



HOW TO USE THE BIBLE SERIES

# RECOMMENDATIONS

AN ENRICH YOUR STUDY TOOL



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# CONSISTENCY

Consider establishing a consistent habit of reading the Bible at your own pace, small sections of the text consistently on a daily or weekly basis versus large sections or entire books all at once. Consistency involves regularly practicing Bible study to cultivate and grow a deeper relationship with the Lord, rather than just increasing knowledge through information.

## Pause and reflect:

What kind of consistent habit or rhythm do you desire for Bible study time?  
What's your next step to be able to do that?

Your relationship with God isn't about striving, pressure to perform, or an item to check-off. God doesn't love you any more or less based on how much you read or pray in a day. He will always love you and wants to spend time with you.

The goal with spending consistent time with God is that the more you spend time with Him, like how you'd spend time with a friend, the more you'll learn about His true character. Knowing God leads to true peace and wisdom as you live your daily life.

If you desire to have a consistent rhythm of studying the Bible that is about relationship and not rules, The Gathering Well offers various Bible resources to help you on your journey to knowing God and the Bible, including the 4 pathways described on the following pages, and Mini Studies.

## Tips for Consistency

### Time

Choose a time of day that works for you. This may be in the morning, at lunch, or in the evening.

### Place

Have a dedicated chair or table to study at (optional).

### Quality

Ensure your space and time are free of distractions.

### Quantity

You may start with one chapter or 5 minutes of Bible reading a day. As you progress, you may find you want to add more time or chapters based on your needs.

### Focus

Having a reading goal or keeping a separate journal of your questions and discoveries may help you focus.



# TIPS

It's important to know that as a whole, the Old Testament provides context for the New, and the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old.

It's difficult to fully appreciate one without the other.

In general, it's recommended to start in the New Testament to give you an understanding of what all of the Old Testament builds up to from a Christian perspective - Jesus.

Many churches and organizations, including the YouVersion Bible App, offer a 'Bible in a Year' plan, that outlines passages to read each day, usually pairing passages from the Old and New Testament that go together.

Reading the same passage in multiple version can help expand your understanding of the text.

As you become more confident in studying the Bible, a great way to level-up your routine is to memorize scriptures.

You're allowed to be new at this. Ask God the big questions, he is not afraid of them. He generously gives wisdom to all those who ask for it (*James 1:5*).

There's no right or wrong order to read the Bible in. Some people read it from start to finish, while others jump around.

Some sections are best read straight through like a novel, while others can be skipped around in.

Remember that we as Christians are never done reading the Bible! As you continue to study, you'll realize that passages you read a year ago might mean something completely different to you now.

The Word (the Bible) is God's Living Word, meaning it is always applicable to your life today in one way or another. Holy Spirit is your Teacher, and will guide you in what you need to learn as you need to learn it.

# PATHWAYS

Described on the following pages are 4 recommended pathways you could take to read the Bible based on personal preferences: Well-Rounded, Classical, Sentimental, and Analytical.

These pathways are by no means exhaustive, and are merely suggested starting points. Do not consider yourself beholden to these paths, but explore the Bible as the Lord leads you.

Each pathway includes:

- Reading suggestions based on interests
- 3 phases of books to read
  - All the pathways include at least 1 Gospel, Acts, Genesis, and Exodus
- Ideas for continued Bible reading and study materials

## Pause and reflect:

Consider what genres of text resonate with you. Do you enjoy poetry? History? Story telling? Memoirs? Different sections or books of the Bible may interest you more.



### Well-rounded

A general path for any new Bible reader.



### Classical

Emphasis on historical events in chronological order.



### Sentimental

Emphasis on human emotion and personal experiences.



### Analytical

Emphasis on logic and reason.



# WELL-ROUNDED



A general path for any new Bible reader.

## Phase 1

## Jesus and the early church

1. **Read Matthew, then Acts**
  - The ministry of Jesus from the perspective of one of his first disciples, and the story of the early church.
2. **Read Romans and Ephesians**
  - Paul's advice to the early church about Christian living.
3. **Read Mark**
  - A reiteration of the character of Jesus, preparing you for the next phase, which focuses on Israel's early history. Remember that from a Christian perspective, Jesus is the fulfillment of all the early history.

