
Leader's Guide

Growing in Faith ↑

An
Introduction to
Spiritual
Disciplines

Reading the Bible



SESSION TARGET:

To learn that the purpose
of reading the Bible is to
know God.

FOCUS SCRIPTURES:

Deuteronomy 16:1-8; 1 Kings 14:25-30;
Ecclesiastes 9:1-4; Obadiah 1:1-4;
Mark 1:35-39; Luke 4:16-21; John 2:22;
19:23-24, 28, 36-37; Acts 4:23-31; 8:34-35;
Galatians 3:22; Philippians 1:1-11;
1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17;
2 Peter 1:20-21; Revelation 4:1-6

CONNECTING TO LIFE

Option 1

Begin this session with a brief, general discussion on what we read every day. Invite your participants to respond to the following questions:

- What do you read most often? (*e.g., social media posts, websites, books, magazines, e-mails, text messages*)
- Why do you read these items?
- Does what you read vary depending on your needs? Explain your answer. (*e.g., you read social media apps to connect with friends, e-mail to keep in touch with coworkers and colleagues, books to learn or to be entertained*)
- If you consider all the different items you read, how much time do you think you spend reading each day?
- When you stop to consider your total reading time each day, does the answer surprise you? Why?

Option 2

Use the following guide to begin a general discussion about the Bible.

- Name as many facts about the Bible as you can.
- What do you find most difficult about reading the Bible?
- What do you enjoy most about reading the Bible?
- Why do you read the Bible?
- Do you believe the Bible is relevant to our lives now? Why or why not?
- What are some different methods for reading the Bible? (*The author mentions several, including developing a schedule to read a certain number of chapters per day, following a written reading plan, or studying the Bible with a group of other Christians.*)
- Bonus: Did anyone learn the books of the Bible with a song? If so, would you mind singing it for us now?

Transition: Though many people say they don't like to read, reading is one of the primary ways we learn. Reading and studying the Bible is an essential way to grow as a Christian.

CONNECTING TO THE WORD

Option 1

Ask volunteers to read the following passages of Scripture aloud to the group. Then, ask the group to answer the questions that follow.

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|----------------------------|---------------------|
| • Luke 4:16-21 | • Galatians 3:22 |
| • John 2:22 | • 1 Timothy 4:13 |
| • John 19:23-24, 28, 36-37 | • 2 Timothy 3:16-17 |
| • Acts 8:34-35 | • 2 Peter 1:20-21 |

1. What do these verses reveal to us about the Bible? (*It is God's Word; Scripture is fulfilled as God intends; The Bible is for both public and personal reading; We study it to learn about God and his plans for the world; The Bible explains the life of faith to us.*)
2. How does the Bible help us solve personal needs in our lives?

CONNECTING TO OUR WORLD

Option 2

Invite your adults to read each of the following examples of the literary genres contained in the Bible. Then, ask them the questions that follow.

- Old Testament
 - Law: Deuteronomy 16:1-8
 - History: 1 Kings 14:25-30
 - Wisdom: Ecclesiastes 9:1-4
 - Prophecy: Obadiah 1:1-4
- New Testament
 - Gospel: Mark 1:35-39
 - History: Acts 4:23-31
 - Epistle: Philippians 1:1-11
 - Prophecy: Revelation 4:1-6

1. How is each type different from the others?
2. How are the different types similar to each other?
3. What purpose can you see for each type?

Transition: When it comes to studying Scripture, a variety of methods are available. We each need to find the reading plan that works for us.

Option 1

Share with your adults the concepts of how to study the Bible that are contained within the text, which are summarized below.

- Begin with a prayer for understanding.
- Find a reading plan that fits you best.
- Consider the Gospel of John as a place to begin.
- Take advantage of the guidance of others through devotional readings.
- Find a friend or small group and study the Bible together.

Guide a discussion around these ideas and invite students to share openly where they may have struggled to find a healthy and meaningful discipline of Bible reading.

Option 2

Draw your participants' attention to the three-year schedule (the *Revised Common Lectionary*) discussed in the text. Show them the following pattern for daily reading. Then, help them find an *RCL* resource, either in print or online. The *Revised Common Lectionary* specifies Scripture readings for each day. Your adults could use these passages during their daily devotional time in the following pattern:

1. Begin with prayer.
2. Read the Old Testament passage.
3. Read the suggested psalm.
4. Read the New Testament passage.
5. Read the Gospel lesson.
6. Record any insights gained during the reading in a journal.
7. Close in prayer or perhaps with a song or hymn.

