



CONNECTION POINT CHURCH

READING THE WORD



*The teaching of your Word gives light,
so even the simple can understand.*

PSALM 119:130

Many believers struggle with setting aside consistent time to deepen their relationship with God. They want to know God better, but either don't invest the time, or don't know how to learn about Him and His ways. One of the most important ways to begin to encounter the Lord is through His Word.

One of the Old Testament prophets, Isaiah, tells us, "The grass withers and the flowers

fade, but the word of our God stands forever." As the world continues to rage against Jesus (Psalm 2), as believers it is important that we find our absolute truth in the words given to us by God through the Bible.

*Simon Peter replied, "Lord,
to whom would we go?
You have the words that
give eternal life.*

JOHN 6:68

The Bible is the final answer of every question and the final solution to every problem. As Paul tells us, "all Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Knowing this, we can be confident that the entire Bible has been communicated to us by God. We can also be confident that:

THE BIBLE CHANGES PEOPLE

If a person reads the Bible every day, they will always change for the better, regardless of their age, education, background, or training. Only the Bible has the power to change the course of an individual's life and eternity.

THE BIBLE HAS ENDURED

There has never been another book from history like the Bible. Though various causes and leaders have endeavored to destroy it, the Bible remains completely intact.

THE BIBLE HAS POWER

The Bible has the ability to speak to the soul of a person. As we read, the Word comes alive and the message of the passage offers truth for living.

THE BIBLE IS INFALLIBLE

The Bible is without error. Every concept and account is correct and does not contain mistakes. Understanding and embracing this concept is essential for believers. How you view the words of the Bible directly influences your view of the Bible and ultimately the God of the Bible.



THE BIBLE IS UNIQUE

The Bible was written by approximately forty writers of diverse backgrounds over the course of 1500 years. Isaiah was a prophet, Ezra was a priest, Matthew was a tax-collector, John was a fisherman, Paul was a tentmaker, and Moses was a shepherd. Despite the varied background of its authors, the Bible does not contradict itself and contains no errors. While the authors present different perspectives, they all proclaim the same one true God and the same one way of salvation, Jesus (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).



THE BIBLE IS GOD-BREATHED

Every word in the Bible is directly from God. Jesus confirmed this when He said, "People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). If we view the Bible as merely a collection of messages from humans, it can be disputed. If it is rightfully viewed as being from God, it must be taken as authority and truth.

Paul admonishes believers to put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-17). All of the pieces of armor are vitally necessary, yet only one is an offensive weapon – the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. In order for the Word to be an effective offensive weapon for you, you must make learning about it a priority. Reading your Bible is a lot like doing push-ups or studying for an exam. There is not a specific point where you can say you are stronger or know the information, but over a period of time – it becomes obvious that you have gained strength or knowledge.

Not one word in the Bible will fail. Jesus promised that Heaven and earth would pass away, but His words would never pass away (Matthew 24:35). As the return of Jesus draws near, a consistent daily time with Jesus is no longer an option for Christian growth – it is imperative if you want to know His voice and be confident in following Him. Consider the absolute privilege it is that we have the opportunity to spend time with our Creator and Savior, hearing His voice and knowing His words. The truth of the Word of God will transform your life like nothing else can.

The Bible is meant to be read prophetically, not therapeutically.

ISAAC BENNETT

WHY READ THE BIBLE?

Introduction to the **OLD TESTAMENT**

The Old Testament is composed of 39 books and covers the five major covenants between God and humanity (Adamic-Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, New) divided into three main categories: (1) The Law, (2) The Prophets, (3) The Writings.

THE LAW – In the Law, God established the Mosaic (old) covenant. This includes Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In it human history is narrated from creation through Abraham and the preservation of Jacob's family in Egypt to God's covenant with Israel under Moses. The Law details the nature, purpose, and future of the Mosaic covenant within the context of the whole world.

