

How Long Does it Take to Read the Bible?

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The devil has done an excellent job convincing people that the Bible is too large and intimidating. Many never begin reading the Bible, because they are intimidated by its size. Is the Bible really an insurmountable obstacle which cannot be conquered? Do Christians today have enough time to devote to reading such a “large” book? If one were to compare time spent engaged in popular forms of entertainment versus the time it takes to read the Bible, what would he find?

There are many who spend countless hours reading secular books. What if the child of God spent as much time reading the Bible as he spent reading other books? The *Harry Potter* series of books has sold over “...500 million copies, making it the best-selling book series in history, and has been translated into 80 languages. The last four books consecutively set records as the fastest-selling books in history...” (Wikipedia). The Harry Potter book series has a total of 4,100 pages (Answers.com). How does this compare to the Bible? A standard pew Bible examined contained 960 pages of Biblical text, with just 223 pages in the New Testament. Using these page amounts for a rough estimate, in the time spent reading the Harry Potter series, a person could have read the entire Bible at least four times, or the entire New Testament eighteen times! It is understood that page and font sizes could slightly affect these numbers, but even with this rough estimate the point is clear. What if over 500 million people alive today could honestly say they had read the entire Bible four times, or the New Testament eighteen times?

What about the time one may spend in other forms of entertainment, such as watching sports? Instead of watching sports most of the day on a Saturday, how many chapters of the Bible could have been read during the duration of just one football game? The average college football game lasts “about 3 hours” (Answers.com), and the average adult reads between 200 and 300 words per minute (wpm). People who enjoy reading typically read above 400 wpm. Many people read at speeds above 800 wpm and maintain excellent comprehension (freereadingtest.com).

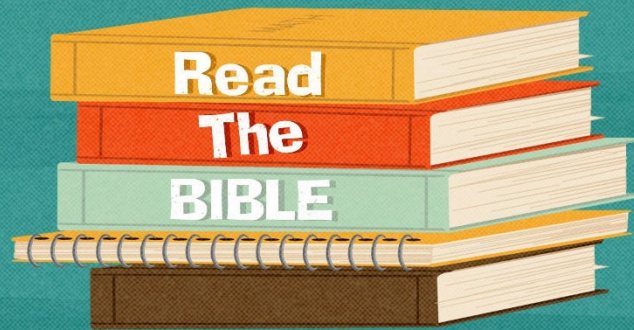
Although there is nothing inherently wrong with watching sports, during the time it would have taken to watch one football game, at an average rate of 250 words per minute, the sports fan could have read Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First Thessalonians, Second Thessalonians, First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, First Peter, Second Peter, First John, Second John, Third John, and Jude, and still have over 35 minutes remaining! (based on total number of words per book). That would be 76 chapters of God’s Word, and he would still have time to include First Corinthians, for a total of 92 chapters in three hours! Granted, many, if not most, will read more slowly, and many may want to spend more time in each book for deeper study, but the point is this—people have time to read God’s Word!

A suggestion is to get the Bible in audio format and listen to it while doing “mundane” tasks like driving, cleaning the house, taking a shower, working outside, etc. Although you can buy copies of the Bible on audio CD, the Bible is available for free in audio format via certain websites or phone apps such as *Bible.is* or *YouVersion*. You may be surprised how much of the Bible you can listen to while doing other things like those mentioned above! This method may not result in as much information being retained as some other methods, but this is surely another way we can fill our minds with God’s Word and make the best use of our time (Eph. 5:15-17).

Much more could be said, but the Bible is not as large and intimidating as many have been persuaded to believe. Let us fill our minds with God’s Word to be more like Him and be close to Him! (Psa. 119:97; Col. 3:2; Php. 2:5; 4:8; 1 Tim. 4:13; 1 Tim. 4:15-16; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18).

The image below from Jonathan Burns contains estimated reading times longer than the estimates above—at around 150 words per minute:

How Long Does It Take To ...



THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis - 3 Hours, 30 Minutes	Song of Solomon - 20 Minutes
Exodus - 3 Hours	Isaiah - 3 Hours, 45 Minutes
Leviticus - 2 Hours	Jeremiah - 4 Hours
Numbers - 3 Hours	Lamentations - 20 Minutes
Deuteronomy - 2 Hours, 30 Minutes	Ezekiel - 3 Hours, 45 Minutes
Joshua - 1 Hour, 45 Minutes	Daniel - 1 Hour, 15 Minutes
Judges - 1 Hour, 45 Minutes	Hosea - 30 Minutes
Ruth - 15 Minutes	Joel - 12 Minutes
1 & 2 Samuel - 4 Hours	Amos - 25 Minutes
1 & 2 Kings - 4 Hours, 15 Minutes	Obadiah - 4 Minutes
1 & 2 Chronicles - 4 Hours, 30 Minutes	Jonah - 8 Minutes
Ezra - 40 Minutes	Micah - 20 Minutes
Nehemiah - 1 Hour	Nahum - 8 Minutes
Esther - 30 Minutes	Habakkuk - 9 Minutes
Job - 1 Hour, 45 Minutes	Zephaniah - 10 Minutes
Psalms - 5 Hours	Haggai - 7 Minutes
Proverbs - 1 Hour, 45 Minutes	Zechariah - 40 Minutes
Ecclesiastes - 30 Minutes	Malachi - 11 Minutes

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew - 2 Hour, 30 Minutes	1 Timothy - 15 Minutes
Mark - 1 Hour, 30 Minutes	2 Timothy - 10 Minutes
Luke - 2 Hour, 30 Minutes	Titus - 5 Minutes
John - 2 Hour, 15 Minutes	Philemon - 3 Minutes
Acts - 2 Hours, 15 Minutes	Hebrews - 45 Minutes
Romans - 1 Hour	James - 15 Minutes
1 Corinthians - 1 Hour	1 Peter - 15 Minutes
2 Corinthians - 45 Minutes	2 Peter - 10 Minutes
Galatians - 20 Minutes	1 John - 15 Minutes
Ephesians - 20 Minutes	2 John - 3 Minutes
Philippians - 15 Minutes	3 John - 2 Minutes
Colossians - 15 Minutes	Jude - 4 Minutes
1 Thessalonians 15 Minutes	Revelation - 1 Hour, 15 Minutes
2 Thessalonians 9 Minutes	