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This is your Bible discovery guide to help you get your Bible off your shelf and into your life!

WELCOME TO INSIDE OUT

Connecting word to life

CONTAINED WITHIN THIS GUIDE YOU WILL FIND



facts about the most amazing book that ever was ... and still is!



ideas to bring the words to life and enable you to meet with God.



clear info about resources that will specifically help you, as a young person, connect with the Bible in a relevant, fresh way.



six 'Connectives' to guide your Bible reading experience and steps into action.



tips on how to read between the lines, get inside the story of the Bible and live out its meaning in our lives.



suggestions for ways of studying the Bible on your own or with a group.

WHAT DO YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY SAY ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE OF READING THE BIBLE?



'It's taught me the best way to treat people. It makes me want to be a better person to the people that I care about.'



'I've seen lots of verses about not to worry and giving your cares to God, and since then I've worried a lot less.'



'Once you get into the routine of reading a Bible, good stuff will come from it!'



'By reading the Bible I've been inspired, and I've lived that out in my life every day.'



'I love reading the Bible because it has personal anecdotes about people's encounters with God.'



'Where Jesus commands people to be healed, it's just so powerful, and I think the power of the name of Jesus is just amazing.'

You can see these and other quotes from young people by watching a video at gnbyouthedition.co.uk/stories

The Bible is one of the most influential documents in the whole of history and has been transforming people's lives for thousands of years.

Great leaders of the past, such as American civil rights activist Dr Martin Luther King, have been inspired by its teachings. Even though it was written so long ago, it's still relevant to our lives right here, right now. The Bible is God's living word – it's what God wants to say to us now and in the future. Through the words in the Bible, God tells us about who we are, who he wants us to become, his dreams for his world and his love for his people. The words are inspiring, exciting, challenging, informing and comforting.



Reading the Bible is not simply reading, it's getting together with God!

The Bible has something to say about almost all the questions we might be asking – whether about our relationships, our purpose here on earth or how to live a good life. People in really tough situations have read the Bible and found themselves changed. God speaks to us through the Bible, bringing a message of hope, love, forgiveness, freedom and purpose.

We learn that nothing can ever separate us from God's love, and we find out more about this God who loves us unconditionally and can make a difference to us today.

**We spend time with the Bible
because we want to get to
know the person it's all about
– that's God!**



The BIBLE IS THE
STORY OF GOD,
PAST, PRESENT
AND FUTURE.

We will soon discover that God speaks to us clearly and personally through the Bible. God will not love us more because we read the Bible, or reject us if we don't. However, getting into the Bible means getting to know God. We can grow in our faith and learn to become more like Jesus.

THE INSIDE OUT CONNECTIVES

We wanted to help you get excited to pick up your Bible and really connect with what you read, and we have come up with six ways of doing this. We've called them the *Inside Out* 'Connectives' - creative practices that we hope will help to deepen your connection with God through the Bible and boost your Bible reading experience.

Each Connective focuses on a specific element that is a vital part of quality Bible study. You can follow these Connectives through step by step, or pick and mix according to the passage you are reading or the context in which you are studying.

THE SIX CONNECTIVES ARE:



Pray

Quite simply, remembering to pray when you read – before, during and after.



Read

There's no way around it: you've got to open the book and read the words. So the 'Read' Connective offers loads of suggestions to help you with the practicalities of reading and understanding the Bible text, from looking up Bible references to using daily Bible reading apps and commentaries.



Explore

The 'Explore' Connective takes you into the Bible text in more detail, to think about the context, timeline, language and principles underpinning the writing. This helps the words come alive before your very eyes.



Question

This Connective is all about investigating Scripture through asking questions. Read between the lines to uncover: What's going on? What does it mean? Who's who? What can I learn from them?



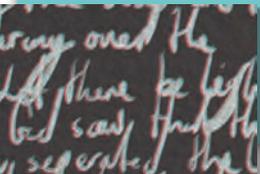
Dig

The 'Dig' Connective is about getting a part of the Bible inside you. It could be a single word, a whole verse, the meaning of a story or even the attitude of a character. This Connective presents several different tools, such as paraphrasing, meditating, memorising and storytelling, to bring the Bible text to life in your life.