THE PROPHETS – In the Prophets, God overviews the enforcement of the Mosaic covenant (what we often call the "old" covenant) as Israel settles into the Promised Land. The former prophets (Joshua through Kings) narrate this history by describing what led Israel to Babylonian exile. The latter prophets (Jeremiah-Malachi) prophetically comment on why the story went the way it did, resulting in an initial restoration to the land, but without heart change.

THE WRITINGS (POETRY + WISDOM) – The Writings include both commentary and narrative texts where the remaining faithful Israelites enjoy God's faithfulness and the hope of His Messianic Kingdom promises. The commentary in the former writings heightens the anticipation for God's Messianic Kingdom by clarifying for the remnant how to live according to this hope. The narrative in the latter writings emphasizes God's absolute sovereignty and commitment to his Kingdom purposes.

Through the variety of genres in the Old Testament, God progressively discloses His Kingdom purposes that will ultimately be fulfilled in the first and second coming of Jesus.



Introduction to the **NEW TESTAMENT**

The New Testament is composed of 27 books and are divided into four main categories: (1) the Gospels, (2) the Acts of the Apostles, (3) the Epistles (or letters), and (4) the Revelation of Jesus.

THE GOSPELS – Gospel means good news. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are the four accounts of the life of Jesus. Although they were never meant to be a complete biography, these four gospels tell us the most important events and teaching in the life of Jesus. Each highlights unique aspects of the character of Jesus and offers a dynamic and compelling picture of Jesus, the Son of God, our Savior.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES – This book is filled with the history of the early church following the death and resurrection of Jesus. It shows the rapid expansion of the early church and gives us instruction as to how Jesus intended the church to function.

THE EPISTLES – The next 21 New Testament books are letters written to the churches by various church leaders. These letters are a more personal means of communication as the writers address specific congregations or individuals for the purpose of encouragement and teaching to help us as we navigate life.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS – The final book of the New Testament gives prophetic insight into the last days before Jesus returns to earth, including the persecution of the Church and the rise of the Antichrist. It is rooted in the promises of the Old Testament and culminates in the eternal defeat of Satan and the sure victory of our returning King Jesus.



HOW TO READ THE BIBLE



With the Bible's 89 books, it can be difficult to know where to start. Many people will start in Genesis and quickly get frustrated as they try to wade through the books of the Law. While there is certainly value in reading the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, when you are looking to create a habit of consistently being in the Word, it can be helpful to approach your Bible reading in a balanced way – meaning you read passages from both the Old and New Testaments. Here are some additional tips to help you:

MAKE TIME TO READ

If you get in the habit of meeting with God at a specific time without interruptions, it will become easier to be faithful in your pursuit of Him.

FIND A PLACE

Find a quiet, distraction-free place that is quiet so that you can posture your heart before Him to read, reflect, and pray.

HAVE A PLAN

Following a reading plan can help you to stay in your habit of daily Bible reading, as well as help to keep your reading interesting and balanced. This is not to say that the Holy Spirit will not lead you to linger in a particular book for a time. You can find a 90-day reading plan in the coming pages.

WE MUST MAKE A
STUDY OF OUR GOD:
WHAT HE LOVES,
AND WHAT HE
HATES, HOW HE
SPEAKS AND ACTS.
WE CANNOT
IMITATE A GOD
WHOSE FEATURES
AND HABITS WE
HAVE NEVER
LEARNED. WE
MUST MAKE A
STUDY OF HIM IF
WE WANT TO
BECOME LIKE HIM.

