



**SESSION FIVE**

*The*

# BIBLE

Lord, teach me to be generous. Teach me to serve you as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I do your will.

•————— *St. Ignatius of Loyola* —————•

## 5. THE BIBLE

Albert Einstein said, “I want to know the thoughts of God, the rest are details.”

The Bible is not just another book. It’s the Word of God. You have probably heard that a lot. But what does it really mean? For one thing, words have value based on who speaks them. If you knew someone who was always telling lies and he told you something, you would discount what he said because you know from experience that he has a habit of lying.

Some people’s words should be discounted. But this here—the Bible, the Word of God—is not to be discounted. God should be taken at his word. The Bible should be taken very seriously. Your happiness in this life and the next life depends in large part on how seriously you take the Word of God.

Here’s the mysterious thing about the Bible: It has the power to transform our lives. That’s why so many people don’t read it! Seriously.

God wants to transform *you* and *your life*. Too often when we pray, we pray for *tweaking*. We want God to *tweak* this and *tweak* that. But God is not interested in tweaking. God is in the business of *transformation*. He wants to turn your life upside down, which as it turns out is right side up. He wants to transform the way you think about yourself, he wants to transform the way you think about relationships, he wants to transform the way you think about money and career, and he wants to transform the way you think about the world and the culture.

If you want to see something incredible, *start praying for transformation*. Ask God to transform you and your life. Most people have never prayed a prayer of transformation.

The truth is, your happiness depends upon discovering God’s will for your life, and the Bible can help you with that. But too often we are not interested in discovering the will of God. Usually we are more interested in “my will be done” than “thy will be done.” Think about it: When was the last time you actively sought out God’s will in a situation?

The Bible leads us to God’s mysterious and fabulous plan for our lives—and that is always transformational. This is not just another book.



-Albert Einstein-

START  
praying for  
TRANSFORMATION



## 5.1 A Map FOR THE Journey

Many years ago, I read an article in a travel magazine about the Camino. The Camino is a pilgrimage, a five-hundred-mile walk that begins in the South of France, crosses the Pyrenees into Spain, and then works its way west across northern Spain, finishing in Santiago de Compostela—where Saint James, one of the twelve apostles, is buried.

I remember reading the article and thinking that it would be an amazing adventure . . . but I also remember thinking that it was the kind of thing that I would never do. Why? Two main reasons: I am not really the outdoors type and I didn’t figure I would ever take a month off. But ten years later, I decided to make the pilgrimage.

A pilgrimage is a spiritual journey to a holy place. Sometimes people go on a pilgrimage in search of answers to questions, and sometimes they do it to thank God for a special favor. I was going for both reasons. I was grateful for all the blessings God had given me, but I had questions about what I should do with the rest of my life.

I blocked a whole month on my schedule (a year in advance) and began to research everything I needed to know for the trip. I read books, studied the route, looked into where to eat and where to stay along the way, what the weather would be like, what clothes to bring and what boots to wear, what to pack and what to leave behind, and I talked to people who had made the journey.

My biggest question was: How will I know if I am going the right way? I had read that an image of a seashell was used to direct pilgrims along the path. But I had also heard that in many places this symbol was faded, which often caused pilgrims to take the wrong path.

Then, I met a couple who had made the pilgrimage seven times. They said to me, “You’ve got to get a copy of this particular guidebook! It’s the bible of the Camino.” I immediately ordered a copy.

The book was amazing. It had maps and routes, suggested starting and ending points for each day, elevations and distances. It showed you where fresh water was available to fill your water bottle, and warned you not to drink the water in certain places. It showed you options for where to stay and where to eat. It marked spots on the map where the signs were faded, and gave specific instructions about what to do in those places. And at every step along the way, it told you how far to the next place for food, water, or sleep. That guidebook was invaluable. It gave me confidence for the journey.

The Bible is that guidebook for your life.

## WHAT IS A PILGRIMAGE?

A spiritual journey to a holy place.

### TOP TEN CATHOLIC PILGRIMAGES

1. St. Peter’s Basilica, the Vatican
2. Jerusalem, Israel
3. Lourdes, France
4. Fatima, Portugal
5. Camino de Santiago, Spain
6. Ephesus, Greece
7. Guadalupe, Mexico
8. Czestochowa, Poland
9. Assisi, Italy
10. Knock, Ireland

“A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education.”

THEODORE ROOSEVELT



# WHAT IS A HOLY PLACE?

A PLACE SET APART FOR GOD BECAUSE OF SPECIAL RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE.

