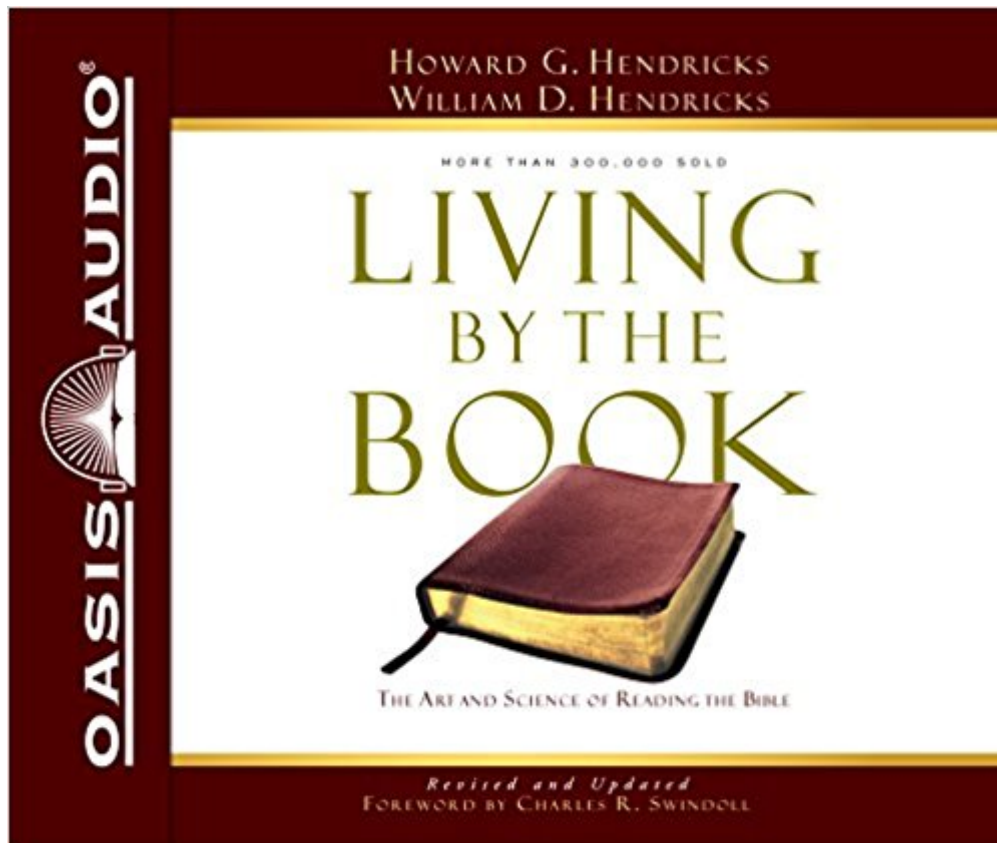




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# Living By The Book: The Art And Science Of Reading The Bible



## Synopsis

For every person who draws strength and direction from the Bible, there are many more who struggle with it. Some call it a long book with fine print and obscure meaning. Some call it a mystery, a chore to read, or an undecipherable puzzle. The good news is you can easily solve this problem. With over 300,000 sold, this revised and expanded edition of *Living by the Book* will remove the barriers that keep Scripture from transforming your life. In a simple, step-by-step fashion, the authors explain how to glean truth from Scripture. It is practical, readable, and applicable. By following its easy-to-apply principles, you'll soon find yourself drawing great nourishment from the Word and enjoying the process! The *Living by the Book Workbook* is the perfect compliment to provide practical application of lessons.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A truly revolutionary book! The contents of this book completely changed how I read and studied the Bible. If you are looking for a book that "puts the cookies on the lower shelf" and can equip you in your bible study--you've found it!!! This is THE best book on Bible study and is destined to remain a classic.-Dr. Dennis Rainey, President, FamilyLifeHoward Hendricks taught me how to study the Bible in a way that revolutionized my life and my teaching. *Living by the Book* is the very material "Prof" Hendricks taught me and is now available to everyone. To this day, I open the Bible daily using the principles found in this book. I highly recommend it to you.-Chip Ingram, President, Walk Thru the Bible Five decades of

