

Bible Engagement For the 21st Century:

Why Bible Reading as Usual isn't Getting it Done and What Churches Need to Do to Change the Game

Glenn Paauw, Paul Caminiti

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Introducing a brand new methodology for engaging the Bible . . .

In the landmark REVEAL study, 87% of church members said that their primary need from the church was help in *understanding the Bible in depth*. Where did such a sentiment come from and what does it mean to understand the Bible "in depth"?

We believe that the modern church has inadvertently developed three bad habits in its attempt to engage people in the Bible:

1. We read the Bible in **fragments**. From verse of the day e-mails to single verse devotionals, we have created a culture of Bible McNuggets.
2. We read the Bible **outside its original setting**. In our attempts to make the Bible "relevant", we have rushed past historical context straight to application.

For too long we have read Scripture with 19th century eyes and 16th century questions. It's time we get back to reading with 1st century eyes and 21st century questions.

N.T. Wright

3. We read the Bible in **isolation**. Our current strategy is to give people reading plans and then send them off by themselves to read. How did that methodology become "normal"?

Introducing a new approach to engaging the Bible . . .

The Complete Bible . . . understood in Context . . . experienced in Community

1. The **Complete** Bible (as opposed to fragments)
2. Understood in **Context** (as opposed to reading outside of the Bible's original setting)

3. Experienced in **Community** (as opposed to being read in isolation)

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Introducing a brand new Bible format . . .

1. What is the Bible?

the word of God spoken, written, collected, copied
(+ more and more ADDITIVES)

Scripture and tradition

2. What is an organic Bible?

reading the Bible without additives

3. What is a sweet, organic Bible?

a restored, literary Bible that allows you to eat the books the authors actually wrote

the sweet spot of Bible engagement: eating whole books

—reading bigger (in the context of whole books)

—reading smaller (in the context of whole books)

4. Some appetizers:

Matthew—a new Torah, a new Moses, a renewed Israel

Matthew's 5 books: "after Jesus had finished saying these things"

Luke—Acts—the journey of the gospel

James—wisdom after Jesus

Comments from users of *The Books of The Bible*:

“As a Christian College graduate and pastor, I was really curious about a Bible formatted like this. After one day of reading it, I fell in love. I read through Genesis in three days.”

“It’s an enjoyable experience that makes reading Scripture no longer feel like reading a big reference book where I take stuff out of context, but rather a library that I’m going to enjoy for the rest of my life.”

“Well, I have trouble putting it down. The Bible! Imagine that. I’m also positively startled to find myself struggling NOT to read the Bible for long periods of time.”

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