

# Bible 101 Curriculum

## The Bible Project - How to Read the Bible

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/how-to-read-the-bible/>

### Intro to the Bible (4 episodes)

What is the Bible? (5:48)

The Story of the Bible (5:38)

Literary Style (5:28)

Ancient Jewish Meditation Literature (4:31)

### How to Read Biblical Narrative (6 episodes)

Plot (5:13)

Character (5:28)

Setting (5:46)

Design Patterns (6:07)

The Gospel (5:47)

The Parables of Jesus (5:42)

### How to Read Biblical Poetry (6 episodes)

Poetry (5:23)

Poetic Metaphor (5:12)

The Book of Psalms (5:30)

The Prophets (5:18)

The Book of Solomon (5:28)

Apocalyptic Literature (6:58)

### How to Read Biblical Prose Discourse (3 episodes)

Biblical Law (6:19)

New Testament Letters: Historical Context (5:21)

New Testament Letters: Literary Context (5:30)

### The Gospel of John Overviews:

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/john/>

**Plan: (6 weeks)**

## Week 1

### Intro:

How was your week?

What are your current thoughts/views about the bible?

### Intro to the Bible (4 episodes)

What is the Bible? (5:48)

The Story of the Bible (5:38)

Literary Style (5:28)

Ancient Jewish Meditation Literature (4:31)

**In group questions** *(After watching each video, have your group ask these questions. Group questions are meant to help start group discussions, reflective questions are for individuals to reflect from there personal life experiences)*

### Week 1 What is the Bible?

Group Question

How do you view the Old and New Testaments?

*(You will get different answers here and that's ok, we just want people to start to open up and share. You are looking for your group to correlate the Old and New testaments together. The next question will help that.*

Reflective Question

What was Jesus's role in the Old and New Testaments?

*(The Old and New Testaments are not stand alone "parts" of the bible. It is one continuous story of God's fulfillment to us and connected by Jesus's life, death and resurrection. A neat teaching point you can use is "The old testament is the new testament concealed, The new testament is the Old Testament revealed". Jesus is the story of the entire bible. Old testament stories have unique personal aspects to the story being told, but those stories had an illusion or pointing to the not yet arrived Jesus, and his life, death and resurrection for us.) Go on to the next video.*

## **Week 2    The story of the Bible.**

### Group Question

What is the result when man defines what is good or bad?

*(The point to get across is sin, without a definition of right and wrong there is no real right and wrong. Each person has a different definition of good or bad and it can vary depending on culture, the person's past history, socio- economic status and a million other things. God's definitions of good and bad are meant to guide us and bring us fulfillment even though it may seem hard sometimes for us.)*

### Reflective question

Where in your life have you thought something was good and it ended up being bad. This can be prior to you being a Christian or being a Christian and deliberately disobeying God?

*(This is meant to put emphasis for the group the evidence of us calling something good or bad apart from God's wisdom and the result of that choice)*

## **Week 3 Literary Style**

### Group question

What literary style of the bible is the hardest for you to read? And why?

### Reflective question

What story of the bible have you been able to relate to the most?

*(The goal is to help the group see that God used real people with real issues just like us, and that we can relate to these stories to learn about God and be encouraged in our faults.)*

## **Week 4    Meditation Literature**

### Group question

What confuses you about the bible?

*(The goal is to let people talk, don't feel like you have to have an answer to people's confusion, if you can speak into it knowledgeably do so. This is giving your group the freedom to be honest and open with each other. And also to see they are not the only ones in the group with confusions. This is to listen and let people open up)*

### Reflective question

How does it make you feel knowing the bible is to be read over and over for a lifetime of learning?

*(This may intimidate some in the group or feel redundant. The thing to note is this is what it takes and God knew that. We will never arrive on this earth. It was written for the purpose of meditating on the Bible over and over and over again. We will have seasons of feeling like we got this, and seasons of wondering how God puts up with me when I keep screwing up over and over. It's a marathon not a sprint.*

*This is also another great opportunity to highlight the importance of doing our christian lives together in group with other christians like you are doing right now. In a group comes the greatest growth!)*

### Homework:

Watch John overview, Read John chapters 1-4, and write reflection:

S: Scripture

O: Observation

A: Application

P: Prayer

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## Part 2

### Intro:

How was your week?

