

## **THE BIBLE—GOD’S PLAYBOOK**

The Bible is God’s Playbook for daily life.

Girls, we’re going to talk football for a minute, so go with me on this one.

If you were a player on a football team, what would you spend your time studying each day—the team’s playbook, or some famous coach’s commentary on the playbook (and no, there isn’t a third choice of *Guide to Looking Slimmer in Full Gear*)? Definitely the playbook!

Without a complete understanding of the plays for your team, you wouldn’t be an effective player (no matter how good you looked). You may decide to supplement your study of the team’s playbook with the commentary of other coaches, but that wouldn’t be your primary focus.

Some may say, “That’s fine for football, but what does this have to do with me?” In your life, God wants you on the field and in the game. He doesn’t want you sitting on the sidelines or in the stands giving a good “Go get ‘em” every now and then. God isn’t looking for life fans. He’s wants players. He put you in the game, and He has given you the playbook—His Playbook.

Unfortunately, many people don’t read the Bible. They think it’s outdated or hard to understand. So if they read anything about God, it’s devotionals or books or commentaries about the Bible. But these aren’t the plays from the Coach Himself.

*“The Word of God is living and active.” Hebrews 4:12* The Bible may tell the stories of what happened long ago, but it still speaks directly to each one of us today. The temptations in our daily lives. The uncomfortable situations we encounter. The decisions we have to make. The struggles with family, friends, finances, work, and health. The same challenges we face today mirror those that people and cultures have faced for thousands of years. God’s Word provides wisdom and guidance to help us navigate our choices and decisions. God’s Word can transform

us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Books about God’s Word lack that power. Devotionals and commentaries may be helpful in adding context or additional details so we can better understand the Bible, but they weren’t breathed by the Creator to speak directly into our lives and our circumstances.

Because the Bible is God’s Playbook for our everyday lives, reading it daily will change us. If you aren’t reading God’s Word daily, or if you don’t believe that reading the Word daily can transform you and your life, take this challenge. For two weeks, commit to reading the Bible 15 minutes a day. That’s all—just 15 minutes, which is less than the commercial time in a one hour television show. Pick one book: John, Mark, Luke, or James. Start at the beginning, and read through. Consider saying a simple prayer before you start reading each day, something like, “God, I want to understand Your Word and how it can apply to my life. Please help me to learn more about You and please speak to me through these passages.” If you’re not sure that you believe the Bible is God’s Living Word, be honest in your prayer and tell Him. And be open to hearing God speak to you.

My life has been transformed by Scripture, God’s Playbook. As I have learned more about God and His love for me, I have allowed God to wash away the dirt of my past, and He has set me on a new path. I would not be a survivor able to say with confidence, “There is hope for all of us,” if it weren’t for God and the power of His Word. I have gone from surviving to thriving because each day I continue to spend time with God in His Word. For all of us, in times of turmoil and trial when we’re struggling to find hope and we have less desire to be reading the Bible and listening to God, this is when we need the Living Word more than ever. God’s Word is Truth. God’s Word is power. God’s Word is light on our circumstances and the path we’re

walking. God’s Word is revelation about Him and His love for us, and His desire for us to love Him. We know God by His Word. He leads us by His Word.

Do you want a life filled with joy and peace and hope for tomorrow? Start with reading God’s Word, and allow Him to begin transforming your life. Be a player in the game, and read God’s Playbook as your primary guide each day.

*I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You. Psalm 119:11*

*Your Word is a lamp for my feet and a light for my path. Psalm 119:105*

*Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” Matthew 4:4*

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16*

*For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Hebrews 4:12*

**For further study.** A good way to study God’s Word is through Bible studies. Bible studies come in many forms, and they can be done on our own, or they can be done with someone else or in a group. As with any type of study, we get out what we put in. So the more time and effort we put into a Bible study, the more we will learn as we feed on the Word, receive nourishment from its truth, and continue to grow. Bible studies can focus on a particular Book of the Bible, or they may be a topical study. If you don’t know where to start, choose a study on the Book of John or the Book of James. Whatever study you choose, make sure that it is truly studying the Word and digging deep into Truth, not just helping people to feel better about some area of their lives. Great authors of Bible studies I have done include Kay Arthur, Max Lucado, Beth Moore,

Carol Kent, Henry Blackaby, and the Women of Faith. There are many other great teachers of the Word, so this is just a short list.