

Some ideas: They won't all suit you, so pick-and-choose and don't try too many at once!

- Use the Bible App: Search "YouVersion" on your phone or Tablet.
- Use a paper Bible: Free Bibles available from the Welcome Desk.
- Set a daily reminder - use an alarm clock or phone.
- Start a short (5-14 day) "Reading Plan" - on an app, or search for one online.
- Start a long (3 months - 1 year) "Reading Plan". Make a realistic plan to read more.
- Join a friend reading through a "Plan" together. Make a madly optimistic plan to read more.
- Agree to message a friend once a week to encourage them in their reading.
- Doodle whilst you read. Set aside a whole afternoon to be still and read.
- Read and then paint/draw/doodle the words on a big piece of paper, or in a notebook.
- Agree for a friend to message you! Set aside a whole ten minutes to be still and read.
- Use the book of Common Prayer, or the new "Common Prayer" by Shane Claiborne.
- Read in-depth and alongside study guides - a verse or two at a time.
- Read or listen in chunks, to get the bigger picture.
- Use a stress-ball or fidget toy or bowl of rice to keep your hands occupied whilst you read.
- Read a whole Gospel in a week. Go to your favourite coffee shop/park bench to read.
- Read a single verse each meal time. Read alternate verses with your children/partner.
- Read different translations. Make a hot drink and settle down somewhere comfortable.
- Trade a translation with a friend. Promise yourself a biscuit when you finish a chapter.
- Read some companion books - perhaps "How to read the Bible Book by Book" "How to read the Bible for all it's worth" - Fee/Stuart "Unlocking the Bible" - David Pawson
- Get a study Bible or Doodle/Journaling Bible.
- Listen to the Bible on the app, or on CD for the car/hifi (they still exist! Check ebay...)
- Buy a new paper Bible with a cover you like, just to start afresh! And don't feel guilty that you already have two Bibles on the shelf gathering dust...
- Commit to a particular time so that you form a habit - breakfast lunch or dinner.
- Or commit to a particular place - perhaps leave a bible by the kettle and read a psalm every time you make a drink. Use the back of this paper to jot down some notes and ideas.
- Write a verse that encourages you, or that you want to memorise, on a post-it note or postcard and put it inside your phone case, your handbag, your coat pocket, your kitchen cupboard.
- Write an encouraging verse out and give it to a friend.
- Do something that encourages you to read the Word, that's not on this list!

Now, if you're feeling guilty at this point, me too. Because when do we ever meet the mark?

But there is a difference between our feelings of guilt here. God convicts us by revealing something that is wrong, without compromising on truth. Condemnation points at **you**, bringing shame and creating a divide between you and God, accusing you and making you believe lies, like there being no hope for change or that you can't come back to Him. Conviction **points a finger at the problem**, but does not accuse the person:- it brings us back to God for repentance, forgiveness and for healing. He always wants us back.

How can a young person stay on the path of purity?

By living according to your word.

I seek you with all my heart; (or, I have tried hard to find you—)

do not let me stray from your commands.

I have hidden your word in my heart

that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:9-11,15-16

The Importance of God's Word – 04/02/2024