Live

The final Connective asks you to 'live' out the words of the Bible in your life. This means finding ways to action what you learn from Scripture on a daily basis. Putting into action the words of the Bible means thinking about how the words you have read, explored, questioned and reflected on make a practical difference in your normal life. Are there any changes that you need to make? Are there any actions that you need to take?



PRAY



Pray before, during and after your reading.

Reading the Bible is more than just reading text. The words in the Bible are God's living words and are one way that God uses to speak clearly and powerfully into our lives.

As you read the Bible, take time to pray and talk to God about his words on those pages. As you hear him speaking to you, it's natural to speak back, having a conversation with God. That's what God longs for you to do as you read his words. You can pray before, during and after your reading.

BEFORE YOU OPEN THE BOOK, ASK GOD TO BE WITH YOU AS YOU READ HIS WORD:

Ask him to guide you to the right passage

Pray that he will make the words come alive to you

Ask him to help you to understand what you are reading

READ

Find your way round the Bible, search words and themes online and use Bible reading Tools.



FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND

Every Bible will have a contents page at the start, with page numbers so that you can easily find the book you're looking for. Often there will also be an introduction page at the start of each book, giving a broad overview of the themes in the book and some handy background information, such as when and why it might have been written, and who might have written it.

The Bible text is broken into smaller chunks so that we can easily search for a particular part. Each book is split into chapters, and then each chapter is split into verses. So, if you see the reference Mark 16.1-5, this means the book of Mark, chapter 16, and verse 1 through to verse 5. The chapter numbers will be printed in large type, and the verse numbers will be printed much smaller.

1200

Mark

Zephaniah
Haggai
Zechariah
Malachi
Matt:

MARK 15. 16

³¹In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the Law jeered at Jesus, saying to each other: "He saved others, but he cannot save himself! ³²Let us see the Messiah, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him!" And the two who were crucified with Jesus insulted him also.

The Death of Jesus

(Mt 27.45-56; Lk 23.44-49; Jn 19.28-30)

³³At noon the whole country was covered with darkness, which lasted for three hours. ³⁴At three o'clock, Jesus cried out with a loud shout, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?"

³⁵Some of the people there heard him and said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah!" ³⁶One of them ran up with a sponge, soaked it in cheap wine, and put it on the end of a stick. Then he held it up to Jesus' lips and said, "Wait! Let us see if Elijah is coming to bring him down from the cross!"

³⁷With a loud cry Jesus died.

³⁸The curtain hanging in the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. ³⁹The army officer who was standing there in front of the cross saw how Jesus had died. ⁴⁰"This man was really the Son of God!" he said.

⁴¹Some women were there, looking on from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and of Joseph, and Salome. ⁴²They had followed Jesus while he was in Galilee and had helped him. Many other women who had come to Jerusalem with him were there also.

The Burial of Jesus

(Mt 27.57-61; Lk 23.50-56; Jn 19.38-42)

⁴³It was towards evening when Joseph of Arimathea arrived. He was a respected member of the Council, who was waiting for the coming of the Kingdom of God. It was Preparation day (that is, the day before the Sabbath), so Joseph went boldly into the presence of Pilate and asked him for the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴Pilate was surprised to hear that Jesus was already dead. He called the army officer and asked him if Jesus had been dead a long time. ⁴⁵After hearing the officer's report, Pilate told Joseph he could have the body. ⁴⁶Joseph bought a linen sheet, took the body down, wrapped it in the sheet, and placed it in a tomb which had been dug out of solid rock. Then he rolled a large stone across the entrance to the tomb. ⁴⁷Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph were watching and saw where the body of Jesus was placed.

The Resurrection

(Mt 28.1-8; Lk 24.1-12; Jn 20.1-10)

16 After the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices to go and anoint the body of Jesus. ²Very early on Sunday morning, at sunrise, they went to the tomb. ³On the way they said to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" (It was a very large stone.) Then they looked up and saw that the stone had already been rolled back. ⁵So they entered the tomb, where they saw a young man sitting on the right, wearing a white robe — and they were alarmed.

⁶"Don't be alarmed," he said. "I know you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is not here — he has been

^{15.29} had died; some manuscripts have had cried out and died.

EXPLORE



Think about the language, timeline, context and principles underpinning the biblical text, to help it come alive.

