

For the new year, commit to *try* to read the Bible every day with Pastor Brady's own Daily Bible Reading Plan!

The Bible is the most nourishing substance we can provide for our souls. A daily intake of the Word of God is better than food and water. Its life giving, and a pattern of reading slowly conforms us into the glorified image of God. John 10:14 says, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me." God is revealed to us in the Scriptures. If you are his sheep, you need to know your Shepherd. And you know him through the Scriptures. We don't worship an unknown, ambiguous God. We don't have to guess at who we're worshiping. We know, and we know with confidence.

About the plan: I made this plan in January of 2017 and have been using it ever since. It takes you through the entire Bible in one year. Plus, you read the Psalms and Proverbs twice. I designed it to where you don't go through the Bible in any particular order. I tried to randomly order the books to read while alternating between genre, length, and difficulty as an effort to keep the reader fresh and not worn out. The plan takes you through *at least* a Psalm/Proverb and a couple of OT passages every day and a New Testament passage on most days.

Key to Understanding the Plan: There are four columns on the spreadsheet. The first is the date, the second is the Psalm/Proverb, the third is OT, and the fourth is NT. So every day, look first to the left column to see the assigned reading for that day. Then, go in that order so that your final reading is in the NT. I abbreviate everything. In the Psalm column, the number applies to the Psalms (so if it just says 3, that's Psalm 3). In the other columns, the actual book is only listed once or a few times. After that, it's abbreviated. For example, in January, you'll see Luke 2 on the 2nd and then just 3 on the 3rd. That 3 refers to Luke 3. You'll read Luke all the way through until the next book is listed. Just ask if you have questions!

Keys to success: Reading the Bible in a year is one of those common new year's resolutions that rarely finds success. I want to provide some tips that I've learned to help you not be so discouraged to give up in March.

1. Don't force yourself to read the whole Bible this year. We often give up on reading when we feel overwhelmed by how far behind we are. Inevitably and without a doubt, things will come up and you'll miss your reading time. **DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.** Don't try to catch up if you miss one day or two weeks. Forgive yourself for missing and move on! When you get back into it, just look up that day and read the assigned text.
2. **PLAN.** You are introducing a time in your day to do something that you weren't doing yesterday. That takes planning. Plan a time to read or it won't happen.
3. Be consistent. Find a time of day that you can see yourself reading for the next several days. We are creatures who like routine. Build a Bible reading routine and stick with it. The longer you do it every day and in the same way, the more natural it will become.
4. Pray. 1 Corinthians 2 says that only the Spiritual person can understand spiritual things. Therefore, it's essential that we read the Bible in participation with the Holy Spirit. Before you read anything, pray that he would help you to understand. After you're reading, pray that he'd help you apply what you read. Pray that he would make you passionate for the Bible, and that he would make you love the Scriptures. The Spirit changes our hearts to these things. Pray in this direction.
5. Why does Bible reading sound like a chore and why isn't it enjoyable? A very common reason why Christians don't stick with a Bible reading plan is because it always seems like too much of a chore, too difficult to understand, or just too boring. For the last one, pray according to #4 above. For the second, let me help you understand the Bible! And for the first one, know that it is okay for it to seem like a difficult chore to accomplish. This is normal because our hearts and minds are more naturally drawn to the quick and flashy things of this world. The Bible is different from anything else we consume because it doesn't move, it doesn't have color, and it doesn't make noise. We must train our minds to be drawn to something so stable. And we do that through consistency and through praying.

I'm encouraged that you want to read your Bible next year. When you adopt this plan, you can have confidence that I'm reading the same passages right alongside you. I would love the opportunity to talk about it somehow. Whether that be through a podcast or video that you listen to, a scheduled time of conversation (weekly or one time), or you texting/calling me when you read something confusing, I want to be here for you as you read through the Bible. Use me. You'll NEVER bother me with questions about the Bible. Let's set something up and meet over lunch, breakfast, coffee, or the phone.