

# SLOW FOOD

## *bible studies for busy teachers*

*Many teachers want to study the Bible regularly and apply it to their stressed-out lives in prayer. But other things seem more urgent. 'If we're in too much of a hurry, the remedy is not to speed up, but to slow down.' The point is not to 'have my n minutes of daily quiet time', but to make them count. Less is sometimes more.*

*Thus in these studies the text is split into sections of a few verses at a time, affording a manageable daily study. Those who want to get a move on can combine two or more sections. The questions are devised with teachers principally in mind (which includes heads, chaplains, staff, governors and even praying parents!); they are not exhaustive and do not depend on any one version of the Bible. Commentaries can be useful, if only because the authors have spent far longer on the thing than we ever could. The questions are mostly posed in the first person singular; for group study change to plurals. Some cross-references are sprinkled in for extra flavour. The advantage of writing down answers to questions is that the mind concentrates better and one can come back to the studies for later reference.*

*I don't have to bend scripture to my situation – just to rediscover Christ for myself and, it may be, for my school. For the necessity of such study cf. Matthew 4:4: 'It takes more than bread to stay alive. It takes a steady stream of words from God's mouth' (tr. The Message).*

## **1 PETER: SERVICE AND FREEDOM**

*Aim: to explore the ways in which the Christian can live under an oppressive and potentially threatening system and yet be free to live a life of faith and service to others, remaining uncompromised by the attitudes and standards of those around – with particular application to those in the independent sector!? Just joking, of course.*

- 1:1-2      How does the position of Peter's readers compare with that of a teacher in an independent school? (Phil 1:1; Ezek 1:1-3)
- 1:3-5      Just how 'privileged' am I? (Matt 13:11; 1 Cor 1:26-31)
- 1:6-9      What pressures can I expect today? What should be my attitude to them? (Heb 11:25-27; 2 Cor 1:8-11)
- 1:10-12   How relevant is the Old Testament likely to be to Christians under testing? (1 Cor 10:1-13; Isa 53:7)
- 1:13-17   What is holiness and how far is it an optional extra for me today? (Tit 2:11-14; Ps 96:6,9)
- 1:18-21   How have the death and resurrection of Christ changed for ever the way we think about life? (Jn 11:25; Rom 6:4)
- 1:22-25   In what ways are 'born-again Christians' going to be different from the rest of mankind? (Jn 1:11-12; Rom 6:14)
- 2:1-3      How should my new-born status affect my teaching today? (Jas 1:18-19, cf 3:1)
- 2:4-8      Does it matter that most of my colleagues and pupils have in their various ways rejected Christ? (Matt 9:9-13, 35-38)
- 2:9-10     What is my primary vocation? (Mk 3:13-15; Exod 19:4-6)

- 2:11-12 Should I care about my reputation? (Gen 39)
- 2:13-17 Does my freedom as a Christian mean that I can disregard authorities? (Mk 12:17; Acts 5:29; Rom 13)
- 2:18-21 If I feel that I am being unjustly treated by those above me in my place of work, how should I react? (Ps 37:5-6; Col 3:22-25)
- 2:22-25 What did Christ do for me on the cross? (Isa 53:5-6; Eph 1:7; Rom 5:6-11)
- 3:1-7 How practicable are these instructions for a married Christian? If I am single, how do they help me to pray for my married friends? (Prov 31:10-31)
- 3:8-12 Is the Christian character described here consistent with maintaining discipline, furthering my career and cutting ice generally? (Ps 106:32-33; Num 20:10-12)
- 3:13-17 How can I ensure that 'when people throw mud at you, none of it will stick' (*The Message*, v16)? (1 Cor 4:12-13; Col 4:6; Acts 5:40-42)
- 3:18-22 Why are Christ's death and resurrection absolutely central for the soundness of any individual or institution? (Eph 1:20-21; Rom 14:9)  
Concentrating on vv18 and 22. Even Martin Luther admitted that he wasn't sure what this passage meant!
- 4:1-6 Should I be concerned if my lifestyle as a Christian causes raised eyebrows or adverse comment among my non-Christian colleagues? (1 Thess 5:22; 2 Cor 8:21)
- 4:7-11 How can I show my love for the Lord and for other Christians in practical ways? (2 Cor 12:15; Rom 12:9-13)
- 4:12-16 Would life be easier if one wasn't a Christian (or if people didn't know one was)? (Matt 5:14-16; 11:28-30)
- 4:17-19 Do I envy non-Christians? (Ps 37:1-2, 7; Eph 2:12-13)
- 5:1-4 How do these verses apply to any position of leadership or responsibility I am in? (2 Cor 6:3ff; Mk 10:35-45)
- 5:5-6 Does 'humility' mean saying goodbye to any form of ambition? (Jer 45:5; 1 Chr 4:10; Dan 12:3)
- 5:7 Should I be worried? (Ps 55:22; Mt 6:25-34; Lk 10:38-42)
- 5:8-9 How should I react to different kinds of pressure as a Christian? (Eph 6:10-20; Gen 49:23-25)
- 5:10-11 Can I trust God? (Jn 14:1; Deut 33:12; 2 Tim 1:12)
- 5:12-14 Could I go off the rails today? (1 Cor 10:12; Heb 10:35-36; Matt 26:41)