Howard Hendrick's students all give the same testimony: his course in Bible Study Methods marked them for life. Because Living By the Book is a distillation of that course, all of us would also offer this counsel: Don't miss this book if you too want to see your study of God's Word come alive.-Duane Litfin, President, Wheaton College

My spiritual inspiration and mentor has been Dr. Howard Hendricks. I am one of thousands who have been impacted by his ministry. Having known Howie and through Howie, Bill, for over 30 years, I know to a small degree the wisdom contained in these men's minds and hearts. Living By the Book is the way that Howie and Bill have lived their lives and, as such, this is a book that is readable and useable by everyone. It is with great joy and enthusiasm that I endorse and recommend Living By the Book.-Ron Blue, President, CFPN

Teach a man to study the Bible and you fill his life. Teach a man to train others and you fill others lives. A generation is indebted to 'The Prof' for teaching us how to train fishermen. Thanks for helping us know and love the Savior through His word.-Dr. Michael Easley, former president, Moody Bible Institute

--This text refers to the Paperback edition.

The adventure of your life awaits! With this classic book, recently update and expanded, Howard and Bill Hendricks invite you on one of the greatest adventures of your life—the journey through Scripture. In the Bible you can interact with a living God who wants a personal relationship with you. And no special skills are needed. If you can read, you can glean important insight from Scripture. Living by the Book will help you engage God's Word like never before. In simple step-by-step fashion, you'll learn how to:

- Observe. Let Scripture speak to you individually.
- Interpret. Develop the tools to properly understand biblical text.
- Apply. Learn how to allow Scripture to transform your life.
- Start your journey today.

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Love this series and am glad to own it so that I can do it at my own pace. I can review, repeat, move ahead... Yes, this was recorded several years ago so you have look past the clothing & hair styles because you're buying this set for the CONTENT and it's value doesn't diminish.

A great study book. You will learn so much using this book. Studying the Bible will be an eye opener when you use the guidelines in this book. The layout and the studies in the book will be a great addition to any Bible scholar.

This is the best method of studying God's Word! Any true believers who are serious about their relationship and walk with God, this book needs to be in your library among your other study references. The Holy Bible when referring to the King James Version will come to life like watching a movie.

Very good book for a more in depth study of the bible. Where I once read the verse and chapter, I am now dissecting almost every word. It's awesome as I have learned to really delve into the meaning and intentions of the writer.

You just can't say anything negative about Dr. Hendricks. It will take a long time to find a replacement for this dedicated man. His methodology for scripture study is second to none.

I have not read this one from cover to cover. I liked what I have learned so far. It tells you how to observe, interpret, and apply the scriptures to your life. I read the bible differently now, because of this book. A great resource to keep on hand and at your finger tips.

Amazing book that will allow you to dig much deeper into scripture. Highly recommend if you want to learn how to truly study the Bible.

Overview Before anyone can preach, they must understand how to rightly divide Scripture. A preacher who does not perform his or her due diligence lives contrary to the teaching of 2 Timothy 2:15 and brings shame upon their life. Preachers and teachers of biblical truth are held a higher accountability (1 Timothy 6:3-4; James 3:1) and must preach with a knowledge that lends to a clear conscience (1 Timothy 3:9). Therefore, one tool a pastor may find as advantageous is Howard G. Hendricks' *Living by the Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible*. Hendricks divides, fairly evenly, the book into three major sections with each section representing one step in the three major steps that defines his solid method of biblical study. The first step is observation or asking the question, "What do I see?" The main idea is that many may read the Bible, but few take the time to observe what is going on in a particular passage. Learning to focus on the details can bring out dozens, if not hundreds, of points one small passage can contain. A few points worth highlighting are observing repeatedly, purposefully, and acquisitively, in that, they are often forgotten and yet greatly needed. Putting to practice the previous ideas, the preacher will discover details that are repeated, related, or emphasized that may otherwise be missed. The second step is interpretation

