

## BIBLE READ-THRU CHALLENGE

### WHY READ THROUGH THE BIBLE THIS YEAR?

**REASON #1:** To be spiritually surprised by forgotten passages and new insights!

**REASON #2:** To get the big picture and the connectivity of the Bible. The Bible department at Wheaton College began testing the Bible literacy of incoming freshmen, most of whom were ardent believers from fine evangelical churches. *One-third of the freshmen could not put the following in order: Abraham, the Old Testament prophets, the death of Christ, and Pentecost. Half could not sequence: Moses in Egypt, Isaac's birth, Saul's death, and Judah's exile. One-third could not identify Matthew as an apostle from a list of New Testament names.*<sup>1</sup>

**REASON #3:** To “unconsciously” memorize Scripture—Sheer repetitive reading of the Bible will begin to lock certain verses in your mind.

**REASON #4:** To be warned and encouraged by biographical examples. **1 Corinthians 10:6** *Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.* **1 Corinthians 4:16** *Therefore I urge you to imitate me.*

**REASON #5:** To let the Holy Spirit nudge your soul

### TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Use different versions to get past the blindness of familiarity and to jog new levels of observation.
2. OR--Use the same Bible over and over—to the point that you can mentally picture exactly where it is located on the page!
3. Choose a plan and the Bible you will use.
  - 3-4 pages a day in a text-only Bible
  - Give yourself some “fudge factor” time. Reading 4 pages a day in a “text-only” Bible (i.e., no additional study notes) will allow you to miss occasional days and still complete your read-thru within twelve months.
  - Reading plan in *Our Daily Bread*. In the middle of the left-hand margin is a tiny box labeled “The Bible in One Year.” In addition to the daily devotional reading, use this guide to read thru your Bible in a year.
  - *The Narrated Bible*—Reorganizes all biblical content into a chronological flow—with explanatory heading notes.
  - Listen to the Bible on your commute.
  - Adapt the target to fit your life and level—Maybe read just the New Testament this year...
  - Use a computer or mobile “ap” reading program
4. Mark up your Bible—as a memory aid and relocation tool.
5. Read with a “grid” in mind...
  - What does the Bible say about widows, orphans, the poor, aliens?
  - What does the Bible say about how and why to pray?
  - What does the Bible say about God's holiness?
  - What does the Bible say about the nature and practice of faith?
  - Etc.

**Martin Luther** read the entire Bible twice a year. By 1513 he had virtually memorized all of the New Testament, Psalms, and part of the Old Testament.

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December 12, 2011

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<sup>1</sup> Gary M. Burge, “The Greatest Story Never Read,” *Christianity Today* (August 9, 1999), 45.