couple of ways to do that effectively:
  - Personal Focus – In your devotional time, prioritize personal and relational elements rather than dissecting scripture for teaching.
  - Choosing a Starting Point – It can be challenging to know where to start reading the Bible. Consider using a devotional as a guide to align your study with Scripture.
  - Prayerful Openness – Begin your devotional time with a simple prayer asking God to speak to you.
- After you read, take a moment to pause and write down or journal what comes to your mind and heart.

“Lord, my heart is open, my ears are open. Show me what it is that you have for me today, in this passage.” - *Priscilla Shirer*

### BIBLE STUDY APPROACH

- Here are a couple of practical steps for preparing a message:
  - Absorbing Scripture
    - Practice reading that passage over and over to yourself to absorb it.
    - Read multiple translations to gain different perspectives for that passage.
    - Record yourself reading it so you can listen to it while doing other things.
    - Do these before reading a commentary so you truly know it for yourself.
  - Ask “What does this passage say?”
    - Once you know the passage, look for observations by looking for what it says.
    - Write down almost your own paraphrase of those verses so you can start to see a similar thread or main idea of the passage.
    - The goal is not to support your own message but to discover God’s truth.
  - Ask “What does this mean?”
    - Once you get those observations, look for the meaning of what it says.
    - Do this before you try to be poetic or make everything go together.



- Then determine what the main applicable point is and filter all of the other observations so they support the main thing you want people to know.
- Once you think you have the message figured out, take some time away from all of this and come back later to see

“I don’t want to go to the text to prove my point.  
I want to go to the text to give me the point.” - *Priscilla Shirer*

### MESSAGE PREPARATION AND DELIVERY

- Sometimes God will give you ideas or illustrations that might not go with what you are currently working on, but help yourself by recording what it is so you can use it later.
- Beyond message preparation, two critical actions are necessary for effective delivery:
  - Pray over your message, asking God to both prepare people’s hearts for the message and fill in the gaps of what you do or don’t say.
  - Focus on your integrity by ensuring you live what you preach.
    - If you do not honor God off-stage you will miss the favor of God, which is what separates preachers from motivational speakers.
- Remember that these messages are ultimately not ours; we are a vessel of God’s truth.
  - To be an effective vessel we must be clean and empty, ready to be filled by God.

“At the end of the day, these aren’t our messages.  
We’re just carriers of them.” - *Chris Hodges*

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

See the last two pages for Discussion Questions that will help you and your team get the most out of this episode!

### RESOURCES

- [GrowLeader Regionals](#)
- [Monthly Mentoring with Pastor Chris](#)
- [Develop Kingdom Builder / Legacy Teams](#)
- [Previous Episodes + Show Notes](#)
- [Impact Leadership Conference](#)
- [Go Beyond Ministries](#)
- [Free Church Resources](#)
- [Compassion International](#)
- [The StudioC](#)
- [The Wesleyan Investment Foundation](#)



**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

Keep growing to reach your full potential by asking yourself and your team these questions:

**DEVOTIONAL TIME**

- 1. How do you currently differentiate between your devotional time and study time? Are there any challenges you face in maintaining this separation?

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- 2. Priscilla emphasizes prioritizing personal and relational elements during devotional time. How can you incorporate this focus into your own devotional practice?

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- 3. Considering the concept of starting points in devotional reading, do you use devotionals or other tools to guide your study? How have these tools helped you study Scripture?

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**BIBLE STUDY APPROACH**

- 1. How can you incorporate reading scripture repeatedly into your Bible study routine to gain a deeper understanding of Scripture?

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- 2. How can focusing on understanding the meaning of a passage before trying to make it poetic enhance your Bible study practice, and impact your message preparation?

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**MESSAGE PREPARATION AND DELIVERY**

- 1. Praying over your message and seeking God's guidance is crucial. Reflect on your previous message preparation experiences. How has prayer impacted your message, and how could you enhance this aspect of your preparation?

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- 2. Are there areas of your life where you feel there's a disconnect between your public and private life? What steps can you take to align your character with your message?

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- 3. How can you ensure that you remain a clean and empty vessel, ready to be filled by God's message? Are there specific practices or habits you start or stop to achieve this?

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