



*How to Study  
The Bible*

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# The Bible is the most influential book in human history.

It has been read, studied, and debated more than any other book.

And for good reason: The Bible is a collection of writings that reveals God's plan for humanity. It offers guidance for living a fulfilling life because we were made to have relationships with God and other humans.

If you've never read the Bible or don't know where to start, don't worry. This guide will teach you how to study the Bible so you can better understand it and apply its principles to your life.

# What gets in the way?

Before we start, it's a good idea to go over some reasons why people (both new Christians and people who have walked with Jesus for a while) often have trouble studying the Bible.

These obstacles fall into three main categories:

**1**

The first is finding time to do it. Between work, family, and other commitments, it can be hard to find enough time to read the Bible.

**2**

The second is staying focused while reading. It can be easy to get lost in the text or to become sidetracked.

**3**

The third obstacle can be understanding the Bible itself. The text can be confusing, and it can be difficult to find an application when you're reading about ancient cultures and unfamiliar places.

With these obstacles in mind,  
here are seven tips on  
how to study the Bible . . .





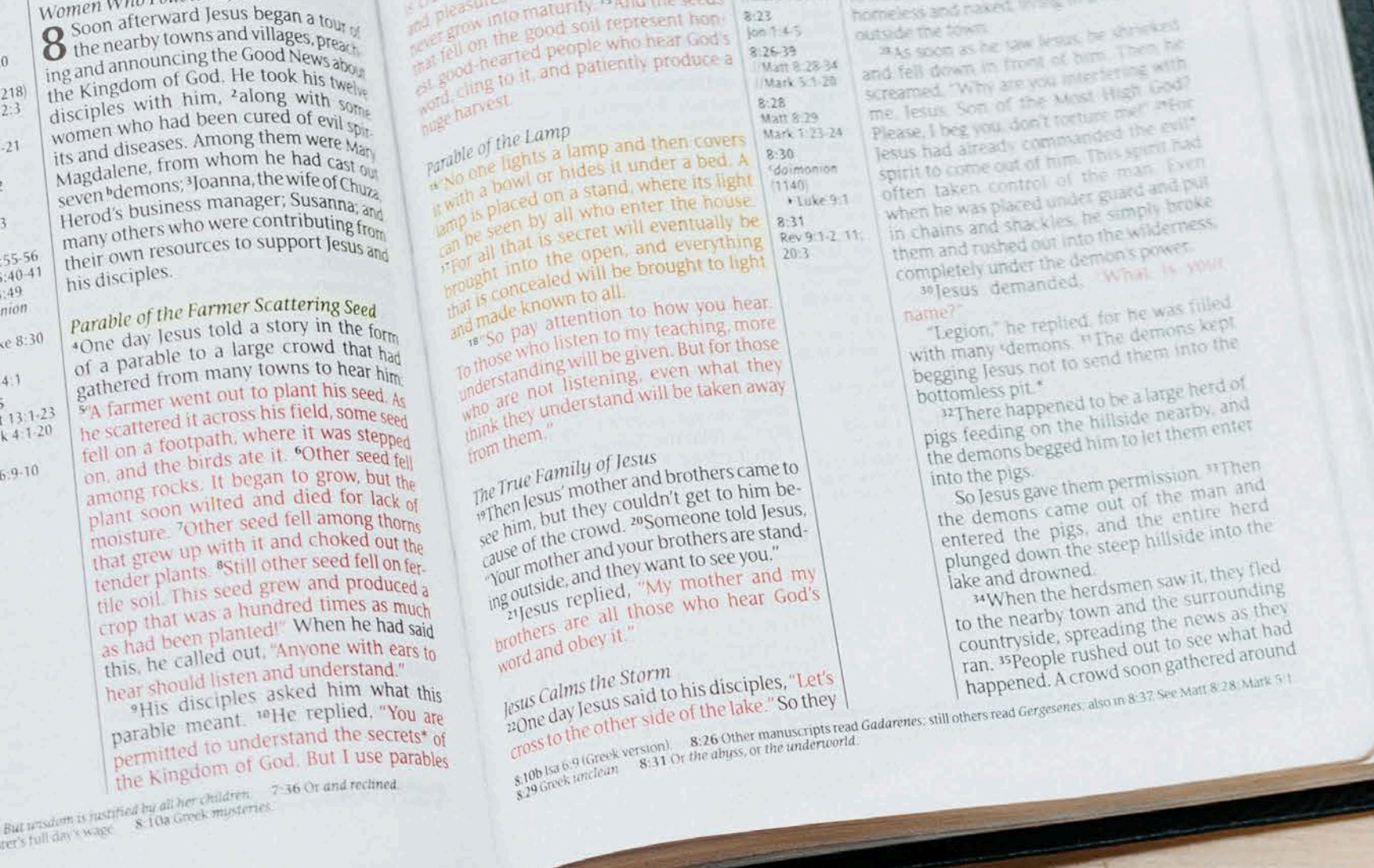
# Choose a translation that is easy to understand.