or asking the question, "What does it mean?" Dealing with the plethora of barriers that stand between the modern reader and the ancient biblical text can be daunting. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, the preacher or teacher must be cautious of not misrepresenting Scripture to those they preach or teach among. Hendricks provides five keys to assist the interpretation process: content, context, comparison, culture, and consultation. Out of the five, this reader found solid value in focusing on context and culture, two ideas that are often misused or not used at all in modern day sermons. The third step is application, "How does it work?" The crucial role all preachers must understand is bridging the gap between two worlds. Observation and interpretation concern the personal study of the pastor or student of the Bible. Application concerns how what has been studied moves from inner knowledge to outward expression. Depending on the demographics of the pastor or student, trying to express what they have learned can be a challenge. The learner must understand their own background, as well as, the community and context in which they desire to express what has been learned. Hendricks offers sound steps and solid advice on how to apply biblical truth to change lives.

**Strengths** One of the major strengths of the book is being highly thorough on the topic of studying the Bible. Although the size of the book may intimidate the casual reader, the serious student of the Bible will discover an advantageous addition to their study library. Instead of having multiple smaller books to reference though each time the pastor or student goes to study, which can take up study time, they can simply use one book that has the same flow and thought pattern throughout. Another strength can be found in the multitude of profitable examples that provide tangible application of the ideas presented. Along with the examples, Hendricks provides discussion questions and examples that a pastor or student can immediately put to practice. This places the text in a category above others in this genre that simply provides ideas with no examples or questions to guide the reader. There is also a workbook that corresponds with the book that provides even more helpful exercises. A final strength correlates to the previous one, the book's flow and style of writing is fluid and approachable by a wide range of readers. It is as if Hendricks is speaking to the reader as they move through the ideas. The chapters are short and to the point, although some chapters have a bit of repetition. Nevertheless, this is profitable because not all pastors or students of the Bible have the opportunity for higher education in private college or seminary. Although Hendricks is a seminary teacher of higher learning, he has taken difficult principles and written them in a manner that opens up his book to a wide audience of readers.

**Weaknesses** The only weakness this writer finds is that, being as thorough as it is, the text could have added a few chapters. One of the chapters that could have enhanced the book could cover a brief history of the Bible. The Bible was written by many people over hundreds of years.

Cultures and societies from the beginning of the Bible to the end were vastly different. A short treatise on how Scripture came to be the way one reads it today would have been advantageous. Yet, adding this could produce another negative being that the book is already lengthy. Another chapter that would be a solid addition to the book would have been to better explain the various translations of the Bible. One of the major questions that secular society presses upon Christians is, "Why do they say the Bible is the infallible and inerrant Word of God and yet have so many translations?" There are even preachers and teachers who claim one is better than the other skewing people's beliefs even further. Even though the appendix does address translations briefly, a chapter dealing with this issue would be profitable for anyone trying to address this question when addressing the larger question of various translations.

**Personal Benefit** On a more personal note, I first encountered Howard Hendricks' books while doing a Bachelors of Arts in Biblical Studies. His book, *Teaching to Change Lives: Seven Proven Ways to Make Your Teaching Come Alive*, has been one I have read many times and have given to dozens of people, especially those I help equip and develop as teachers and small group leaders. Therefore, I may have a bias toward anything that Hendricks writes. Notwithstanding, Hendricks has impacted thousands of students and teachers who have profited from his teachings demonstrating that his works are valuable. *Living by the Book* will be a new tool that I can continually go back to when studying. While reading, I came to realize how much I lost in the art of observation. Years ago, I would spend hours in a passage. Lately, I have only skimmed the surface. I have not been digging as deep as I could in a passage missing timeless truths. I have already put "Six Things to Look For" (chapters 19-23) into practice in my own study time while I read through 1 and 2 Peter. I know for a fact, when I allow my study of the Bible to fail to live up to what the Word is worth, I will continually refer back to Hendricks for fresh inspiration. Paul explains in Colossians 4:4 that he desires them to pray for him to proclaim the Word clearly as it should be proclaimed. May that be all of our prayers as we preach and teach the Bible.

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