

Denver Baptist Church

2016 Bible Reading Plan

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17

As the year 2015 comes to a close and the dawn of another year breaks, I want to invite you to join me in participating in an intentional Bible reading plan. All Christians have a love for God’s Word and a desire to read and understand the Bible. We all know that reading the Bible is an important part of growing as a disciple of Jesus. Sadly, a recent survey has found that only 19% of churchgoers read the Bible daily.

I think our struggle to read the Bible daily is two-fold. *First, we don’t have a good plan to follow.* Where do we start? Do we have to read the whole Bible? Do we have to read 10 chapters a day? I hope to present to you a simple plan that will encourage you to read the Bible daily.

Second, we don’t have a good motive for reading the Bible. When I was much younger it seems that every New Year’s Eve I made a spiritual resolution to read the Bible through in the next year. I never was able to keep that commitment because my motive was wrong. I thought that if I didn’t read the Bible then God would be angry with me, bad things might happen and that I would make Jesus sad. On the other hand, if I did read the Bible through, I could brag to all my friends that I was more spiritual than them. I found that I was motivated by either fear or pride and those are not motivations that will sustain any type of spiritual commitment.

Let me say this clearly—you do not have to read the Bible. You should, but if you don’t God isn’t going to kick you out of His family. There is nothing that can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Reading your Bible every day won’t increase God’s love for you and failing to read your Bible won’t cause God to reject you. Our God is a God of great grace—and grace is the thing that will activate in your life a desire to read the Bible! Grace is actually the only motivator that enables us to keep a commitment to read the Bible daily.

The Reasons

So, let me give you **six reasons** why you should take up and read the Bible regularly even though you don’t have to:

First, the Bible is God’s Word to us. This is how God speaks to His children—through the Bible. If you want to hear God speak then you are going to have to read the Bible. There is a dangerous practice today among many Christians of trying to find God speaking outside of the Bible. Many people will say, “The Lord told me...the Lord led me...the Lord spoke to me...” and never reference the Bible. Instead of

trying to listen for God's voice in nature, circumstances or coincidences we simply open the Bible and read, and God clearly speaks to us through His Word, the Bible.

Second, the Bible is all about Jesus. The Bible is not a book of principles to live by, but a book about a Person to live for. Jesus Himself told a couple of His disciples that the entire Bible was about Him—who He was and what He had come to do. From the first pages of Genesis to the very last chapter of Revelation the Bible is pointing you to Jesus. It is a continual reminder of His work of redemption, His rescue mission to save sinners. We should read the Bible to understand more clearly the person and work of Jesus since the Bible is all about Him.

Third, the Bible helps us know how to respond to the gospel. Once I learn of Jesus' great work of salvation how do I respond? How do I re-orient my life in order to give great glory to the One who has saved me? The Bible teaches not only the beauty of grace but the transforming nature of grace. It shows us how God works in the life of a believer to grow him in the gospel, to strengthen him to resist sin, to live a life of worship and repentance, to walk by faith and to glorify Him in all things. The Bible is full of instructions for us—not in order to gain God's acceptance, but to respond to His acceptance of us in Christ.

Fourth, the Bible teaches us what is true. How do you know that what that TV preacher is talking about is true? How do you know that the advice you got from a Christian friend is true? How do you know that your pastor is teaching you the truth? You check the Bible. The early church was full of false teachers and prophets. The modern church is full of them as well. From the very beginning the battle between good and evil has been a battle for the truth. The first tactic of Satan was to cast doubt on the truth of God's Word. But His Word is true and if you want to walk in the truth, to fight against error, to avoid being taken captive by empty philosophies and false teachers then you need to take in a steady diet of Scripture.

