

H.E.A.R Method for Studying Scripture

H = HIGHLIGHT

Highlight the verses that stand out to you. Write the date you read the scripture and the chapter/verse number in your notebook. If you can, summarize what it is about or give it a title so that you can easily reference it. Or, if you want to go the extra step, write out the entire verse in your notebook.

E = EXPLAIN

After you've highlighted your verse(s), explain what the text means. How would you explain this passage in your own words? By asking some simple questions, with the help of the Holy Spirit, you can understand the meaning of the passage or verse. Here are a few good questions to get you started:

- >> Why was the verse or passage written?
- >> To whom was it originally written?
- >> How does the verse or passage fit with the verses before and after it?
- >> Why would the Holy Spirit include this passage in the Bible?
- >> What does God intend to communicate through the text?

A = APPLY

At this point you're beginning the process of discovering the specific personal word God has for you from His Word. What's important is that you're engaging with the text and wrestling with the meaning. Application is the heart of the process. Everything you've done so far combines under this heading. As you've done before, answer a series of questions to discover the significance of these verses to you personally. Ask yourself:

- >> How can this verse or passage help me?
- >> What's God saying to me?
- >> What would the application of this verse look like in my life?

These questions bridge the gap between the ancient world and your world today. They provide a way for God to speak to you through the specific passage or verse. Challenge yourself to write between two and five sentences about the way the text applies to your life.

R = RESPOND

Finally, you'll respond to the text. A personal response may take on many forms. You may write an action step, describe a change in perspective, or simply respond in prayer to what you've learned. For example, you may ask for help in being bold or generous, you may need to repent of unconfessed sin, or you may want to praise God. Keep in mind that you're responding to what you've just read. You may want to write a brief explanation-and-application summary: *"The verse means... , so I can or will"*