JERUSALEM IS A HOLY PLACE BECAUSE JESUS LIVED, TAUGHT, DIED, AND ROSE FROM THE DEAD THERE. YOUR LOCAL PARISH CHURCH IS A HOLY PLACE BECAUSE IT IS THE CENTER OF WORSHIP FOR YOUR COMMUNITY.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE HOLY PLACE?

Whether you realize it or not, you are on a sacred journey. Life is a pilgrimage and you are a pilgrim. Remember, a pilgrimage is a spiritual journey to a holy place. A pilgrim is someone on a journey to a holy place. The holy place we are journeying toward is Heaven.

The world doesn't want you to be a pilgrim on a spiritual journey. The world wants you to be a tourist. A pilgrim travels with purpose. A tourist travels only for pleasure. You have to decide—do you want to be a tourist or a pilgrim?

There is more to life than life. You will die one day and it is healthy to think about that from time to time. If you died today and had to account to God for the way you have lived your life, how would you fare?

God wants you to live a rich, full, and happy life—and he provides the Bible as a map for that.



Where do you think was Mary's favorite place to pray?



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. DO YOU THINK OF THE BIBLE AS A GUIDEBOOK? IF NOT, WHAT IS YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE BIBLE?

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2. IN WHAT WAYS ARE YOU A TOURIST AND IN WHAT WAYS ARE YOU A PILGRIM?

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3. HOW COMFORTABLE WOULD YOU BE IF YOU DIED TODAY AND HAD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE WAY YOU HAVE LIVED YOUR LIFE?

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Gud är kärlek

DEUS É AMOR Bog yest' lyubov'

ANG DIYOS AY PAG-IBIG

DEUS CARITAS EST

GOD IS LOVE

MUNGU NI UPENDO HAMI WAI AIDEARU

DIOS É S·AMOR DDUW YW CARIAD

Elohim ahavah

Allah Adalah Kasih

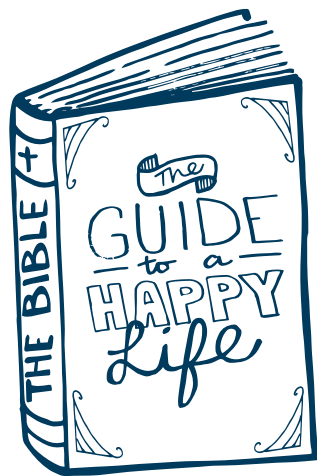
Dieu est amour

GOD IS LIEBE

GOTT·IST·DIE·LIEBE

Dio é Amore





## 5.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

One of the ways God loves us is by revealing himself to us. He does not remain a distant, anonymous God; he allows us to know him. Not only does God reveal himself to us but he also reveals his loving plans. We call this Divine Revelation.

There are many things we can know just by observing the natural world, such as the law of gravity and the regularity of the seasons from one year to the next. But there are some things we can only know because God reveals them to us; for example, the Trinity, the fact that God is three persons in one: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We only know this because God has revealed it to us.

God reveals himself to us in two ways, through Sacred Scripture and through Sacred Tradition. Sacred Scripture is the Bible. Sacred Tradition is the teachings that have been handed down from the apostles to their successors through preaching, example, and life of worship, even before the New Testament was written.

Both Scripture and Tradition make up the Word of God, and both were entrusted to the Church to interpret and share with the people of every place and time. If you separate the Scriptures from Tradition, the Scriptures begin to die. They are kept alive through their connection with Sacred Tradition. Separate the Scriptures from Tradition and it becomes very easy to misinterpret them.

The first generation of Christians didn't have a written New Testament; the Church existed before it was written. The New Testament itself is the fruit of Sacred Tradition, and a beautiful demonstration of the role Tradition has always played in the lives of Christians from the very beginning. It is impossible to truly appreciate the Bible unless we understand the connection between the Bible and the Sacred Tradition of the Catholic Church.

The Bible is made up of seventy-three books—forty-six in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament. The Old Testament can be divided into three sections: the Historical Books, the Wisdom Books, and the Prophets. The New Testament can be divided into five sections: the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Letters of Saint Paul, the Catholic Letters, and the book of Revelation.

