

Getting Started With The Bible

Reading the Bible regularly will bless you and help you grow beyond what you can imagine!

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. (Psalm 119:105)

1. Choose a Bible version that's understandable and easy to read. If you don't understand it, you will be less likely to read it. If you're a beginner, we recommend the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) or the New International Version (NIV). You can also download the You Version Bible App or Bible Gateway App. Both have bible reading plans and daily devotionals for free.

2. You don't have to start at the beginning. The Bible contains 66 separate books compiled into one book. The 39 books of the Old Testament are the story of God and his people before the coming of Jesus. The 27 books of the New Testament tell the story of Jesus' life and the story of the early church.

3. Pick a book of the Bible and work your way through it. Start with the Gospel of John. If you read one chapter per day, 5-10 minutes, you can read all of John in just 3 weeks. After reading John, move on to the other books suggested below.

4. Read a little every day. Getting God's Word into your life doesn't have to take long. Start with 5 or 10 minutes. Choose a time and place that's convenient for you. Many people read their Bible first thing in the morning; others like to read it before going to bed. Pick a time and place that is right for you.

5. Don't worry if you don't understand all of what you read. The Bible can be confusing. If you come to a part you don't understand, spend a little time with it, and then continue on.

6. Pray before you begin. Pause before you open your Bible and ask God to speak to you. Ask God to help you understand His Word. Ask God to use His Word to teach you, to direct you through his Word. Ask Him to use His Word to help you know Him and love Him. Jeremiah 29:13 says, "You will seek me and find Me, if you seek Me with all your heart." God loves to reveal himself to those who seek Him.

7. Take notes or write down your thoughts. Highlight or underline verses or make notes in the margins to help you refer back to certain stories or verses.

8. Trust the process. Sometimes you will forget what you read or you may not "feel" closer to God every time you read the Bible, but if you try it consistently for a while, when you look back on that time, you will be surprised at how much God helped you grow, and you will be so glad that you made time in your life for God.

Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." ~Matthew 4:4



Bible Reading Guides and Suggested Books

Read Per Day

- 1 Chapter
- 3 Chapters of Old Testament and 1 of New Testament
- 3 Chapters of Old Testament
- 1 Chapter of New Testament
- 2-3 Chapters

Length of Time

- Finish the Bible in about 3 years
- Finish the Bible in about 1 year
- Finish the Old Testament in 1 year
- Finish the New Testament in 1 year
- Finish the Bible in about 1 ½ years

If trying to follow one of the plans is too structured for you, try reading some of the suggested books. The ones that are starred (*) are fairly short and could probably be read in one sitting or two. Try alternating between the Old and New Testaments. It may keep your reading a little more interesting.

Suggested Old Testament Books

- Genesis (Creation, Noah's Ark, Abraham's life)
- Exodus 1-35 (Moses' Life, 10 Commandments)
- 1 & 2 Kings (History, War stories)
- *Ruth (Short story of faithfulness)
- Ecclesiastes (Short, Meaning of Life)
- Joel (Short book of Prophecy)
- *Jonah (Jonah and the Great Fish)
- Psalms (Short chapters, prayers praising God)
- Proverbs (Good advice for life)
- Job (a story of patience and faithfulness)

Suggested New Testament Books

- *Matthew (The story of Jesus' life)
- *Mark (The story of Jesus' life)
- *Luke (The story of Jesus' life)
- *John (The story of Jesus' life)
- Romans (God wants to save us)
- 1&2 Corinthians (Advice for Christian living)
- *Galatians (Forgiveness comes through faith)
- *Ephesians (Encouragement for Christian living)
- *Philippians (Encouragement for Christian living)
- *Colossians (Encouragement for Christian living)
- *James (A short and challenging book)