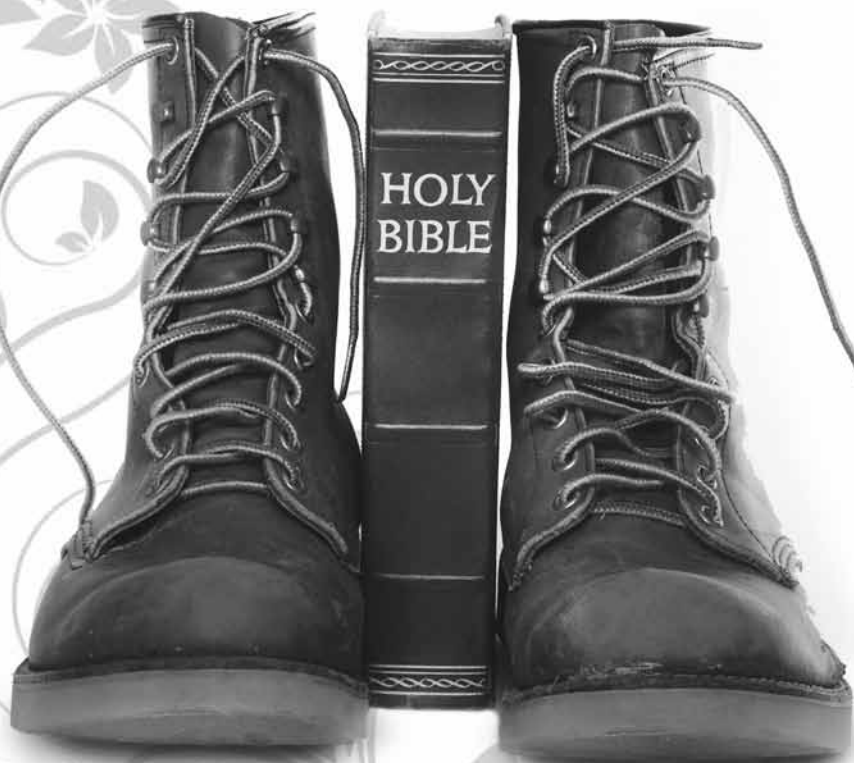


BIBLE STUDY *for* BUSY MAMAS

CHILD TRAINING BOOT CAMP

A Thirty-Day Bible Study

by
Pam Forster



Doorposts

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INTRODUCTION

I still remember the season when our first three children (all boys) were little and stretching my patience and “wisdom” to their limits. It took a ridiculously long time and some real challenging life circumstances before I finally admitted that I wasn’t equipped to do this parenting thing in my own strength.

God used the chaos and confusion of my life to drive me into His Word and help me see what I should have known all along -- *the answers were all there*. No, I couldn’t turn to chapter and verse to find out what to do about tantrums or sass or not doing chores. But God hadn’t left my husband and me to wallow through parenting on our own. In His great love and grace, He was ready and willing to hold our hands and guide us through the great and often-scary-and-overwhelming adventure of parenthood. He was eager to help *me* grow while I learned how to help our children grow.

It was an exciting season of life as I took hold of God’s Word in a whole new way – praying the Psalms, poring over sections of verses in *Nave’s Topical Bible*, looking at God’s dealings with His children, and seeking to *apply* those principles to day-to-day life with little ones.

My time in God’s Word – even if I could only manage a minute or two behind a locked bathroom door some days – became my lifeline. This might sound a bit melodramatic, but I felt like I had been drowning in the midst of all that motherhood and the rest of life had dealt me, and I finally had hold of the lifeline God had been offering me all along. I felt like He had reeled me in out of that sea of self-sufficient bewilderment

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and depression, set me down next to Him, and said, “Let me help. Talk to me. Listen to me. Let’s do this together.”

That’s when God finally got it through my head that His Word is a **gift**. I had known that. I’d known it since I was a little girl. But now I *believed* it. It’s God talking to *me* and teaching me how to talk to *Him*.

And it **applies to my everyday life** with all its ups and downs.

God has so much He wants to teach us! We don’t need to turn to man’s wisdom when we don’t know how to handle a problem with our children. God has given us His Word to guide us!

Join me! Let’s learn some simple ways to *study* our Bibles while we also learn how to be better parents. Let’s find out what God says about some of the typical challenges we run into day after day with our children — things like **disobedience, bickering, unkind speech, tattling, and anger. While we’re at it, let’s see what God wants to say to us about those same sins.**

You don’t need anything fancy — just your Bible, a computer or tablet (or even a smart phone), a pen, some colored pencils, and a notebook of some sort. Sometimes picking up a spiffy new notebook or some special pens can help inspire us to sit down and actually study each day. Maybe this would be a good time to splurge just a bit!