## Phase 2

## early history and the human experience

1. **Read Genesis and Exodus**
  - Starting with the creation story, these detail Israel's oral tradition of early human history, and end with the Israelite exodus from Egypt.
2. **Read Proverbs and Psalms**
  - You may read these straight through, or choose to jump around these books. Proverbs of general wisdom to live by and heartfelt songs exploring the writers' depressions and praises in the sight of God.
3. **Read Ecclesiastes and Job**
  - These books explore the meaning of life and Christian suffering.

## Phase 3

## well known Bible stories and prophets

1. **Read 1 + 2 Samuel and Ruth**
  - Israel establishing a monarchy in the Promised Land, including the war stories of David, and the love story of Ruth and Boaz.
2. **Read Daniel and Isaiah**
  - Prophets during Israel's period of banishment, including the stories of the Blazing Furnace and Daniel in the Lion's Den.
3. **Read Esther and Jonah**
  - Two juxtaposed stories - faithful Queen Esther and evasive Jonah and the Whale.

Continue exploring new books of the Bible consistently, as the Lord guides you. You may benefit from reading a psalm, a chapter of proverbs, or a chapter of a book of the Bible a day.

# CLASSICAL



Emphasis on historical events in chronological order.

## Phase 1

## Jesus and early history

1. **Read Luke, then Acts**
  - The ministry of Jesus from the perspective of a doctor and historian who was well acquainted with Jesus' original disciples, and the story of the early church.
2. **Read Genesis and Exodus**
  - Starting with the creation story, these detail Israel's oral tradition of early human history, and end with the Israelite exodus from Egypt.

## Phase 2

## Christian theology and continued early history

1. **Read Romans**
  - Paul's advice to the early church about Christian living.
2. **Read Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy**
  - Continuing the full account of the Israelite's escape from Egypt and wandering in the wilderness.

## Phase 3

## continued Christian theology and the Promised Land

1. **Read 1 + 2 Corinthians**
  - More advice from Paul to the early church about Christian living.
2. **Read Joshua and Judges**
  - Israel's conquering and settlement of the Promised Land.

You may have noticed that you've been reading from both the Old and New Testament in tandem, each in order. Continue reading as such and as the Lord guides you. 1 + 2 Chronicles might interest you as an overall summary of Israel's historical events. The Prophets might interest you, as they provide their own and God's perspective from their period of Old Testament history.

Some books in the Bible are not in chronological order. If you're interested in reading the Bible in this way, you may wish to find a Bible-in-a-Year plan on the YouVersion Bible App that focuses on historical events in order or a Bible that's been specially formatted as such. You may be interested in an archaeological study Bible.

# SENTIMENTAL



Emphasis on human emotion and personal experiences.

## Phase 1

### Jesus, impactful women, and Christian suffering

1. **Read John, Acts, and 1 John**
  - The ministry of Jesus from the perspective of one of his closest original disciples, and the story of the early church.
2. **Read Ruth and Esther**
  - The experiences of two faithful women.
3. **Read Job**
  - The story of a devoted man and his dialogue with God and friends about his experience of loss and human suffering.

## Phase 2

### early history, King David, and a love song

1. **Read Genesis and Exodus**
  - Starting with the creation story, these detail Israel's oral tradition of early human history, and end with the Israelite exodus from Egypt.
2. **Read 1 + 2 Samuel**
  - Israel's establishment of a monarchy and the rise and rule of King David and his descendants.
3. **Read Psalms and Song of Songs**
  - Songs and prayers written by David during the course of his life, ranging from full of praise to grief-stricken and vengeful, as well as a love poem written by Solomon.

