

Introduction to the Bible Reading Plan

Our leadership team thought that reading the same Bible passages on the same day might be an encouragement and stimulus to all of us. Our prayer is that it contributes to increasing the consistency of our Bible reading and brings a new vibrancy into our friendship with God and shared life with one another. We'd like to invite you to join us by using the schedule below.

The reading schedule we're following is set up to get us through the New Testament by the end of the semester. We will then read the book of Psalms and Proverbs during the month of January. Our spring semester will get us into the Old Testament. Here is a brief overview of the material we will cover from now through the end of January.

The New Testament is the second half of the Bible written after the birth of Jesus. It covers material in 4 gospels. The book of Acts, letters written by early church leaders to their churches in the first century, as well as an apocalyptic book, the Book of Revelation. There are 27 books in the New Testament.

The four Gospels (Matthew-Mark-Luke-John) cover material from the life and teachings of Jesus. Gospel refers to 'good news,' meaning the good news of Jesus' coming to earth. There are four different presentations by four different authors about the person and work of Jesus Christ.

The book of Psalms is the Bible's collection of prayers and worship songs. We'll read five psalms a day, taking them in order. The book of Proverbs is wisdom literature. We'll read one proverb a day, alongside 5 psalms.

I want to recommend two key resources for your Bible reading. It would be helpful to pick up a copy of "How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth" and "How to Read the Bible Book by Book," by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart.

The **first book** gives you an introduction to the various kinds of literature in the Bible. Each kind of literature has ground rules for reading and interpreting its material in context. It is critical to know the ground rules on handling the various sorts of material (i.e., narrative, gospel, wisdom, letters, etc) in the Bible so we lessen the chance of misinterpreting the Scriptures. The **second book** gives basic information about each book of the Bible and some helpful advice about where to focus your attention as you read it. Both tools provide an excellent way to orient yourself as you begin to read the various kinds of literature and books of the Bible.

Both books can be found in bookstores like Barnes and Noble, as well as on-line at Amazon.com.

Each week of Bible readings will also include the opportunity to memorize two verses of Scripture per week. One way to develop the discipline of Scripture

memory is to put the verses on index cards and to practice reciting each verse in the morning and the evening.

We have also developed a Journal for students to use as they read the Scriptures, so they can jot down insights from Scripture and remember what they are learning from time well spent with God. Please contact Mike Olejarz at cacf@mit.edu to get a copy of The Journal. The cost of a Journal is \$7.00.

Finally, there is a bookshelf outside of Mike Olejarz' office in the basement of W11 with free literature. Material is available on handling the Bible, various books of the Bible, as well as Biblical characters and pertinent issues. Stop by and find something that will benefit your spiritual growth.

Bible Reading Tips

I have found that a few simple things can really make a difference in my enjoyment of daily Bible reading.

First, the goal is to meet with God and enjoy His presence. Make it a daily habit to meet with God to get to know him better.

Second, find a good translation of the Bible. I usually read the New International Version and find it to be a clear, modern translation. There is a helpful chapter in "How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth" about selecting a good translation. If you are not sure about which version of the Bible to use, and do not want to buy the book, ask me and I will help you find a translation. If you do not have a Bible, let us know and we'll be glad to give you a free copy. Free New Testaments are available on the bookshelf in W11.

Third, make an appointment in your schedule to read the Bible. Reading 3 chapters a day should take you approximately 15 minutes a day, depending on your reading speed and comprehension ability. If you miss a day, don't go back and try to make up what you missed. That could result in building up quite a backlog. It would be helpful to approach each day as a new opportunity to read the Bible and encounter God, regardless of what happened the day before.

Fourth, follow the schedule we've set up. If you are the kind of person who likes things to be orderly, the reading schedule will generally be satisfying for you, even though we are not reading the New Testament in chronological order.

Fifth, it may not always be clear from a single day's passage what you have learned, but that's okay. The value of the Bible reading experience is meant to be cumulative, so we get a more complete picture of the Bible as a whole. The aim of the daily reading is to read a few chapters and ask, "What can I learn from these passages?" What can I learn about God, the people mentioned in the

material, and even myself? That is where journaling comes in. I find it helpful to take a moment to journal what was interesting to me in the day's reading. What got my attention? What did I learn? What questions were provoked? I have also learned that if I review the passage a little during the day, I'm more likely to talk about it and remember those thoughts and questions when I read the next day's material.

Sixth, find a method that works for you as you move forward with the flow of the reading schedule. I know some people who prefer doing their reading in larger segments; so instead of reading all three chapters each day, they read three days of material every three days. Or they tackle a week's worth of the reading on the weekend. That way, they are covering the larger chunks they prefer, and they're still reading the same passages at roughly the same time as everyone else.

Seventh, choose a partner to meet with each week so you'll have someone to encourage you to keep up with the readings, and someone you could talk with about the readings. Discuss what you are reading and learning, whether you discuss every day's passage with them or simply one passage that impacted you. I believe taking the opportunity to meet with a friend can be one of the most powerful parts of reading the Bible together. Our weekly large group meeting and/or small groups will also serve as a good place to check in on a regular basis. I find that e-mail works well as a way to keep in touch with a partner. Many of you are in front of your computer a lot, and it's really easy to drop a quick note to a friend. Just don't get stuck in only talking with people on line. There's too much to be gained by meeting face-to-face.