The books of the Bible are:



# THE BIBLE

73 BOOKS

46

OLD  
TESTAMENT

27

NEW  
TESTAMENT

# THE OLD TESTAMENT

## THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

Genesis  
Exodus  
Leviticus  
Numbers  
Deuteronomy  
Joshua  
Judges  
Ruth  
1 Samuel  
2 Samuel  
1 Kings  
2 Kings  
1 Chronicles  
2 Chronicles  
Ezra  
Nehemiah  
Tobit

## THE WISDOM BOOKS

Judith  
Esther  
1 Maccabees  
2 Maccabees  
Job  
Psalms  
Proverbs  
Ecclesiastes  
Song of Solomon  
Wisdom  
Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)

## THE PROPHETS

Isaiah  
Jeremiah  
Lamentations  
Baruch  
Ezekiel  
Daniel  
Hosea  
Joel  
Amos  
Obadiah  
Jonah  
Micah  
Nahum  
Habakkuk  
Zephaniah  
Haggai  
Zechariah  
Malachi

# THE NEW TESTAMENT

## THE GOSPELS

Matthew  
Mark  
Luke  
John

## THE LETTERS OF SAINT PAUL

Romans  
1 Corinthians  
2 Corinthians  
Galatians  
Ephesians  
Philippians  
Colossians  
1 Thessalonians  
2 Thessalonians  
1 Timothy  
2 Timothy  
Titus  
Philemon  
Hebrews

## THE CATHOLIC LETTERS

James  
1 Peter  
2 Peter  
1 John  
2 John  
3 John  
Jude

## REVELATION (APOCALYPSE)



ARE YOU READY FOR  
**GOD'S**  
★ Amazing  
**PLAN**  
FOR YOUR LIFE?

The Bible was originally written in Hebrew and Greek, and has been translated into more languages than any other book. It was written by hundreds of different authors between approximately 1500 BC and 100 AD.

In the Old Testament God reveals himself as the Creator who is deeply interested in a relationship with humanity. In the New Testament he reveals his mercy and overwhelming desire that all people experience his love—more proof of God's incredible yearning for a relationship with us.

If you want to get a sense of what the Old Testament is all about, read Genesis. The book of Genesis demonstrates that there is a great cause-and-effect relationship between obedience to God and happiness, and between disobedience and misery. Genesis shows us, over and over again, what happens if you follow the ways of God and what happens if you follow the ways of the world. In Genesis we see an in-depth study of the human condition.

The New Testament presents the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the life of the early Church.

All this might lead you to ask, where did the Bible come from?

It did not fall from Heaven as a single book. Nor did God dictate it mechanically to scribes. God chose certain people whom he inspired to write down what he wanted to convey to humanity. The Bible came together over the course of more than sixteen hundred years, and hundreds of authors were involved in writing the Bible as we know it today.



You could spend your whole life just studying Sacred Scripture and it would be a life well spent. And truth be told, very few lives are really well spent. I hope you spend yours well and I hope this program is helping to prepare you for that.

But if you did spend your whole life studying the Bible you would discover that it is not just a theological book. The Bible is immensely practical. It can show you how to get to Heaven, but it can also show you how to live on earth. In many ways it is a guide to a happy life.



What do you think were Mary's hopes and fears?



**1. WHAT NEW THING DID YOU LEARN ABOUT THE BIBLE IN THIS SECTION?**

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**2. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE BOOK IN THE BIBLE? WHY?**

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**3. IF YOU COULD BE ONE PERSON IN THE BIBLE, WHO WOULD YOU WANT TO BE? WHY?**

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YOU MAY BE SAYING TO YOURSELF,  
**“I am too young**

*to be thinking about all this serious stuff!”*

**BUT THAT WOULD BE A MISTAKE.**

**MOZART** *was* **EIGHT** *years old*  
*when he wrote his first symphony.*

**JESUS** *was* **TWELVE** *years old*  
**WHEN HE FIRST TAUGHT IN THE TEMPLE.**

**ANNE FRANK** *was* **THIRTEEN**  
*—when she wrote her diary.—*

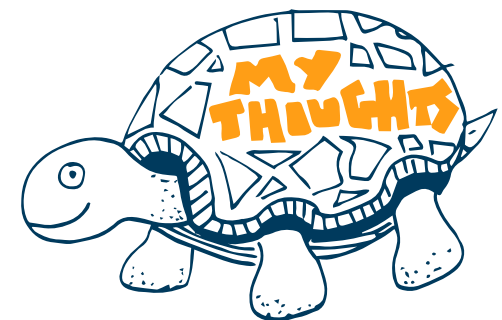
**RALPH WALDO EMERSON** *was*  
**FOURTEEN** *when he enrolled at Harvard.*

**JOAN of ARC** *was* **SEVENTEEN**  
**WHEN SHE LED THE FRENCH ARMY.**

**BILL GATES** *was* **NINETEEN**  
*—when he co-founded Microsoft.—*

**YOU ARE NOT TOO YOUNG**  
**TO START THINKING ABOUT THESE THINGS.**

**You are not too young**  
*to start thinking seriously about your life.*



## 5.3 HOW SHOULD I USE THE BIBLE?

When it comes to reading the Bible, the first rule is: Don't be intimidated. So many people never read the Bible because they get intimidated. If you come across something you don't understand, just press on. Don't get bogged down.

