

Enjoying the Bible (part 1): A preparation for your personal daily Bible study in 2020.

Jesus loves me this I know,
For the Bible tells me so
B.I.B.L.E. (3)
For the Bible tells me so

“The Holy Scriptures are our letters from home.” -Augustine of Hippo

Opening prayer: Lord, I thank you for the Bible because.....

Conversation: Do you have favorite verse/ psalm/ book in the Bible? What would it be?

Relevance of Scripture: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God^[a] may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3: 16,17

Permanence of Scripture: The Lord Jesus declared in Matthew 24: 35: “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away”

Isaiah 40:8: The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever."

Reverence for Scripture: “These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word. Isaiah 66: 2

What a fascinating book! 40 authors including Kings, scholars, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen, historians and doctors. 66 Books with such a span of writing types from history to wisdom literature, poetry, to the Gospels to the Epistles to apocalyptic and so on.

Martin Luther spoke of “Scripture which never erred”

Two types of reading:

Fast reading

Recommended for the noon or the evening. Suggested time: 20 minutes. Your own plan could include a combination of reading: 2 Old Testament chapters + 2 New Testament chapters + a psalm + a proverb.

You can also use the “Read your Bible in a year plans”. Help available: Read the Bible in a year plan: Youversion : <https://www.youversion.com/>

Our daily Bread daily reading plan: <http://odb.org/>

Slow Reading

Recommended for the mornings. Suggested time: 20 minutes to an hour. Read book by book.

Things that will help you enjoy your reading and study

1. An open mind and heart
2. An open Bible. While Bible apps are wonderful, there is something special about reading your Bible the old-fashioned way and being able to mark it, highlight it, date it and claim it. (And there won't be any texts, e mails and calls to distract you!!)
3. An open journal/ Notebook
4. A set of pens: Four colors will be ideal: Black, blue, red, green
5. Highlighter/ Marker: Yellow
6. Commentaries / Bible dictionaries as you go along
7. Bible apps and helps online like Bible Gateway: <https://www.biblegateway.com/>

Guidance to read your Bible:

1. Set aside a daily time
2. Choose a quiet place where you can also easily write into your journal/ notebook.
3. Freshen up in the morning before you begin
4. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to teach you from the words he inspired.
5. Read systematically: Not randomly but chapter by chapter, book by book. Begin with the New Testament. Maybe Mark's Gospel
6. Usually read a sub-section of a chapter not exceeding 10 verses a day.
7. Always keep your journal/ notebook and pens handy.

Steps to read your Bible

1. Enter date and scripture text details: For example: January 1, 2020. Text: Mark 1:1-8
2. **Reading 1:** Write down names, places, times
3. **Reading 2:** Visualize what you read: Picture the place, trees, sea, people, etc.
4. **Reading 3: Answer the following questions from the Bible passage:**

- Is there a **COMMAND** for me to obey here?

- Is there a **SIN** I must confess?

- _____

5. **Reading 4: Answer the following questions:**

- Is there an **EXAMPLE** I can follow?

- Is there a **PROMISE** I can claim?

6. Ask God to lead you to your verse/ thought/ phrase or word for the day
7. Write a prayer based on that verse, thought, phrase or word.
8. Write your verse, thought, phrase or word on a card or in a memo page in your handheld device and carry it with you for the day
9. Take your blessing breaks every hour or two and reflect upon the words on your card.