Jen Wilkin

EXPECT TO MEET THE LORD

Expect to meet Jesus in a new way each day. If you enter into your secret place with a heart that is indifferent, you will likely leave frustrated and wondering why it felt like a waste of time. If you enter in expecting to hear from the Lord, He loves to meet that expectation and reveal deeper things about Himself to you in your time with Him. Anticipate the Holy Spirit to speak to you by impressing thoughts and ideas into your mind that are personal to you. Expect to become the person God wants you to be as you daily spend time in His Word. Claim the promise of James that if you draw near to God, He will draw near to you! (James 4:8)

BE REALISTIC

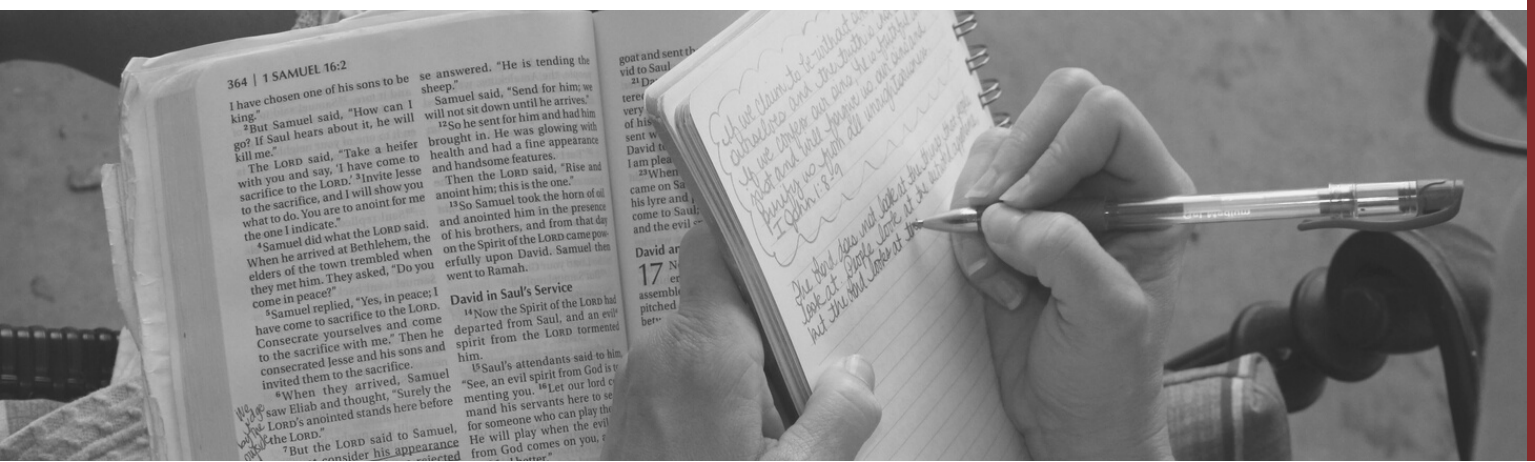
Select a realistic amount to read each day. If you do not have a daily habit of reading the Word, you will likely struggle to start reading for an hour each day. Instead, consider a manageable number of chapters, or amount of time, to read and you can build from there.

STUDY THE BIBLE

Paul challenged Timothy to show himself approved to God by understanding the Word (2 Timothy 2:15). Simply reading the Bible is an excellent start to deepening your relationship with God, but the Bible contains many principles, some more difficult to grasp than others. It is helpful to contemplate or meditate on the Word of God so that it becomes alive in your spirit. By spending time studying the Word, you will begin to understand more complicated sections and concepts. Studying the Word also allows space for the Holy Spirit to reveal truths that we often miss at a quick read.

CONSIDER GROUP STUDY

While reading the Bible individually is vital to the health of a believer's spirit, the Lord designed the Church to be a body (Colossians 1:18). Reading and studying the Bible with a group of believers allows for deeper understanding and revelation of God through His Word.





S.O.A.P. METHOD

SCRIPTURE

Choose a specific verse from your reading and write it out. Read it over a few times and meditate on it.

OBSERVATION

What do you observe from the passage? Write down what stands out to you.

APPLICATION

How does this passage apply to your life? What does God want to teach you from your reading?

PRAYER

Say or write out a prayer to God based on this passage.