How was your homework?

What did you notice/learn?

How did it impact you?

## **How to Read Biblical Narrative (6 episodes)**

Plot (5:13)

Character (5:28)

Setting (5:46)

Design Patterns (6:07)

The Gospel (5:47)

The Parables of Jesus (5:42)

## **In group questions:**

**A. Plot** *(After watching each video, have your group ask these questions. Group questions are meant to help start group discussions, reflective questions are for individuals to reflect from there personal life experiences)*

### **Group Question**

Why is it important to follow the plot and context of a biblical narrative?

*(The thought to get across is that God's biblical truth is the real truth we can base our lives on. The way God chooses to give us that truth is through stories and people. These stories are written in specific ways for a specific purpose. To give us the truth about God. Like in the video with Gideon's story if we are not careful we can miss the main point of what God is telling us through a story. Reading the bible is not about what I want it to say to me or what I need to hear, but rather what is God wanting to tell me so I can change)*

### Reflective question

What is a time in your life where you have seen God's patience and have asked God for a sign over and over like Gideon?

*(We want people to relate their lives back to this biblical story, if a "Gideon story" does not come to your group members' minds. Ask how God has shown patience to them in repeating ways. The goal is not to feel shame, but to be settled inside that God knows our humanness, and we can trust him, and trust his guidance in our lives as He grows us.)*

## **B. Character**

### Group question

What are your thoughts after hearing about some of the characters God uses in the bible?

*(The point of this question is for people to relate, emphasis David was a MURDER!!! Lol. Drive those points home about who God used, he can use anyone. Your past, present or future do not disqualify you from God using you)*

### Reflective question

What has God called you to do that you are doubting?

*(We want people to look inward now, we are contrasting to look who God used in the first question. To our group looking inside and asking themselves to face the same doubts. The goal is for people to pinpoint what God is asking them to do and saying it. That is all)*

## **C. Setting**

### Group Question

What stands out to you about settings in the bible and how God uses settings to teach us?

*(The thought we want the group to see is patterns. God uses patterns in settings and places. Egypt was repeated over and over, testing Israel and Jesus with numbers. There are many avenues to look at with all of this. The resounding theme to get across is God's faithfulness over and over and over and his ability to deliver his people. This can all be seen in settings in Biblical narrative)*

Reflective question

Think of an unfavorable setting in your past that God either delivered you from, or a setting you may have chosen in disobedience to God (Like Israel in the videos). That you can now look back on and see God's faithfulness to deliver and teach you. Share with the group.

*(The goal is to have your group reflect on their lives and relate to the stories in the Bible around settings)*

Reflective question

The video refers to Jesus being the beginning of a new creation. Jesus says a lot we are born again in him or "made new". What parts of your life have you seen most drastically be made new?

*(We want people to reflect and see the actual CHANGE God has made in their lives. It is not about doing good, or right and wrong. It is about Jesus making us new, causing us to change by his revelation to us. And we dedicate ourselves to follow him. And*

*trusting Him to see us through, protect us (shepherd) and walk with us to the end. Our trust is not in ourselves, our trust is in His finished work)*

### **Homework:**

Watch John overview, Read John chapters 5-9, and write reflection:

S: Scripture

O: Observation

A: Application

P: Prayer

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### **Week 3:**

#### **Intro:**

How was your week?

How was your homework?

What did you notice/learn?

How did it impact you?

### **How to Read Biblical Narrative (6 episodes)**



Design Patterns (6:07)

The Gospel (5:47)

The Parables of Jesus (5:42)

### **In group questions:**

**A. Design Patterns** *(After watching each video, have your group ask these questions. Group questions are meant to help start group discussions, reflective questions are for individuals to reflect from there personal life experiences)*

#### **Group Question**

How do the repeated themes in the Bible help show the truth and reliability of it so we can base our lives on it as God's truth?

