



**GROW**

**A BIBLE STUDY  
NOTEBOOK FOR KIDS**



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THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:

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# GETTING STARTED

## God Wrote a Book!

This notebook is meant to help you read another book. That other book is the most important book in the whole world—the Bible! The Bible is so important because it is *God's book*.

God is the one who made the world and everything in it. That means he made *you*! And God made you to know him. How can you know him? God tells us a little bit about himself in the creation all around us. By looking at nature, we can see he is powerful and wise. But God tells us much, much more about himself in the Bible. In the Bible, he tells us more about what kind of God he is, what kinds of things he has done in the past, and what he promises to do in the future.

But what if you've never really read the Bible for yourself before? You might have a lot of questions. Good news! We've got answers for some of the most important questions.

## What Is the Bible All About?

The Bible is all about *one big story*. That story is all about the gospel of Jesus. The word 'gospel' means good news. In the Bible, the gospel is the good news that Jesus saves sinners from the punishment that deserve from God. A sinner is someone who does bad things like lying, cheating, using bad words, hating other people, or being prideful. God is the opposite of a sinner. God is holy, which means he has never done anything wrong and all that he does is right. Because he is holy, he cannot put up with sin or be friends with those who sin.

God created us to know him and be his friends. He made us and all around so we should love and obey him. But the sad news is that *all people are sinners*. Yep. You, men, everybody. We decide other things are better than God so we love those things and don't obey God. That means no one is good enough to be friends with God. And because we aren't his friends, we are his enemies. As God's enemies, he deserve to be punished for our sins. This is pretty bad news.

But the Bible also has good news: *Jesus saves sinners!* He saves us by coming into the world to live and die for us. Jesus was God in human form. That doesn't mean he was part God and part man. He was fully God and fully man. As God's Son, he lived a perfect life, obeyed his Father, and never sinned. But Jesus also died on the cross as punishment for sins. Jesus didn't die for his own sins (he didn't have any!). He died for the sins of others. He took the place of other people on the cross. So the perfect life we need before God, he lived for us. And the punishment we deserve for our sin, he took for us in his death.

Jesus becomes our Savior when he believe he did those things and we trust that he did them for us. When we put our faith in Jesus, God forgives our sin and makes us, not just his friends, but his children! Most incredible of all, after Jesus dies on the cross, he comes back to life and God the Father makes him king over everything! So, if we trust Jesus to be our savior, we show it by living the way God made us to live: loving and obeying him. We live with Jesus as our king. This good news of God saving sinners in Jesus is called *the gospel*.

As you read the Bible, look for the gospel of Jesus. It's just about everywhere! In the Old Testament, the gospel is sometimes hard to see because Jesus hasn't come yet. It is only promised and hinted at. So, Think of it like this. In the Old Testament, we see people who fail to live as God commands. Those stories help us see our need for Jesus. We also see people who do really good things, even though they aren't perfect. They help us see how much greater Jesus will be. We also read about God's Law which is perfect and demands God's people be perfect. No one can be perfect, though because we always sin. The Law helps us see God's perfect character and our need of a Savior to forgive us our sin and change us to be like God. In all of this, we see God himself who promises the gospel. God is powerful, holy, wise, and good. We even see God being patient and loving towards people who don't love him. The Bible calls this *grace* (giving people good things they don't deserve) and *mercy* (not giving people bad things they do deserve). By showing grace and mercy God is teaching people who he is and what the gospel will be about.

In the New Testament, we see Jesus. He lives an amazing life, teaching people about God, healing sick people, loving people nobody else loves, and so much more. Most importantly, he dies for his people on the cross and raises again to life. *Jesus' life is the gospel*. After the first four books that tell the story of Jesus' life, the rest of the New Testament tells us how Jesus' disciples live with Jesus as their king and tell others about him. They explain the gospel and they explain how we should live as *disciples*—people who love Jesus, learn from Jesus, and live for Jesus.

## Why Should I Read the Bible?

Your parents or other grown-ups may have even given you this notebook telling that you should read the Bible. But why should you read it? You should read the Bible because that is how God *saves* people and *grows* people. God gives us faith to believe when we read or hear the Bible. God also changes us and shapes us into the people he wants us to be through his word, the Bible.

So, as much fun as it might be to read your favorite storybook or novel, or as hard as it might be to study your school books, the Bible is different. At times it will be fun to read and at other times it may be hard to understand. But we cannot take it or leave it. God uses the Bible to grow and change us. So, think about what God says in Psalm 1:

Blessed is the man  
    who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners,  
    nor sits in the seat of scoffers;  
but his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
    and on his law he meditates day and night.  
He is like a tree  
    planted by streams of water  
that yields its fruit in its season,  
    and its leaf does not wither.  
In all that he does, he prospers.  
The wicked are not so,  
    but are like chaff that the wind drives away.  
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
    nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;  
for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
    but the way of the wicked will perish.

*Psalm 1*



Did you see what the Bible does for us? The man (or women or boy or girl) who reads God's word, thinks about God's word, and obeys God's word finds that he is a tree that always grows. That doesn't happen for the wicked person because they ignore God's word and listen to other people instead. Remember that this is the goal of Bible reading: *to grow into the kind of people God wants us to be.*

## How Do I Read the Bible?

The Bible should be read like any other book. When we read any book we are trying to understand what it says. But the Bible also has some special kinds of writing that we may not be used to reading. So, here is a list of the different kinds of writing the Bible has in it. Along with this list are some hints that might help when you read it.

