

How to Read Your Bible

Developing a Habit of Listening to God

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Getting Started

Maybe the thought of reading the Bible scares you a little. Maybe you would like some help getting to know how the Bible works or knowing a little bit more about the way the Bible was put together. Then you will feel more ready to read it. That is what this book is for – to help you understand the Bible and its main message. Of course, the Bible does not need this extra little book. If you read the Bible, God will use the words in the Bible to speak to you and teach you. We will be glad if this book helps you to read through the Bible. But we will be even happier to know that you are reading the Bible itself, because the Bible is full of God’s powerful truth!

READ THE TEXT

Each lesson is broken up into smaller sections with a review question after each section. Feel free to stop at any of the passages to make sure you understand them or to dig more deeply into what they are saying. Circle, underline, or highlight key words.

GRAPPLE WITH THE QUESTIONS

In this book there are also questions to start, review and end the lesson. If you are studying this on your own, think through the questions for yourself. If you are studying in a group, use the questions for deeper discussion. Designate someone as a facilitator. Allow each individual a level of comfort to ask questions and freedom to discover and grow.

NOTICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER STUDY

Each page also includes additional references on the sidebar for those who want to dig deeper (You will need a Bible or a Bible app to read those sections). They are available to use in group or in personal study.



= Location of Bible Story



= Search options – related passages

MAP OUT YOUR NEXT STEPS



After connecting the timeless truths to your life, make sure you map out Next Steps before ending the lesson.



Chapter One

KNOW THE SOURCE



There are countless books written over the years. Some books are written to entertain people. Other books are written to help people learn things or to teach skills for living. Libraries are filled with thousands of books.

1. What are some of your favorite books. Why?

Many books are considered sacred or holy books. The Bible, however, is special. No other book is like it. It is estimated that over the years five billion copies have been printed in over 2,800 languages. What makes it so popular and enduring? In these chapters, you will find out what and gain help in reading it.

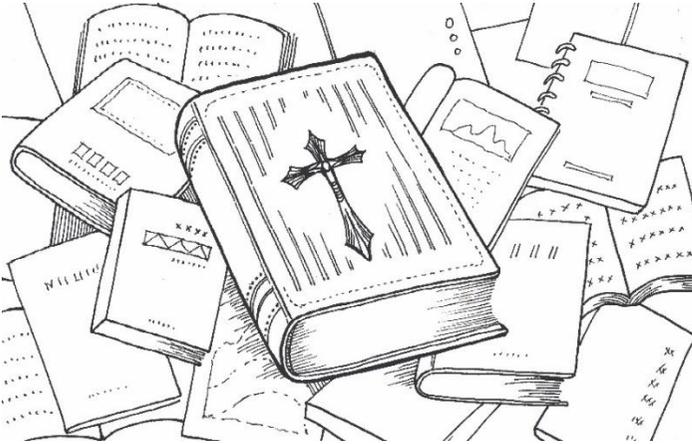
THE BIBLE – UNIQUE AMONG WRITINGS

The Bible has survived the test of time and cultures over thousands of years. People risked their lives to translate it. Others risked their lives to read it and

The Bible is filled with love stories and tragedies, heroes and villains, history and poetry.

share it. Yet despite all the hostility it met over the years, it continues to be in demand throughout the world.

The Bible is filled with love stories and tragedies, heroes and villains, history and poetry. It talks of human sufferings and victories. It identifies with the daily challenges of this world and unfolds the hidden mysteries of the spiritual world.



Many religions set out to discover the Supreme Being that influences the universe. Others try to explain the spiritual realm to gain its advantages or avoid its darkness. But we cannot see God and or discover the spiritual realm by looking in us or around us. We cannot by ourselves understand God and what he thinks of us. Only God can tell us about himself and



Heroes of Faith

Hebrews 11

what we cannot see. He reveals all of that in the Bible.

**Only God can tell us
about himself and what
we cannot see**

The Bible helps us understand the origin and cause of the evil and suffering in our world and shows how

God carried out his plan to solve it. It addresses life's biggest questions, which include, "Where did this world come from," "Why am I here?" "What will happen after I die."

The Bible remains timeless because it deals with the unchanging challenges of humanity and reveals the only solution that applies to any culture, any person, any situation. That message has been changing the lives of countless people for thousands of years across all cultures.

2. List three ways that the Bible is unique.

MANY WRITERS – ONE AUTHOR

The human writers of the Bible were farmers, kings, fisherman, tax-collectors, priests, physicians, musicians, and people from other walks of life. More than 30 men wrote 66 different books. The writing took more than 1,500 years to finish. Yet, the whole Bible stayed true and reliable.



**God reveals the
truth about
himself**

Isaiah 43:10-13

45:18-22

John 1:1-3; 14-18



**All the Bible's books
have one Author –
God Himself**

Even though many prophets and apostles wrote down the words of the Bible, really we can say that all the Bible's books have one Author—God Himself.

*“All Scripture is God-breathed” (2 Timothy 3:16).
“For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit”
(2 Peter 1:21)*

The Bible is inspired. “Inspired” means that every word in the Bible was breathed by God. God put his words into the minds of the men as they wrote. Because the Bible is inspired we can know that the Bible really is God’s Word. God made sure the writers wrote things exactly as they happened.

