



General Epistles



Reading the Bible Together DECEMBER 2015

What is 'In Sync' Bible Reading?

'In Sync' encourages us to read together through the Bible, and then reflect together on what we have read from God's Word. We consider the main message and the key themes of a whole book (or books) of the Bible, and then we can share with others what we have learnt through our Bible reading.

'I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.' (Psalm 119:16)

Questions to consider

Reading the Bible does not have to be an intellectual study. Anyone can read the Bible and by God's grace understand it. The main thing is that we pray for God's help as we read.

Here are some questions to help you think through what you are reading:

1. What have I learnt about God and about Jesus?
2. What does this teach me about humanity and myself?
3. What has most encouraged me from this book?
4. How does this teach me to love the Lord my God with all my heart, soul and mind? (Matt 22:37-40)
5. How does this teach me to love my neighbour as myself? (Matt 22:37-40)
6. Is there anything else I should learn here to be 'equipped for every good work' (2 Tim 3:17)

What to expect?

The General Epistles of the New Testament are letters written to Christians more generally rather than addressed to specific churches.

James

The author James is probably a brother of Jesus. This letter is to scattered Christians with a Jewish background who are experiencing trials and temptation. It is a very practical book and it emphasises that true saving faith is an active faith. James opposes double-mindedness and compromise with the world, and he employs memorable metaphors and figures of speech in his writing.

1 and 2 Peter

These letters were written by the apostle Peter. They deal with opposition from outside the church through persecution and opposition within the church through false teaching. Peter issues a call to holiness and for Christians to be prepared to follow in the footsteps of Jesus by suffering for doing good. Advice is given to Christians in regard to relationships with the state and within the home. Peter also looks forward to the Day of the Lord.

1, 2 and 3 John

These letters were written by the apostle John. John takes up a number of themes and keeps returning to them. John delights in the greatness of God's love that is evidenced in the sending of Jesus into the world. He urges Christians to love one another and not to love the world. In 2 John and 3 John he writes about walking in the truth and in love.

Jude

Jude warns against apostasy and uses illustrations from the Old Testament. Christians are urged to contend for the faith and are called to perseverance by building ourselves up in the truth and keeping ourselves in God's love.

In-Sync for January 2016

Deuteronomy