Don't be intimidated by the Bible. This is our book. It lays out a blueprint for happiness. It helps us to know the heart of God, and his incredible dreams for us. And the Bible teaches us how to listen to the voice of God in our own lives.

So, where to start?

I would like to recommend that you start with three books.

1. The Gospel of Matthew.

First, as we discussed in Session 3, read the Gospel of Matthew. This will help you to delve deeply into the life and teachings of Jesus.

2. The book of Genesis.

Next read Genesis. This will give you incredible insight into the human condition, show you what happens when we walk with God and what happens when we turn our backs on him, and help you to see that the world is a bit of a mess and the Gospel is the antidote.

3. The book of Psalms.

Finally, read the Psalms; better still—pray them! This is the most beautiful collection of prayers. Here you will find a prayer for every occasion in your life. You will encounter every emotion in the Psalms: joy, sorrow, hope, desperation, trust, fear, confusion, clarity, and many more.

Begin by reading one chapter a day. It will take you twenty-eight days to work your way through Matthew and fifty days to make your journey through Genesis. If you then pray three Psalms a day it will take you fifty days to make your way through all 150 Psalms.

In just 128 days you will have a good sense of what the Bible is all about.



**“LOOK, THE VIRGIN SHALL CONCEIVE AND BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL NAME HIM EMMANUEL, WHICH MEANS ‘GOD IS WITH US.’”**  
**Matthew 1:23**

**KNOW IT:** At every moment of every day God is with us.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** Do you recognize and acknowledge God's presence in your daily life? Or are you oblivious to him by your side?

**LIVE IT:** Today when you are moving from one activity to another, use those gaps in your day to talk to God about what just happened or what is about to happen.

When you read your chapter, approach it with an open heart, listening for what God is saying to you. As you read, identify a word, phrase, or idea in each chapter that jumps out at you, something that taps you on the shoulder.

For example, you might be reading the first chapter of Matthew's Gospel. The first seventeen verses are the genealogy of Jesus—not the most interesting reading for a Bible rookie. But the phrase that often strikes me when I read this first chapter of Matthew is verse 23: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means ‘God is with us.’”

“God is with us.” There may have been times in your life when God has felt very far away. There have almost certainly been times when you have wandered far from God. I hope there have also been some times in your life when you have felt God was near. But here is the elemental truth: God is with us.

And each day, before you begin reading the Bible, pray asking God to help you to listen to what he is trying to say to you. It could be something as simple as:

“Loving Father, I know you have good plans for me. Open my heart and my mind so that I can hear clearly what you are trying to say to me through the Scriptures today.”

The process is quite simple.

1. Begin with a short prayer.
2. Read a chapter of the Bible.
3. Pick out a word, phrase, or idea that jumps out at you.
4. Talk to God about it.

If you read the same chapter many times, you might be drawn to different phrases or ideas on different days.

Even if you pick the same phrase, you may have very different conversations with God about that same phrase. Perhaps you pick the phrase “God is with us.” You may have a conversation with God about how you sense his presence guiding you and encouraging you. But you may come back in a couple of years and read the same chapter, pick out the same phrase, and have a conversation with God about how he feels far from you at that time.

Talk to God about the word or phrase that strikes you, and listen for what he is trying to say to you through it. Just as we discussed with The



**THE PROCESS IS QUITE SIMPLE.**



Begin with a short prayer.



Read a chapter of the Bible.



Pick out a word, phrase or idea that jumps out at you.



Talk to God about it.





**"GOOD, BETTER, BEST. NEVER LET IT REST. TILL YOUR GOOD IS BETTER AND YOUR BETTER IS BEST."**

**SAINT JEROME**



**SAINT JEROME (347-420)** was a priest, confessor, theologian, and historian. He is most famous for translating the Bible into Latin. It took him twenty-three years to complete the translation. Can you imagine translating the whole Bible? Jerome wrote,

**"IGNORANCE OF SCRIPTURES IS IGNORANCE OF CHRIST."**

He is the patron saint of librarians and his feast day is September 30.

Prayer Process, it is important that you don't just sit there and think about it. The point is to have a conversation with God about whatever that particular Scripture stirs in your heart.



Another great way to connect with the Scriptures is to bring your Bible to Mass. Sure, most churches have those booklets that have the readings in them, but there is something very powerful about holding a Bible. It's different. Try it and you will see.

