

Personal Study Guide

Hearing God in Scripture: Responding to His Word

Main Idea

Bible reading is not meant to be a one-way activity where we simply gather information. God speaks through His Word, and we are called to respond personally, prayerfully, and obediently.

1. Begin with Prayer

Pray something like this:

Father, thank You for giving me Your Word. Help me not only to read it, but to hear Your voice through it. Show me what You want me to see, teach me what You want me to know, and help me respond with faith, obedience, repentance, and trust. In Jesus' name, amen.

2. Review: The HERE Method

The lesson used the acrostic **HERE** as a way to read the Bible devotionally.

H — Highlight

Mark words, phrases, verses, or ideas that stand out to you.

Ask:

- What catches my attention?
- What seems repeated or emphasized?
- What feels especially personal, convicting, encouraging, or confusing?

E — Explain

Seek to understand the passage in context.

Consider three kinds of context:

1. Literary context

- What comes before and after this passage?
- How does this passage fit in the book?

2. Historical context

- Who wrote this?
- Who was the original audience?
- What was happening at the time?

3. Whole Bible context

- How does this passage fit into God's big story of creation, sin, redemption, and restoration in Christ?

A — Apply

Ask how the passage connects to your actual life.

Use questions like:

- Is there a sin to confess?
- Is there a promise to trust?
- Is there an example to follow or avoid?
- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a truth about God to worship Him for?

R — Respond

Respond to God personally.

This is the focus of this study.

Your response is your personal appropriation of the truth you have heard in the concrete circumstances of your life.

In other words:

What is God saying to me, and how will I answer Him?

3. Why Response Matters

The lesson emphasized that many people read the Bible but feel like they “don’t get anything out of it.” One reason may be that they read the Bible like they read the news: they take in information, close the book, and move on.

But Scripture is different.

God is personally involved in the details of your life. When you open His Word, you are not merely reading ancient history or religious instruction. You are hearing from the living God.

Reflect personally:

- Do I usually read the Bible expecting God to speak to me?
- Do I treat Scripture more like information or communication?
- When I read, do I pause long enough to respond to God?
- Have I been “hearing” without truly “listening”?

Write a brief answer:

When I read the Bible, I usually respond by...

4. God Is Involved in the Details of Your Life

The lesson made this point clearly:

God is involved in the details of your life, even down to the passage of Scripture you read in the morning.

That does not mean every day will be easy or every passage will feel dramatic. But it does mean God is present, active, and able to speak to you through His Word.

Reflect:

- What circumstances in my life do I need to bring before God right now?
- What worries, questions, responsibilities, or relationships are weighing on me?
- Am I willing to believe that God’s Word speaks into those realities?

Write down three areas of your life where you need God’s wisdom right now:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

5. Scripture Study: Examples of Responding to God

Read each passage slowly. After each one, answer the reflection questions.

Passage 1: Job 42:1–6

Job had suffered deeply and wanted answers from God. When God finally spoke, Job responded with humility and repentance.

Read

Job 42:1–6

Reflect

- What did Job realize about God?
- What did Job realize about himself?
- How did Job respond after hearing from God?

Personal Application

Ask yourself:

- Have I ever demanded answers from God?
- Is there an area where I need to humble myself before Him?
- Have I spoken or thought wrongly about God because I did not understand what He was doing?

Personal Response Prayer

Write a prayer of humility to God.

Lord, I confess that...

Passage 2: Isaiah 6:1–8

Isaiah saw the holiness of God, became aware of his own sin, received cleansing, and then responded to God's call.

Read

Isaiah 6:1–8

Reflect

- What did Isaiah see?
- How did Isaiah respond to God's holiness?
- What did God do for Isaiah?
- How did Isaiah answer God's call?

Personal Application

Ask yourself:

- Where do I need to be cleansed by God?
- Am I available to God, or am I holding something back?
- If God asked, “Who will go for us?” how would I answer?

