

# First Presbyterian Church



## BIBLE READING PLANS

It's that time of year again. The New Year is about to begin. You know what that means, right?

No, it's not time to make more New Year's Resolutions. Too often those become an expression of living by sight/flesh rather than living by the Spirit/faith (2 Corinthians 5:7, Galatians 5:16). They don't work!

Rather, it's that time of year to renew our use of the one thing we know will result in lasting change – the word of God. Particularly, it's time to renew and redo our commitment to our private reading of the Bible.

So, how did you do this past year? Did you make it all the way through? Or, is this something new to you? No matter if this is your first attempt, a continuation of a developing habit, or another attempt to read through the Bible just once in your life: this is a faith-activity that your heavenly Father desires and the Spirit blesses:

*Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors. ~ Proverbs 8:34*

*And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ~ Acts 20:32*

*Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. ~ James 1:21*

Whether this is a first for you, you're frustrated with past failures, or you've developed a blessed habit, this booklet will help. In it, you will find the resources you need to daily take up your Bible, and meet your Savior in its pages. Remember God's promise to always bless faith, and make a plan for the daily reading of your Bible in the New Year.

*GIVING THE GOSPEL EVERY ... FOR THE JOY OF HIS GLORY ~ ROM 1:16*

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## GOAL

Daily Bible reading IS NOT the same as Bible study. Don't worry too much about comprehension in this reading. You can and should do such study in other settings (e.g., listening to sermons, studies. etc.) The goal of daily Bible reading is different: it is familiarity leading to memorization.

Memorization?! Yes, that's right. Each time you read through the Bible, the words become more familiar. After a few years of this type of reading you will find yourself "automatically" memorizing things. You may spontaneously remember a certain passage. You will remember the book, maybe the chapter, of a certain phrase. Give yourself a decade of such Bible reading and you will have most of the Bible committed to memory. (Parents, this is an especially powerful opportunity for your children. See the children's plans.)

## TWO DIFFERENT ORDERS

Look at the Table of Contents in your Bible. This might be a new thought to you, but the order of the books in your Bible is NOT something God has mandated. The books in the Bible Jesus used (what we call the Old Testament) were arranged substantially different from the order we commonly use. In other words, the order in which you read the books is not right or wrong; flexibility is okay.

This flexibility in order is seen in the plans offered here. There are two different kinds of plans: 1) ones that follow the order of the books of the Bible as are they are, and 2) ones that suggest a reading arranged differently, in the Old Testament historically and in the New Testament by author families.

The plans that follow the historical order of the OT will help you get the flow of God's work in the history of Israel. This will help you see how Jesus is the fulfillment of all the promises and hopes in the OT, from Genesis 3:15 through Malachi 4:6.

In the plans that arranged the New Testament into author families, each gospel is paired with the letters that most relate to it. This will help you see how the NT explains the details about redemption in Christ.

## ADVICE

The key to developing a regular habit of daily Bible reading is to find a plan that works for you, one you can stick with, or at least can catch up with when you mess up. Below are a variety of plans. Read the descriptions. Find at least two that you think will work for you. You can try one and then switch to the other if your first choice doesn't fit you.

Most of these plans are oriented around a Monday through Friday reading schedule. You can use Saturday and Sunday each week to catch up on any missed reading. In the event you miss more than a few days (or a week or two), simply start back where you left off. In the rare event that you just can't catch up, keep reading. It is better to read most of the Bible this year than quit part way through.

Read the description of the plans. Then pick up the two reading-plans to start with. Feel free to mix and match, choosing different kinds of plans for both Old and New Testaments. Put this booklet in your Bible and check off your progress as you read. Try the first plan you picked. If you like it, stick with it. If you don't, then switch to the other plan.

## PLAN DESCRIPTIONS

### *BASIC PLANS:*

⊕ **Chapter by Chapter:** this plan is the simplest of all. There are no daily assigned readings. Each day, from both OT and NT, just read as many chapters, or as few, as you wish. This plan allows you to read more when you have time, less when you don't. The goal with this plan is just to read through the whole Bible. You can take as long as you want. Just keep reading!

⊕ **Chapters per Day:** this plan takes you to the next level, assigning specific chapters for daily readings in both OT and NT.\* This plan provides you with more accountability, telling you how many chapters to read daily. (If you need a bit more time, turn the 1-year plan into a 2-year plan by reading ½ each day's reading.)

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\* This plan was influenced by Dr. Denny Burke's 25-day Bible Reading plan; dennyburk.com.

