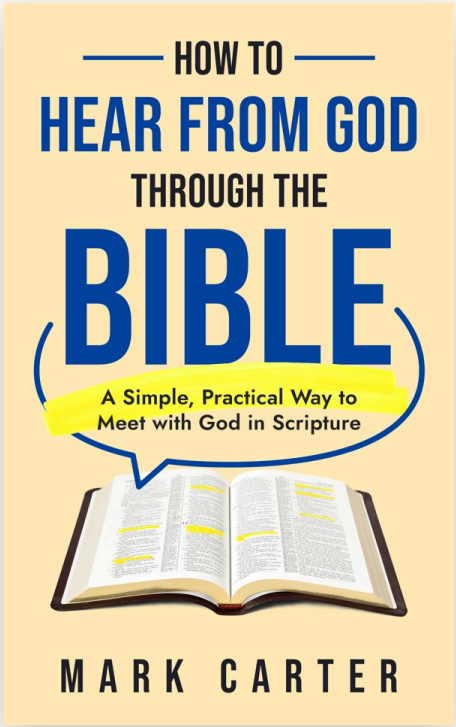
A 15-MINUTE PATH INTO SCRIPTURE

THE R.E.A.D. GUIDE

A simple, repeatable way to hear from God through the Bible — even if quiet times have never worked for you.

Read · Examine · Apply · Dialogue



R READ

E EXAMINE

A APPLY

D DIALOGUE

MARK CARTER

A quick-start companion to How to Hear From God Through the Bible

WHY THIS FEELS HARD (AND WHY YOU'RE NOT THE PROBLEM)

You've tried to spend time with God. You've opened your Bible. You've read a chapter. Maybe you even highlighted a few verses.

But if you're honest, it didn't feel like much happened. You felt no clarity, no sense that God was speaking, no real connection. Meanwhile, other people talk about "hearing from God" like it's normal. And somewhere in the back of your mind, a question forms: *Why does this seem to work for them... but not for me?*

If you've ever felt like that, you're not alone. And more importantly: you're not the problem.

Most people assume hearing from God is rare—something reserved for especially spiritual people, emotional moments, or dramatic experiences. But what if hearing from God is not rare... but normal? What if the issue isn't that God is silent—what if the issue is that no one has ever shown you how to listen?

THE BIBLE IS NOT JUST SOMETHING GOD SAID. IT'S HOW GOD STILL SPEAKS.

We're not talking about audible voices or random thoughts. We're talking about something much more grounded: **God, by His Spirit, takes what He has already said in Scripture and applies it personally to your life.**

Think of it like this. Imagine someone writes a letter to your whole family. You read it, and you know it's meant for everyone. But then the person who wrote it sits down with you, points to one sentence, and says: "This part... this is for you right now." That's what it means to hear from God through the Bible. The words don't change. Your awareness does.

You don't need a seminary degree for this. You need a simple path—and about fifteen minutes.

FIRST, PREHEAT THE OVEN

Certain things just cook better if you preheat first—pizza, cookies, and the soul of a person trying to draw near to God. Before you read: slow down and breathe. Then pray something simple:

> *"Lord, please open my eyes to see what You want me to see. Help me slow down enough to hear You."*

The Bible isn't a machine you work or a lever you pull; it's a place you meet a Person.

THE R.E.A.D. METHOD

R.E.A.D. isn't a rigid formula you have to follow perfectly. It's a path that keeps you from sitting down with your Bible thinking, "I have no idea what to do now."

R — READ IT SMALL, SLOW, AND MORE THAN ONCE

Pick a small passage—one paragraph, one short story about Jesus, one chunk of a letter. Then read it three to five times. The first read gives you the general idea. The second and third help you notice words and phrases that stand out. By the fourth and fifth, one or two verses may pull your focus. That's a clue worth paying attention to.

Depth matters more than distance. You're not trying to see how much you can get through. You're listening for what God is actually saying through a smaller portion.

E — EXAMINE: DIG FOR THE GOLD

There is gold in every passage, but you have to dig it out—and digging means asking great questions:

1. In this passage, what does God say about Himself, or what do others say about God?
2. What do people in the passage believe or assume about God that is not true?
3. What are the "villains" doing or believing—and where might I see myself in them?
4. What does it seem like God wants the people to do or believe?
5. Are there specific commands, promises, or warnings I need to heed?

Not every question fits every passage. Use the ones that fit, and don't force the rest. Then write one sentence that starts with **"Personalized for me:"**—what this means for your actual life. One sentence is better than a blank page.

A — APPLY: DECIDE WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO

Application doesn't happen when we know something new. It happens when we change what, how, or when we do something. Ask: "What is one thing I can obey, repent of, believe, or practice today?" God usually speaks about one thing at a time. He doesn't overwhelm us; He shepherds us.

Then make it concrete. "Today I'll thank God for this promise" is good. Here's better: "For the next few days, every time I stop at a red light, I'm going to say out loud, 'Thank You, Lord, that You promise You won't ever leave me.'"

