

How to get the best out of

# **READING THE BIBLE**

## **Bible reading notes**

Many Christians use daily Bible reading notes. These give you a passage from the Bible to read each day, with comments to help you understand the passage and apply it to your situation. You can buy daily Bible reading notes on line or from a bookshop.

## **Do it yourself**

Using Bible reading notes is like eating a meal someone else has prepared – but it's a lot of fun to cook for yourself. The rest of this leaflet tells you how.

## **Bible reading programme**

Use the list on the next page – start with the easiest books (such as Mark) and work your way through. Alternate between a gospel, an epistle and an Old Testament book, that way you will read the gospels more and get really familiar with Jesus' teaching. Read a Psalm or a few verses of Proverbs each day along with your main reading.

### **Too busy to sit and read?**

Why not get an audio book of the Bible on CD and listen to it while you are in the car or doing manual tasks?

## A method to help you read the Bible on your own without notes

- 1 Choose which bit to read. Read a chapter or section at a time, following the guide supplied on the opposite page.
- 2 Ask God to help you understand it.
- 3 Read it.
- 4 Cover it up and see if you can remember what it was about. If not, read it again and stay awake this time!
- 5 Then ask yourself questions about what you have read as below. You might find it helpful to write your answers down in a notebook, along with any other thoughts that come to you while you are reading.
- 6 Finally, respond in prayer to what you have read.

### Questions

Does it tell me something I didn't know before?

What does it teach me about God?

What does it tell me to do?

What does it tell me not to do?

Is there a good example to follow?

Is there a bad example to avoid?

Is there anything I don't understand? – if there is, make a note of it and take steps to find out about it (for example, ask a church leader or look it up in a commentary).

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### The books of the Bible arranged according to ease of reading

#### **Quite easy to read and understand without much background knowledge:**

Gospels: Mark, Luke, Acts (Acts follows on from Luke and tells how Jesus continued his work through his disciples).

Epistles: James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, Philemon, Titus, 1 & 2 Timothy.

Old Testament: Genesis, Ruth, Jonah, Psalms, Proverbs.

#### **Quite easy to read but the background**

**needs explanation:** Gospels: Matthew, John

Epistles: 1 & 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians,

Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1, 2 & 3 John

Old Testament: Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges,

1 Kings, 1 & 2 Samuel, Amos, Micah, Hosea,

Haggai, Esther, Nehemiah.

**A bit more difficult to read and you will need someone to explain them:**

Epistles: Romans, Galatians, Hebrews, Jude

Old Testament: 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Lamentations, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezra, Joel, Isaiah, Malachi, Ecclesiastes.

**The most difficult books - worth tackling later on:**

New Testament: Revelation

Old Testament: Leviticus, Song of Songs, Job, Ezekiel, Obadiah, Nahum, Habbakuk, Zephaniah, Zechariah

## Useful websites

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)

<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk>

[http://eden.co.uk/shop/bibles\\_217/index1.html](http://eden.co.uk/shop/bibles_217/index1.html)

<https://christianity.org.uk>

Web site: [www.rejesus.co.uk](http://www.rejesus.co.uk)

**Warning:** The internet is a great resource but not all of it is reliable and some of it is wrong. Always check the academic and ethical credentials of authors, make allowances for any likely bias and ask the Holy Spirit for discernment.