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H.E.A.R. Method for Reading and Engaging with God's Word:

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☐ The acronym H.E.A.R. stands for Highlight, Explain, Apply, and Respond. Each of these four action steps contributes to creating an atmosphere to hear God speak. Instead of waiting passively, God desires that we actively pursue Him. Jesus said, "Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7).

☐ Before reading the text, pause to sincerely ask God to speak to you. It may seem trite, but we must seek God's guidance to understand His Word (1 Cor. 2:12–14). Every time we open our Bibles, we should pray the simple prayer that David prayed: "Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law." (Ps. 119:18).

☐ Below is an outline of the H.E.A.R method that will help you as you journey through God's Word. **Remember the goal is not just to consume information, but to engage with God's Word.**

Goal: Read one chapter a day- at least 5 days a week. I would encourage that you start by reading through a book in the New Testament (i.e. Luke, 1&2 Timothy, etc. Foundations New Testament plan on youversion.com is very helpful in applying this method)
Note: It's very helpful to keep a journal as you use this method.

H.E.A.R
HIGHLIGHT the verses that speak to you.
Why are these verses significant to you?

EXPLAIN what is in the text.
What is the context (i.e. time, place, when it was written)? Who is in the text? What is happening in these verses? Is there a phrase or word that is often repeated?
By asking some simple questions, with the help of God's Spirit, you can better understand the meaning of a passage or verse. At this point, you are beginning the process of discovering the specific and personal word that God has for you from His Word. What is important is that you are engaging the text and wrestling with its meaning. A Study Bible can be a helpful resource as you seek to understand the meaning of a passage.

APPLY what God is saying in these verses to your life.
How can this help me? What do these verses mean for me today? How do they apply to my current situation? **What is God saying to me personally? (Take time to pray and listen as you ask this question).**
Questions to help with application (SPECK)
- S - Is there a **SIN** to confess and avoid?
- P - Is there a **PROMISE** to keep?
  E - Is there an **EXAMPLE** to follow?
- C - Is there a **COMMAND** to obey?
- K - Is there **KNOWLEDGE** of God I need to reflect on?

RESPOND to what you've read.
Your response to the passage may take on many forms. **The goal is not just to be a hearer of God's Word, but to put it into practice**. Here are some possible responses:
- In what ways does this passage call you to action?
- **Is there a promise to hold on to, a truth to believe, a command to obey?**
- **Is there something you need to repent of?**
- How will you be different because of what you've learned and applied?
- What are you thankful for in light of the truth you have read?
- Write out a prayer to God in response to what you read today and what you are committing to.

H.E.A.R. Journal Sample:

READ: PHILIPPIANS 4:13
DATE: JANUARY 10, 2022
TITLE: SECRET OF CONTENTMENT

H (Highlight) - "I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

E (Explain) - Paul was telling the church at Philippi that he has discovered the secret of contentment. No matter the situation in Paul's life, he realized that Christ was all he needed, and Christ was the one who strengthened him to persevere through difficult times.

A (Apply) - In my life, I will experience many ups and downs. My contentment is not found in circumstances. Rather, it is based on my relationship with Jesus Christ. Only Jesus gives me the strength I need to be content in every circumstance of life.

R (Respond) - Lord Jesus, please help me as I strive to be content in You. Through Your strength, I can make it through any situation I face.

HEAR Method is adopted from Replicate Ministries