

BIBLE GUIDE

THE BOOK of
Proverbs

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BIBLE GUIDE

The Bible is a BIG book—not to mention old and sometimes confusing. So what do I do with it? How do I get started? Use this guide to help you begin reading your Bible.

THE BIBLE

GOD'S STORY
OUR STORY
YOUR STORY

THE STORY OF EVERYTHING

THE STORY OF EVERYTHING

This big book tells a big story. You could call it “the story of everything” because it reveals what kind of world we’re living in and makes claims about what’s real, what matters, and what it means to be human. The story has a plot. After a good beginning, drama builds, and the problems within the world and within us are exposed. Yet, through it all, **the Bible unveils a loving God working to heal all that’s broken.**

FEATURING JESUS

The story ultimately points to Jesus as the solution we’ve been longing for. In Jesus there is hope and healing—for us and the world. Jesus is introduced as the center of everything, and it’s no wonder the Bible bids us to make Jesus the center of our lives. In Jesus, we become who we were made to be. We become whole. We discover what story we’re a part of and how to live as a result. **And that’s why we read the Bible—because it points us to Jesus.**

AS YOU BEGIN, KNOW THIS...

ONE, it’s okay to have questions.

Even without answers and full clarity, keep exploring the Bible and discovering more about God and “God’s Word” (←that’s another way people refer to the Bible).

TWO, learning how to read the Bible and what to do as a result is a lifelong journey.

There will always be more to discover. The Bible is designed to be wrestled with, meditated upon, sifted through, and embraced throughout a lifetime of pursuing Jesus in community with others. The Bible will light our path along the way, but there will always be more steps in the path.

THREE, it’s been said “the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

So let this guide encourage you in your first steps of discovering the Bible and the God behind it.



WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

Before jumping in, a quick orientation to what the Bible is and isn't could be helpful, otherwise our expectations could lead to frustrations.

THE BIBLE IS A LIBRARY

The Bible is actually a LIBRARY of multiple books. It could be thought of as 66 different books on a shelf. It's bound in one volume, but the many "books of the Bible" were produced at different times by different authors over many years. And there's all different kinds of literature: poetry, history, parables, songs, letters, and more. Yet, it's not just a random collection. The Bible tells a unified and extraordinary story that we're invited to be a part of.

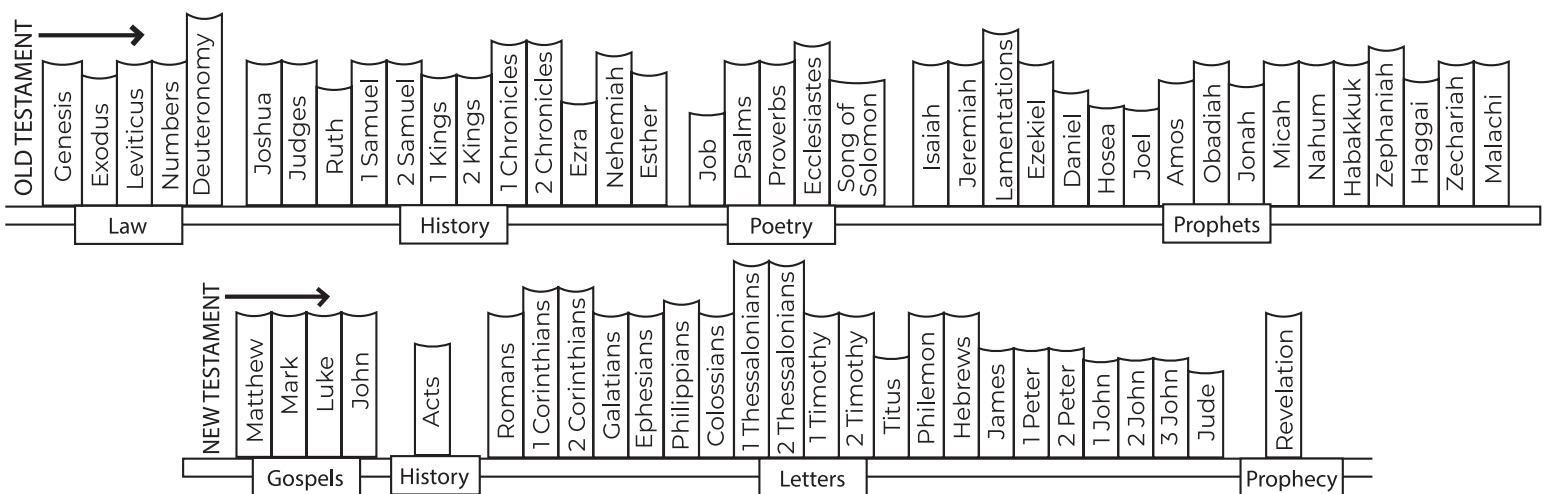
THERE ARE 2 SECTIONS

Page 1 starts with the Old Testament, 39 of the 66 books, making up about three-quarters of the whole thing. The New Testament is 27 books. It begins with Jesus, telling about how the whole Old Testament was leading to him. These sections work together to communicate a compelling vision of God and the world that we're invited to behold. It won't all be clear right away, but it was meant for lifelong exploration in community with others.

