

October 2012 – Book of the Month Review
One-to-One Bible Reading

By Pastor David Forsyth

Practical Help for Disciple-making

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” We all know this familiar passage of Scripture as “The Great Commission” and as earnest followers of Jesus Christ we desire to do our part in helping to fulfill it - But how? Many of us feel a little like Moses who protested when called by God to speak to Pharaoh... *“Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue” (Ex. 4:10).*

Well I have good news for you. It comes in the form of a little (103 pages) book entitled “One to One Bible Reading” (ISBN 978-1-921441-981). In this book David Helm, pastor of Holy Trinity Church in Chicago, provides instructions for implementing a simple method of discipleship that can easily be used by young believer and seasoned saint alike. Since God through His Holy Spirit has inspired the writing of His inerrant and authoritative word, He has also through that same Spirit empowered that work to be the means by which He brings about spiritual life and growth (Jam. 1:21; 1 Pet. 1:23; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Therefore, it is an essentially Christian activity to read that word on a regular basis (1 Pet. 2:2; 1 Tim. 4:13). Helm takes that idea of regular Bible reading, lifts it out of the realm of “private devotions” and applies it to a context of personal discipleship. The method he outlines in the book has application evangelistically in addition to working with those who have already made a personal faith commitment to Christ.

Practically speaking, how does it all work? Pastor Helm outlines a simple 3-step method on how to get started (chapter 4), followed by chapters specifically devoted to the actual planning and organization of the regular meetings. To get started we are encouraged to pray for God to prepare both us and the person we intend to invite. The second step is probably the scariest, in that we actually have to open our mouths and invite someone to join us for a time of Bible reading. It is here that we are called upon to exercise faith in God that He will honor our desire to honor Him and will place it within the heart of those we invite to take us up on the invitation. The third and final step is to plan when and where you will meet; coffee shops to – living rooms and everything in between provide an ideal setting.

In addressing the subject of: “What will a typical meeting look like?” (chapter 5) Pastor Helm lays out the process: pray, read out loud (alternating sections of verses), talk about what you have just read and how to apply it to your lives, set a date for the next meeting. It really is as simple as that. By utilizing this simple format we are trusting in the power of the Word rather than our own Bible knowledge or eloquence to bring about real change. If in your reading you encounter a concept or word that you don’t understand, talk about it and then promise you will ask your pastor and get back to them the following week. Whatever you do, do not turn your meetings into a soapbox for personal agendas, pet theological discussions, or arguments. Pray, and let the Word do it work.

Beginning on page 43 and finishing out the book pastor Helm gives practical helps in how to build upon this simple method, as well as choosing what to read with different types of people. He also provides an extensive section of passages and helpful discussion questions for those passages, which will stimulate your creative juices for adding questions of your own. I find the brilliance of this book lies in its simplicity and accessibility to believers of all stripes and highly recommend it. May God empower us to start a movement of Bible reading that will turn our world upside down.