MEDITATION

The Bible is the primary way for us to learn to hear God's voice. Through the Word God gives us instruction, shows us how we can become fruitful, and teaches us His language and how to hear His voice. One way we can partner with Him in through meditating on the Word. God told Joshua to meditate on the Word, day and night (Joshua 1:8). The Hebrew word meditation simply means to mumble over and over. Scripture meditation is saying God's Word back to God. Meditating on Scripture is a form of worship and prayer, as well as a way to actively engage with the Lord. God makes this a simple way of relating with Him.

There are many different ways that you can meditate on the Word, but throughout the Bible we see several different ways that God teaching us to engage with His Word:

READ THE WORD

(Colossians 4:16, Ephesians 3:4, Acts 8:30, Nehemiah 8:8, Jeremiah 38:15; 2 Corinthians 3:14, Isaiah 29:12, Acts 13:15, Mark 12:10, Revelation 1:3)

WRITE THE WORD

(Deuteronomy 10:2, Deuteronomy 17:18, Deuteronomy 27:3, Habukkuk 2:2-4, Jeremiah 30:2, Jeremiah 36:2, Exodus 34:27, Revelation 19:9)

SAY THE WORD

(Ezekiel 6:3, Ezekiel 20:47)

SING THE WORD

(Psalms, Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16)

PRAY THE WORD

(Joel 2:17, Matthew 6:9)

A SIMPLE APPROACH TO MEDITATING ON A VERSE:

- Write out the verse at the top of a page
- Isolate a phrase of the verse (read, write, say, sing, and pray that phrase)
- Take notes, write questions, draw pictures as you do this
- Make a task list on the side to write down all distractions
- Make a small section at the bottom of the page for all other Scripture references that pop into your mind
- Give space for the Holy Spirit to speak as you contemplate the verse

HELPFUL WAYS TO READ THE BIBLE

PRAY-READING THE WORD

If you read the Bible with a conversation in mind, you will see that the Bible is filled with topics to talk over with the Lord. Pray-reading simply means turning the Word of God into a dialogue with Him. You can talk to God about promises we are to believe by thanking Him for the truth of the promise and then asking Him to reveal that truth to us in a deeper way. You can talk to God about commands that we are to obey by declaring our resolve to obey the command, and then asking God for the power to obey it.

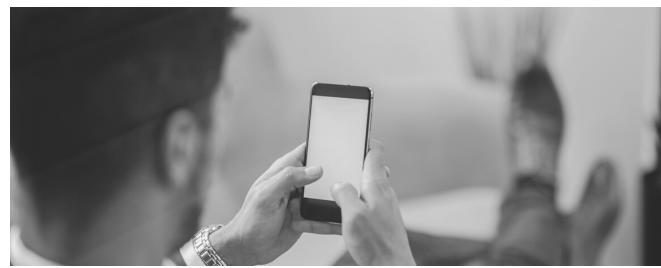
A very simple way to use this pray-read approach to Bible reading is using the phrase, "Thank you, show me more." In other words, when you see a truth that the Lord reveals to you in Scripture, thank Him for that truth. Then ask the Holy Spirit to show you deeper revelation of that truth and how to apply it to your life.

YOUVERSION APP

The YouVersion app is a great resource for finding Bible reading plans. You can locate thousands of plans here to cater to your season of life. Whether you want to dig in to a particular book of the Bible or want to explore a theme relevant to you, there are countless plans you can find on the app. You can also go through a plan together with a group of people and share insights with each other as you study.

LET THE
MESSAGE
ABOUT
CHRIST,
IN ALL ITS
RICHNESS,
FILL YOUR
LIVES. TEACH
AND COUNSEL
EACH OTHER
WITH ALL THE
WISDOM HE
GIVES.

Colossians 3:16



When we study the Bible, we are seeking to be
CONTROLLED BY THE INTENT
of the author.

We are determined to
HEAR WHAT HE IS SAYING,
not what we want Him to say.

We want
LIFE-TRANSFORMING TRUTH
not just good feelings.