**“Inspired” means
that every work in
the Bible was
breathed by God**



**The Bible is of
spiritual origin**

- 1 Corinthians 2:4-13
- 2 Peter 1:19-21
- Galatians 1:11-12
- 1 Thessalonians 2:13

Notice that we said, “The Bible *is* God’s Word.” Saying it that way is important. Sometimes people say, “The Bible *contains* God’s Word.” That statement can mislead people to think that only certain portions of the Bible are God’s word. The

The Bible remains the final authority on faith and life

Bible does not simply *contain* God’s Word; it *is* God’s Word. Every word in the Bible comes from God. Because it is God’s

word, the Bible remains the final authority on faith and life. It is the measure or standard against which we view everything to be true or false, right or wrong.

3. Review the important truths you learned from this section.

MANY STORIES – ONE MAIN STORY

The Bible is full of many stories but all the Bible’s stories really make up one big story.



**Jesus speaks of
Old Testament
Events as real
history**

Matthew 19:4-6

Luke 17:26-27

Matthew 12:40

All the Bible's stories really make up one big story

The main storyline starts with God creating a wonderful and perfect world. His creation displayed his love and glory. He created people to enjoy life with him, but they betrayed that honor by turning away from him.

God promised a Savior to Adam and Eve, the first people, after they had sinned against God. But soon sin filled the world with wickedness. God sent a flood over the whole world and started over with Noah's family. But again after that, people did not stay connected to God. Then God chose to make Abraham the father of the nation from which the Savior would come. God gave judges and priests and kings and prophets to the people, but none of the leaders could solve the real problem. Just like the ones they served, they were all sinful human beings. During that time over 300 prophecies told about the coming savior. Then at God's right timing, the Savior was born as a baby in Bethlehem that fulfilled all those prophecies. His name is Jesus.

Over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament were fulfilled in the person of Jesus

Jesus taught people about God and healed with miracles. But the religious leaders nailed him to a cross like a criminal. His death became the event that saved the whole world. After three days, he came alive again and showed the world he had satisfied God's justice and brought peace with God that brings life to those who believe.

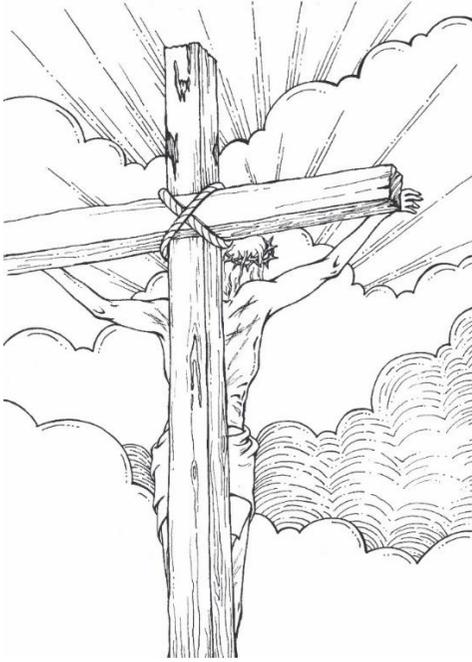
The appendix includes a longer narrative summary of the Bible.



The whole Bible was pointing ahead to Jesus

Luke 24:25-27

1 Corinthians 15:1-4



“All the prophets testify about him (Jesus) that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” (Acts 10:43).

All of the Bible’s stories are really pointing us to Jesus and what he does for us. He forgives our sins and makes us God’s children. This is God’s great gift to us.

4. Summarize in your own words the main story of the Bible.

MANY BENEFITS – ONE MAIN PURPOSE

People gain many benefits from reading the Bible, but it is important to recognize its chief purpose. It is not just to improve our lives. It is a matter of life and death. Jesus said without obeying it, you won't be able to withstand the storms of life nor face the judgment at the end of the world.

Among all the stories and teachings, the Bible has one main purpose – to lead us to faith in Jesus so that we might live in the blessings of God now and after we die.

“These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” (John 20:31)



The Bible has one main purpose – to lead us to faith in Jesus so that we might live in the blessings of God

The Bible not only prepares you for life after death but equips you for this life. Understanding and trusting that message brings joy, peace, and hope. It brings



**God's Word is
Your Solid
Foundation**

Psalm 119:89-93

Acts 20:32



**King David
Cherishes God's
Word**

Psalm 19:7-11

Psalm 119:98-105

confidence, comfort, guidance, and strength in life.

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

5. In your own words, explain the main purpose of the Bible.



CONNECTING TO YOUR DAILY LIFE

1. Evaluate different sacred books people trust in and what makes the Bible different from them.
2. When you realize the Bible is the very word of God, how does it change the way you approach life and life's values?
3. Some people say that the Bible is only another book about morals, how to improve yourself, or how to live do good. What would you respond according to what you learned in this lesson?
4. Pick out the one point that was most meaningful for you in this lesson.
5. Please pray to God based on this.



YOUR NEXT STEPS

Memorize it!

Identify a Bible passage in this lesson that is most meaningful for you and memorize it.

Read it!

Page through the Bible to get familiar with it. Take note of names of books (memorize the order if you want to find them easier in the future)

Apply it!

Discuss how you can put this lesson into your life this week.

Share it!

Who especially needs to hear this? Determine how you will share this chapter with others. (You can use this lesson to help you).

Go on to Lesson Two to learn a simple map to find your way around in the Bible