



cell outlines | overview of theme

DIG INTO THE BIBLE

By now you will be all geared up for a year of digging! Shovels and spades in hand, you are ready to start digging deeper into your faith, deeper into your knowledge of who God is and deeper into knowing who you are. And what better place to start digging for all this treasure than into the Bible?!

This month's cell outlines are going to explore the most popular book ever written... the world's number one best-seller. The Bible!

Year after year millions of copies of the Bible are sold or given away. Although most ancient books have disappeared from memory, the Bible continues to be printed more than any other book and is available in more than 2,000 languages. The Bible is universal and known around the world but what makes it so important? Well the fact is there has never been a book written like it ever before. The Bible is in fact written from actual human history. It claims to be the word of God and his interactions with people and nations. The authors were touched by the Holy Spirit to write the words.

Abraham Lincoln said 'The Bible is the greatest book ever written' and Charles Dickens said 'it is the very best book that ever was or ever will be known in the world.' Even Napoleon said 'The Bible is no mere book, but a Living Creature, with a power that conquers all that oppose it'.

The following two stories illustrate just how much the Bible means to Christians around the world.

- **Mary Jones and Her Bible**

Mary Jones was born in December 1784 into a poor Welsh family. Her father was a weaver. Her parents were Calvinistic Methodists and Mary herself became a Christian aged eight. They lived at the foot of the Cader Idris mountain, in Gwynedd, North Wales.

Mary learned to read in schools organised by Thomas Charles, a preacher from nearby Bala, who had a passion for teaching children from poor families.

Mary used to visit a farm two miles from her home to read a copy of the Bible there. But it became her burning desire to possess a Bible of her own. It was a vain hope. Money was scarce and Welsh Bibles were hard to come by. The nearest place to buy one was Bala, 25 miles away. And it was not even certain that a copy could be bought there. But Mary saved money for six years. And eventually she had enough money to buy a Bible.

One morning in 1800, Mary set out to buy her Bible. It was 25 miles to Bala, and she was barefoot, as usual. Her journey took her through valleys, across streams and around mountains. Eventually, she came to Bala and to the home of Mr Charles – the only man with Bibles for sale in the town. But all the copies Mr Charles had were either sold or spoken for. Distraught and heartbroken, Mary wept. Her despair touched Mr Charles, who sold her one of the copies already promised to another.

Mary's visit profoundly impacted Thomas Charles. He began to wonder what could be done for others such as Mary – for people who long for the Bible around the world. He proposed to the Council of the Religious Tract Society to form a new Society to supply Wales with Bibles. And, in 1804, the British and Foreign Bible Society was established in London.

Mary Jones died in 1864 and was buried at the graveyard of Bryn-crug Calvinistic Methodist Chapel. The Bible she walked 25 miles to buy is now stored in the Bible Society's archives in Cambridge University Library.

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- **Farmers Translate Bible for Ngawn Tribe**

In what may seem like an amazing feat, five Myanmar gospel workers, who are also farmers, have translated the Bible into a language spoken by the Ngawn tribe of Myanmar, according to a report circulated by Christian Aid Mission of Charlottesville, Va.

The five began translating the Bible in 1990, and completed it in 2006. Using a manual typewriter, they made 10 copies and kept them in safe places, loaning them out to believers. This year they were able to transcribe the New Testament into the computer and now are ready to print 10,000 copies for the Ngawn people group, who number about 20,000.

They have located a printer and are praying for the funds to print 10,000 copies at \$1 each. These farmer missionaries are selling their crops to help raise funds for printing the Bibles. After the New Testaments are completed, they plan to transcribe and print the Old Testament.

(World Christian Ministries)

Dig Into The Bible

Week One: The first week we will look at what the Bible is; what is so special about this book; where did it come from; why is it important?

Week Two: We all know that Christians are supposed to read their Bible and this week will look at the reasons why! What is so important about getting into the Bible and what can it teach us?

Week Three: This week we will get down to the nitty gritty of how to read the Bible. This week aims to give you a variety of tools and resources to make your Bible reading easier, informative, consistent and fun!

Week Four: In the final week we will put into practice all we have learnt in a group Bible study.

Bible Challenges

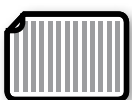
This month we have two challenges running alongside our cell group studies.

The first is for everyone and is a **30 Day Bible Reading Challenge**. You will be given a Bible Reading Planner which will give you a small portion of the Bible to read each day. You need to decide when is the best time for you to read the Bible and stick to a regular routine throughout the month. Keep a notebook and pen handy as you read so you can jot down your thoughts or questions and bring them to the next week's cell group.

Secondly, and only for those who want to, the challenge is to **memorise all the books of the Bible in order**. There will be prizes! Try these two You Tube clips to give you a helping hand!

Bible Book Rap <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=biJ0LZi1asM&feature=fvw>

Books of the Bible Rap http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uT_yEowtcgY



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Notes for Leaders

30 Day Bible Reading Challenge

Included in the resources section this month are five 30 day Bible reading planners. You can either choose one for all of your group to do, or bring a selection and allow each individual to choose the one most relevant to them. Start Day One as the day after your cell group meeting. Encourage the group to get reading the Bible everyday this month and provide feedback and accountability at your weekly meetings.

Memorise Challenge

This challenge is self-explanatory as above. However, if the budget allows, it would be great to have some decent prizes on offer for those who succeed this momentous task!

You Tube

This month uses several You Tube clips. You can download You Tube clips onto a computer using www.catchvideo.com. It is very simple to do and, once downloaded, you can show the clips without having to access the internet.

Week Three

Week Three aims to provide the young people with as many different tools and resources for reading / studying the Bible as possible. A substantial list of suggestions is provided but please feel free to recommend your own resources. Where online resources have been indicated, it would be good if you could have the web page available for the group to see (but of course, remind them to ask their parents permission before they access any website at home!) This week's cell outline has been written more like an interactive journal with the thought in mind that each group member has a copy and you work through the various exercises together.

It would be excellent to have a copy of the UCB resource Word For You Today that you could distribute to everyone: either in week three or at the end of week 4 when the 30 day challenge will have finished. Contact <http://www.ucb.co.uk/biblehelps> for more info.

Further Resources

How To Read The Bible For All It's Worth, Gordon D.Fee and Douglas Stuart.

Nancy Goudie's Spiritual Health Workout, Nancy Goudie

Biblical Inspiration, Howard Marshall

The Bible Book. A User's Guide, Nick Page