The lessons in this study are designed for busy parents. I’ve tried to write lessons that can be completed in fifteen to thirty minutes, but sometimes I get excited and a bit carried away. If you find you can’t finish a lesson in one sitting, don’t give up! Take your time. No one is looking over your shoulder. Take several days on a lesson if that’s what you need to really soak up what God wants to teach you!

You’ll find that each lesson also includes an **activity to do with your children. These are *not* designed to make you feel guilty if you choose to not do them.** If you feel like you can’t do these short studies with your children right now, ignore them. But I *would* encourage you to try to come back and do the children’s lessons later. They’ll help you

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be **proactive in the instruction of your children**. Instead of waiting until you're in the midst of an issue with one of your little (or not-so-little) sinners, you can study what God says about it ahead of time. You can memorize verses together and be armed and ready when temptations arise.

Gather your materials! Start praying for God to teach you new things from His Word! Invite a friend or two to join you, and dive in!



DAY 1: THE ROOT

Are you ready? Today we start our child-training “boot camp”! We’re going **straight to God’s Word**, because *that* is where we’re going to find the real answers to the challenges we face as we seek to raise children who love and obey God.

Today we’re going to start our study by laying a bit of groundwork. **What does God tell us to do for our children?**

We’re going to dive right into using one of my favorite online Bible study sites, *Blue Letter Bible*. You will need your computer, tablet, or smartphone to access the web. I will be giving instructions based on using *Blue Letter Bible’s* website on a computer.

If you’re using a tablet or smartphone, you may want to use *Blue Letter Bible’s* apps for those devices. The formats for the apps vary a bit from the website, so you’ll have to do a little more exploring to find your way around. What I describe while using the computer will look considerably different on your tablet or phone. If you get stuck, visit www.doorposts.com/studyapps, where you will find **basic instructions** for using the various apps for smartphones and tablets.

Assignment: Pray for God’s blessing as you start your study time today. The only way we will learn anything from the Bible is with the Holy Spirit’s guiding help.

Day 1: The Root

- Then go to www.blueletterbible.org.
- Do you see the words “Search the Bible” in the white section on the top, right-hand part of the page?
- Type the words **your children** in the search box.
- Then click the green button with the white magnifying glass in it. What you should see now is a list of every verse in the King James Bible that includes the words **your children**.
- **Skim those verses.** Don’t feel like you need to spend a lot of time on each verse. Look specifically for ones that **give instructions** to parents about their responsibilities. What are we told to do with or for our children? **Note the reference** of each relevant verse and **summarize** it in your notebook.
- You will need to read the **context** of some of these verses that are listed to get their full meaning. Reading the verses that come before and after a particular verse helps us understand it better and also helps us not misinterpret its meaning.

To see the entire chapter that the verse is in, **simply click on the verse’s reference**. Then read enough of the surrounding verses to gain a better understanding of the passage.

- After you have read the verse in context, **click your browser’s back arrow**. This will take you back to the original list of verses that contain the words **your children**.
- **Continue skimming** verses and taking notes on the verses that instruct parents. **Stop** when you reach the blue bar labeled “Here are the remaining matches”. If you can’t finish reading all the verses today, you can finish up tomorrow. We will look more closely at the verses you have recorded then.
- For today, **look back over your notes**. Take a yellow colored pencil or highlighter and **mark in your notes** every instruction that was given to parents in these verses.

What does God want to teach you through these verses? Note any ways the Holy Spirit is convicting you to change your thinking and actions.

For your children:

Several verses you read in your lesson today speak of the Israelites erecting **memorials** or observing **special feasts and ceremonies** that commemorated God's deliverance of His people.

Memorials help us teach our children about God's faithfulness, and they build our faith as we recall what He has done, knowing that He will continue to do what is good for His children.

- **Choose one of those accounts**, click on the verse reference to bring up the entire chapter, and **read it aloud** with your children. If they are old enough, take turns reading verses.
- **Discuss** how God delivered the Israelites.
- Then think together about ways that God has delivered your family or members of your family from danger, illness, financial need, etc.
- Thank Him for His mercy and protection and discuss ways you could **memorialize one of those events**.

Would an annual **family party or feast** help you remember and give thanks to God for His deliverance?

Could you associate a **particular song** with His deliverance, and make a point of remembering and thanking God every time you hear that song?

Could you draw a **picture** or post a **photograph** that would help everyone remember and give thanks for His deliverance or provision?

Could you begin a **scrapbook** or **journal** of accounts of God's deliverance, adding to it as you witness God's protection and deliverance?

Think of a way to memorialize at least one time God has delivered a member of your family; work on your memorial together as a family.