

Beginning and Maintaining a Yearly Bible Reading Program

(on three to five pages a day)

Deuteronomy 17:19

“And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes.”

Reading the Bible through in a year is a relatively simple task and yet it is amazing how few people actually do it. One reason for this is that they are generally told if they will read three to five chapters a day they can read the Bible through in a year. On hearing this their hearts cringe – “Three to five chapters a day!” and they think of their high school or college text books and how hard it was to read just a chapter a week, more or less three to five chapters a day.

This though is really an unfounded fear. Many do not realize that some pages of the Bible contain multiple chapters, thus the emotional reaction is not warranted. Never-the-less, there we have it, when people hear three to five chapters a day they generally freeze up.

An entirely different and more realistic way to think of this is in terms of pages. A quick perusal of your Bible will reveal that it, like most Bibles has between 1,200 and 1,500 pages. That means that by reading just 3 – 5 pages a day you can read the Bible through in a year. Now a sheet of your Bible contains two numbered pages, one on each side, so in reality you are just reading from one and a half to two and half sheets a day from your Bible. Open your Bible up and hold those first two sheets (four pages) up, see you simple it would be to read that much tomorrow morning. Wouldn't you agree that now even a child could do that.

It is amazing how small decisions can turn out to be so important in your life. I can remember being challenged by a businessman named Gene Warr (who worked very closely as a layman with the Billy Graham Crusade) to read the Bible through in every year. He pointed out how simple it was and I began down the glorious road of this wonderful discipline. To mix things up a bit I began to buy different translations of the Bible each year. Next I began to look for themes, then later to keep a notebook. There were many variations but the one constant was to get up in the morning and not begin my day until I had read three to five pages in my Bible.

Generally I would read three Old Testament pages and two New Testament pages. Sometimes I would get caught up in the Word of God and read many pages. Other times I would be sick or distracted or in sin and miss a day or two, in the end however, if I kept this pace up, I could be assured of reading the Bible through in a year and sometimes the New Testament twice – should I finish early.

I quickly discovered that the daily reading of God's Word is an essential discipline for every disciple who would seek to lead others in the battle for the eternal destiny of the souls of men and women. Every word and every thought of the Bible is inspired, is living, and is of significant weight. We, as Christ's disciples, must be continually exposing our hearts and minds to God's total Word, that the Holy Spirit might at any time bring a verse to mind. If we have not exposed our mind to it, if we are not familiar with it, we should not proudly presume upon the grace of God to work in our lives. For this reason, a yearly exposure to every chapter, passage and word of the Bible is essential. God speaks not only in John and Psalms, but he also speaks in Leviticus, Hosea, Habakkuk, Haggai, Philemon, 2 John, and Jude. His Holy Spirit may want to speak to us, and we must make ourselves available.

The goal of every disciple should be to read the Bible through once each year. It is my hope that through the use of the tools provided in this section you will grow in this conviction. Let me suggest that you look at each level of the reading program charts before deciding where to begin.