Personal Response Prayer

Write your own version of Isaiah’s response:

Here I am, Lord. Send me to...

Passage 3: Habakkuk 3:16–19

Habakkuk heard that things would get worse before they got better. His response was not despair, but worship and trust.

Read

Habakkuk 3:16–19

Reflect

- What difficult circumstances does Habakkuk describe?
- What does he choose to do anyway?
- What does he believe about God?

Personal Application

Ask yourself:

- What situation in my life feels uncertain, painful, or frightening?
- Can I say, “Yet I will rejoice in the Lord”?
- What would trusting God look like for me today?

Personal Response Prayer

Complete this prayer:

Lord, even if _____, I will trust You because _____.

Passage 4: Psalm 50

Psalm 50 presents God as the sovereign Judge who calls His people to true worship, gratitude, repentance, and obedience.

Read

Psalm 50

Reflect

- What does God say He does not need from His people?
- What kind of worship does God desire?
- What warnings does God give?
- What kind of response does this psalm call for?

Personal Application

Ask yourself:

- Am I going through religious motions without genuine gratitude?
- Have I taken God's words on my lips while resisting His instruction?
- Is there sin I need to confess and turn from?
- Is there obedience I have delayed?

Personal Response Prayer

Write a prayer of repentance and renewed obedience.

God, You are right about...

Passage 5: Matthew 18:1–4

The disciples asked Jesus who was greatest in the kingdom. Jesus answered by placing a child before them and calling them to humility.

Read

Matthew 18:1–4

Reflect

- What were the disciples concerned about?
- How did Jesus redefine greatness?

- What does childlike humility look like?

Personal Application

Ask yourself:

- Where am I seeking recognition, importance, or control?
- In what area do I need to become more dependent on God?
- Do I believe God needs my strength, skills, or charisma, or am I relying on Him?

Personal Response Prayer

Pray honestly:

God, make me humble. Help me depend on You in...

6. Practice: Write Your Own HERE Journal Entry

Choose one passage from above or another passage from your Bible reading.

Scripture Passage

Write the reference:

Today I read: _____

H — Highlight

What verse, phrase, or idea stood out?

What stood out to me was...

E — Explain

What does this passage mean in context?

In this passage...

A — Apply

How does this connect to my life?

This applies to me because...

R — Respond

How will I answer God?

Write a prayer, confession, commitment, or act of obedience.

Lord, I hear You saying...

7. Personal Reflection Questions

Use these for journaling or prayer.

1. When I read Scripture, do I expect God to speak personally to me? Why or why not?
 2. What usually keeps me from responding to God's Word?
 3. Is there a passage I have recently read but not obeyed?
 4. Do I tend to respond more with information, emotion, or obedience?
 5. What is one concrete step of obedience I need to take this week?
 6. Is there a sin I need to confess?
 7. Is there a promise I need to trust?
 8. Is there a relationship where I need to apply what God has shown me?
 9. How can I make prayer a more natural response to Bible reading?
 10. What would change if I approached Scripture as communication with God, not just information about God?
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8. A Simple Daily Bible Reading Plan

If you are unsure where to begin, choose one of these simple plans.

Option 1: Read Through the New Testament

Read one chapter a day beginning in Matthew and continue through Revelation.

Option 2: Psalms and Proverbs

Read one psalm and one proverb each day.

Option 3: One Book at a Time

Choose a short book and read it slowly. Good starting places:

- Ruth
- Jonah
- Philippians
- Colossians
- James
- 1 John

Option 4: Use a Bible Reading Plan

Choose a plan and stick with it for a set period of time.

The goal is not to rush. The goal is to hear from God and respond faithfully.

9. Closing Prayer

Pray:

Father, thank You for speaking through Your Word. Forgive me for the times I have read without listening and listened without responding. Teach me to hear You clearly, trust You deeply, and obey You faithfully. Help me bring the truth of Scripture into the real circumstances of my life. Make me humble, repentant, grateful, and obedient. In Jesus' name, amen.