**Stories:** Everyone loves to read a good story. When you read the Bible, just remember that they are true! These are true stories about real people. But like any other story, think about who the characters are, what they are doing, and happens in their lives as you read. Most important: look for God and what he is doing. You will see these historical stories in *Genesis* through *Esther* in the Old Testament and *Acts* in the New Testament.

**Law:** This is a large part of the Old Testament. These are the instructions God gives to Israel for them to obey as his people. When you read the Law of God, remember that Jesus fulfilled the Law. So, ask what the specific command can teach us about God's character. Does it get affirmed or changes in the New Testament? You can read about God's Law for Israel in parts of *Genesis* through *Deuteronomy*.

**Poetry:** The poetry of the Bible uses word pictures. So, think about the images that are used and how they teach us about God. A special part of poetry is seen in wise sayings. These can be found in *Proverbs Ecclesiastes*, *Song of Songs*, and *Job*. All of those books and *The Psalms* are poetry. The Psalms are prayers and songs of God's people.

**Prophets:** This is one of the most unusual parts of the Bible. These are something like written down sermons. But they are more than that too. The prophet not only told people how to stop sinning and love God but also told them what was going to happen in the future. This includes *Isaiah* through *Malachi* in the Old Testament and a special book called *Revelation* in the New Testament.

**Gospels.** The beginning of the New Testament has four books that are like the historical books in the Old Testament. However, these are all about who Jesus is and how he is the Savior and King for everyone. Read about him in *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John*.

**Letters.** Sometimes called *epistles*, these are letters written by Jesus' apostles to Christians in churches. These letters help us understand who Jesus is, why we should trust him, and how we can live for him. These are the books from *Romans* through *Jude*.

The Bible is really a small library of sixty-six books. Thinking about that might make it easier to read.

## How Should I Use this Notebook?

Because the Bible is God's book, one of the most important things we can do is actually read it. It will show us how know God and how he want us to live. *Discovering these things is what this notebook is all about.* Something that helps us learn is making notes. There are five kinds of notes you can write down in this notebook.

**What you're reading.** Write down what part of the Bible you read. This is called a *passage* and will include a book name, chapter number, and verse number. Remember that big numbers in the Bible are for chapters and little numbers are for verses. For example, if you read the first 4 verses of John chapter 1, you can write: **JOHN 1:1-4**

**God.** Think about some specific things you learned about God. Who is he? What is he like? What does he do? Remember that there is only one God, but he reveals himself in three Persons: The Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

**You.** What does the passage say about how to live? Did you find a promise to believe, a sin to confess, a command to obey, or an example to follow? Check the box, then write down a few words to help you remember.

**Prayer.** Whenever we read the Bible, we should pray. We might *thank* God for what we see. We might be *sorry* because we saw a sin that we do. Usually, we will see something that makes us want to ask God for *help* with something. Try to do all three: be thankful, be sorry, be hopeful (more on this later!).

## Ask for Help

Here is one last thing to help you read the Bible: *remember to ask for help*. You might ask a grown-up for help. This is always a good idea, especially when you don't understand something important. But even better is asking God for help. The Bible calls talking to God *prayer*. What you say to God doesn't have to be fancy or special. Just be respectful. You're talking to a King who made you. Your prayers can also be hopeful because God likes to answer prayer!

The Bible is God's book. Although he used people to write it down for us, they wrote exactly what he wanted them to write. This is why the Bible is sometimes called "God's Word." Because it's his book, he best knows what it means. So before you read, pray and ask him to help you. You can pray the same kinds of prayers people in the Bible prayed:

- Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law (Psalm 119:18).
- God, be merciful to me, a sinner! (Luke 18:13).
- Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth (Psalm 86:11).
- Make me a doer of your word (James 1:22).
- Open my eyes to see Jesus (Luke 24:44-45).

Then, when you are all finished reading and writing in this notebook, pray, asking for more help. This time, ask God to help you believe what you read and obey what it says. So,

**Be thankful in prayer.** Tell God how great he is and how much you appreciate what he has done for the world, his people, and you. Be especially thankful that he sent Jesus.

**Be sorry in prayer.** The Bible will show us ways that we disobey God. When you see your sin, tell God you're sorry. Then trust Jesus to be forgiven.

**Be hopeful in prayer.** Ask God for anything you think you need to trust him and obey him. You can also ask God to work in the lives of other people you know (like family or friends). God likes to answer prayer. So you can have hope that he will hear and answer, especially when you ask for things he has promised to give in the Bible!

Now, get going! Read and enjoy God's book, the Bible!

## **BIBLE READING NOTES**



**Bible Passage:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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*Did you see something about who he is, what he does, or what he expects from his people?*

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**WHAT DID YOU FIND FOR YOURSELF?**

*Did you find a promise to believe, sin to confess, command to obey, or an example to follow?*

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**HOW CAN YOU PRAY?**

*How does this passage lead you to be thankful, sorry, and hopeful?*

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