

I M M E R S E
The Bible Reading Experience™

Pastor's Guide

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Welcome to Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience

Dear Pastor,

We are so pleased you have decided to bring Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience to your church. Immerse was designed with one goal in mind: to help congregations experience the Bible together in a unique and powerful way.

As the leader of your church it is important that you champion this experience by promoting it and encouraging your entire congregation to participate. This Immerse Pastors Guide is designed to answer your questions and walk you through some of the “best practices” for how to implement Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience in your church.

If you have any questions that are not addressed in this guide or if we can support you in any way, please contact us at csresponse@tyndale.com or 1-855-277-9400.

Sincerely,





What Is Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience?

Immerse is an *intentionally simple*, fresh way of experiencing the Bible—together.

It all starts with *Immerse: The Reading Bible*. This innovative new format presents the Scriptures in a more natural way, without the modern additives of chapters, verses, section headings, or notes. Instead, each book is presented in a way that honors the natural literary form the authors chose to use. It invites readers to experience the Bible in a natural and familiar way: letters look like letters, poetry looks like poetry—the way they were given to us originally.

Now that your congregation is reading the Bible in a new way, they can talk about it in a new way. Immerse is built on weekly community group “book club” conversations. Once a week, groups of 8-10 people will gather and simply talk about what they’ve read in honest, unmediated conversations. We’ve included conversation starters like, “What stood out to you this week?” or “Was there anything confusing or troubling?”

Finally, Immerse invites your church to establish an ongoing culture of Bible reading through a three-year Bible reading rhythm. By reading together twice a year, your church can read through all six volumes—the entire Bible—in three years.



How Immerse Works

- 1** *First:* Commit to reading each volume of Immerse: The Reading Bible as you would any other book, from start to finish. The first goal here is to experience the different books of the Bible as complete and unique writings. The more books you read, the more you will see the overall story emerging. The point is to have a fresh experience of the Bible in this simple, natural format.
- 2** *Secondly:* Read the assigned readings each day. Don't skip the book introductions; they help set the stage for your reading. Many people say reading and listening to the audio version at the same time is very helpful. Try to make your reading a part of your daily schedule. See it as an opportunity and not a task.
- 3** *Third:* As you read, think about the questions that you will use to begin your discussion. You can find these at the bottom of the Quick Start Guide that comes inside the book. Feel free to make notes in the book or in a separate journal. Write down your observations, questions, and reactions.
- 4** *Fourth:* Meet once a week in community groups to talk about what you've read. Treat these gatherings more like a book club—open, honest conversations about your reactions to that week's reading.

Planning Checklist: Before

Before the Experience

- 8-12+ Weeks Out: Involve your entire church staff and key leaders in the initial planning for Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience.
- 4-6 Weeks Out: Begin promoting Immerse to your congregation each Sunday. You can download all of the Immerse materials including videos and a graphics kit at ImmerseBible.com.
- 4-6 Weeks Out: Lead a training session with all of your group leaders and explain the unmediated nature of Immerse. Reiterate that as group leaders their main role is to *facilitate* conversation. Be sure to have the Group Leaders Guide available (included with Immerse Resources).
- 3-5 Weeks Out: Create discussion groups that fit the context of your church. Try to have less than 12 people in each group. If existing small groups work, great! You will likely have to create new groups for anyone not involved in a group already.
- 3 Weeks Out: Order the appropriate number of copies of *Immerse: The Reading Bible* for your church.
- 1-2 Weeks Out: Distribute copies of *Immerse: The Reading Bible* to participants. Each copy will include an insert that contains a participant Quick Start Guide, reading plan, discussion questions, and URL for additional materials.



Planning Checklist: During

During the Experience

- Meet with your group leaders to check in and see if anyone has any new questions.
- Take an active role in encouraging your congregation through their Bible experience. We recommend preparing your sermons based on each week's reading; reinforcing that Immerse is central to your church's spiritual journey for eight weeks.
- Share stories as they happen by writing stories or emailing videos to stories@ImmerseBible.com. We want to hear about your church's experience with the Bible during these eight weeks.
- Upon Completion: Celebrate! Finishing such a large portion of the Scriptures together is a milestone achievement. Make sure your congregation appreciates their accomplishment, and begin encouraging a regular Bible reading rhythm.