D — DIALOGUE: TALK WITH GOD BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER

Turn the passage into conversation. Thank Him for what He showed you. Confess what it surfaced. Ask for help where you feel weak. Tell Him what confused you. Respond like He's actually in the room—because He is.

Prayer is how you talk to God. Slow attention to His Word is how He talks to you. Put them together, and Bible reading becomes what it was always meant to be: a two-way conversation.

> **One guardrail before you begin:** God never asks you to trust an impression that contradicts His Word. Scripture is the anchor. The Spirit doesn't replace the Bible—He illuminates it. So speak humbly about what you sense ("I believe God may be showing me..."), and focus on small, everyday obedience rather than giant life decisions.

WATCH IT WORK: LUKE 15 — THE PRODIGAL SON

Here's the method on a real passage—Jesus' story of a father and his runaway son (Luke 15:11–24). Read the passage slowly, twice. Then walk the questions.

1. **In this passage, what does God say about Himself, or what do others say about God?** God runs toward sinners instead of waiting for them to clean themselves up. That includes me. God isn't angrily glaring at me through the window.

> **PERSONALIZED FOR ME:** *Even when I've messed up big, God is running toward me, not away from me.*

2. **What do people in the passage believe or assume about God that is not true?** Both sons assume they need to earn or keep the father's love. They treat a relationship with him like a chore or a checklist instead of a gift.

> **PERSONALIZED FOR ME:** *I've sometimes felt like I have to earn my way back into God's favor instead of trusting that He has given it to me through Jesus.*

3. **What are the "villains" doing or believing—and where might I see myself in them?** The prodigal squanders what he was given and treats his father as not worth being around. The older brother believes his superior moral performance entitles him to more reward. He resents grace when it benefits someone else.

> **PERSONALIZED FOR ME:** *Am I ever quietly despising God's kindness to someone?*

4. **What does it seem like God wants the people to do or believe?** He wants people to trust His grace and come home—and to rejoice when others come home, rather than congratulating themselves for being comparatively obedient.

> **PERSONALIZED FOR ME:** *God doesn't want me to forget that it pleases Him more to celebrate His mercy toward others than to secretly resent them.*

5. **Are there specific commands, promises, or warnings I need to heed?** Implied promise: God welcomes repentant sinners with joy. Warning: self-righteousness can keep you outside the celebration even if you're near the house.

> **PERSONALIZED FOR ME:** *Harboring unforgiveness may be keeping me from greater nearness to the Father.*

> **APPLY:** One small thing. Maybe: believe today that God runs toward me. **DIALOGUE:** "Father, thank You that You saw me while I was still a long way off..."

Do you see what happened? These questions bring you out of passive reading into active contemplation. Instead of just looking at the words, you're letting the words look at you.

YOUR R.E.A.D. WORKSHEET

PRINT OR COPY THIS PAGE. FIFTEEN MINUTES. ONE SMALL PASSAGE.

DATE / PASSAGE

R — READ.

I read it ___ times. What word, phrase, or verse pulled my focus?

E — EXAMINE.

1. What does God say about Himself, or what do others say about God?

2. What do people in the passage believe or assume about God that is not true?

3. What are the "villains" doing or believing—and where might I see myself in them?

4. What does it seem like God wants the people to do or believe?

5. Are there specific commands, promises, or warnings I need to heed?

PERSONALIZED FOR ME:

A — APPLY.

One small thing I will do or believe today:

D — DIALOGUE.

My prayer back to God (a sentence or two):

YOUR FIRST 7 DAYS

One small passage a day, fifteen minutes, using the worksheet. (If you're using a physical Bible: Luke and Matthew sit about three-quarters of the way through; Psalms sit near the middle.)

DAY 1	**Luke 15:11–24.** The runaway son. You've seen it worked—now hear it yourself.
DAY 2	**Psalm 23.** The Shepherd who leads and refreshes.
DAY 3	**Matthew 6:25–34.** Jesus on worry.
DAY 4	**Philippians 4:6–9.** Trading anxiety for peace.
DAY 5	**James 1:19–25.** Hearing that becomes doing.
DAY 6	**Ephesians 4:29–32.** Words, kindness, forgiveness.
DAY 7	**Luke 10:38–42.** Martha, Mary, and the one necessary thing.

> Miss a day? Here's the most important rule of all: **get back on the horse.** Perfection is a mirage. Your goal is consistency, even if you have great stumbles. The people who grow closest to God are not the ones who never miss. They're the ones who keep coming back.

WHERE THIS LEADS

A relationship with God doesn't grow through occasional inspiration. It grows through daily attention. Time with God compounds—like an investment. What feels small at first becomes deep over time. What feels ordinary becomes powerful.

This guide is your quick reference. ***How to Hear From God Through the Bible*** walks the whole journey: your first quiet time, the full method, how to test what you sense against Scripture, and how to keep going through boredom, busyness, and dry seasons. Keep it close, and come back to it whenever you feel stuck.

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GOD IS ALREADY SPEAKING.
GRAB YOUR BIBLE, TAKE FIFTEEN MINUTES, AND START LISTENING.