## Phase 3

### Prophet's poems, prayers, and stories

1. **Read Jonah and Isaiah**
  - The well-known story of Jonah and the Whale, and the prophet Isaiah's ministry.
2. **Read Jeremiah and Lamentations**
  - The prophet Jeremiah's ministry during the turbulence of the fall of Jerusalem, and his lamenting prayers to God for his people.
3. **Read Micah and Daniel**
  - Micah's warning to his people, and Daniel's experience and visions in the service of Babylon during Israel's banishment.

Continue exploring new books of the Bible as the Lord guides you. You may enjoy revisiting stories that impacted you and reading a psalm a day.

You may appreciate exploring new worship music and adding intentional worship time to your daily practice, and seeking out books or podcasts highlighting people's experience of coming to Christ and experiencing freedom.

# ANALYTICAL



Emphasis on logic and reason.

## Phase 1

### Jesus, Christian theology, and practical wisdom

1. **Read Matthew, then Acts**
  - A structurally organized and detailed account of the ministry of Jesus from the perspective of one of his original disciples, and the story of the early church.
2. **Read Romans and Proverbs**
  - Paul's advice to the early church about Christian living given in a Socratic format, and practical wisdom from King Solomon.

## Phase 2

### early history and the meaning of life

1. **Read Genesis and Exodus**
  - Starting with the creation story, these detail Israel's oral tradition of early human history, and end with the Israelite exodus from Egypt.
2. **Read Ecclesiastes and Ephesians**
  - Solomon's philosophical monologue exploring the meaning of life, and advice from Paul on Christian living.

## Phase 3

### Christian theology and suffering, and the lives of prophets

1. **Read 1 + 2 Corinthians**
  - More advice from Paul to the early church about Christian living.
2. **Read Job and Jonah**
  - The story of a devoted man and his dialogue with God and friends about his experience of loss and human suffering, and the well-known story of Jonah and the Whale.
3. **Read Micah and Daniel**
  - Micah's warning to his people, and Daniel's visions and influence in the service of Babylon during Israel's banishment.

Continue exploring new books of the Bible as the Lord guides you. You may appreciate studying Paul's letters and reading a chapter of Proverbs a day.

You may enjoy seeking out the historical works of Christian theologians, and may benefit from Study Bibles or commentaries by these individuals, as well as books or podcasts from current thought-leaders.

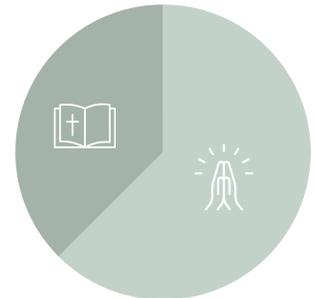
# TESTIMONIES

See what the Gathering Well Team has to say about their relationships with the Bible on the following pages! Below are the questions the Team was asked.

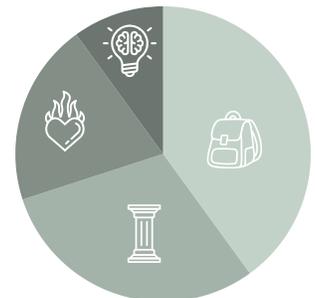
1 What sorts of questions, curiosities, or doubts did you have when you first started reading the Bible? What stage of life were you in when you first got serious about reading it for yourself?

Most common:  
Early 20s

2 In your personal time with God, what would you say connects you to him the most? What does your current Bible-reading/God-time practice look like? Please describe your routine if you have one. We want to hear the good, the bad, and the ugly!



3 Which of TGW's 4 recommended pathways for reading the Bible resonates with you the most and why? Looking back, has your relationship with the Bible or your preference between the 4 pathways evolved over time?



4 What's your favorite part of the Bible and why? Could be a specific book, character, story, or verse.

5 What's your favorite Bible translation and why?

Most common:  
NLT or ESV

6 Any tips or advice for new Bible readers? Any outside resources, theologians or current thought leaders that helped you as a new believer that you would recommend?

## Jazmin Caton

## Executive Director and Co-Founder



- 1 I think my biggest question or curiosity when I first started to actually read and study scripture was "how is this relevant to what I'm living out today... why/how does this matter?" And God just started pulling the thread throughout scripture.

