

Helping Your Children Read Their Bibles

- ★ Model reading the Bible. Modeling is the most effective teaching method.
- ★ Find an age appropriate version with the features that will most appear to your child (see download on selecting a Bible for your child).
- ★ Most children tend to just open the Bible and read wherever it opens. Stress the importance of systematic reading - starting and finishing a book of the Bible, or at least starting and finishing a complete Bible story.
- ★ Elementary age children should mainly focus on reading the Gospels, Acts, appropriate Old Testament stories, Psalms, and Proverbs.
- ★ Stress consistency rather than quantity. Reading a few paragraphs a day at least 5 days a week is a great goal. There is nothing wrong with extrinsic rewards to get them started.
- ★ Encourage highlighting and marking the Bible. Drawing symbols like a heart when they see the word “love” or a dove when they see the word “Holy Spirit” can help kids to focus.
- ★ Teach children to listen to God when they read. The Bible does not emphasize “studying” Scripture, but rather listening to God’s voice as we read and letting Scripture transform us (The Greek in 2 Timothy 2:15 says to be “diligent” with the Word). Highlighting a verse is a way we acknowledge God is speaking to us about something. After highlighting a verse, follow these steps:

Quiet yourself by turning your focus on Jesus.
Ask God what He wants to speak to you about this verse.
Tune to the words and pictures that gently light upon your heart.
Write down these spontaneous words and pictures.

- ★ God speaks to us through the Bible and then we can pray that verse back to God as a prayer. For example, start by praying Psalm 23. “Lord, you are my shepherd. Lead me today into all of your will.” If your child has highlighted verses of the Bible, turn each of these highlighted verses into a prayer.
- ★ You and your child could put tabs on your Bibles together to mark each book. You could talk about the book as you add a few tabs each night (very basic background, type of book, etc.).
- ★ Read the Bible together. Don’t be intimidated by not knowing all the answers to their questions. Such is the wonder of the Bible. Our understanding is constantly growing.