*(The teaching point is that the Bible has 100's of different stories, written over 1,000's of years, by different authors, at different times, in different places that all repeat the same themes pointing toward Jesus. What are the chances of that happening apart from God and left up to coincidence? Another teaching point is to bring up that during biblical times the only reason they would write or keep records is for historical accuracy. Fiction did not exist at that time, people did not write stories for the sake of entertainment. To use that as an argument against the bible would be inaccurate as fiction or story telling did not exist)*

#### **Reflective Question**

The video referenced the repeated theme of humanity seeing, taking, and the destruction those choices caused. Jesus did the opposite and surrendered his will to doing what God wanted instead.

Where in your life has there been destruction from your own seeing, and taking?

*(We want people to reflect and realize the importance of our decisions and what is caused. Be sure to also highlight how God was faithful in wrong decisions in the bible and was faithful to see his people through. That they had to deal with the consequences of their decisions but God used all things for their good. The goal is to illustrate not bad choices as much as God's faithfulness in our weakness.)*

Where in your life have you done the opposite and surrendered to his will for you?

*(Important to note that following Gods will sometimes does not mean it's easy or pain free. Sometimes what God wants us to do has nothing to do with us but is for others. Jesus followed God's will which led to pain in his life, personal anguish and ultimately his death. The result of that obedience was the salvation of MANY. Sometimes what God asks us to do is not about us, but about others. What would have happened if Christ did not submit to God's plan for His life?)*

## **B. The Gospel**

Group question

Why did the gospel writers reference the Old Testament so much? What does that tell us?

*(This can be two fold. One, it tells us that Jesus was fulfilling the prophecies that were laid out over and over again in the Old Testament. The gospel writers were trying to relay the message to us the readers. That Jesus was the long awaited Savior we had been waiting for. Each time the OT is referenced is evidence and proof that Jesus is the savior!*

*Two, it shows us that Jesus was the plan all along. That over and over again God was*

*telling his people in the Old Testament that a savior was coming. The Old Testament was written prior to the New Testament. In Old Testament times there was no New Testament. So as they read or were read what we call the Old Testament. God was telling them he would provide and the answer (Jesus) was coming. All in His timing. Our job is not to question or demand the answer right now. But to pray and trust God that no matter when the answer comes. Immediately or years. The ANSWER is coming because we can trust God)*

#### Reflective Question

What does the principle we just talked about come into play in our circumstances in life and trusting God?

*(The principle to highlight is that Jesus was not plan B. Jesus was Plan A. God had planned for our salvation through Jesus for thousands of years. The hard part for us is the wait. And the learning in the waiting. That is where the trust comes in. We don't have nor do we need all the answers. Our faith is strongest when we can rest in that and say, I don't know but I know THEE One who does know the answer)*

### **C. Parables of Jesus**

#### Group question

What is the importance in how parables teach, and the ability to hear?

*(We want to highlight the importance of listening. The word we use for hear had a deeper meaning in the language used to write the bible. It was the word "Shema" (Sha-ma). The definition of that word is not only to listen. But to listen and do, and to go a little deeper, to truly listen is to act on it, and do it. To truly have listened results in action. To have "ears to hear" means not only listening but acting on what was heard)*

#### Reflective question

The video referenced what the people “thought” the kingdom of God was and would do. Mainly, it would overthrow the Roman government and rule. What God sent was not what the people expected it to look like. In fact it was the polar opposite.

Where in your life have you “expected” God to do something one way, and he did it another way? What were your feelings when you were going through that?

### **Homework:**

Watch John overview, Read John chapters 10-14, and write reflection:

S: Scripture

O: Observation

A: Application

P: Prayer

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### **Week 4:**

#### **Intro:**

How was your week?

How was your homework?

What did you notice/learn?

How did it impact you?

### **How to Read Biblical Poetry (6 episodes)**

Poetry (5:23)

Poetic Metaphor (5:12)

The Book of Psalms (5:30)

### **In group questions:**

**A. Poetry** *(After watching each video, have your group ask these questions. Group questions are meant to help start group discussions, reflective questions are for individuals to reflect from there personal life experiences)*

Group question

Biblical poetry was written in a way to cause the reader to slow down and digest what was being written and to stop and think. We see this in the Psalms alot where their writer would use the phrase “Selah” which means, stop and think on that.