Bible Reading Plan

Weekly Memory Verses: 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Galatians 2:20

September 21 Matthew 1-3
September 22 Matthew 4-6
September 23 Matthew 7-9
September 24 Matthew 10-12
September 25 Matthew 13-15
September 26 Matthew 16-18
September 27 Matthew 19-21

Weekly Memory Verses: Romans 12:1 and John 14:21

September 28 Matthew 22-24
September 29 Matthew 25-27
September 30 Matthew 28 - Acts 2
October 1 Acts 3-5

October 2 Acts 6-8
October 3 Acts 9-11
October 4 Acts 12-14

Weekly Memory Verses: 2 Timothy 3:16 and Joshua 1:8

October 5 Acts 15-17
October 6 Acts 18-20
October 7 Acts 21-23
October 8 Acts 24-26
October 9 Acts 27-28
October 10 Romans 1-3
October 11 Romans 4-6

Weekly Memory Verses: John 15:7 and Philippians 4:6,7

October 12 Romans 7-9
October 13 Romans 10-12
October 14 Romans 13-15
October 15 Romans 16 1 Corinthians 2
October 16 1 Corinthians 3-5
October 17 1 Corinthians 6-8
October 18 1 Corinthians 9-11

Weekly Memory Verses: Matthew 18:20 and Hebrews 10:24,25

October 19 1 Corinthians 12-14
October 20 1 Corinthians 15-16
October 21 2 Corinthians 1-3
October 22 2 Corinthians 4-6
October 23 2 Corinthians 7-9
October 24 2 Corinthians 10-12
October 25 2 Corinthians 13-15

Weekly Memory Verses: Matthew 4:19 and Romans 1:16

October 26 Galatians 1-3
October 27 Galatians 4-6
October 28 Ephesians 1-3
October 29 Ephesians 4-6
October 30 Philippians 1-3
October 31 Philippians 4-6
November 1 Colossians 1-3

Weekly Memory Verses: Romans 3:23 and Isaiah 53:6

November 2 Colossians 4-6
November 3 Mark 1-3
November 4 Mark 4-6
November 5 Mark 7-9
November 6 Mark 10-12
November 7 Mark 13-16
November 8 1 Thessalonians 1-3

Weekly Memory Verses: Romans 6:23 and Hebrews 9:27

November 9 1 Thessalonians 4-5
November 10 2 Thessalonians 1-3
November 11 1 Timothy 1-3
November 12 1 Timothy 4-6
November 13 2 Timothy 1-4
November 14 Titus 1-3
November 15 Hebrews 1-3

Memory Verses: Romans 5:8 and 1 Peter 3:18

November 16 Hebrews 4-6
November 17 Hebrews 7-9
November 18 Hebrews 10-11
November 19 Hebrews 12-13
November 20 Luke 1-3
November 21 Luke 4-6
November 22 Luke 7-9

Weekly Memory Verses: Ephesians 2:8,9 and Titus 3:5

November 23 Luke 10-12
November 24 Luke 13-15
November 25 Luke 16-18
November 26 Luke 19-21
November 27 Luke 22-24
November 28 James 1-3
November 29 James 4-5

Weekly Memory Verses: John 1:12 and Revelation 3:20

November 30 1 Peter 1-3
December 1 1 Peter 4-5
December 2 2 Peter 1-3
December 3 1 John 1-3
December 4 1 John 4-5
December 5 2 John, 3 John, Jude

December 6 Revelation 1-3

Weekly Memory Verses: 1 John 5:13 and John 5:24

December 7 Revelation 4-6

December 8 Revelation 7-9

December 9 Revelation 10-12

December 10 Revelation 13-15

December 11 Revelation 16-18

December 12 Revelation 19-22

Weekly Memory Verses: 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 1 Corinthians 2:12

January 1 Psalm 1-5, Proverbs 1

January 2 Psalm 6-10, Proverbs 2

January 3 Psalm 11-15, Proverbs 3

Weekly Memory Verses: Isaiah 41:10 and Philippians 4:13

January 4 Psalm 16-20, Proverbs 4

January 5 Psalm 21-25, Proverbs 5

January 6 Psalm 26-30, Proverbs 6

January 7 Psalm 31-35, Proverbs 7

January 8 Psalm 36-40, Proverbs 8

January 9 Psalm 41-45, Proverbs 9

January 10 Psalm 46-50, Proverbs 10

Weekly Memory Verses: Lamentations 3:22,23 and Numbers 23:19

January 11 Psalm 51-55, Proverbs 11

January 12 Psalm 56-60, Proverbs 12

January 13 Psalm 61-65, Proverbs 13

January 14 Psalm 66-70 Proverbs 14

January 15 Psalm 71-75, Proverbs 15

January 16 Psalm 76-80, Proverbs 16

January 17 Psalm 81-85, Proverbs 17

Weekly Memory Verses: Isaiah 26:3 and 1 Peter 5:7

January 18 Psalm 86-90, Proverbs 18

January 19 Psalm 91-95, Proverbs 19

January 20 Psalm 96-100, Proverbs 20

January 21 Psalm 101-105, Proverbs 21

January 22 Psalm 106-110, Proverbs 22

January 23 Psalm 111-115, Proverbs 23

January 24 Psalm 116-120, Proverbs 24

Weekly Memory Verses: Romans 8:32 and Philippians 4:19

January 25 Psalm 121-125, Proverbs 25

January 26 Psalm 126-130, Proverbs 26

January 27 Psalm 131-135, Proverbs 27

January 28 Psalm 136-140, Proverbs 28

January 29 Psalm 141-145, Proverbs 29

January 30 Psalm 146-150, Proverbs 30

January 31 Psalm 1, Proverbs 31