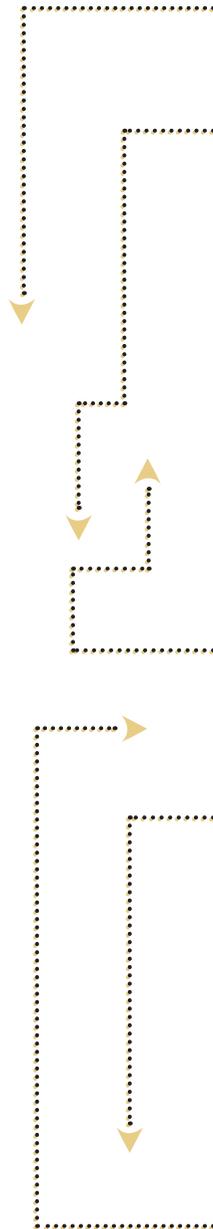
EXPLORE THE LANGUAGE

The Bible was not written in English. When people translated it from Hebrew, Greek or Aramaic into English, they had to find the English word that best corresponded to the original meaning. Sometimes there simply isn't an English word that does this, so looking at different Bible translations (perhaps using biblegateway.com), or even researching back to the original language, can help make sense of the Bible.

EXPLORE THE TIMELINE

We also need to understand how any individual Bible passage or story fits into the whole biblical story and how it is part of the overall plan. The first 17 books of the Old Testament (the historical books) tell the story of the Israelites in roughly the order that the events happened (called 'chronological order'), but the remaining 22 books of poetry and prophecy are not part of this order. The letters in the New Testament are not in chronological order, either.

For that reason, it can be helpful to have a timeline of the Bible. You can see a timeline in the *Good News Bible - Youth Edition*: look at pages 14 to 17 for highlights from this one big story. You can also download this timeline from biblesociety.org.uk/youthbible (scroll down to 'Extras').



QUESTION ?

Investigate Scripture through asking questions. Read between the lines to uncover the answers: What's going on? What does it mean? Who's who? What can I learn from them?

THERE ARE THREE TYPES OF QUESTION WE CAN ASK TO HELP US UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE TEXT:

Understanding: What do the words and phrases actually mean and how do I understand what they say?

Observation: Searching for facts such as who, what, when, why and where? These questions are useful when looking into the context of the passage.

Action: What actions should I take? What commands are there to obey? What promises are there to remember?

DIG



Get the Bible inside you by paraphrasing, meditating, memorising, storytelling and more.



Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing can be a really useful way of getting behind the meaning of the words. It means using your own words to express the essence of the Scripture passage. Be careful not to change the meaning; just communicate it in a different manner, using words and contexts that are more familiar to you. The Message or The Living Bible are good examples of a paraphrase.

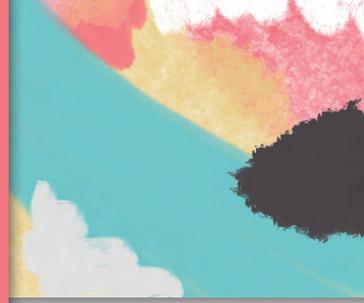
2 Timothy 3.16–17 says, ‘All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed.’

This could be paraphrased as follows: ‘The whole Bible is inspired by God and is important to teach us the truth and help us to understand where we are going wrong in our lives. It shows us how to live holy lives. It builds us up and gets us ready to do whatever it is that God has planned for us.’

LIVE



Find ways of putting into action the words of the Bible, to make a practical difference in your everyday life.



Reading the Bible inspires us to dream big dreams. We see the amazing way that God can use ordinary people like us when we give our lives in obedience and passion for him. Big dreams are usually accomplished by small steps, and putting to work the principles that we read in Scripture enables us to make changes one at a time, heading towards our final goal.

The key thing in living the Bible is to be real in the way you apply it. It's great to think of massive ideas such as 'I need to love everyone I meet' but how will you know if you have achieved it? Try this instead: 'I will show my little brother something of Jesus' love this week by being kind to him and helping him with his homework.' You need to have a clear idea of what action you are going to take from the minute you put down your Bible. And don't forget to note down exactly what actions you are going to make and keep yourself accountable.

TRY THINKING ABOUT THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:



WHAT PROMISES ARE THERE FOR ME TO BELIEVE?

What changes do I need to make?

What examples are there for me to follow?

WHAT ACTIONS DO I NEED TO TAKE?

What commands are there for me to obey?

WHAT WARNINGS ARE THERE FOR ME TO TAKE NOTE OF?