

Bible Studies

As a Christian, I think it is very important to read and understand scripture on a daily basis. I've found many ways to do this that are simple and effective. I don't always have a physical Bible at hand, but it's always there on my phone. Any version of the Bible can be accessed online, and all are searchable, making it a simple matter to look up a particular verse.

I also subscribe to several web services that deliver daily scripture readings and devotions. I generally read these first thing in the morning.

The *very best thing I've ever done*, outside of attending church on Sundays, since becoming a Christian, was to participate in a weekly Bible study with friends. Our group decided to work through the Bible one book at a time, meeting once a week or so. We were a group of four: myself as a new Christian, a preacher and his wife from Mississippi (who became my best friends), and their youngest daughter, a teenager, whose enthusiasm for Jesus brought a wonderful perspective to our discussions. Each week, we would all read the book in question (we started with Genesis), and one of us would prepare a lesson about that book. When the day arrived we would listen to the lesson and discuss the book, sometimes using extra resources.

Over the course of two years (we took the summers off) we made our way through all sixty-six books of the Bible! When we were done, all four of us had read the entire Bible, and gained a lot of understanding, not just about what was in each book, but how God's story, and what Jesus had to say, was interwoven through the entire Bible. We learned about people whose stories we hadn't known well; some were sad, others joyful. We learned about kings, prophets, minor and major characters, and how they all fit together to bring us a picture of what it really means to believe in God.

Those two years were the most amazing years of my spiritual life.

Since moving to the Edmonton area for health reasons, I have maintained contact with these friends, who live in Fairview. David is a retired preacher and the person who taught me to paint in oils; his paintings can be seen here on this site off the main page. He and I now meet weekly through Messenger video, and each week we read one chapter of a book from the Bible and on the day, one of us reads it out loud and presents a

lesson on it. To date (March 2023) we've worked our way through John, Acts, Galatians, James, Romans, and 1 Corinthians. The difference this time is that we are doing it *one chapter at a time*. It's amazing.

I've become fascinated by Paul's life, and we plan to continue with the other books he's written.

I can't stress enough how valuable this experience has been. The first study was, of course, in addition to regular church on Sundays, sometimes Sunday school before church, and often a men's study group on Wednesday evenings. I enjoyed every bit of it, but the in-depth study with friends I trusted was the best!

Nowadays, at least until I get a car, I attend church virtually through services on YouTube from my own church in Worsley, as well as David's church in Fairview, and occasionally even a church in Mississippi!