RICHARD FOSTER

DAY 1 - Psalm 1; Genesis 1-2; Matthew 1
 DAY 2 - Psalm 2; Genesis 3-4; Matthew 5
 DAY 3 - Psalm 3; Genesis 6-9; Matthew 6
 DAY 4 - Psalm 4; Genesis 11:1-8; Matthew 9
 DAY 5 - Psalm 5; Job 1-2; Matthew 14
 DAY 6 - Psalm 7; Job 42; Matthew 24
 DAY 7 - Psalm 8; Genesis 12:1-8; Matthew 26
 DAY 8 - Psalm 9; Genesis 15-16; Mark 2
 DAY 9 - Psalm 11; Genesis 18:1-15; Mark 4
 DAY 10 - Psalm 14; Genesis 21-22; Mark 8
 DAY 11 - Psalm 15; Genesis 25:19-34; Luke 10
 DAY 12 - Psalm 16; Genesis 27-28; Luke 11
 DAY 13 - Psalm 18; Genesis 29-30; Luke 15
 DAY 14 - Psalm 19; Genesis 32:22-31; Luke 19
 DAY 15 - Psalm 20; Genesis 37; Luke 22
 DAY 16 - Psalm 22; Genesis 39-41; Luke 24
 DAY 17 - Psalm 23; Genesis 42-43; John 3
 DAY 18 - Psalm 24; Genesis 44-45; John 4
 DAY 19 - Psalm 25; Genesis 46-47; John 11
 DAY 20 - Psalm 26; Exodus 1-2; John 13
 DAY 21 - Psalm 27; Exodus 3-4; John 14
 DAY 22 - Psalm 28; Exodus 11-12; John 15
 DAY 23 - Psalm 29; Exodus 13-14; John 16
 DAY 24 - Psalm 30; Exodus 19-20; John 17
 DAY 25 - Psalm 31; Exodus 24; John 19
 DAY 26 - Psalm 32; Numbers 11-14; John 20
 DAY 27 - Psalm 33; Deuteronomy 12; Acts 2
 DAY 28 - Psalm 34; Deuteronomy 8-10; Acts 6
 DAY 29 - Psalm 35 - Deuteronomy 11-16; Acts 8
 DAY 30 - Psalm 36 - Deuteronomy 28-31; Acts 9
 DAY 31 - Psalm 37; Joshua 1-4; Acts 12
 DAY 32 - Psalm 39; Joshua 5-6; Acts 13
 DAY 33 - Psalm 40; Joshua 7-8; Acts 14
 DAY 34 - Psalm 42; Joshua 10-12; Acts 16
 DAY 35 - Psalm 43; Joshua 13-15; Acts 19
 DAY 36 - Psalm 44; Joshua 16-19; Romans 5
 DAY 37 - Psalm 45; Ruth 1-4; Romans 8
 DAY 38 - Psalm 46; Judges 3; Romans 10
 DAY 39 - Psalm 47; Judges 6-7; Romans 12
 DAY 40 - Psalm 49; Judges 13-16; Romans 15
 DAY 41 - Psalm 50; 1 Samuel 1-4; Romans 16
 DAY 42 - Psalm 51; 1 Samuel 8-10; 1 Corinthians 12
 DAY 43 - Psalm 53; 1 Samuel 15-20; 1 Corinthians 13
 DAY 44 - Psalm 54; 2 Samuel 7; 1 Corinthians 14
 DAY 45 - Psalm 55; 2 Samuel 11-12; 1 Corinthians 15
 DAY 46 - Psalm 56; 1 Kings 2-3; 1 Corinthians 16
 DAY 47 - Psalm 57; 1 Kings 6; 2 Corinthians 2
 DAY 48 - Psalm 59; 1 Kings 8-11; 2 Corinthians 5
 DAY 49 - Psalm 60; Ecclesiastes 1; Galatians 3
 DAY 50 - Psalm 61; Ecclesiastes 3; Galatians 5
 DAY 51 - Psalm 62; Ecclesiastes 12; Ephesians 1
 DAY 52 - Psalm 63; Proverbs 10; Ephesians 2
 DAY 53 - Psalm 65; 1 Kings 12; Ephesians 3
