

7 Tips to Read Through the Bible in One Year

Are you up for a challenge? How about reading the Bible through this coming new year?

I've heard from so many people who would love to read the Bible through in a year but never completed the task. It's nearly impossible for the pastor to preach through all of it, so you are going to miss something unless you study on your own. Sadly, most believers haven't read the entire Bible. Some of the best nuggets of truth I discovered on my own, reading through the Bible in a year.

For several decades, I have practiced an every other year read-through of the Bible. On even-numbered years, I read through the Bible as part of my daily devotion time. On the other years, I read the Bible more thematically or spend more time in certain books. I believe both are important in our spiritual formation.

Here are seven tips for reading the Bible through in a year:

1. Pray. Ask God to give you the motivation and strength to accomplish this goal. You can't read the Bible effectively like any other book. You need God's Spirit to help you.

2. Pick an Easy-to-Read Version. This past year, I used the Holman Christian Standard, since this was the version I was primarily using in my preaching. You can use any version you wish, but I would choose one which most appeals to you—whether you want an easy-to-read or a more literal translation. I previously wrote a post about versions. You can read that [here](#).

3. Find a Plan to Help You Discipline Yourself. You could simply read three chapters a day and do fine, but I have found

having a printed checklist helps keep me disciplined. It may seem mechanical to some, but it will keep you on task. YouVersion has many plans to follow. There are more than you can imagine. The key is to find one. I like the balance of reading some Old and New Testament each day. There are even chronological versions of how we believe the events of the Bible happened. The key is to choose one that works for you. Here's a link to other options.

4. Find a Place. Choose the time and place that works best and you will most likely stick with it through the year. I find mornings work best for me. I travel frequently, so I can't have just one place, but when I'm home, I have a certain chair. I have often used the dining room table because I know I'll be less distracted. To be most effective, I need to turn off everything else and simply concentrate on the Bible reading.

5. Document Your Reading. I've found I get more out of my reading if I journal along the way what it's saying to me. Even if I don't understand it completely, writing the questions I have down helps me process them later, and eventually something else I read seems to help answer my questions. This is another benefit to the YouVersion app. It allows you to highlight and comment on verses that stand out to you.

6. Discipline Yourself. It will likely take you on average about 15 minutes per day to complete this. Once you've done it consistently for 30 days or so, you'll be well on your way to having a habit formed.

7. Catch up when needed. If you miss a day, don't sweat it—and don't quit. Spend a little extra time and play catch up on what you missed. Of course, if you do this too many times, you'll eventually give up, so the key is discipline, but extend grace to yourself as you move through the year. Also, if you didn't start on Jan. 1, start on Jan. 2 or Jan. 22 and

go through the same time next year. You can begin today. There's no legalism here—just encouragement. You can do this.

Keep the goal in front of you and follow through. A year from now, you'll be glad you accomplished your goal.

Who's with me? {eo}

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