CHECK YOUR EXPECTATIONS

We might not even know what baggage and expectations we bring to the Bible when we open it each time. But consider the assumptions you might have. For example, you might expect the Bible...

- ...to be simple, but it's complex.
- ...to give every detail, but it leaves things out.
- ...to provide all the answers, but it provokes as many questions.
- ...to always move chronologically, but it doesn't.
- ...to be just one type of literature, but it isn't.
- ...to fit our journalistic standards, but it won't.



EXPLORE NEW PLACES

The Bible will always seem foreign at first. But let that be an encouragement to **approach it like you would a visit to a foreign country** for the first time. Be humble

and open to learn. Expect to be surprised. Explore new places. Don't demand that it talk like you talk. Immerse yourself in the culture. Taste the local flavor. Allow the Bible

to reshape and reframe your perspective. And share the experience with friends. Eventually, not only will the Bible become familiar, but **you will never be the same again.**

WHERE DID THE BIBLE COME FROM?

WHAT'S THE BIBLE ABOUT?

The first page of the Bible begins good—even “very good” (Genesis 1). **Humans are created to enjoy a relationship with their Creator and responsibility to care for Creation.** Adam and Eve, the original pair, are made “in the image of God” to partner with God in multiplying God’s goodness on the earth.

GET THE WHOLE STORY OF THE BIBLE IN 15 MINUTES!

To better grasp the story of the Bible through simple summaries and visuals, scan the QR code on the last page and check out **The Bible in 10 Frames!**

AUTHORSHIP

The Bible depicts a God who partners with humans. And this partnership is reflected in the production of the Bible. Christians have always understood the Bible to be “inspired” and in some way authored by God. At the same time, God’s partnership with human authors is evident throughout. Some of these authors are named in the Bible itself (e.g. David or Paul), while other books are anonymous. Additional authors are identified by the tradition of faithful communities. In all, around 40 authors generated the books of the Bible through a divine-human partnership.

Discover more in this article **“Did God or People Write the Bible?”** by scanning the QR code on the last page.

But this image is distorted when Adam and Eve reach beyond God’s design. They decide for themselves what’s good, only to watch things get bad in a hurry. **Pride and envy and fear take root in the humans God made, and rather than goodness, they multiply violence throughout the earth.**

Yet, God does not give up. In Genesis 12, **the Bible zooms in on Abraham and his family.** Because God desires to heal what’s broken in the world, this one family will be used by God to bless all the families of the earth. The rest of the Old Testament follows the story of this family, often referred to as “Israel” (named after Abraham’s grandson). Their family history is messy and ugly and redemptive

LANGUAGES & TRANSLATIONS

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, while the New Testament was written in Greek. (Plus there’s a little bit of Aramaic sprinkled in).

Having the Bible translated into your own language is a real gift, and there are now many English Translations. Language changes over time, and an up-to-date translation can help modern readers understand ancient authors and hear God’s Word in fresh ways today.

Discover more in this article **“Does a ‘Most Accurate’ Bible Translation Exist?”** by scanning the QR code on the last page.

all at the same time, just like the story of most families. **Through all the twists and turns, it points in one, distinct direction. Jesus.**

The New Testament introduces Jesus as the truest picture of God and of what a human is supposed to be. He is both Son of God and descendant of Abraham. **And through his surprising death and even more surprising resurrection, Jesus fulfills God’s promise to bless all the people of the earth.** The rest of the New Testament is about the Church, the new family of people recreated through Jesus and his Spirit to multiply God’s love and goodness on the earth. The Bible closes with a vision of a whole New Creation!

LET'S GET PRACTICAL



MAKE TIME

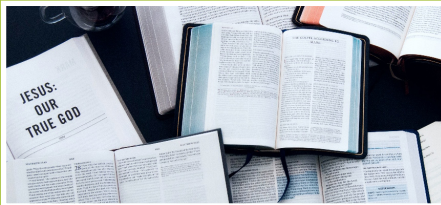
Carving out time daily to read the Bible is a foundational habit, even if only for a few minutes to begin with. Put it in your calendar. Set a daily alarm. Create a time and place.



FIND PEOPLE

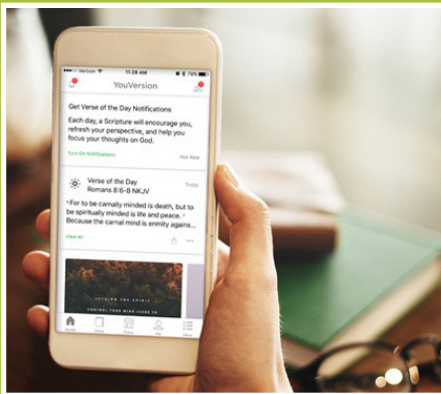
We're meant to read the Bible with others, specifically with the movement of Jesus-followers known as the church.

TYPES OF BIBLES



STUDY BIBLE

A **Study Bible** comes with additional notes and helpful commentary.



