



Diverse Ways to Engage the Word

The Word is living and active! (Hebrews 4:12) And yet, sometimes you may find yourself feeling overwhelmed or bored by your mechanical reading of the Word. As you seek to live in the Word this year, remember that there are numerous ways to engage it. Consider trying a practice you've never done before or haven't done in a long time! Below is a list of ideas to get you started.

Set or Make Music to the Word

Play instrumental (wordless) music while reading the Word. Write a song using biblical words and phrases. Write a song inspired by a Scripture passage. Play music as a response to your reading of the Word. Listen to songs inspired by Scripture passages. The options are many!

Listen to the Word

There are many audio Bibles available for listening (for free) online, including [Streetlights](#), an audio Bible performed by a ministry of creative communicators that share word-for-word Scripture set to an original hip hop score.

Memorize the Word

Identify a verse (or verses) you want to memorize! Rehearse the verse(s) over and over aloud until you can recite the verse(s) by memory.

Read Different Versions of the Word

Consider reading different versions of the Bible. NLT, ESV, The Message, The Voice, [First Nations Version](#), just to name a few!

Summarize the Word

Consider paring down an entire passage to a single sentence or key phrase/word. Write down that sentence, phrase, or word, and meditate on it.

Linger on the Word

Is there a particular word or set of words that stood out to you as you read the Word? Chew on it. Read it over and over, with a different emphasis on each word.

Be Curious about the Word

Write a list of questions that you have. Why do you think the author of a given book/passage wrote the words he did? What questions do you have for the author? What questions do you have for God?



Explore the Word with all Five Senses

As you read a particular passage from the Word, imagine yourself at the scene. What do you smell? What might you hear? Is it cold or hot? Is there sand between your toes or wind blowing through your hair? As you imagine the scene through your sense, pieces of the narrative may come to life or offer you a deeper connection to the passage.

Explore Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is Latin for “divine reading.” This practice of reading Scripture is an ancient practice, and it emerged in a time where literacy was low and the Bible was a resource that was less accessible to the common person. This practice moves through five phases (silence, reading, meditation, prayer, and contemplation); this practice emphasizes listening to the Spirit while contemplating the Scriptures.

Handwrite the Word

There is something memorable and powerful about the process of writing words on paper. Rewrite (word-for-word) a passage that you just read. The process of writing slows us down and encourages us to take notice of details in the text we may have otherwise missed.

Journal the Word

Bible Journaling is a creative practice that has become more popular in recent years, and it has the same benefits of hand-writing the Word. The practice of Bible journaling can provide us a new way to engage with the Word while simultaneously helping us concentrate on a passage of Scripture in a slower manner.

Read and Study the Word with Others

Reading the Word with others invites us to consider perspectives or insights we otherwise may not be aware of. It is natural for us to bring our own cultural lens to Scripture, but reading with people from diverse backgrounds allow us to hear diverse viewpoints. And those viewpoints have the power to challenge us to step beyond the comfort and familiarity of our personally formed beliefs on Scripture. If we only engage with the Word in private, it is easy for God’s voice to begin sounding like our own!

Pray the Word

According to Evan Howard, in his book *Praying the Scriptures*, “To pray the Scriptures is to order one’s time of prayer around a particular text in the Bible.” Scripture prayers can take many forms. You can pray the Scriptures word-for-word. Or you can personalize a particular passage. Or you can ask God to bring certain passages to mind as you pray. There is no set way for choosing how to pray the Word.



Read the Word Aloud

Read Scripture aloud for yourself. Listen to the words as you say them aloud. Don't rush through the reading; instead, emphasize certain words and pause for moments of silence throughout your reading.

Read the Word Aloud with Another Person

Pair up with someone else and take turns reading a passage of Scripture aloud to one another. You can take turns reading the entire passage to each other or take turns reading portions of the passage until you've read it all the way through.

Create a Visual Reminder of the Word

Identify a particular word or verse that stood out to you during your reading of Scripture. Write the word(s) or verse(s) on a piece of paper and place the paper in a visible place so that you can be reminded of God's truth each time you see it.

Watch Videos Illustrating the Word

Watch animated videos produced by [The Bible Project](#). "All of our videos are short visual explanations that show how the Bible is a unified story that leads to Jesus."

Illustrate the Word

Depict the main ideas of a passage with simple illustrations or symbols. Consider sketching a comic. (Break the passage up into discrete scenes and draw key actions of each scene paired with important dialogue or narration. Don't be afraid to use stick figures!)

Use Creative Expression to Respond to the Word

Imagine what the passage you just read would sound like as a song or look like as a painting or feel like as a performance. Consider turning your reflection into a creative piece! (Ex: Sculpt a response with clay, draw with markers, write using prose or poetry, create a response through music using an instrument of your choice, etc.)

Share the Word

As you engage with a specific passage or verse, consider sharing your reflections with others. It is a gift to share what you are learning from Scripture-- both for yourself and others! Share your personal and authentic reflections with friend or family members, a child/youth or adult. Email/text a group of friends. Share them in a social media post. If your audience is potentially less familiar with living the Christian faith, avoid using familiar Christian terms; instead, challenge yourself by using language that he/she can access!