This requires some advance preparation. I like to mark the readings with Post-it notes before I go to Mass. Otherwise, I am distracted looking for the readings in my Bible during Mass. Next week's readings are usually published in the bulletin, or you can find them online.

Spend some time preparing for Mass next week, and bring your Bible—you will have a completely different experience.



I also want to encourage you to bring your Bible to these classes. Throughout the rest of this program we will be referring to passages from the Bible. Each time we do, find the passage in your Bible and mark it with an asterisk or underline it.

Don't be afraid to write in your Bible. It's yours. It's there to help you learn and grow spiritually, and sometimes highlighting a passage or underlining a phrase can be very helpful. This will also help you over time to see what parts of the Bible you have spent time with.



The last thing I want to encourage you to do in this section is to identify some favorite Bible passages. Memorize them. These will be of great comfort and guidance to you throughout your life.

Here are some of mine:

*"Be still and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10*

Life is busy and noisy and distracting, and that can all be overwhelming at times. Sometimes it helps just to sit down, be quiet, sit still, and recognize God's presence.

Another of my favorite Scripture passages is:

*"Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all else will be given in addition." Matthew 6:33*

You will be amazed the clarity that this one line of Scripture can bring to decision-making. We are making hundreds of choices every day, and each choice celebrates the kingdom of God or rejects it. Happiness comes from seeking God and his kingdom. If we put that first in our decisions, so many of the other things of this world will take care of themselves.

*"What does the Lord require of you? But to live justly, love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8*

This is almost like a mini-Gospel. We could spend our whole lives just reflecting on this one passage, examining ourselves each day: Am I living justly? Am I loving tenderly? Am I walking humbly with my God?

Finally, I would like to encourage you to have a favorite Psalm. Read it often, but also memorize it. There will be times in your life when you are too tired, too distracted, or too conflicted to form your own words for prayer. At these times you will find yourself praying your Psalm.

My favorite is Psalm 23: *"The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want . . ."*



There are a hundred ways to invite the Scriptures into our lives. I hope you will make reading the Bible part of your daily routine. If you do, I am confident you will find it a life-changing habit.



**What do you think Mary looked forward to each day?**

**IF YOU DON'T HAVE TIME TO PRAY AND READ THE SCRIPTURES, YOU ARE BUSIER THAN GOD EVER INTENDED YOU TO BE.**



# Discussion Questions

1. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE CHALLENGE TO READ THE BIBLE FOR A FEW MINUTES EACH DAY?

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2. HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR LIFE WOULD CHANGE IF YOU DID READ THE BIBLE FOR A FEW MINUTES EACH DAY?

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3. OTHER THAN READING THE BIBLE, WHAT OTHER HABITS COULD HELP YOU BECOME THE-BEST-VERSION-OF-YOURSELF?

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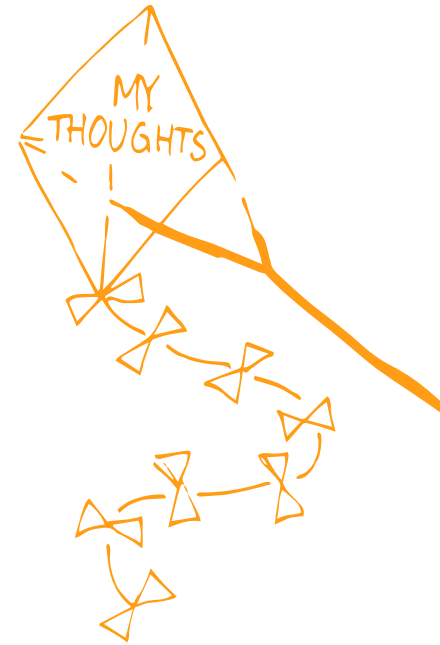
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# 5.4 THE POWER OF HABIT

Albert Einstein also said, "Compound interest is the most powerful force in the universe." You might be thinking, what on earth does compound interest have to do with the Bible. Let me explain.

To demonstrate the power of compound interest, let's take a look at an example.

If from your eighteenth birthday you saved just three dollars a day, every day, until your sixty-fifth birthday, you would have saved \$51,465. But if you invested that money at a compounding interest rate of 10 percent, you would have more than a million dollars—\$1,017,046, to be exact.

But most people don't retire with anywhere near that much money. In fact, the latest data shows that at age sixty-five the average American has a net worth of just \$66,740. Most people never engage the power of compounding interest. Most wait until far too late in life to start saving for retirement—and it matters.

In the example we discussed, if everything else remained the same except you waited until you were thirty to start saving your three dollars a day, instead of retiring with more than a million dollars, you would have just \$316,115.

