

DAYSRING DAYBOOK

Monthly Newsletter of Dayspring Presbyterian Church, 11445-40 Ave, Edmonton, AB, CAN, T6J 0R4

May 2023

WHY STUDY THE BIBLE?

That might seem like a strange question for the editors to be asking. After all, doesn't everyone study the Bible—at least, everyone who is reading this issue?

But do they? Do you? And how?

The Protestant Reformation is dated, by most scholars, as having begun on 31 October 1517, when Martin Luther nailed a sheet of paper (an early version of a “poster”) to the door of the castle chapel at Worms (in Germany - pronounced Voarms). On the poster, Luther listed 95 “beefs” that he had with the church hierarchy's doctrine (belief system). Historians call those the Ninety-Five Theses.

Luther believed that the mediaeval Church had fallen into error because its leadership had stopped reading and studying the Bible. Beliefs had crept into the Church's doctrine that actually contradicted what the Bible has to say (perhaps more about those erroneous beliefs in the upcoming October issue).

But we asked whether you, the reader, actually study the Bible!!!

The best way to do so is to have a method for studying the Bible on your own, and then having a small group of people with whom you can discuss what you think God might be saying in particular verses.

Or perhaps you need a class in which a knowledgeable teacher helps you to figure out how to go about individual Bible Study, including what kind of resources to access, in order to do solo study so that you can be a contributing member in your Bible study group.

BTW, there are some excellent and reliable resources available for free on the internet. You just need to learn how to access reliable resources and avoid those which are unhelpful and many which are actually injurious to your faith and health because their goal is to draw people into a cult.

Hopefully, this issue will give you some tools for your personal study of the Bible - maybe even contribute to your participation in group Bible study.

After all, we don't want the church of today to become like the mediaeval Church - needing the kind of correction that Luther offered in his Ninety-Five Theses.

Or, more positively, your personal study may contribute to us all being more closely in touch with God and each other in the human community.



Do your best to win full approval in God's sight, as a worker who is not ashamed of [their] work, one who correctly teaches the message of God's truth.

Good News Bible

In This Issue

- Why study the Bible?
- How to study the Bible
- From our Minister
- Tools for Bible Study
- Learning online
- Additional Resources

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

S.O.A.P. Study of the Bible

Scripture: Write the verse in your journal.

Observation: Write down observations about the Scripture.

Application: How can you apply what you observed in your life?

Prayer: Write a prayer to God based on what you just learned and ask Him to give you opportunities to live out this truth.

Study a Book of the Bible

Select a book of the Bible to read through. Each day read through a passage or entire chapter. Then read through a second time and underline keywords and phrases.

1. Write down what God is saying in this chapter and identify a theme.
2. Identify the spiritual truth or principles in this chapter that are applicable to your life.
3. Write down how you will act on the lessons learned in this passage.
4. As you work through the book of the Bible, create an outline.

Topical

Use a concordance to search what the Bible says about a topic.

1. Select a topic and look it up in a concordance. (See page 3)
2. Choose 10-20 verses on the subject.
3. Read the verses.
4. Write down observations.
5. Draw conclusions and identify how you can apply what you've read.

Biographical

There are more than 3,000 people mentioned in the Bible? Genesis tells the stories of Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. These are epic tales filled with challenges, heartbreak, and family drama. But that is not the end of the story. Each of the stories illustrates how God met these people and tells of promises God made and fulfilled.

1. Select a character. Start with someone with a few references you can easily study. Save characters like David and Paul for later.
2. Read the passages of their story and create a timeline.
3. Note their background, key events, rela-

tionships, and the challenges they faced.

4. Identify their strengths and weaknesses. Try to imagine what it might have been like to be in their shoes,
6. What truths do you discover while researching this person's life? Write a personal application for your own life.
7. Ask yourself if you see any of yourself in this person's story. How might God be leading you to make a change or take the next step? What impressed you about their story and how does it challenge you and your choices?

Inductive

This method examines a passage and its context to determine what it says, what it meant to the original audience, and what it means to us today.

1. Approach the passage like a journalist asking the five "W" and "H" questions. Note key words, contrasts, and comparisons. Keywords are often repeated for emphasis. If there are time and geographical references, write them down.
2. Try to interpret the passage's deeper meaning.
3. Ask questions like:
 - a. What is the cultural and/or historical context of this passage?
 - b. What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
 - c. What other Scripture passages might help me interpret this one?
 - d. Have you overlooked anything or made assumptions that filter your interpretation?
4. Summarize what you see as the clearest meaning of the text based on your research.
5. Finally, ask yourself what the biblical truths you have discovered mean to your life, your priorities, and your relationships. This application step can be uncomfortable, for it is where truth and life might conflict. Don't stop; it is important, and it is worth it.

This material adapted from an article at

<https://adultministry.lifeway.com/2020/12/21/five-methods-for-studying-the-bible-on-your-own/>

FROM OUR MINISTER

Reading a bible is one thing. Studying it is another. Still, both are beneficial for several reasons.