Planning Checklist: After

After the Experience

- Send feedback about your experience to csreponse@tyndale.com. We'd love to hear about any suggestions, questions, or problems. We'd also like to know how your church did—how many people finished, their reactions to this style of reading together, etc.
- Encourage your congregation to keep immersing themselves in the Bible outside of whole-church Immerse campaigns. Keep reading whole books and talking about them together.
- If you had a great experience, tell other pastors and churches about it.
- Begin preparing for your church's next Immerse experience.

Best Practices: 6 key things you can do to help your congregation have the best possible experience

- 1 *Take the lead.* Immerse offers the opportunity to focus your church's attention on reading the Bible together during a specific period of time. As much as possible, make this the singular focus of your life together during these weeks. If you champion this experience, your church will follow.
- 2 *Involve other staff and key leaders in the process.* This is a wonderful opportunity to break down the silos or barriers that can form between different areas of ministry in your church. Take advantage of this opportunity to come together as a team around a single purpose.
- 3 *Make use of the additional resources.* The weekly videos, audio, and Family Guide are designed to enhance the experience for each member of your community. Encourage your congregation to utilize them and adapt them to best fit the needs of your church.
- 4 *Include your entire congregation.* This isn't just for adults. Encourage your youth and children's ministries to participate in Immerse, and ask parents to use the Family Guide to bring this experience into their homes. Invite families to read aloud together! Cross-generational involvement will strengthen the bonds within your church and ensure one "heartbeat" for eight weeks.
- 5 *Make it work for your context.* The materials and outline we've provided reflect what we believe is the best way for your church to experience the Bible together. But if something doesn't work for your church, we encourage you to adapt this program to fit your needs. Just make sure the core DNA of Immerse remains intact: reading at length and having honest, unmediated conversations around the text.
- 6 *Keep it simple!* This is difficult because it is not what most of us normally experience in traditional Bible studies. But the evidence is overwhelming that simply reading the Bible and then discussing it in community has great impact. So be willing to let the Holy Spirit work through the Word of God as people engage in reading the entire Bible, often for the first time. Then, at a later time, build on this foundation through more in-depth study.

Above all, enjoy the experience!

Immerse is all about experiencing life together in the Bible. Our hope is that by reading in this fresh new way, you and your church will grow closer to God, closer to the Bible, and closer to each other. So enjoy the journey, build relationships, and let reading the Bible become a delight.

Reading Plans for Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience

Immerse: Messiah Reading Plan

Week 1

Luke

Day 1 pp. A9-12
Day 2 pp. 13-27
Day 3 pp. 28-37
Day 4 pp. 37-47
Day 5 pp. 47-59

Week 2

Acts, 1 & 2 Thessalonians

Day 6 pp. 61-70
Day 7 pp. 70-82
Day 8 pp. 82-94
Day 9 pp. 95-110
Day 10 pp. 111-123

Week 3

1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans

Day 11 pp. 125-135
Day 12 pp. 135-148
Day 13 pp. 149-164
Day 14 pp. 165-175
Day 15 pp. 177-190

Week 4

Romans, Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, 1 Timothy, Titus, 2 Timothy

Day 16 pp. 190-202
Day 17 pp. 203-214
Day 18 pp. 215-224
Day 19 pp. 225-241
Day 20 pp. 243-255

Week 5

Mark, 1 & 2 Peter, Jude

Day 21 pp. 257-268
Day 22 pp. 268-279
Day 23 pp. 279-292
Day 24 pp. 293-301
Day 25 pp. 303-310

Week 6

Matthew

Day 26 pp. 311-324
Day 27 pp. 324-336
Day 28 pp. 337-345
Day 29 pp. 345-358
Day 30 pp. 358-366

Week 7

Hebrews, James, John

Day 31 pp. 367-377
Day 32 pp. 377-387
Day 33 pp. 389-396
Day 34 pp. 397-411
Day 35 pp. 411-423

Week 8

John, 1-3 John, Revelation

Day 36 pp. 424-437
Day 37 pp. 439-452
Day 38 pp. 453-459
Day 39 pp. 460-471
Day 40 pp. 471-482