What's the lesson here? The earlier you start saving the better.

Habits are even more powerful than compounding interest, and they have the same powerful compounding impact on our lives. The earlier you develop some foundational positive habits, the better.

What are your habits? What are the things you do every day or every week with unrelenting consistency? Are they helping you or hurting you?

Tell me what your habits are and I will tell you what your future looks like. Thoughts become choices, choices become actions, actions become habits, habits become character, and your character is your destiny. Your life is running in the direction of your habits much faster than you might think.

Life is choices. Make a choice often enough and it will become an ingrained habit.

You can, of course, be on the wrong side of compound interest. Run up some credit card debt that you can't pay off and you will discover

that many of those cards have 21 percent interest rates. You will then find yourself very much on the wrong side of compounding interest.

The same can happen with habits. No drug addict or alcoholic ever set out to become a slave to their addiction. It happened one step at a time, one choice at a time, and before they knew it they were trapped. Habits are incredibly powerful—for better or for worse.

How would you like your life to be different this year than it was last year? Our lives change when our habits change. If you want your life to be different this year, change your habits. If you want to do better academically, change your habits. If you want to do better in a sport, change your habits. If you want to have more fulfilling relationships, change your habits.

You may be quite content with your life today, but there will be times when you will encounter profound discontentment. When you come to those moments, I want you to remember: Our lives change when our habits change.



Throughout this program I am trying to help you to establish some foundational habits in your life. In Session 4 we explored the habit of daily prayer. Now I want to encourage you to add the habit of reading the Bible for a few minutes each day. Perhaps you could start your day reading a chapter from the Bible and end your day with The Prayer Process. There are going to be a few defining foundational habits in your life. I hope prayer and reading the Bible are among them.

There are so many habits, good and bad, that can impact the direction of your life. You know the habits that will help you become the best-version-of-yourself and the ones that will not.

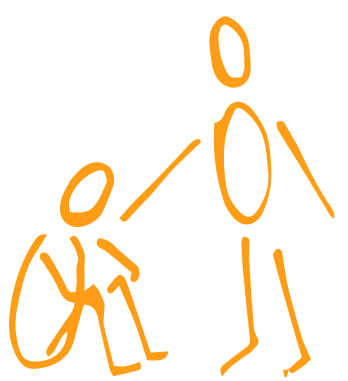
What will be the defining habits of your life?

Let me share with you something I have learned from trying to read the Bible each day for twenty years: It is never convenient. It is always inconvenient. There are always other things you could be doing, and often there will be other things you would rather be doing. There will be those days when you yearn to read the Bible and talk with God about what you discover. But those days will likely be quite rare. There are going to be times when you feel like you are getting nothing out of it. When you encounter those times I want to encourage you to persevere. At those times I want you to hear me whispering into your ear, "Press on. Press on. The effort will be worth it in the long run."

One day you will be glad you did. I promise you.

Our Lives  
CHANGE  
— WHEN OUR —  
HABITS  
CHANGE

**WHO WAS Saint James?**  
James was one of Jesus' twelve apostles. He was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and the brother of John the Apostle. Jesus sent the disciples to preach the Gospels to the ends of the earth, and James did just that, traveling to the region along the western coast of Spain to share the Good News with anyone who would listen. Saint James is buried in the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela, the famous destination of the Camino. Pilgrims have been walking that path for hundreds of years. Saint James is the patron saint of Spain and his feast day is July 25.



**“SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS JUSTICE, AND ALL ELSE WILL BE GIVEN IN ADDITION.”**

**MATTHEW 6:33**



**KNOW IT:** God's priorities are clear.

**THINK ABOUT IT:** How clear are you about your priorities? Are they good priorities?

**LIVE IT:** Do something today that puts God's priorities at the center of your life.

The inconvenience of having the discipline to read the Bible daily is a microcosm of a much larger truth: Christianity is inconvenient. But it will bring you a joy that you have not even imagined yet. So embrace the life and teachings of Jesus like you would a good friend whom you have not seen for a long time. Embrace the genius of Catholicism and you will live a life uncommon.



You matter, your happiness matters, and that's why habits matter.

You may be saying to yourself, "I am too young to be thinking about all this serious stuff!" But that would be a mistake. Mozart was eight years old when he wrote his first symphony. Jesus was twelve years old when he first taught in the Temple. Anne Frank was thirteen when she wrote her diary. Ralph Waldo Emerson was fourteen when he enrolled at Harvard. Joan of Arc was seventeen when she led the French army. Bill Gates was nineteen when he co-founded Microsoft. You are not too young to start thinking about these things. You are not too young to start thinking seriously about your life.

