

# What to Expect

Reading the Bible cover to cover is hard work, but it can be done, and it can be enjoyable! When our small group at church read, studied, and discussed the *One Year Chronological Bible*, we loved it! We called it "**BiAY**" for short — **Bible in a year**. It was the catalyst that launched several of our members to the next level of their spiritual growth. Here are some of their comments:

"The **BiAY** helped me gain a better understanding of the big picture of Scripture."

"I have started reading the Bible many times, but I always fizzled out. The **BiAY** curriculum and accountability were exactly what I needed to see me through to the end."

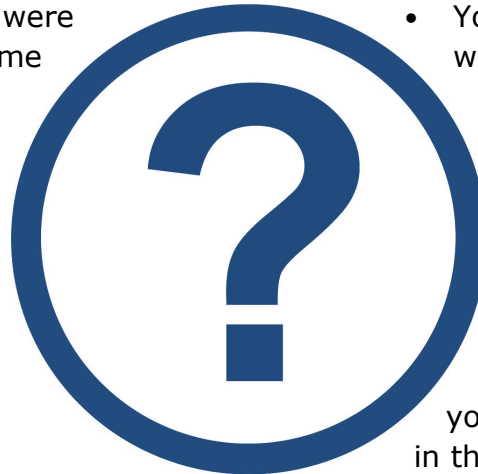
"It was fun and motivating to read the **BiAY** with my spouse. We always knew that we had read the same thing each day, and it sparked spiritual discussions we never had before."

"Going through the **BiAY** helped me to establish a consistent daily time with God in His Word, something I had struggled with before. Now that I have carved out time for Him, I will never give it up."

These are just a few of the comments from people just like you who have not only survived the **BiAY** but who have thrived. While there is always a downside to every endeavor — in this case, **BiAY** is a long, difficult, daily grind — the positive far outweighs the negative. If you accept the challenge, you'll be blessed immeasurably.

The people at Tyndale Publishers have put together a fantastic *One Year Chronological Bible* in the New Living Translation (NLT 2000). While there are numerous "read-in-a-year" Bibles to choose from, I have to say that the *Chronological Bible* is the way to go. You are not trying to read the books of the Bible in canonical order from cover to cover, and you are not asked to read a little of the Old Testament and a little of the New Testament each day for a confusing out-of-order concoction.

Consider these advantages to reading the *Chronological Bible*:



- You are reading the Bible the way that it should be read, which is in the order that it was written.
- In the canonical order, you would read the prophets long after you read the time in which they lived; with the *Chronological Bible*, you will read their prophecies in the historical period of their time.
- Rather than reading the *Psalms* as a separate book from its authors, you will read the psalms that the author wrote when he lived. For example, many of David's psalms fall in with his life.
- The Gospels are combined, rather than being separate, and they make for smooth reading of the stories and teachings of Jesus. Thus, you will not have to read the Gospel four times as you normally would.

- Likewise, the letters of Paul are intermingled with the story of *Acts* and fall during the time when he would have written them. They are not separate books but rather are integrated into Paul's life.
- The NLT is easy to read, which helps for quick understanding of difficult texts and for trudging through difficult words.

In addition to the terrific *Chronological Bible*, I have developed, by God's grace, a *Study Guide* to help you understand the Scriptures each week. Keep in mind, the goal of these materials was to provide a big picture of what's being said and to find a common thread for all passages read in a particular week.

**It is recommended, but certainly not required, that you tackle this challenge with others**, so that they can encourage you and you can encourage them. It would even be good to meet once a week to discuss the Reviews and answer the questions. Our group met on Sunday evenings for two hours. There's something about accountability that spurs us on to do what we cannot or would not do alone.

Reading the **BiAY** will demand that you read approximately 2-4 chapters a day, which equates to 20-25 chapters a week. Depending on what you do during your time, reading on the surface, catching the gist, or stopping to study more deeply, you will spend from 15-60 minutes each day in the Bible.

Let me caution you here. If you do not already set aside time each day to spend

with God, either reading His Word or praying, etc., then reading the **BiAY** will be difficult, not impossible, but difficult.

If you already set aside time daily to spend with God, then **BiAY** will not be a problem for you. In fact, I would encourage you to take it to the next level and get as much out of **BiAY** as possible. For those of you who don't have a daily time now, you will struggle to hang on and survive. But, **you can do it**; with God's help, you can do it. I don't wish to discourage you; by all means, I want to encourage you to read the **BiAY**. However, I do want you to be aware of the challenge this will be.

**Here's the bottom line — it's all about time and discipline.** If reading God's Word from beginning to end is a priority for you, then you will make time in your day for it to happen. Don't try to find time in your day, but make time in your day. By struggling to find time each day to read the Bible, you are saying that reading it is not a priority in your life. Make it a priority and then budget your time wisely so that you can experience this wonderful journey through the Bible.

My prayer for you is that the **BiAY** will develop in you not only an appreciation for the Scriptures but a burning desire to know them well. Become an expert student of the Bible, and when it's all said and done, you, like those who have gone before you, will have a story to tell!

You will be amazed at what a difference a year can make! But are you willing to roll up your sleeves, dig in, and do it? I am praying that you are. I will promise you this — you will not regret the experience!