

Bible Study Tips:

This 8-lesson study is based on the book Loving As Jesus Does by Sharon A. Steele. It can be done on your own or with a family member or friend (via Face-time or Zoom, during this period of COVID isolation). As you work through these studies, ask God, through His Spirit, to be your teacher and guide. Each study should take about 1-1.5 hours. You can break it down into smaller studies, if that is preferred.

Have a Bible ready (hard-copy or electronic) and take time to thoughtfully read the verses/passages identified. It is helpful to read them out loud, if you are able. Reflect on them personally or in conversation with a family member/friend. (Note the key words; words that stand out or are repeated. Note the connectors: but, and, therefore, etc.; they help to explain relationships between different thoughts and ideas. Think through the Who? What? Where? When? Why? Note the action words – what is being done or is to be done.) You may want to journal your thoughts and impressions.

(NOTE: Passages/verses are written as follows throughout the study: John 3:16-17. The Bible is comprised of 66 different books, each of which is broken down into chapters and verses. John is one of those books. This passage is in the book of John, in chapter 3, verses 16-17. To find it, if you are using a hard-copy Bible, go to the front of the Bible where you will find a listing of the “Books of the Bible”, with corresponding page numbers. [They will not be in alphabetical order!] In this case, look for John. Beside the books’ name you will find the page number which corresponds to the start of the book. Go to that page to begin, then move through the book of John until you come to chapter 3 (the larger numbers in a printed Bible). Once you find chapter 3, look for verses 16 and 17 (the smaller numbers in a printed Bible). If you are using an electronic Bible, simply type in the verse/passage as written in the guide into your search engine and it should bring it up. There are various translations available; NIV or CEV are good ones to start with.)

Once you have personally read and reflected on the verse/passage, work your way through the questions given for each. Try to focus on the passage/verse at hand when answering, unless a question invites you to think more broadly. The questions are offered to help you think more deeply about the passage/verse and then to delve into practical applications. Feel free to journal anything that really speaks to you ... a promise, a command, an action step that you might want to take. If a passage causes you to think on a specific situation, person, relationship record that as well.

At certain points you will be encouraged to pray through what you are learning. Prayer is simply a two-way conversation with God. As you pray, ask Him to help you understand and apply His truths in your life. It's important in prayer to also listen for God; often He speaks/responds through thoughts and impressions that come to the heart and/or mind. You can, of course, pray at any time as you study His Word! If you are lead to make a specific prayer request, note it in your journal. When that prayer is answered, record it as proof that God does answer prayer.

Before you leave the study, identify at least 2-3 practical applications for the week ahead. Some lessons will give you specific ideas on this; others will not. The aim of Bible study is always to have God's Word change us, so looking for ways to put it into practice is important.