ON YOUR PHONE

Perhaps you'll prefer to read from an app on your phone or listen to an audio Bible. The **Bible App** or **Biblegateway.com** have several versions available for reading or listening.

Scan the QR code on the last page for links to these resources.



CHOOSE A BIBLE

Whether in print or audio, there are many English translations of the Bible. The New International Version (NIV), New Living Translation (NLT), or Christian Standard Bible (CSB) are a good place to start.



READ "BIG" & "SMALL"

Try reading for the big picture, not just plucking out a nice quote. Read a whole book at once—or at least several chapters—and try to soak up the main message. Then go back and explore the smaller parts, maybe even memorizing or writing down meaningful verses.



GET GOING

See the Resources section on the back of this guide for suggested Books to start with and recommended reading plans.

START HERE

BEGIN WITH LUKE & ACTS

Find “Luke” in the New Testament section of the Table of contents at the beginning of your Bible and start reading there. The next page has a link to a Bible reading plan for Luke-Acts that includes helpful videos along the way.

BOOKS, CHAPTERS & VERSES

Each “book” of the bible is subdivided into “chapters” which are further marked off by “verses.” Chapters are often around one page long, while verses are roughly a sentence or two. For example, “Luke 4:1-13” refers to the first 13 verses of chapter 4 of Luke.

ABOUT LUKE & ACTS

Luke and Acts tell about Jesus and the movement that he started. They were written by the same author and addressed to someone who was curious about the real story of Jesus, so they’re a great starting place for anyone who wants to discover what Jesus is all about. Luke starts with Jesus’ birth and concludes with his death and resurrection. Acts is the sequel, continuing from Jesus’ resurrection through the birth and growth of the early church.

AS YOU READ, ASK YOURSELF...

WHAT IS HAPPENING?

Consider who, what, when, where, why... questions. Who is speaking? Who is being addressed? What’s going on? Etc. Summarize what you read in your own words.

WHAT DO I LEARN ABOUT GOD?

Keep notes of God’s character (and that of Jesus and the Holy Spirit) as you read more and more.

WHAT QUESTIONS DO I HAVE?

Ask ANYTHING of the text. Keep a journal. Seek perspective from good resources and wise friends. Questions pile up fast when reading the Bible. Answers come slower. Be patient and humble as you read, eager to discover more, and you’ll gradually grow in your ability to interpret and understand what you’re reading.

HOW SHOULD I RESPOND?

As a result of this text, should I... repent, trust, pray, go, wait, meditate, praise, grieve, celebrate, forgive, serve...? Don’t just hear the words, put them into action.

PRAY ACCORDINGLY

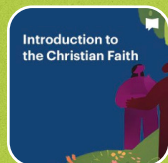
Based on what you read, pray that you grow in faith, knowledge, and love for God and others.

READING PLANS

These reading plans from **BibleProject** contain helpful videos and are available in the **Bible App**.

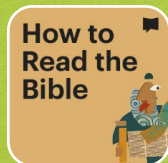
Scan the QR code on the last page for links to these resources.

INTRODUCTORY



Introduction to the Christian Faith

9 days



How to Read the Bible

19 days



The Character of God

6 days

JESUS FOCUS (NEW TESTAMENT)



God's Eternal Love

9 days

(John)



Jesus & the Jesus Movement

23 days

(Luke & Acts)

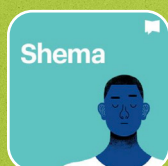


Gospels

90 days

(Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)

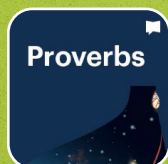
OLD TESTAMENT



Shema

6 days

The "Shema" prayer calls people to respond to God's love with faithfulness and devotion.



Proverbs

32 days

There are 31 chapters in Proverbs. Read one per day for a month!



Torah

100 days

First 5 books of the Old Testament

READING THROUGH THE BIBLE



One Story that leads to Jesus

358 days



Old Testament in a Year

365 days



New Testament in a Year

365 days

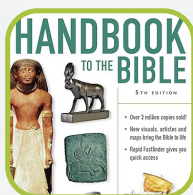
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



BibleProject.com helps make the biblical story accessible to everyone everywhere through creative videos, podcasts, blogs, classes, and educational Bible resources.

Article — [3 Easy Ways to Engage the Bible & Help You Get Started](#)

Videos — [Intro to the Bible](#)



Zondervan Handbook to the Bible is a handy bible study companion with colorful photos, guides, and commentary on the whole Bible.



For Everyone Commentaries on the New Testament provide concise, helpful commentary on each book of the New Testament.



Scan the QR code for links to all resources mentioned throughout the Bible Guide.

As you read the Bible and get to know Jesus, you may find that it begins to change you. Mountain is a group of people who are experiencing that life change and are exploring our faith together.

If you'd like to join the journey with others, we'd love to connect with you!

CONNECT WITH THE CAMPUS CLOSEST TO YOU AT [MOUNTAINCC.ORG/LOCATIONS](https://mountaincc.org/locations)