 DAY 54 - Psalm 66; 1 Kings 14; Ephesians 5
 DAY 55 - Psalm 67; 1 Kings 18-19; Ephesians 6
 DAY 56 - Psalm 68; 2 Kings 2-4; Philippians 1
 DAY 57 - Psalm 69; Jonah 1-4; Philippians 3
 DAY 58 - Psalm 70; Amos 5-6; Colossians 1
 DAY 59 - Psalm 71; Joel 2; Colossians 3
 DAY 60 - Psalm 72; Hosea 1-4; Colossians 4
 DAY 61 - Psalm 73; 2 Kings 17; 1 Thessalonians 3
 DAY 62 - Psalm 75; 2 Chronicles 14-16; 1 Thessalonians 4
 DAY 63 - Psalm 77; 2 Chronicles 32-34; 1 Thessalonians 5
 DAY 64 - Psalm 78; Isaiah 3; 2 Thessalonians 1
 DAY 65 - Psalm 79; Isaiah 8-9; 2 Thessalonians 2
 DAY 66 - Psalm 80; Isaiah 13; 2 Thessalonians 3
 DAY 67 - Psalm 81; Nahum 1; 1 Timothy 1
 DAY 68 - Psalm 82; Habakkuk 1-2; 1 Timothy 6
 DAY 69 - Psalm 84; Zephaniah 1; 2 Timothy 2
 DAY 70 - Psalm 86; Jeremiah 7; Titus 2
 DAY 71 - Psalm 89; Jeremiah 11; Hebrews 1
 DAY 72 - Psalm 90; Jeremiah 25; Hebrews 3
 DAY 73 - Psalm 91; 2 Chronicles 36; Hebrews 11
 DAY 74 - Psalm 92; Jeremiah 52; James 1
 DAY 75 - Psalm 93; Ezekiel 11; James 3
 DAY 76 - Psalm 95; Lamentations 1; 1 Peter 1
 DAY 77 - Psalm 96; Ezekiel 16; 2 Peter 1
 DAY 78 - Psalm 100; Ezekiel 20; 2 Peter 3
 DAY 79 - Psalm 103; Daniel 1, 3, 6; 1 John 1
 DAY 80 - Psalm 106; Esther 1-5; Jude
 DAY 81 - Psalm 108; Esther 6-10; Revelation 1
 DAY 82 - Psalm 111; Ezra 1, 3-4; Revelation 3
 DAY 83 - Psalm 115; Ezra 5-7; Revelation 4
 DAY 84 - Psalm 116; Ezra 8-10; Revelation 5
 DAY 85 - Psalm 118; Nehemiah 1-3; Revelation 7
 DAY 86 - Psalm 121; Nehemiah 4-6; Revelation 15
 DAY 87 - Psalm 127; Zechariah 1; Revelation 16
 DAY 88 - Psalm 130; Zechariah 8; Revelation 19
 DAY 89 - Psalm 139; Nehemiah 7-13; Revelation 21
 DAY 90 - Psalm 145; Malachi 1-4; Revelation 22

90-DAY READING PLAN



Additional Resources on Bible Reading



The Bible 360°

Daniel Lim



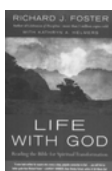
Habits of Grace

David Mathis



Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes

Kenneth Bailey



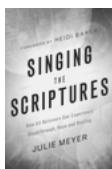
Life with God: Reading the Bible for Spiritual Transformation

Richard Foster



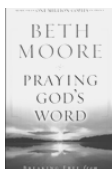
Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes

Brandon O'Brien & E Randolph Richards



Singing the Scriptures

Julie Meyer



Praying God's Word

Beth Moore



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