



Akaloo
Serve the Lord!
Grades 7-8

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How to Read the Bible Aloud to Someone: In Public—In Private

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The Bible has been read aloud in thousands of different settings for hundreds of years. So whether you’re reading the Bible aloud for the first time or for the hundredth time, these helpful hints will guide your reading and make it the best it can be.

Preparation

1 Sit down with a Bible.

It’s wise to get familiar with the reading ahead of time

2 Unleash your curiosity as you read.

Ask questions like: Who is speaking? Is this a story or a teaching? What is the context? Who is the audience? Where is that place? Who is that person? How do you pronounce that?

3 Find the answers.

Use a Bible dictionary. Ask your pastor. Look up commentary about the text online. Read the stuff that comes right before the text and right after it. That might help. The point is to understand as well as you can what you are reading.

4 Read the passage or chapter out loud to yourself.

Mark up the page so you can remember where to pause and what to emphasize.

5 Read it out loud again.

Does it make sense now?

6 Experiment with vocal expression.

If you were telling this story instead of reading it, what would you sound like? Imagine you are reading to very young kids. Pause. Change the tone of your voice. Change the pitch.

7 Make sure the print is readable.

If the print is too small or the lines of type are too long, retype it so you can read it easily. Then remember to take the new copy with you.

Public Reading

1 Arrive at the space ahead of time.

Stand where you will read. Figure out where the book or paper should be so you can see it well. If you can, try out the microphone so you know where to point your face in order to have the microphone pick up your voice.

Reading the Bible in public forums, like Sunday worship, requires poise and focus. But it can be a very rewarding experience.



2 Be on the lookout for danger.

Undetected steps, podiums, electrical cords, and microphones can cause painful and embarrassing situations in front of a group.

3 Mark the page.

A bookmark and/or highlighter pen will prevent you from losing your place in front of your listeners.

4 Say a silent prayer before you begin.

Ask God to be with you as you deliver the reading, and to speak through you.

5 Read more slowly than you imagine you should.

If you are nervous it will feel like you are crawling along, but it will probably be about right.

6 Speak loudly and clearly enough so your voice carries.

You might have to slow down even more if the space is really big.

7 Continue to breathe.

Public speaking is one of the average person's greatest fears, and it may result in the failure to take in oxygen. Gently inhale and exhale while you talk.

8 Look up only if you feel comfortable.

It's much better to keep your eyes on the page than to lose your place.

9 Remember to pause.

Pause for just a moment once you get in place before you start reading. Pause for just a moment after you finish and before you leave. The pauses are kind of like book ends.

Private Reading

① Connect with your listener.

Before beginning to read, exchange a warm greeting, learn one another's names, and share a bit of personal information.

② Relax.

Your listener will appreciate your reading if done in a calm, gentle manner. If you encounter difficult words for names and places, try your best to pronounce them. Your listener will understand.

③ Be sure the person to whom you are reading can see your face and hear your voice.

④ Kick up the expression a bit, especially if you are reading to kids.

They won't listen if you are boring or clueless. Instead, their minds will wander, and they may even wander away—literally. The Bible can be funny and mysterious and suspenseful and sad. If your reading carries an emotion, read it like it does.



Reading the Bible to someone in private is a close and powerful way to experience God's word.

Ten Effective Ways to Tend God's Creation without Having to Live in a Tree

You don't have to be fanatical about the environment to make a difference. Simple habits like collecting trash off your street or recycling renewable materials can have a big impact and involve you in tending God's creation.

Taking care of God's creation does not have to be complicated. Here is a list of 10 things you could start doing today to help take better care of the environment.

1 Recycle.

Make sure that you put things like paper, cardboard, cans, and bottles in their proper recycling bins at home, church, and school. Sometimes it may be easier just to throw your recyclables in the garbage, but taking the extra step to recycle helps a lot.

2 Dispose of batteries properly.

Tossing old batteries into the trash at home or school is bad for the environment. Find out where the battery drop-off sites are in your community. Collect batteries in a central place, then make periodic battery drop-offs. Go a step further and volunteer to collect and dispose of the old batteries of friends and neighbors.

3 Pick up litter.

When you see litter on the ground, don't just complain about it, do something about it. Pick it up and walk it to the nearest garbage can. If it is a recyclable, make sure it gets into the correct kind of bin. One person can undo the mess of many.

4 Turn off the water while you brush your teeth.

Doing this simple thing and can save four gallons a minute—that's 10,000 gallons a year for a family of four.



5 Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator.

This will keep you from wasting running water waiting for it to get cold.

6 Turn out the lights when you leave the room.

Once you get in the habit, it is easy to do and goes a long way to conserve energy. Everything we can do to save energy is good for the environment.

7 Walk or ride your bike.

Whenever possible, walk or ride your bike for short trips to the store, library, or a friend's home. Save the cars for longer trips. Besides, exercise is great for one part of God's creation, you!

8 Reuse paper.

Most people recycle or throw away paper that has been used on only one side or only has a little printing on it. Saving paper that can still be used is good for the environment. It also saves money.