Why is it important when we read biblical poetry that we take time to slow down and think?

*(We want to highlight that biblically and especially in poetry we slow down and think about it. That when we put the Bible down we continue to think about it. That is when life change happens. Remember from last week it is not just hearing, but hearing and doing. The doing is helped when we think and ponder what we just read.)*

Reflective question

Biblical poetry is a bottomless well in depth and meaning of what was written. It was not meant to be read once and mastered. Much like all of scripture is. It requires thought and repetition.

What is one thing you can do starting today to help with thought and repetition of scripture reading in your life?

*(The goal is for you folks to implement something to help, take a next step)*

**B. Poetic metaphor**

Group question

One way the bible uses metaphor is to tie poetry to narrative. What are the chances a metaphor used in the Old Testament is used thousands of years later in a narrative in the New Testament?

*(We want to highlight the reliability of the bible and the consistency of the Bible. That over thousands of years and many different writers it all ties together. We can base our lives on it)*

Reflective question

What metaphor either used in the video, or that you have read in the Bible. Is most impactful for you to think about?

*(This can range anywhere from “the rock” and what that means to them or anything impactful they have heard or read)*

### **C. The book of Psalms**

Group Question

This book was written to an exiled Israel to praise and worship God, and thousands of years later we can say the same thing. We are exiles on Earth waiting to return home to heaven to be with Jesus in our promised land. How does that impact you, when you reflect on that?

*(It is powerful to think about. How it all ties together. Israel was exiled from their homeland that God had promised them. It was their home and “promised land” from God. When Jesus left this earth he returned home to prepare a place for us. He reassured those who heard him over and over that those who believe in Him will not perish, but would live with him forever. It can be said that Heaven is our “promised” land. That is a LIVING METAPHOR for us right now who believe in Jesus.”*

Reflective question

The Psalms are very real and raw. The authors don’t hold back how they feel or their emotion. Read Psalm 69 aloud to the group.

Have you ever felt that way in your life?

*(highlight the realness of how David felt, the things he was saying to God, he didn't hold back. But then bring it back to verse 13 where it says "But as for me, my prayer is to you O Lord. At an acceptable time, O God, in the abundance of your steadfast love answer me in your saving faithfulness")*

### **Homework:**

Watch John overview, Read John chapters 15-18, and write reflection:

S: Scripture

O: Observation

A: Application

P: Prayer

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## **Week 5:**

### **Intro:**

How was your week?

How was your homework?

What did you notice/learn?

How did it impact you?

### **How to Read Biblical Poetry (6 episodes)**

The Prophets (5:18)

The Books of Solomon (5:28)

Apocalyptic Literature (6:58)

**In group questions:** *(After watching each video, have your group ask these questions. Group questions are meant to help start group discussions, reflective questions are for individuals to reflect from there personal life experiences)*

## **A. The Prophets**

### Group Question

The video mentioned the word covenant and that Israel had a role to play in the partnership with God. What are the 3 ways in which Israel violated the covenant? (Idolatry, alliances with other nations, and injustice toward the poor)

### Reflective question

Of those 3 which stand out to you the most and why?

## **B. The Books of Solomon**

### Group question

The video reflects on Solomon looking back to the tree of life in the Garden and us having a choice in being wise rulers and choosing God's wisdom. How does knowing we have a choice and the power to choose to obey God or to not listen to God?