**YOU MATTER.**  
your **HAPPINESS** matters.  
& that's why **HABITS** matter.

# {DISCUSSION QUESTIONS}

1. WHO DO YOU KNOW WHO HAS GREAT HABITS? WHAT ARE THOSE HABITS?

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2. HAVE YOU EVER SEEN BAD HABITS DESTROY A PERSON'S LIFE?

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3. WHAT WILL BE THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE TO YOU ESTABLISHING THE HABIT OF READING THE BIBLE FOR A FEW MINUTES EACH DAY?

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# Psalm 119

<sup>89</sup> For ever, O Lord, thy word is firmly fixed in the heavens.

<sup>90</sup> Thy faithfulness endures to all generations; thou hast established the earth, and it stands fast.

<sup>91</sup> By thy appointment they stand this day; for all things are thy servants.

<sup>92</sup> If thy law had not been my delight, I should have perished in my affliction.

<sup>93</sup> I will never forget thy precepts; for by them thou hast given me life.

<sup>94</sup> I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts.

<sup>95</sup> The wicked lie in wait to destroy me; but I consider thy testimonies.

<sup>96</sup> I have seen a limit to all perfection, but thy commandment is exceedingly broad.

<sup>97</sup> Oh, how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day.

<sup>98</sup> Thy commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me.

<sup>99</sup> I have more understanding than all my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation.

<sup>100</sup> I understand more than the aged, for I keep thy precepts.

<sup>101</sup> I hold back my feet from every evil way, in order to keep thy word.

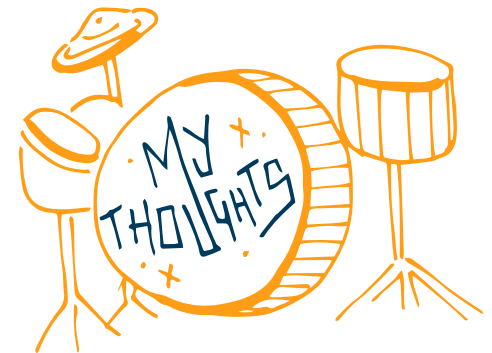
<sup>102</sup> I do not turn aside from thy ordinances, for thou hast taught me.

<sup>103</sup> How sweet are thy words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

<sup>104</sup> Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

<sup>105</sup> Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

*Psalm 119: 89–105*





# 5.5 DECISION point

Thirty minutes to speak about the most important book in the world is nothing. So as I prepared to speak to you about the Bible, I asked myself, "What do you hope to accomplish with this session?" I came to the conclusion that I could teach you very little about the Bible in such a short time. So I set out with two objectives:

1. To give you a starting point so that you would feel comfortable picking up the Bible and beginning to read it.
2. To give you an appetite for reading the Bible.

So, I want to encourage you to get yourself a good Bible and make reading it a part of your day. When you go looking for a Bible, remember, not all Bibles are the same—so get yourself a good Catholic Bible. The Catholic Bible has seventy-three books, but many other Christian Bibles have removed books and those Bibles usually contain only sixty-six. Visit [DynamicCatholic.com](http://DynamicCatholic.com) and we will help you find a good Catholic Bible.

If you really want to surprise your parents, ask them to get you a Bible as an early Confirmation gift.

Last week I was speaking to my friend Brian in San Diego, and he was talking about his Bible. He has had it for years, reads from it every day, and it is well worn. Something he said to me struck me particularly: "You need a good Bible to do life with."

Here's my challenge: Wear out a Bible in your lifetime. Get a really good one, and wear it out with prayer and reflection.

Dozens of voices are influencing you and the direction of your life every day. But how often do we pause and allow God to speak into our lives? Reading the Bible for a few minutes each day is a great way to allow the voice of God to speak into the situations and circumstances we are dealing with.

If I were going to spend the rest of my life on a deserted island and I could only take one book with me, I would take the Bible. I hope in time you will come to feel the same way.

The Bible is a map and an instruction manual, but it is also an invitation to get to know God and his Church. Will you accept the invitation to get to know God? Or will you reject it? What role are you going to allow the Bible to play in your life?

You get to decide.

Get yourself a Bible. Take a few minutes each day to read it. I'm telling you, it will change your life in the most incredible ways.

# "BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD."

PSALM 46:10

**KNOW IT:**  
To be still and quiet is really good for us.

**THINK ABOUT IT:**  
When was the last time you sat down and gave yourself the gift of a few still, quiet minutes?

**LIVE IT:** Make time today to be quiet and still.

# JOURNAL QUESTIONS

## 1. WHAT ARE THE MAJOR VOICES INFLUENCING THE DIRECTION OF YOUR LIFE?

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## 2. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU ACCEPTED OR REJECTED AN INVITATION FROM GOD?