I was in my mid-twenties when I say that I started to study God's word. I came to faith at 6, and only read my "teen bible" when I felt guilty about how I was living and trying to find verses that would serve as a pick-me-up. I did that for almost 20 years before actually recognizing and learning how to study my Bible.

- 2 I connect to God most through prayer. Currently, I try to get up to pray and spend time studying the Bible in the early morning. I usually start with prayer, sometimes I will journal and then read text or read text and journal. Currently I am reading through 2 Corinthians in a small group women's Bible study and Psalm 46 on my own as I prepare to teach through it this summer.

I've had lots of seasons of God-time. Some seasons where I didn't read my Bible much at all, or just read through Psalms and Proverbs... some seasons where I was just DEEP in study, using Bible study tools to help me understand what I was reading, etc. But my most consistent rhythm and the one I kind of "hunger and thirst" for is the early morning time with the Lord in the quiet of the morning, in prayer, and in His word.

- 3 Probably Sentimental. It just typically tends to be where I land, even when I take other approaches or pathways to reading scripture, I find myself landing on the humanity or the emotion or the embodied experience or expression of what I'm reading.

- 4 I think I'd say it's relevance. Even in the seasons where and when I wasn't "studying my Bible" or reading it with more honoring or Godly intentions, God never let my time in his word be wasted. Even the cherry picked verses were relevant, I may not have applied them with a gospel or Christ-centered worldview, or understood the fullness and richness of the context in which they were written -- but they were still anchors of hope in my life that did not return void. They were seeds that God would cultivate and grow into a deeper desire and understanding of and for His word. And to this day, God's word is still relevant to my life. Every word brings me a depth of understanding or experience of who He is... that's my favorite thing about Scripture.

- 5 Mmmm, probably NLT or CSB. Probably because those are just the texts that I most often find myself studying.

- 6 Reading and studying God's word with curiosity and openness, releasing expectations of "looking for or finding answers." Instead, considering what does God want to show me? Instead of looking for what to do, asking God to show you who He is.



NLT  
CSB

Relevance

**Chelsea Miller**

**Director of Programs and Operations**



- 1 I first started reading the Bible seriously for myself when I was in high school. I was fortunate to have 2 mentors who helped me to have a framework for studying the Bible that started from a place of trust. I trusted the Bible, and if something I read felt like it didn't match up with my understanding of God and His character, I wanted to explore why that was. I didn't really have doubts, as much as curiosity. I wanted to understand how all the parts of the Bible fit together and how I could apply it to my life.
- 2 I spend 2-3 days a week in deeper Bible study, usually through a book of the Bible that I'm studying with others in a group setting. Outside of that, I have a rhythm of prayer, and worship that's incorporated into my daily routines. When I do household tasks like folding laundry, or doing the dishes, I try and utilize that time to connect with God. Through music or prayer, I connect to God most through worship. I've never been good at having a set time of day where I read my Bible first thing in the morning, and through every season of my life, I've found that the most important thing is that I take some intentional time each day (whether that's 5 minutes or an hour) to stop what I'm doing and just come to the Lord. To seek His presence.
- 3 Well rounded! I love spending time in the gospels and looking at the early church, and looking at old testament to see how it points to Jesus. I would say I've always preferred this pathway.
- 4 I love Acts. I love looking at the early church and seeing how it grew. I also love the epistles because I feel like there is so much wisdom for us to take away from Paul's notes to early church communities.
- 5 Depends on what I'm reading for! I primarily utilize the English Standard Version (ESV) and New Living Translation (NLT) translations, and the Message (MSG) transliteration. I like to compare the ESV and the NLT because the ESV is the most word for word translation and the NLT is a good thought for thought translation. I like the MSG transliteration because it can help me better understand what I'm reading and how to apply it to my life. And sometimes, it's poetic.
- 6 GotQuestions.org is a great resource that can help point you to where you can find answers to your questions in the Bible. I also love John Mark Comer, his books, teachings and resources that I think help you live a life of fully following Jesus. Not just reading scripture, but understanding it and applying it to your life. No theologian or thought leader is Jesus. So we always need to hold everything they say up against what we see in the Bible.