Fifth, the Bible reminds us of our joy and hope. Life is full of discouragements and disappointments. Sin abounds in the world and, sadly, even in our own lives. On every page of the Bible God reminds us that He is sovereign, good, holy, just, righteous and kind. He is working out His plan for humanity and one day all those who are in Christ will enter into their reward. He has not left us or abandoned us. He is with us, and therefore we can be people of hope in the midst of a hopeless world. We can find encouragement to run the race, to endure, to stand firm in Christ through the teaching of the Word. There is grace for our faults, peace for our chaos, hope for our sadness—and the Bible shows us over and over again that because of Jesus we are a people of joy and hope.

Sixth, reading the Bible equips us to live on mission. We are a sent people who are to go into all the world with this glorious good news of a Savior who rescues sinners. That is God's mission and we are invited to participate with Him. The more we read the Bible, the clearer God's missionary heart becomes to us, and the more we are motivated to make His heart our heart. The Bible is full of commands that we should obey as Christians. Why? It is so that we will not hinder our participation in

the mission of making the fame and glory of Jesus known. So, we read the Bible to encourage and equip us in this life that is really just one big mission trip until we see Jesus!

The Plan

Instead of reading the entire Bible this plan allows us to repetitively read portions of Scripture. This year we are reading the 13 letters of Paul, in chronological order. Each week you will only read a couple of chapters, but the goal is to read those chapters over and over again during that week. On Saturdays we will read through the book of Daniel and on most Sundays we will read a passage that encourages worship in our hearts as we prepare to enjoy gathering with the people of God.

The point of this reading plan isn't to skim through large sections of the Bible, but to slowly plod and meditate through smaller portions every day. Whatever you read on Monday is what you will read on Tuesday. This way if you miss a day of reading there is no need to panic or give up, since you cannot "fall behind."

You will find that after you have read through a portion several times that your love and appreciation for that part of Scripture has grown and you begin to understand God's Word in a deeper and more meaningful way. Rather than being bored by reading the same thing every day, you will find that you look forward to slowly thinking through that portion of Scripture once again as the Holy Spirit continues to illuminate His Word to your mind and heart.

The Tools

You don't need much to start and maintain this Bible reading plan. Let me suggest the following tools. *First, you need a Bible.* It doesn't need to be a study Bible with a bunch of notes, nor does it even need to be a paper Bible. You can access the Scripture through your phone or tablet. The important thing is that you have a Bible that is easy for you to access.

Second, you need time. Most of the daily readings will take between 10 and 20 minutes. That's not a lot of time, but if you don't schedule it then we know what will happen. I would suggest either starting or ending your day with the reading. You may even want to make it a part of your family meal times. If you find yourself in the car a lot you could even download an audio version of that month's readings and listen to them.

Third, you need some paper. When I read through the Scripture I often will jot down a note or two to help me get a handle on the Word. You do not have to journal or take notes. But I have found it to be helpful at times to be able to reflect on some truth of God's Word by writing my responses down.

Fourth, you need to respond. Remember that God speaks to us through the Bible. We read it and hear His voice. We then lift our voice to Him in prayer, thanking Him for His Word and asking His Holy Spirit to help us re-orient our lives around His truth. Make sure that you don't just fly through the readings as if you are checking off some spiritual to-do list. This is time to commune with God.

Fifth, you need to relax. Sitting down and reading the Bible is to be a joyful experience. If your day is absolutely crazy and your mind is unfocused then don't beat yourself up if you miss that day. Relax. This isn't a race or a competition to see who can keep to the plan the best. On those crazy days why not have someone in your house read the passage out loud? Position your heart to rest in God's grace and see His Word as a gift, not as a religious ritual that you must keep in order to have His favor.

Let's Get Started!

Below is the Bible Reading Plan for 2016. Let me encourage you to join our Facebook page for weekly encouragement as we read the Bible together (DBC Bible Reading Plan 2016). On that page you will also find instructions to join a Google calendar that is set up with daily email reminders and links to the daily reading in an audio version. May God grow us in the gospel as we read His Word in 2016!