1

There are many different translations of the Bible, and it can be confusing trying to figure out which one to read.

If you're just starting out, it's best to choose a translation that is easy to read and understand. The New International Version (NIV) and The New Living Translation (NLT) are two good options.

If you're willing to trade some readability in order to better understand the nuances of the text, the English Standard Version (ESV) and Christian Standard Bible (CSB) are great options.



# Make a schedule and stick to it.

One of the most important things you can do when learning how to study the Bible is to make a schedule and stick to it. It's easy to get sidetracked or forget to study altogether if you don't have a plan.



One of the best ways to set yourself up for success is to set aside time each day. You might want to get up a few minutes early, take 15 minutes at lunch, or plan to go to bed a few minutes early so that you can read the Bible before shutting off the light.

Pick a time of day that makes sense for your current life stage, and make it part of your daily rhythm. Consider adding it to your calendar or creating a recurring reminder on your phone, so you don't forget.

Start where you are, and remember that getting it done (not getting it perfect) is the goal. Even if you can only spare a few minutes during the day, that's better than nothing.



# Read—and ask questions

3

As you read, take note of any passages that stand out to you or that you don't understand. Write your questions in a journal or in the margins of your Bible, and start looking for answers.

You can start by reading different versions of the Bible to get a better understanding of the text, but you'll also want to invest in resources to help and ask other Christians about what you're learning (more on both of those later!)

# Invest in resources to help you study.

Once you've chosen a translation and started gathering some questions while reading on your own, it's time to find a study guide, commentary, or concordance. These resources will help you understand the Bible better by providing background information and commentary on the text. You can find a great selection online or at a Christian bookstore.

4

There are many different kinds of study guides available, so take some time to find one that fits your needs. Some guides are specifically designed for beginners, while others are more advanced. At all levels, some will focus on a specific topic found throughout Scripture, while others will help you break down the passage you're reading verse by verse. Depending on what you want to study and how comfortable you are, each type can be helpful—just make sure you pick one that goes with what you're reading or what's standing out to you right now!





# 5

## Study with a friend or group.

Studying the Bible is more fun and effective when you do it with others. Find a friend or group to study with, and discuss what you're learning. This will help you gain new insights and perspectives on the Bible. It'll also provide help and accountability as you try to apply what you're learning to your life!

Many churches often offer Bible studies—if you don't see one that works with your schedule, talk to your church about leading your own!



# 6

## Pray for guidance.

Before you begin studying the Bible, take a moment to pray and ask God for guidance. He will help you understand the text and apply its principles to your life.

This step seems simple, but really can't be overstated.

You'll probably find that your best moments studying the Bible often come when you're connecting with God through prayer, ready to listen to His voice. He'll reveal Himself through His Words in ways you couldn't imagine.



# 7

## Be patient.

Learning how to study the Bible takes time, so be patient with yourself. Don't be discouraged if you don't understand everything right away. Just keep reading and studying and asking questions, and eventually, things will start to make sense.

It may not happen quickly.

You won't ever feel like you understand everything (after all, how could anyone comprehend an eternal, perfect God?).

But, you will know enough of God to bring your heart the joy and peace it needs in this crazy world.



## *Bonus*

# Bonus Tip: Find a place that's free from distractions.

We know, we know—this is easier to say than to do. But the space doesn't have to be perfectly distraction-free. It just needs to be someplace where you can feel free to focus on God and His Word.

If you're reading your Bible on your lunch break, consider closing your office door or going out to your car for a few minutes.

If you're a stay-at-home parent, think through where in your house or yard your kids could safely play for a few minutes while you read!

Having space planned out that's (relatively) free of distractions will help you make the most of your time reading the Bible!

With these tips,  
you'll be well on your way to  
understanding the Bible better.

So what are you waiting for?  
**Get started today!**

