

MAYBRIDGE
COMMUNITY CHURCH

A close-up photograph of aloe vera leaves, showing their characteristic pointed shape and serrated edges. The leaves are a vibrant green color, with some showing a slight yellowish tint at the tips. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

A stylized, light green icon of a plant with three leaves, positioned above the letter 'F' in the word 'FLOURISH'.

FLOURISH

MAYBRIDGE
COMMUNITY CHURCH

**FLOURISH**
The Bible



FLOURISH The Bible

The Bible is central to the Christian life, but many struggle with it. Today we want to be **equipped** to engage with the Bible better, and **inspired** to engage with the Bible more.

DISCUSS



What might be the benefits of exploring the Bible? What things might stop us?



How confident are you at understanding the Bible? If you find things in the Bible that you don't understand, how do you respond?



Has a passage of the Bible ever particularly touched you?

BIBLE OVERVIEW

The Bible **isn't**

- A rulebook
- An instruction manual
- God
- Boring
- Inaccessible
- Irrelevant

The Bible **is**

- An epic, exciting story which invites participation
- A love letter from God to the world
- A challenge to live in God's ways
- The basis of how we do life together as a church

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE (Part 1)

SNACK: Read a few lines. A psalm, a proverb, or a saying of Jesus.

MEAL: Study a chapter or long passage. Write down some thoughts in a journal.

BANQUET: Take an hour or two, get some resources to help you.

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE (Part 2)

Text without a context = a con.

BACKGROUND (TO A BOOK)

WHO wrote this?

WHEN did they write?

WHY did they write?

HOW does this info help me?

ASK YOURSELF

What do I **like** in the passage? Why?

What do I find **difficult** in the passage? Why?

What does it tell me about **God**? (Father, Son or Spirit)

What does it tell me about **humanity**?

What **promises**, commands or examples are here?

What **one thing** do I need to take from this today?

Remember to pray before you start, and at the end.



HAVE A GO: 1 JOHN 1:5-10

BACKGROUND





WHO John, one of Jesus' closest followers, wrote this letter

WHEN Probably 85-95AD

WHY To remind Christians that Jesus is dependable, and that some ideas that had been floating around (e.g. that Jesus was not both fully man and fully God) were not true.

HOW This info is helpful because it shows us what John was writing in response to. It explains why he chooses certain words and ideas, and why he writes forcefully but with a desire to point to Jesus and the love of God.

DISCUSS

-  Turn to the person next to you and tell them what your (normal) week looks like. When works best for you to engage with the Bible? (Think snack, meal, banquet)
-  Where will you struggle with engaging with the Bible in the future? How can the rest of the group help you?
-  What can you put into place when your group meet each week that will help you all to grow in your engagement with the Bible? Note: it might be helpful for the group to hold you accountable to a particular intention around exploring the Bible? (e.g. 'I want to read it every day', 'I want to buy a study guide' etc.)
-  What do you think happens to you/your group/the church when we are in the habit of engaging with the Bible regularly?

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

GENERAL

bibleproject.com	Lots of easy to understand animations
biblegateway.com	Any translation you can think of
biblestudytools.com	Free reading plan and other tools
enduringword.com	Useful commentary from many sources
navigators.org	Lots of study resources, reading plans
scriptureunion.org.uk	Really helpful study notes
biblesociety.org.uk	Really helpful study notes
LifeChange Series	(By Navigators) excellent, cheap and easy to use

NIV Life Application Study Bible/NIV Cultural Backgrounds Bible
Great insights into cultural context

How to Read the Bible For All It's Worth

Good introduction to different kinds of literature in the Bible

The Bible from Scratch

Great guide to the books of the Bible with diagrams/illustrations

LOOKING AT THE BIBLE WITH KIDS

The Jesus Storybook Bible

Fantastic and worth investing in (and actually great for grown ups too!) There are also accompanying DVDs.

The "Together" Family Bible Studies

There are three books - *All Together*, *Time Together* and *Life Together* - written by Bekah and Steve Legg (but they really are brilliant, Bekah hasn't asked us to sneak this in!)

GETTING TEENAGERS INTO THE BIBLE

scriptureunion.org.uk (Resources and activities page)

bible.soulsurvivor.com

