

I M M E R S E

The Bible Reading Experience™

Group Leader's Guide

Immerse: Messiah
New Testament

Contents

Welcome to Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience.....	1
What Is Immerse?.....	2
How Immerse Works.....	3
Planning Your Group Experience....	4
How to Guide Conversations.....	5
Best Practices.....	6
<i>Immerse: Messiah</i> Reading Plan.....	7

Welcome to Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience

Dear Group Leader,

Thank you for volunteering to lead your small group through Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience. As you begin to understand Immerse, you'll find that it's quite different from a traditional Bible study. As a group leader, it's important to know that your role will be as a *facilitator* rather than as a *teacher*.

This Quick Start Guide is designed to answer your questions and walk you through some of the best practices for how to lead your small group through Immerse: The Bible Reading Experience.

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 Your Group Experience

Who

Immerse groups consist of 8-10 people from your church community. Immerse is also a great opportunity to invite friends, coworkers, or neighbors who wouldn't normally join a Bible study but are open to an eight-week commitment to read the Bible in a "book club" model. Just try to keep it under 12 people—it gets difficult to manage after that.

When

Meet together once per week, planning to spend 60-90 minutes in discussion. Be sure to honor your group members' time by setting a specific start and end time. When time is up, let your group know they are free to leave. Of course, if people want to continue talking, then use your judgment to give them options for where to continue the conversation.

Where

We recommend choosing a meeting place that is comfortable, quiet, and free of distractions. Snacks and refreshments are great during or after discussion time. If you meet at somebody's house, perhaps you'd like to have a meal together before discussion.



How to Guide Conversations

Remember, your main role as the group leader is to facilitate the conversation. You aren't the teacher, so you should feel free to fully participate in the discussion without the responsibility of providing the "right answers."

Here are some suggestions for leading the group effectively:

- 1 Have clearly agreed upon start and finish times and commit to keeping them.
- 2 At the end of each discussion show the video trailer for the upcoming week's reading. You can find these at [ImmerseBible.com](https://www.immerseBible.com). These videos are a great way to get your group into the right mindset for what they're about to read.
- 3 Emphasize respect for others. If you'd like, share these "rules for good conversation" with your group at the beginning of each meeting:
 - Don't dominate the conversation.
 - Listen carefully to others.
 - Respect others and what they share, even if you disagree.
 - Try not to interrupt—you will get a chance to speak.
- 4 Sometimes one of your group members will have something specific they want to talk about at the beginning. If so, great. If not, use the discussion questions on the Quick Start Guide book insert to get the conversation started.
- 5 If a question or issue gets to be too difficult, don't get bogged down. Table the topic until next week, contact your pastor for assistance, then come back to it the following week. Try to keep the conversation moving.

Best Practices: 4 key things you can do to help your group have the best possible experience

- 1** *Encourage your group to stick to the reading schedule.* There will inevitably be days when they can't find time to read, but they should try not to fall too far behind. Reading several days' worth of text the night before you meet will not only be unenjoyable, it won't give them time to properly reflect on the reading.

*Note: If a group member hasn't finished the reading in time for the group discussion, have them skip ahead to the current week rather than trying to read everything to catch up. They can always go back and read what they missed after the eight weeks are over.
- 2** *Communicate with your pastor.* Write down key questions, concerns, doubts, and fears that are discussed (without names attached), and share them with your pastor. This will be a great way for your pastor to plan future sermons that speak to the hearts of your congregation.
- 3** *Encourage your group to incorporate prayer into their experience.* Each day before reading, group members should pause and pray, asking the Holy Spirit to open their hearts to receive God's word (we've included a sample prayer at the beginning of Immerse: Messiah.) We also encourage you to open each group discussion with prayer.
- 4** *Share your stories!* Tell your pastor and other group leaders about the discussions and discoveries your group has had. We would love to hear your stories as well—record a video or write them down and email them to stories@ImmerseBible.com.

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