9 Wear an extra layer.

In the winter, turning down the thermostat saves energy and money. The less energy we use, the better it is for the environment. Simply wearing a sweatshirt or sweater, and heavy socks, can keep you comfortable when home and school thermostats are set at a lower temperature.

10 Eat right and exercise.

You are God's creation. When you eat right and exercise, you make yourself healthier!

How to Make a Care Package

Receiving a care package can be one of the most memorable experiences a person can ever have! A well-timed, just-right package expresses love, care, and understanding in a way that few other gifts can. As you prepare your gift, keep these things in mind.

1 Decide whom you are caring for.

The possibilities are limitless. Check with international relief organizations and your denomination for details about sending health kits, layettes, or other emergency supplies for those in need around the world. Talk to local relief organizations about families that might need groceries, children's items, or household goods. Talk to your pastor about people in your community who might appreciate some care: college students approaching exams, elderly church members who are alone for holidays or birthdays, members struggling with illnesses, or families with new babies.

2 Remember the context.

Think about what would be most helpful, and if in doubt, ask. Some college students don't have access to a regular kitchen. A baby in Africa might not be able to use that secondhand snowsuit. Some people facing illness have dietary restrictions. Make sure that what you are sending is useful.

3 Collect what's needed.

Are there others you can invite into the project? Talk to friends and family members who might want to donate. If you're assembling many packages, see if you can publicize the project to your congregation. Be clear about whether secondhand items are acceptable, and check the expiration dates on food and health-care items!

4 Remember the environment.

Try to avoid over-packaged or over-processed items if you can. Reusing clothing or toys can be good stewardship if things are in good condition. Instead of buying new boxes or packaging, think of what you have around: old cardboard egg cartons and zipper-seal bags filled with air can make good packing material. If you have to use new materials, try to buy biodegradable packing materials.

5 Pack carefully.

Watch for items that could break or spill in shipment and pack accordingly. Reuse plastic shopping bags around things that could spill.

6 Remember that the care is as important as the package.

This is where you can be really creative! Write a group note, identify yourself or your group (enclose a picture if you like), or each person can write a personal note. You might enclose a Scripture passage you've been discussing or a prayer for them to share.

7 Mail or deliver.

Follow directions from the post office or mailing center and mail the package accordingly.

8 Pray.

You may not ever even know who receives your package, but you can know that God connects us all!



Be sure to select a box of appropriate size. Also, choose the contents wisely. Don't send breakables or objects of great intrinsic value that could be stolen.

How to Pray for Other People

Intercessory prayer is an essential part of a Christian lifestyle. Ole Hallesby, a 20th-century Norwegian Christian teacher and devotional writer, said that “prayer is the oxygen of God.” Being intentional about your prayer habits will keep you energized and full of the life-giving breath of God.

1 Assess whether you are “oxygen deprived.”

If you are not already one who calls on God in prayer daily, recognize that you are “oxygen deprived” and may be spiritually suffocating.

2 Take a tip from Elijah.

When you hear that small little voice saying, “I should really pray right now,” listen and act. Martin Luther reminded us, “God wants us to call on him with complete confidence.”

3 Start a list so that you can pray for others by name.

Keep it small enough that it will find inside your Bible, prayer book, or wallet. Make sure your own name is on your list. Like Jesus, pray for God’s will to be done (Luke 22 and John 17). Update your list from time to time. It may be helpful to manage your list with a computer.

4 If you can think, you can pray!

Don’t worry that your prayer is “not good enough.” A good practice is to base your prayers on a daily Bible reading or on a particular need.



*Ole Hallesby says,
“Prayer is the oxygen of God.” So why would
any Christian want to suffocate?*

5 Let others know about your practice and that you are praying for them.

This not only encourages them it also encourages your own discipline and accountability.

6 Be honest.

“I am praying for you” are some of the most powerful words any of us can hear. If you say this to someone, you better be doing it. Otherwise, keep your mouth closed.

7 Fight for and stick to a regular time.

The beginning and end of each day, and each mealtime, are popular times for regular prayer.

8 You may get distracted while praying, but don't get discouraged.

The Holy Spirit can work through us, even when we occasionally lose our focus.

9 Place the palms of your hands together..

This will help reduce disruptions from your physical surroundings as you pray.

10 Interlock your fingers, close your eyes, and bow your head.

- A sensation of security and unity reminds us of our intimacy with God.
- Eliminating visual distractions can help your minds stay focused on your list of petitions.
- In addition to being a physical act of trust and obedience, bowing your head will also help you with increased concentration and mental clarity.

Please Note:

- If you do not have access to your prayer list, or a convenient location to hold your hands and bow your head, you can still pray! You can communicate with God while waiting for the bus, washing dishes, sitting in a school classroom, or doing anything that allows you a brief moment for silent prayer.
- DO NOT bow your head and close your eyes if you pray while driving a car.

Journal Stuff

The Facts

- Where:
- When:
- Why:

What did you do?

What did you learn about yourself?

What did you learn about others?

What did you learn about God?

I never want to forget...

I still wonder...