

10 week plan

WEEK
01

This first week is an interesting selection from various parts of the Bible, and gives an overview of some of the reasons we have for reading God's message.

Psalms 19 Whilst we can be amazed at the power and glory of God seen in the Universe around us (v 1-6), God's Word (v 7-14) is even more amazing, as it has the power to change us. This Psalm gives us strong reasons as to why we should read the Bible: it can make us wise (v7), will make us glad (v8), and ultimately gain us a great reward (v11). Try listing out all the other benefits that the Psalm tells us come from God's Word.

Genesis 1 This chapter shows the power of God's Word – God said, and it was done. God created everything, and in the ultimate act of creation He made mankind 'in His image and likeness'. Here is a challenge for us; we are the reason that God created life, so we can reflect His characteristics, so we can be like God and give Him glory. Look up these other references: Isaiah 45:18; Mark 12:16,17.

Luke 2 The angels promised that the birth of Jesus will bring joy to all people (v 10), and ultimately peace on Earth (v 14). Simeon spoke about salvation (v 30 – note the name Jesus means 'He shall save'), and Anna about redemption (v 38). The word 'Christ' means 'anointed', the same as 'Messiah' in Hebrew. In Old Testament times the kings and priests were anointed, so the title 'Christ' tells us that Jesus is God's anointed King and Priest. Look up 1 Chronicles 17:11-14 and Micah 5:2 to find some Old Testament background as to the significance of Jesus being born in Bethlehem, the 'city of David'.

1 Corinthians 13 Old translations have the word 'charity' - the meaning of this word is 'love'. Love is a characteristic of God Himself (1 John 4:7-12), and God wants us to be like Him. In New Testament times many of the disciples had miraculous gifts of prophecy, miracles and foreign languages. But these amazing powers were only a means to an end, to teach people the Gospel and enable them to develop God's love in themselves, a far greater and more enduring possession than any Spirit gift.

Mark 4 Jesus' parables teach us that we have to make sure we allow God's Word to penetrate into our hearts and grow and become fruitful (Galatians 5:22,23). The difficulties we face in our lives, the influences of others, or the distractions of the world around us, can easily prevent us from putting God's message into practice. The parables showed the difference between Jesus' true followers (the good ground), who would search hard until they found an explanation for his words, and those who were only following him because of his miracles (the other soil types). The same principle is true for us today. God wants people who want Him, and are actively seeking to understand His message and apply it in their lives.

Ecclesiastes 3 Our lives are short and fragile, and constantly changing between times of building and times of breaking up, times of weeping and times of laughing. This is in contrast with God who is eternal, and who can be the one constant in our lives. We need to learn to rejoice in the things God gives us, whatever our situation (verses 12,13, Philippians 4:11-13). Life often appears to us to be unfair and unjust (verse 16), but we are reassured that God is in control and ultimately will bring the day of judgement when true justice will be restored (verses 15,17, 2 Timothy 4:1, 8, John 5:28-30).

2 Timothy 3 How well the 'last days' of this chapter seem to describe the days we live in! Reading the first few verses we should question ourselves: are we selfish, money-loving, boastful, proud...? We are reminded in verses 15-17 of our reason for reading the Bible – the Word of God can change us into people who are ready and able to do 'good works'. The Bible can do this because 'all Scripture is given by inspiration of God' – in other words God is the author of the Bible. The words may have been written down by many different people over a very long period of time, but in all cases it was God who was telling them what to write (see 2 Peter 1:20-21), and so we can trust what it tells us.

Don't forget that if you have any questions or comments you are always welcome to send us an email. We would also be delighted to have you come along to one of our Bible talks on Sunday at 6pm.

Over the next 9 weeks, we'll take readings from the first books of the Old Testament and the New Testament. As you read, look out for connections between the Old and New Testaments; the Bible is not two separate books but one, with a consistent message from one, unchanging God.

We will be introduced in the book of Genesis to the life of Abraham, a man whose life and faith are fundamental to our understanding of the whole gospel (see for example Galatians 3:8). Alongside this we will be continuing our study of the life of Jesus in the book of Matthew.

WEEK 02	Genesis 2-8	WEEK 07	Matthew 15-21
WEEK 03	Matthew 1-7	WEEK 08	Genesis 32-42
WEEK 04	Genesis 11-19	WEEK 09	Matthew 22-28
WEEK 05	Matthew 8-14	WEEK 10	Genesis 43-50
WEEK 06	Genesis 22-31		

The reading plan continues, covering 1 chapter every day for the whole year. Please send an email to bibletruthnottingham@gmail.com, or a message to 07391 152 474, if you would like more reading notes to help you as you work your way through God's Word. Also available is a reading plan which takes you through the whole Bible in a year.