January

Day 1: Psalm 46
Wk 1 (4-8): Galatians 1-2
Wk 2 (11-15): Galatians 3-4
Wk 3 (18-22): Galatians 5-6
Wk 4 (25-29): 1 Thessalonians 1-2
Saturday (2,9,16,23,30): Daniel 1
Sunday (3,10,17,24,31): 1 Chronicles 16

February

Wk 1 (1-5): 1 Thessalonians 3-4
Wk 2 (8-12): 1 Thessalonians 5
Wk 3 (15-19): 2 Thessalonians 1
Wk 4 (22-26,29): 2 Thessalonians 2
Saturday (6,13,20,27): Daniel 2
Sunday (7,14,21,28): Revelation 1

March

Wk 1 (1-4): 2 Thessalonians 3
Wk 2 (7-11): 1 Corinthians 1-2
Wk 3 (14-18): 1 Corinthians 3-4
Wk 4 (21-25): 1 Corinthians 5-6
Wk 5 (28-31): 1 Corinthians 7-8
Saturday (5,12,19,26): Daniel 3
Sunday (6,13,20,27): Psalm 99

July

Wk 1 (1,4-8): Romans 6-7
Wk 2 (11-15): Romans 8
Wk 3 (18-22): Romans 9
Wk 4 (25-29): Romans 10
Saturday (2,9,16,23,30): Daniel 7
Sunday (3,10,17,24,31): Hebrews 13

August

Wk 1 (1-5): Romans 11
Wk 2 (8-12): Romans 12
Wk 3 (15-19): Romans 13-14
Wk 4 (22-26): Romans 15-16
Wk 5 (29-31): Ephesians 1-2
Saturday (6,13,20,27): Daniel 8
Sunday (7,14,21,28): Revelation 7

September

Wk 1 (1-2,5-9): Ephesians 3-4
Wk 2 (12-16): Philippians 1-2
Wk 3 (19-23): Philippians 3-4
Wk 4 (26-30): Colossians 1
Saturday (3,10,17,24): Daniel 9
Sunday (4,11,18,25): Psalm 139

April

Wk 1 (1,4-8): 1 Corinthians 9-10
Wk 2 (11-15): 1 Corinthians 11-12
Wk 3 (18-22): 1 Corinthians 13-14
Wk 4 (25-29): 1 Corinthians 15-16
Saturday (2,9,16,23,30): Daniel 4
Sunday (3,10,17,24): Revelation 4

May

Wk 1 (2-6): 2 Corinthians 1-2
Wk 2 (9-13): 2 Corinthians 3-4
Wk 3 (16-20): 2 Corinthians 5-6
Wk 4 (23-27,30-31): 2 Corinthians 7-8
Saturday (7,14,21,28): Daniel 5
Sunday (1,8,15,22,29): Psalm 95

June

Wk 1 (1-3): 2 Corinthians 9-11
Wk 2 (6-10): 2 Corinthians 12-13
Wk 3 (13-17): Romans 1-2
Wk 4 (20-24): Romans 3-4
Wk 5 (27-30): Romans 5
Saturday (4,11,18,25): Daniel 6
Sunday (5,12,19,26): Revelation 5

October

Wk 1 (3-7): Colossians 2
Wk 2 (10-14): Colossians 3
Wk 3 (17-21): Colossians 4
Wk 4 (24-28): Philemon
Saturday (1,8,15,22,29): Daniel 10
Sunday (2,9,16,23,30): Revelation 11

November

Wk 1 (1-4): 1 Timothy 1-2
Wk 2 (7-11): 1 Timothy 3-4
Wk 3 (14-18): 1 Timothy 5-6
Wk 4 (21-25): Titus 1-2
Wk 5 (28-30): Titus 3
Saturday (5,12,19,26): Daniel 11
Sunday (6,13,20,27): Psalm 67, Psalm 96

December

Wk 1 (1-2, 5-9): Titus 1
Wk 2 (12-16): Titus 2
Wk 3 (19-23): Titus 3
Wk 4 (26-30): Luke 1-2
Saturday (3,10,17,24,31): Daniel 12
Sunday (4,11,18,25): Revelation 12