*(We want to highlight the power of choice, God gave us the power to choose. Sometimes when we are tempted to not obey God, we need to remind ourselves God gave us the power of choice, with his Holy Spirit helping us we have and are equipped to have power and guidance. We see this theme repeated alot in the Bible starting with Adam and Eve having a choice, Israel in the wilderness God told them he set before them blessings and curses. God outlined following his way would lead to blessing, and if they did not and turned to their own wisdom it would lead to curses and death.*



*Important to drive home that God didn't cause, he didn't allow, he merely set the choice before Israel and told them to choose life.)*

### Reflective question

The book of Ecclesiastes highlights that even living by God's wisdom does not mean disappointment won't come, and that life will not always be merry for us on earth. We will experience things that don't make sense and cause pain even following God's wisdom and way. The video stated Solomon at the end of the book told us to have realistic expectations of this life and to strive to rely God's wisdom for our lives. Where in your life did you do something God's way, and something painful happened?

*(We want to point people to the fact that even in the pain we can trust God. Following God is not about a result, it is about trusting Him in all things by saying "No matter what happens I will follow you and your way and trust you will work all things out for the best")*

## **C. Apocalyptic Literature**

### Group Question

The word apocalyptic means to unveil or uncover something. The video stated that apocalyptic literature in the bible it was God revealing or uncovering a divine perspective of what was really going on in the world. How does knowing there is a divine perspective of what is taking place in the world change your perspective from your human perspective of what is going on in the world?

*(The point to get across is that we do not always see or understand what God is doing and what is actually happening in the world. We need to balance our perspective with a trust that God has a plan and we may not see that plan nor understand it. But we can trust it because its God)*

### Reflective question

The book of revelation can seem like a dark illumination of the end of the world. Yet the point of Revelation is to show that Jesus overcomes all and it is the beginning of the new world, our eternal world. Where is your life? Can you examine an area where you need to remember that God wins and Jesus has overcome?

*(Sometimes we forget that God wins and Jesus has overcome, we want the group to reflect on that, this is temporary. Jesus wins)*

### Homework:

Watch John overview, Read John chapters 19-21, and write reflection:

S: Scripture

O: Observation

A: Application

P: Prayer

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## Week 6:

### Intro:

How was your week?

How was your homework?

What did you notice/learn?

How did it impact you?

## **How to Read Biblical Prose Discourse (3 episodes)**

Biblical Law (6:19)

New Testament Letters: Historical Context (5:21)

New Testament Letters: Literary Context (5:30)

**In group questions:** *(After watching each video, have your group ask these questions. Group questions are meant to help start group discussions, reflective questions are for individuals to reflect from there personal life experiences)*

### **A. Biblical Law**

#### Group Question

After hearing some about the laws and they symbolism that they had. How difficult and how much of your own effort would it take to fulfill God's laws?

*(We want to highlight how hard it was, even use the word impossible!!! We want to highlight human effort in the law to fulfill it and to point toward Jesus doing what we could not. And fulfilling that law. And now we look to Jesus who did what we could not)*

#### Reflective Question

The video talked about the number 7. And God wanted humans to "partner" with him as his ultimate goal. In your life what does "partnering" with God mean to you? What is one step you can take right now to partner with Him?

### **B. New Testament Letters: Historical Context**

### Group Question

Why is understanding the context of the New Testament letters important?

*(We want to highlight the importance of reading these letters with the understanding of why they were written and to whom. This is important to practice as we read these letters. In order to properly understand what is being said and why it was said is how we can base our lives on biblical truth and gives us confidence in that choice as we live and honor God)*

### Reflective Question

Have you read something in the New Testament without the proper background and context of that verse? And found out what you thought it said, was not really what it was saying?

*(If there is anything in your life that you can share here please do so. There are many bible verses that we can believe as truth, and pray them even. And that is not what God was wanting us to know through his word. We do not want this truth to scare people, we want it to encourage them, and inspire them to study for truth! And study in the context the Bible was written.)*

## C. New Testament Letter: Literary Context

### Group Question

The video spoke about each letter being one continuous letter and thought. What are the dangers of reading one specific part of a letter without understanding what was written before and after the specific part you read?

*(That we can be off, or interpret what we want it to say verses what the Bible is telling us!!!. We want to always read the Bible with the mindset of, What is the Bible telling me verse what do I want the Bible to say to me)*

### Reflective Question

The video talked about unity and living as one under Jesus in this new life with other believers. Is there anyone in your life that is a brother or sister in Christ that you need to forgive?