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## 3. ARE YOU OPEN TO GOD'S DIRECTION IN YOUR LIFE?

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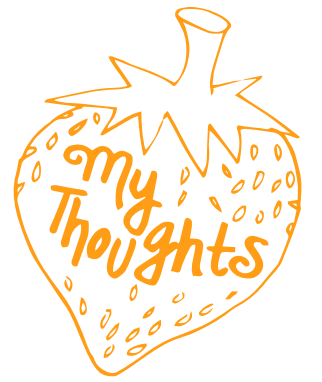
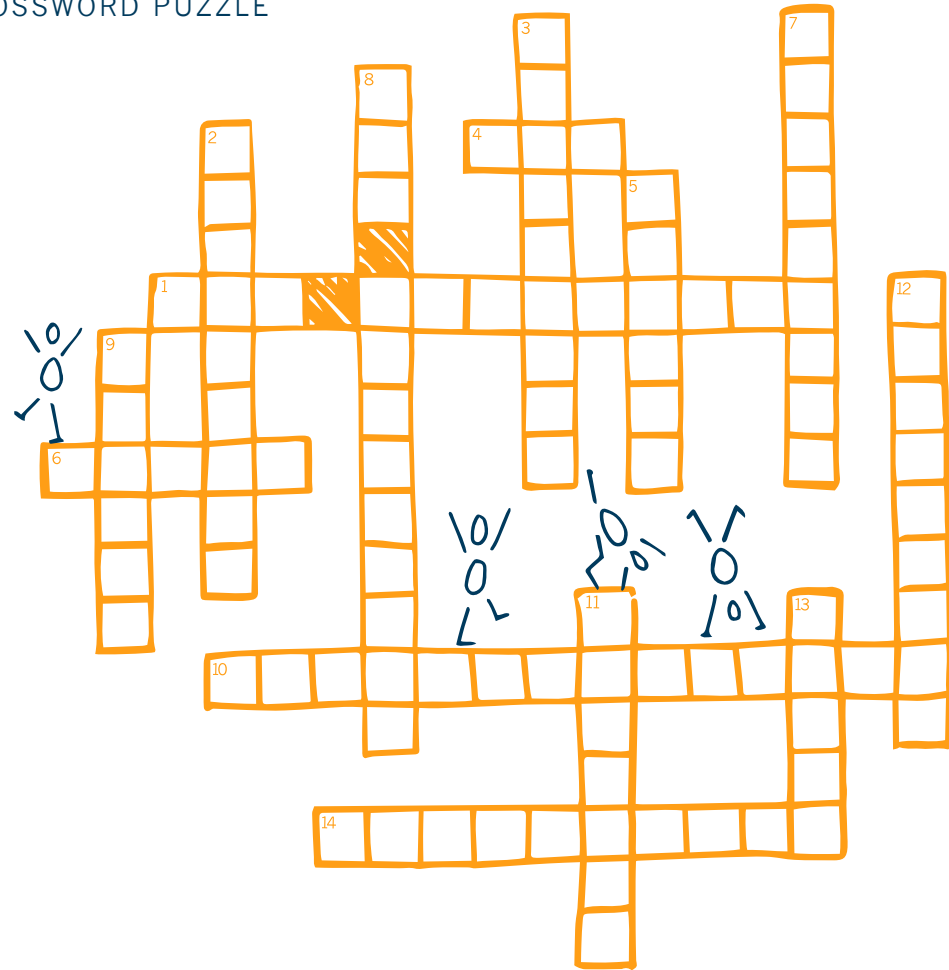


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# THE BIBLE

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



### ACROSS

1. The twenty-seven books of the Bible that tell the story of the life of Jesus and his followers and include the Gospels, Catholic Letters, Acts of the Apostles, and Letters of Saint Paul
4. A picture or chart used to find one's way that shows rivers, mountains, streets, etc.
6. A pattern of behavior that is acquired through frequent repetition
10. A thorough or dramatic change
14. A spiritual journey to a holy place

### DOWN

2. The course or path in which someone is moving
3. The teachings that have been handed down from the apostles to their successors
5. The first of Saint Paul's Letters
7. God reveals himself to us in two ways, through Sacred \_\_\_\_\_ and through Sacred Tradition.
8. The first forty-six books of the Bible
9. What God wants us all to experience after we die
11. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
12. Every day you make thousands of \_\_\_\_\_.
13. The Word of God

