

“New to the Bible? Here’s a Good Place to Start”

By: David Sproule

In last week’s article, we noted that folks often ask where is a good place to start reading the Bible. While most folks would probably just start on page one, the fact that the question is even asked shows that folks are looking for ways to best understand a very large book. It was noted in last week’s article that there may not really be a “wrong way” to answer the question of where to start, but I do have a favorite suggestion that I give to folks when they ask.

In my opinion, a great place to start reading the Bible (especially for folks who have never picked it up before) is the book of John. I recognize that is right in the middle of the book, but there is something about this book that makes it, in my view, the perfect introduction to the Bible for someone who is not familiar with the Bible. Why is that?

First and foremost, the stated purpose of the book of John is to create faith. Near the end of the book, John affirmed that he had “written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31). Perhaps even the entire Bible could be said to have been written for that purpose—“Faith comes by hearing...the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). For someone who does not know Jesus, the book of John is a great place to start.

The book of John emphasizes the deity of Jesus from its very first verses. Jesus is God, who became flesh and dwelt among humanity on this earth (John 1:1-14). That is important for a first-time reader to know. Jesus emphasized repeatedly His relationship with the Father, “making Himself

equal with God” (5:17-18), for they are “one” (10:30; 17:11, 21-22).

The book of John emphasizes the authority of Jesus. He spoke the very words of God while on this earth (12:49-50; 14:10; cf. 6:38). He has the “authority to execute judgment” (5:27), and His word “will judge [man] in the last day” (12:48).

The book of John emphasizes the compassion of Jesus. Someone has counted 27 personal conversations of Jesus in this book. Whether it was a Samaritan woman, a blind man, a Roman governor or even antagonists out to get Him, Jesus showed Himself to be a man of kindness and selflessness.

The book of John emphasizes the love of God. The most well-known Bible verse is here in John 3:16. Jesus affirms that there is “no greater love” than what was demonstrated on the cross (15:13). His love is so deep that it compels us to love Him in return through our obedience (14:15; 15:14; 21:15-17).

Are you looking for a place to start, to get an idea of what the Bible is about and help you to see why it is such a great book to read and study? Start in John. (more next week)

When the Saints Sleep

By: Selected

I think that many who read these words know the story of Eutychus, the man who went to sleep and fell out the window while Paul was preaching. He actually missed out on hearing the great apostle preach.

What we may have overlooked is other times when individuals went to sleep and almost missed being part of some of the most remarkable times in history. This lack of knowledge makes it difficult to see and learn the lessons from other times when men slept.

Jesus only took three of the apostles to the mountain where He was to be transfigured and engaged in conversations with Moses and Elijah. These men went with Jesus who went to the mountain to pray with Him (Luke 9:28). I cannot imagine what it would have been like to hear the Master pray. Can you believe that these three men could have heard His prayers, but they fell asleep (Luke 9:32)? Had they not been asleep they could have known the full conversation Jesus, Moses and Elijah had.

The apostles slept in Gethsemane and were not there to watch and pray with Jesus as the enemies were approaching. At first, He woke the disciples but later let them sleep. Jesus needed them, and they had fallen asleep. Saints sometimes sleep when others need us.

There are times when saints “sleep,” and those times become a great blessing. Before Jesus’ resurrection, the fear of death brought bondage to mankind (Heb. 2:14-15). He who was the resurrection and life did not see death in this way. His disciples did not understand why Jesus wanted to go the Bethany and wake Lazarus up (John 11:12-13). Yet, we know what He meant when He said He was going to awake Him from sleep.

Seeing death as going to sleep removes the fear we have of the unknown nature of death. We go to sleep every night and rest, and we do it without fear. When saints die, the truth is that they have fallen asleep awaiting the morning of their resurrection.

When Jesus arrived at the house where a twelve-year-old girl had died, the Bible describes what was happening as loud wailing, tumult and commotion. When Jesus said that she was not dead, but simply asleep, they ridiculed Him. He used their definition of death and not His. When properly understood, death is like going to sleep. We do not fear going to sleep and saints should never react as the world does when someone dies.

At the end, there will be the final trumpet that sounds, and there will be a resurrection of all that are in the grave. While the world views death as the end, Christians see it so differently. It is not the end! It is the beginning! Our bodies sleep; our souls are with Jesus. God hasten the day!



Upcoming Events

TODAY! During the 9am adult class-- Caleb Lehtinen will be reporting on the mission trip that he, his wife, Melani and Sklyer Rosebrock went to recently.

Tuesday, Sept. 22 - All ladies are invited to an evening Bible study at 7pm at Katy McCoy's home. This group will meet once a month and refreshments will be provided.

Area events:

Area events/details are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. Please check them out.

Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Yvonne Smith who fell last week.

Steve Randle who had knee surgery last week.

Elana Carroll request prayers for strength at work.

Jake & Phyllis Jacobs as they travel to Tennessee.

Service Roster

Week of September 20, 2026

Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading..... Dan Fielder
Song Leader Doug Jobes

Opening Prayer..... Mark FitzSimmons
Closing Prayer..... Clifton Rutherford

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread..... Kirk FitzSimmons
Cup..... Bryant Siegel
Offering..... Lupe Escojido
Assist..... Bryce Dolan
Assist..... Billy York
Assist..... Willie Fossati

Sunday Evening

Song Leader Jeff Cannady

Opening Prayer..... Ron White
Closing Prayer..... Ken Dorries

Lord's Supper & Offering..... Bryce Dolan/
Willie Fossati

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class..... Cody McCoy
Song Leader Kirk FitzSimmons
Devotional..... Benny Horton

Other

Prepare Communion..... Katy McCoy

Congregational News This Week

Birthdays

Dan Fielder..... Sept. 20
Callie Terry..... Sept. 22
Joy Terry..... Sept. 23
Jack Jobes..... Sept. 25

Tuesday Ladies Bible Class

The Tuesday Ladies Bible Class meets at 10am here in the fellowship hall. They are studying "Women of the Bible."

If you have any prayer requests, upcoming events to be announced, or updates/corrections please contact our secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030 or email
office.midtownchurch@gmail.com

Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons
Ron White

Our Deacons

James Cammock—Evangelism
Lupe Escojido— Benevolence
Doug Jobes—Safety, Men's Encouragement &
Winter Youth Retreat
Kevin Sheeran—Worship Organization and
Communication
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

Our Minister

Cody McCoy

Weekly Reading

For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right
hand, saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'
Isaiah 41:13 NKJV

midtown
CHURCH OF CHRIST

5901 N. Main
Victoria, TX 77904
361-573-0030

Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Class.....9:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship.....5:00 P.M.
Wednesday Bible Class.....7:00 P.M.

Attendance Records

Week of September 13, 2026

A.M. Bible Class.....50
A.M. Worship.....80
P.M. Worship.....44
Wednesday Worship.....62

*Financial information is located on the bulletin
board in the hallway.*

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