Reading Plans for Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience

Immerse: Beginnings Reading Plan

Week 1

Genesis

Day 1 pp. A9-7
Day 2 pp. 7-16
Day 3 pp. 16-24
Day 4 pp. 24-35
Day 5 pp. 36-45

Week 2

Genesis

Day 6 pp. 45-55
Day 7 pp. 55-61
Day 8 pp. 61-66
Day 9 pp. 66-74
Day 10 pp. 74-81

Week 3

Exodus

Day 11 pp. 83-91
Day 12 pp. 91-100
Day 13 pp. 100-108
Day 14 pp. 108-113
Day 15 pp. 113-122

Week 4

Exodus

Day 16 pp. 122-126
Day 17 pp. 126-133
Day 18 pp. 133-139
Day 19 pp. 139-145
Day 20 pp. 145-149

Week 5

Leviticus

Day 21 pp. 151-159
Day 22 pp. 159-169
Day 23 pp. 169-179
Day 24 pp. 179-188
Day 25 pp. 188-199

Week 6

Numbers

Day 26 pp. 201-210
Day 27 pp. 210-221
Day 28 pp. 221-229
Day 29 pp. 229-238
Day 30 pp. 238-248

Week 7

Numbers, Deuteronomy

Day 31 pp. 248-259
Day 32 pp. 259-269
Day 33 pp. 271-279
Day 34 pp. 279-287
Day 35 pp. 287-295

Week 8

Deuteronomy

Day 36 pp. 295-302
Day 37 pp. 302-310
Day 38 pp. 310-315
Day 39 pp. 315-323
Day 40 pp. 324-327

Reading Plans for Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience

Immerse: Kingdoms Reading Plan

Week 1

Joshua

Day 1 pp. A9-4
Day 2 pp. 4-10
Day 3 pp. 10-19
Day 4 pp. 19-32
Day 5 pp. 32-39

Week 2

Judges, Ruth

Day 6 pp. 41-52
Day 7 pp. 52-61
Day 8 pp. 61-72
Day 9 pp. 72-80
Day 10 pp. 81-88

Week 3

Samuel–Kings

Day 11 pp. 89-95
Day 12 pp. 96-100
Day 13 pp. 100-106
Day 14 pp. 106-114
Day 15 pp. 114-122

Week 4

Samuel–Kings

Day 16 pp. 122-129
Day 17 pp. 129-135
Day 18 pp. 135-142
Day 19 pp. 143-147
Day 20 pp. 147-153

Week 5

Samuel–Kings

Day 21 pp. 153-159
Day 22 pp. 159-166
Day 23 pp. 166-176
Day 24 pp. 176-180
Day 25 pp. 180-183

Week 6

Samuel–Kings

Day 26 pp. 183-189
Day 27 pp. 189-195
Day 28 pp. 195-200
Day 29 pp. 200-205
Day 30 pp. 205-210

Week 7

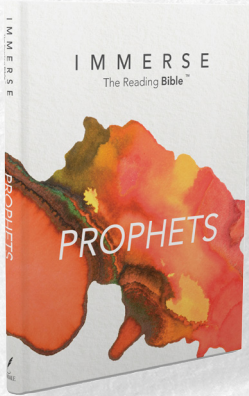
Samuel–Kings

Day 31 pp. 210-215
Day 32 pp. 215-222
Day 33 pp. 222-228
Day 34 pp. 228-237
Day 35 pp. 237-242

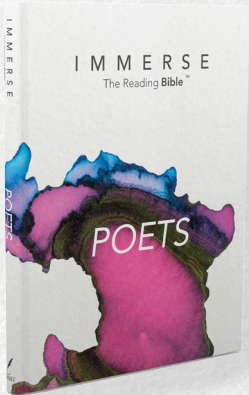
Week 8

Samuel–Kings

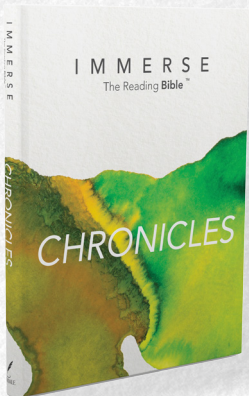
Day 36 pp. 242-248
Day 37 pp. 248-255
Day 38 pp. 255-260
Day 39 pp. 260-267
Day 40 pp. 267-271



The *Immerse: Prophets* reading plan will be available soon.



The *Immerse: Poets* reading plan will be available soon.



The *Immerse: Chronicles* reading plan will be available soon.