## UNCONVENTIONAL PLANS

⊕ **2X/Year Intense Plan:** This plan follows the chapters by day layout above, but doubles up on the 1-year readings. On this plan you will read through the Bible two-times in one year.

⊕ **4x/Year Extreme Plan:** With this plan, you will read through the whole Bible in just three months. Whoa!! Yet this is a great way to capture the main themes of the Bible. Issues of sin, Savior, and salvation will become clearer in every chapter. Moreover, reading the Bible at this pace will help you memorize it very effectively!

⊕ **Chapters by List:** This plan involves reading nine chapters a day.<sup>†</sup> The books of the Bible are organized into nine lists based on genre and author family considerations. Each day you read one chapter from each list. This plan is not based on an annual pace of reading. Instead, each list of books takes a different amount of time to read through. Once you've completed a list, start it over again. This will result in you always reading different books together. The continual comparing of different books in each daily reading will provide you with two great results: 1) seeing the interconnectedness of each book's presentation of sin-Savior-salvation (i.e., the Bible's story of redemption), and 2) deepening insights into how the gospel works (i.e., the Bible's system of doctrine).

## CHILDREN'S PLANS

Parents, think of this promise from God:

*Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. ~ Proverbs 22:6*

*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. ~ Ephesians 6:4*

If you help your children develop a daily habit of Bible reading, by the time they are twenty-five they will have the whole Bible all but memorized. Can you think of a better gift to give them?

Provide them the self-discipline they lack: 1) help them arrange their

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<sup>†</sup> This plan is an adaptation of Professor Grant Horner's Bible-Reading System. It is well worth your time reading his explanation of how this system works. See the video at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Prof-Horners-Bible-Reading-System/148160145252358?fref=nf>

schedule so they make time for daily Bible reading, 2) remind them to do it each day, 3) hold them accountable for their daily readings, and 4) help them adjust and/or catch up when they get off plan.

Here are the plans:

⊕ **Good Reader Plan**: If your child (at least 7<sup>th</sup> grade) is a good reader, start them off on the one year plan, but have them read it at the 2-year pace. Once they complete that plan one time, move them to the 1-year plan.

⊕ **Growing Reader Plan**: For a variety of reasons, your child may take a bit longer to grow into a good reader. No problem. Start them off on this 3-year reading plan. After they complete it, move them up to the 1-year plan. (If they need a bit more time, turn the 1-year plan into a 2-year plan as described above).

⊕ **Beginning Reader Plan**: This is a graduated plan designed for children who are just learning to read. The pace of reading is graduated to increase as their reading skills increase. The first year they will read 10% of the OT and NT, the second year 20%, the third year 30%, and the fourth year 40%. They will completely read through the Bible in four years. After that, move them up to a 2-year plan, and then to a 1-year plan.

### *OTHER PLANS*

It may be that none of these plans fits your needs. Don't give up! There are plenty of plans available. Here are a few sites to look for Bible reading plans:

⊕ **Ligonier**: [ligonier.org/blog/bible-reading/plans](http://ligonier.org/blog/bible-reading/plans)

⊕ **ESV**: [about.esvbible.org/resource/reading/](http://about.esvbible.org/resource/reading/)

⊕ **Bible Study Tools**: [biblestudytools.com/bible-reading-plan/](http://biblestudytools.com/bible-reading-plan/)

## WHEN YOU BLOW IT

Don't worry if you fail time and time again. Keep asking for the Spirit's help because of Jesus and then start again. Let's get reading!

*If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ~ John 15:7*

# THE PLANS

**For All Plans:** Read the assigned amount as per your plan choice, Monday through Friday. Use Saturday/Sunday to catch up on days missed.

## *Children's Plans*

- **Good Reader:** Read 2-½ chapters/day, beginning at Genesis 1.
- **Growing Reader:** Read 1-½ chapters/day, beginning at Genesis 1.
- **Beginning Reader:** Read 1 entry/day, as per the following chart:

<i>First Year:</i>	♦ Read 10% of the Bible, ½ chapter/day. ♦ Alternative: read 12 verses per day. ♦ Begin at Genesis 1; finish at Numbers 1.
<i>Second Year:</i>	♦ Read 20% of the Bible, 1 chapter/day. ♦ Alternative: read 24 verses per day. ♦ Begin at Numbers 2; finish at 1 Chronicles 17.
<i>Third Year:</i>	♦ Read 30% of the Bible, 1-½ chapters/day. ♦ Alternative: read 36 verses per day. ♦ Begin at 1 Chronicles 18; finish at Isaiah 32.
<i>Fourth Year:</i>	♦ Read 40% of the Bible, 2 chapters/day. ♦ Alternative: read 48 verses per day. ♦ Begin at Isaiah 33; finish at Revelation 22.