ESV  
NLT  
MSG

Acts

## Megan Hernandez

## Member Engagement Specialist



1 I was so caught up with reading my Bible in the “perfect” way, which obviously there is no perfect way, but I thought there could be. I thought it had to look a certain way. I started getting very serious about reading my Bible my freshman year of college!

2 I connect most to God through prayer!

Well, since having my daughter it has looked very different than before. As a mom I try my hardest to at least get one good uninterrupted hour a week to sit down with my Bible and a journal. I love to start by journaling out a prayer to God following the ACTS acronym! (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication). Next I read the passage of scripture I chose for the day, I am currently reading through Galatians. Then I pick a couple key verses and write them down in my journal. If I have any questions or need any clarification I go to an app on my phone called Blue Letter Bible and search for the passage and read some commentary on it. I tend to read David Guzik’s commentary, but there are lots of great ones! I don’t read commentary every time though because I also truly believe God’s word speaks for itself. ❤️

3 I would say Classical for sure! I absolutely love getting to read about historical events and context of what the author was doing while writing scripture, it makes it so much more real for me! I get so excited about all things history, so this path absolutely resonates with me. I’d say the other path I resonate with is Well-Rounded and that is definitely how I started off reading my Bible.

4 I love Hannah’s story in 1 Samuel! It is such a sweet story of longing and being given the desires of your heart but also her willingness to dedicate what she was given to the Lord is so inspiring to me.

5 ESV, it is straight forward and close to the original translation.

6 I would say just to read! Don’t be afraid to open your Bible, often. Reach out to friends who you know read scripture and see if they will read with you! Pray for the spirit to speak to you while reading. But also make sure you are reading with the correct context, don’t take scripture out of its context.

I really appreciate John Mark Comer and Ruth Cho Simmons and what they have written. Ruth’s book *Now and Not Yet* is one of my favorites right now!



ESV

Hannah



1 I grew up Christian, but really got serious about reading the Bible on my own in middle school. I wanted to know what the Bible said for myself instead of people telling me their interpretations. My dad had been sick for a long time, and eventually passed away when I was 15, so I was also seeking comfort from God.

2 I connect with God most through reading the Bible! I love learning more context for the authors, audiences, cultures, language, and timelines that make the text richer, and God's orchestration evident!

In high school I developed the habit of reading the Bible both when I woke up and before going to bed almost every day, and have generally kept that routine up to this day. I can feel my mood shift if I miss several days of Bible reading in a row.

I'm not the best at praying out-loud or for long periods of time, so I tend to journal my prayers and lift up short ones throughout the day. God's made a point to let me know that he's just a whisper away!

I also enjoy weekly Bible study and fellowship meetings.

3 As a high-schooler, I was on a more Analytical path, absorbing all of Paul's advice in his letters. As a young adult, I became more interested in the timeline of everything, a more Classical approach. I'm not usually a big history gal, but I started looking into visuals - diagrams and maps, and eventually drew out for myself a timeline of all the books of the Bible. That period of research has been the closest I've ever felt to God to date, I was so excited! Understanding how all of the Bible ties together really makes it come alive for me.

4 I've always loved Paul and his letters. His transformation story from Pharisee to devout Christian really speaks to me, as a recovering perfectionist. I appreciate the question-answer writing style of Romans. All of Paul's sentences in all his letters feel like one-liners that could be studied for a week each.

A helpful verse for me is when God tells Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). As someone who tends towards performance and striving, this verse reminds me that I'm allowed to mess up and not know it all.

5 The first Bible I was ever given was an NIV, and that's remained my preference. I like the writing style.

6 Give yourself permission to be brutally honest about your emotions with yourself and God. We'll always be growing for as long as we live, which means the pressure is off to pass some unattainable finish line of "Christian-ness." Ask questions, learn and apply as much as you can, and enjoy the ride!