Reading and studying scripture grounds us in faith and brings us immediately into conversation with what we find.

It helps to provide spiritual guidance and roots us in historical understanding; lets us challenge what we find; and allows us to struggle with it. Through our interactions with the bible, we are led to guidance, and to a deeper relationship with the God of scriptures.

We learn about other worldviews, customs, traditions, and various ancient civilizations



that have also grappled with many of the same issues we do today.

In scripture, we also find literary and artistic influence. We see the art and expression of faith in familiar stories, themes, and motifs, and even find music.

There are ethical and moral reflections awaiting.

Moreover, when we turn regularly to scripture, we also find ourselves seeing with completely new eyes. What one verse or story meant at age 20, may not be what it means to us at 40 or 80 years of age.

As Jeremiah the prophet is told to do, I believe so are we. He was told, "Devour this book."

Accompanying this issue of the *DayBook*, as a separate document, I have provided a few helpful resources with a brief description of what they are about.

- Brad.



MORE BIBLE STUDY TOOLS

Study Edition of the Bible

Purchase a study edition such as the **Good News Study Bible** or the **Westminster Study Edition of The Holy Bible**.

Concordance

Buy a concordance, such as **Cruden's Complete Concordance**.

Alternatively, learn how to use your computer's search function to find biblical texts that use the word you are wondering about - e.g. search "love" in the Bible.

Translation Comparison Tools

Written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, the Bible has been translated into many other languages, including over 100 English translations. All translation is "interpretation" and sometimes the interpretations of particular texts vary widely. Purchase a multi-translation presentation of the text. Such as **The New Testament in four versions** which has each version in a separate column across two pages. Comparison can help you get closer to the original meaning. Alternatively, learn how to use the online platform **Bible Gateway** for this same purpose.

Commentaries

One of the most comprehensive commentaries available is the 12-volume **Interpreter's Bible**. These are very expensive but there are some volumes in the Dayspring library. William Barclay's 17-volume **Commentaries on the New Testament** are also very useful. They include Barclay's translation of the text. You will also find several of Barclay's books available (free) using the platform StudyLight.org.

Bible Dictionaries

There are several of these, including one by William Barclay. **The Interpreter's Bible** has a 4-volume set - again very expensive. Or use your computer.

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/>.

LEARNING ONLINE

I joined the weekly Bible Study shortly after it began online. It was an adjustment to begin a discovery process this way, but after a few weeks it became familiar. I was already accustomed to meeting with several groups for planning and connecting online so this became another way of getting together.

The advantages

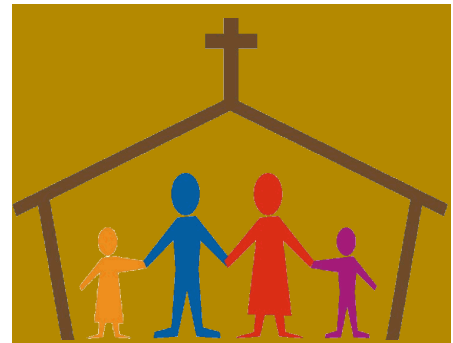
- ◆ People who live at a distance join us.
- ◆ People who do not drive can join, also.
- ◆ During the shutdown of the pandemic, this was a good connector.
- ◆ Whatever the weather, ice or snow, we can be connected without risking use of the roadways.

The disadvantages:

- ◆ Occasionally, someone will have a technical glitch with their device and cannot be seen or heard and may need to reboot or carry on with only the audio available. This is not a regular occurrence.

The present method for this group is that a willing person will be the presenter in a rotation that includes Brad. This involves researching the passages from the designated date in the Lectionary; preparing discussion questions; and sending them out to everyone two days ahead of our meeting. The use of email provides a very efficient way to get the proposed study material out to everyone.

Using the Lectionary provides us with an opportunity to enhance our study by listening to the preacher, possibly using one of the passages, on the upcoming Sunday. I do not think we always provide insight for the preacher, but we certainly see how a single passage or theme can be more fully developed and presented in worship. - Marilyn C.



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DayBook Deadlines

3rd Sunday of the month

SESSION

Moderator: Brad Childs

Session Clerk: Gina Kottke

Deputy Clerk: Iris Routledge

Roll Clerk: Darlene Eerkes

Other Elders

Jane de Caen

Peter Eerkes

Sam Malayang

Heather Tansem

MINISTER

The Rev Brad Childs

CHURCH STAFF

Church School Coordinator

Lynn Vaughan

Youth Coordinator: Fionna McCrostie

Music Director

Binaifer (Binu) Kapadia, B.Mus.

Administrative Assistant: Linda

Custodian: Jim

Brad's List of Resources for Bible Study

May 2023

The Blue Letter Bible (www.blueletterbible.org): Blue Letter Bible offers a range of study tools, including interlinear and original language texts, commentaries, lexicons, and concordances. It also provides audio and video resources for further study.