[*Note:* you can cut these boxes out and use them as book marks.]

## *Basic and Unconventional Plans:*

- **Chapter by Chapter:** Read 1 chapter/day, beginning at Genesis 1.
- **Chapters by List:** see instructions on page 7.
- **Chapters by Day:** see instruction on page 8.

## Chapters by List Reading Plan

**Directions:** There are nine lists of books here.†

- Read one chapter from each list each day.
- Use sticky notes as bookmarks for each list, marking where you are in your Bible on each list.
- When you are finished reading the chapters in a list, start over at the beginning of that list.

<b>1. Pentateuch</b> (187 chapters, days)	Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
<b>2. History: Joshua to David</b> (104 chapters, days)	Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel
<b>3. History: Pre-Exile</b> (150 chapters, days)	1 Kings, 2 Kings, Jonah, Isaiah, Amos, Micah, Hosea, Nahum
<b>4. History, Josiah to Exile</b> (124 chapters, days)	Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel
<b>5. History: Post-Exile</b> (121 chapters, days)	1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah, Joel, Esther, Nehemiah, Malachi
<b>6. Wisdom</b> (243 chapters, days)	Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes
<b>7. Gospels + Acts</b> (117 chapters, days)	Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts
<b>8. Paul's Letters</b> (87 chapters, days)	Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colos- sians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy Titus, Philemon
<b>9. Apostle's Letters</b> (56 chapters, days)	Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Revelation

[**Note:** you can cut these boxes out and use them as book marks.]

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† For a different arrangement of lists, please see the original lists on which these here are based: <http://bit.ly/Horner-Bible-reading-plan>.

## Chapters by Day Reading Plans

- **Choose a speed:**
  - 3 years (1-½ chapters/day)
  - 2 years (2-½ chapters/day)
  - 1 year (5 chapters/day)
  - 2x/year (10 chapters/day)
  - 4x/year (20 chapters/day)
- **Choose an order:**
  - Traditional Order
  - Historical (OT) - Author-family (NT) Order
- **For Traditional Order:** each day (M-F) read the number of chapters for the speed you chose. Begin at Genesis 1, finish at Revelation 22. Use a sticky note as a bookmark.
- **For Historic (OT) - Author-family (NT) Order:** each day (M-F) read the number of chapters for the speed you chose. Follow this chart.

<b>OT: historical order</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Gn 1-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Pro 30-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 1-40
	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 1-42	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 12-22	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 24-25
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gn 12-50	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 1-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 90-105
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 1-40	<input type="checkbox"/> Jo 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Hab 1-3
	<input type="checkbox"/> Lv 1-27	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 41-52
	<input type="checkbox"/> Nb 1-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 1-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Oba 1
	<input type="checkbox"/> Dt 1-34	<input type="checkbox"/> Amo 1-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Lam 1-5
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jos 1-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 9-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezk 1-48
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jdg 1-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Mic 1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Dan 1-12
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rth 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 16-17	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ch 1-29
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sa 1-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 13-27	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ch 37
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 1-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Hos 1-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezr1-6
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sa 1-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 28-43	<input type="checkbox"/> Hag 1-2
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 42-72	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 18-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Zec 1-14
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 44-66	<input type="checkbox"/> Joe 1-3
	<input type="checkbox"/> SoS 1-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 20	<input type="checkbox"/> Est 1-10
	<input type="checkbox"/> Pro 1-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 73-89	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezr 7-10
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 21	<input type="checkbox"/> Neh 1-13
	<input type="checkbox"/> Pro 25-29	<input type="checkbox"/> Nah 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Mal 1-41
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ecc 1-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 22-23	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 146-150
<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 10-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Zep 1-3		

<b>NT: author-family order</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Mt	<input type="checkbox"/> Php
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom	<input type="checkbox"/> Col
	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Th
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jas	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Th
	<input type="checkbox"/> Mk	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ti
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Pe	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ti
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Pe	<input type="checkbox"/> Tit
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jde	<input type="checkbox"/> Phm
	<input type="checkbox"/> Lk	<input type="checkbox"/> Jh
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ac	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Jo
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Co	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Jo
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Co	<input type="checkbox"/> 3Jo
	<input type="checkbox"/> Gal	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev
	<input type="checkbox"/> Eph	

[**Note:** you can cut these boxes out and use them as bookmarks, or use a sticky note.]