I like the *Rose Book of Bible Charts, Maps, and Timelines* by Rose Publishing. My favorite genre to read is theologically-sound fantasy novels. My favorites are *At the Back of the North Wind* and *Phantastes* both by George MacDonald, and *Till We Have Faces* by C. S. Lewis, as well other books by them. I like conversations between Jordan B. Peterson and Jonathan Pageau, and others like them, about archetypes, creativity, and the human search for meaning. I've recently started dabbling in John Lennox.



NIV

Paul



- 1 When I first became a believer, I thought I wasn't allowed to have questions; I thought having questions and doubts meant I wasn't actually a Christian yet. I grew up believing in God, but I did not have a relationship with Him until my early 20s.

In June 2013, I went through a temporary period of darkness; I had no purpose and I was extremely anxious. I had questions about God, the Bible, and faith, which now I know is normal, and getting the answers to those questions continues to help my faith grow. I remember crying out to God and asking Jesus to come into my life. This did not automatically fix everything; there is no "quick fix." I know I was saved as soon as I professed Jesus as my Lord and Savior and accepted His sacrifice on the cross as payment for my sins. This didn't mean all of my problems automatically went away or that I stopped experiencing hardships in life. It is an ongoing, lifetime process of becoming more Christ-like, and it is not always easy.

Having Jesus and the Holy Spirit help me make changes in my life and I have purpose through Him. Now, I turn to God, Scripture, and supportive family and friends who are also Christ-followers for guidance instead of carrying the weight all on my own. By God's grace, I have a new life; I have been made new!

- 2 In this season of life with two kids ages 4 and under and a new baby on the way, I don't have a set routine. I try to make time throughout the day, whether it is in the car or even while doing the dishes, to quiet my mind and pray; even if it only lasts a couple of minutes before being interrupted, I have learned that God hears me and meets me where I am!

Prayer definitely makes me feel connected to God the most. Even in the chaos, I can always pray to God and I know He hears me! After our kids go to bed, my husband and I usually listen to a sermon or some sort of Christian podcast/resource together; it helps us stay connected to God and His word, and also to one another! I also read the Bible (on my own and to my kids), listen to worship music with my kids, listen to Christian podcasts/YouTube videos, and read other Christian books/resources on various topics on my own when I am able throughout the day.

- 3 Well-Rounded-- reading the Gospel, along with the letters, history, poetry, and prophets, will keep me close to God, while also learning more about Him!

- 4 My favorite Bible verse is Isaiah 43:1--  
But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine."

This reminds me that I do not need to fear because I am God's! He has called me to Himself!

- 5 ESV- it is a literal translation that stays close to the originality of the Hebrew and Greek, but is also very easy to comprehend.

- 6 Pray before reading the Bible. Ask God to speak to you through the Holy Spirit. Ask Him to quiet your mind and open your heart to hear Him!

Deepen with Pastor Joby Martin (podcast- The Church of Eleven22)  
 YouTube- The Church of Eleven22 sermons  
 YouTube- Billy Graham's old sermons  
 Relatable with Allie Beth Stuckey (podcast)  
 Desiring God (website and podcast with Pastor John Piper)



ESV

Isaiah  
43:1

Sarah S.

## Content Development: Design and Copyediting



- 1 I was a young adult (maybe early twenties, in college) when I started to get serious about reading and studying the Bible for myself. I remember assuming that there must be a "right way" and that it would be similar to studying in school: I read the text, use the study guide, and pass the test. Surely we Christ followers would all come to the same interpretive conclusions and it would all be very easy to grasp!

I have a lot of tenderness for that me -- I was so earnest in my hope that my questions about the problem of suffering and God's sovereign will, my fears about the future and all the tangled up longings of my own heart would be so simply resolved if I could just "unlock" the Bible!

Over the years my view has changed and matured -- it feels much less like a class to pass and far more like a glorious, mysterious journey with Someone I love and want to know, as the Holy Spirit peels back layers of understanding, correction, encouragement, and equipping for this life of faith.