YouVersion (www.youversion.com): YouVersion is a popular Bible app that offers numerous translations, reading plans, and devotionals. It's available for various platforms, including web, iOS, and Android.

Online Bible Libraries: Websites like BibleHub (www.biblehub.com) and BibleStudyTools (www.biblestudytools.com) provide comprehensive online libraries with a wealth of Bible study resources, including commentaries, lexicons, concordances, and more.

In the last few decades, a lot has happened in terms of bible translations. No, they aren't editing out things they don't like. Translations are generally just that. Word choices and differences between "versions" of the bible have to do with several things.

1. It may be written for the 12th-grade reading level (ESV) or perhaps for 4th-grade (CEV).
2. Differences at times have to do with whether translators choose to use "majority" texts of ancient documents OR "eldest" texts which often differ slightly.
3. Other major differences in translation generally have to do, not with the actual text of scripture, but with the additional information provided to you in the liner notes or by a research concordance to help you find topics of interest. If you find yourself looking for a new bible here are some great options.

The Message: This contemporary paraphrase by Eugene H. Peterson presents the biblical text in a highly readable and accessible language, aiming to capture the original meaning and intent in a modern context.

The Amplified Bible: This translation incorporates additional explanatory words and phrases within the text to help readers better understand the nuances of the original languages.

The ESV Study Bible: *The English Standard Version* (ESV) is a popular and accurate translation, and includes extensive study notes, maps, and articles to provide a comprehensive understanding of the biblical text.

The NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible: The *New International Version* (NIV) includes valuable insights into the historical, cultural, and archaeological background of the Bible, helping readers grasp the context in which the events occurred.

The New Jerusalem Bible: This translation, originally published in French, seeks to provide a balance between literary style and accuracy. It includes detailed footnotes and cross-references to enhance understanding.

The Orthodox Study Bible: This edition, based on the *New King James Version* (NKJV), includes additional content from the Eastern Orthodox Christian tradition, such as icons, prayers, and commentary from Church Fathers.

The Jewish Study Bible: This edition, based on the Jewish Publication Society (JPS) Tanakh translation, offers a comprehensive exploration of Jewish history, culture, and tradition, with scholarly commentary and essays.

The Oxford Annotated Bible: This edition, available in various translations, includes extensive annotations, essays, and supplementary materials written by biblical scholars, making it a valuable resource for in-depth study.

The HarperCollins Study Bible: This edition, available in multiple translations, includes study notes, introductions, and essays written by leading scholars, providing a wealth of information for readers.

The Interlinear Bible: Interlinear editions present the original biblical text alongside a literal translation, enabling readers to compare the original language with the English rendering word-for-word.

The following translations and editions offer unique features and perspectives, catering to different reading preferences and study needs. Remember to research and explore them further to determine which one aligns best with your personal interests and goals. And if you are a little more adventurous you want to look at the following translations/paraphrases

The Mirror Bible: This translation by Francois du Toit focuses on emphasizing the grace and love of God, using contemporary language and idioms to convey the message in a fresh and poetic way.

The Cotton Patch Gospel: Clarence Jordan's translation offers a Southern American twist to the biblical narrative by reimagining the events in modern-day Georgia. It aims to bring the message closer to the cultural context of the American South.

The Green Bible: This translation highlights passages related to environmental stewardship, emphasizing God's care for creation. It includes additional essays and reflections on the Bible's teachings about the environment.

The Comic Book Bible: For a visually engaging experience, comic book-style Bibles present biblical stories in a colourful and illustrated format, making it accessible and appealing to younger readers or those who enjoy graphic novels.

The LEGO Bible: Similar to the comic book version, this unique Bible retelling uses LEGO bricks to illustrate the stories, providing a creative and interactive way to engage with the biblical narrative.

The Street Bible: Rob Lacey's translation seeks to make the Bible more relatable to urban and contemporary audiences by using slang and street language, aiming to bridge the gap between biblical times and modern society.

Rappin' with Jesus: The Gospel According to the Four Brothers: A Bible written in “Ebonics” or “Street Lingo”, this Gospel-only edition gives a very unique look. For example: “Go open the mouth of that fish, grab the coin inside and then drop it on the tax man, brother.” (Matthew 17)

The Bible Emoji: As the name suggests, this version replaces words and phrases with emojis to condense the text and offer a lighthearted, visual interpretation of the biblical content.

The Navarre Bible: This Catholic translation includes extensive commentary and explanatory notes drawing from the teachings of saints, Church fathers, and renowned theologians, providing a comprehensive understanding of Catholic doctrine.

The Pioneer's New Testament: This edition, specifically aimed at pioneers and early settlers, uses simplified language and eliminates archaic terms to make the Bible more accessible to those with limited formal education.

The Transparent English Bible: This translation, currently in progress, aims to provide a word-for-word translation that focuses on linguistic transparency, providing readers with a deeper understanding of the original languages.