- 2 I cycle through so many approaches, depending on the season and my inner life. I've had periods of time where an Analytical, academic approach has matched my curiosities and questions; times where I deep dive particularly difficult topics or passages of scripture to know God's heart and character.

I've had seasons in the Word with an intentionally devotional approach -- by which I mean that I was reading scripture meditatively, praying that God would stir up my heart with increased devotion towards Himself. In alignment with my unique personality and image-of-God-ness, those meditative seasons include silence, contemplative prayer, and scripture memorization.

I've also had seasons of total nothingness -- no intentional Bible study or reading, barely-there prayers whispered half-heartedly through pain and longing.

Right now, I have an eclectic mix going on: throughout the week I am reading through the Acts of the Apostles (while not strictly academic, there is definitely annotating in the margins and commentaries on the desk); my kids and I read a psalm together each morning, and we are using two different Bible study guides (one for me, one for them!) throughout this traditional church season of Lent.

- 3 I resonate most with the Well-rounded + Sentimental approaches I think, but as described above, I find such usefulness and beauty in different approaches depending on the season of life. It really depends on the intention and need of the season. (Of note: I prefer 'devotional' over 'sentimental' -- rooted in the actual sense of being devoted or lovingly attentive to the presence of God; 'sentimental' may imply cloying emotionalism, which is not my experience. But 'devotional' can be confused for a little gift book with daily readings 😊 Words are hard.)

- 4 HOW COULD YOU ASK ME THIS

- 5 Right now, I'm loving the New Living Translation. After years in the heady NASB and the ESV, I needed to read something that did, in fact, feel \*living\*!

- 6 I mean, as a new believer in 1989, I was using my *Survival Kit for New Christians: Children's Edition!* by Ralph Neighbour, Jr. 😊 I have no idea who this is or if it was good. Some of my current favorite theologians include: Dr. Joel Muddamalle, Sharon Hodde Miller, Jen Wilkin, and the late Timothy Keller.

The only advice I could offer to new Bible readers is this: Deep breath - don't be overwhelmed! God \*wants\* to reveal Himself to us. He does this through His Word (the Bible) and through the Living Word (Jesus, whom we meet in the pages of the Bible). His Holy Spirit empowers and strengthens us for understanding when we approach the Bible, so we have nothing to fear and everything to gain by taking time to form intentional habits of reading and studying God's Word.



NLT

## Cody Miller

## Content Development: Theology Advisor



- 1 I first got serious about reading the Bible when I was in college. Through the support of a solid mentor and good Bible study group, I began to develop a desire to know more about the Bible, how it was put together, and what it could show me about who God is the life that He wants for me.
- 2 I connect most to God through reading the Bible. I spend 20-30 minutes first thing in the morning reading the Bible and spending time in prayer. I pick a book of the Bible and read it until I finish it. I like to use a method of studying where I break down the chapter into smaller sections and come up with a short key statement for each section. Then I look at my key statements for the chapter and determine what is the author trying to say. From there, I spend time in prayer asking God to show me how I can apply what I've read to my life.
- 3 Probably Classical. I think I've always been interested in the Bible as a book that I can gain knowledge from. As I've grown in my faith, I've also found the Bible to be a book that helps me understand God better and gives me wisdom for how I can help others connect with Him.
- 4 The Gospel of Mark is one that I enjoy to read and to encourage others to read because its short and gives you a clear picture of Jesus's life on earth. Romans is a letter that gives so much wisdom about a life of following Jesus.
- 5 I primarily read the English Standard Version (ESV) and the New Living Translation (NLT). The ESV is a more word for word translation from the original languages. The NLT is a more thought for thought translation. Both together help provide a well-rounded view of whatever scripture you're reading.
- 6 Just read. Start in the Gospels and read through the New Testament. If you don't understand what you are reading, ask for help. Reach out to a friend, or a pastor. GotQuestions.org is a great resource. My favorite theologian is C.S. Lewis. His books are thought provoking and creative. I enjoy listening to podcasts and sermons from Timothy Keller and Allister Begg.



ESV  
NLT

Mark  
Romans