



one to one
BIBLE READING

a simple guide for every Christian

DAVID HELM

What people are saying about *One-to-One Bible Reading*

This is a fresh approach to one of the most practical and personal ways of sharing the gospel. This strategy for evangelistic ministry is very important for making disciples. Pastors, you'll want to get copies for your elders, deacons, staff, discipleship coordinators and congregations.

Justin Holcomb

Director of the Resurgence and Pastor at Mars Hill
Church in Seattle

David Helm has written a guide to help Christians in one of the most basic methods of helping others: reading the Bible with them. In evangelism, in edification, nothing can beat opening the text of the Bible and reading what God himself has actually said. Christians need only have confidence in God's word and a basic skill in reading it with others. David has done us a great service in helping people gain that basic skill.

Phillip Jensen

Dean of Sydney at St Andrew's Cathedral

One of my great joys in ministry among women is reading the Bible with just one other person. David's book explains in a clear and straightforward way how each one of us can get started in this simple yet life-changing ministry. If you have a heart for kingdom growth then read this book, pray and make a start!

Jenny Salt

Dean of Students at Sydney Missionary and Bible College

One-to-one Bible reading is vital for effective and vibrant gospel ministry. This simple guide to an essential ministry is a magnificent resource that will be useful for training all Christians in ministry. There is little else like it. We shall use it extensively at St Helen's.

William Taylor

Rector at St. Helen's Bishopsgate in London

Helm's booklet encourages relational evangelism and discipleship based on the living and active word of God, offering practical tools for one-on-one Bible reading and envisioning a mobilization of God's people that would complement church programs. Helm calls us to invite people not only to an event, but into our lives and into the life of faith in Jesus Christ offered in his word.

Kathleen Nielson

Author and conference speaker

David Helm is deeply committed to the public exposition of God's word and the training of preachers. Yet in this guide he advocates a deep-rooted culture of one-to-one Bible reading in our churches. Surely the two go hand in hand, but many Christians don't know where to start in this personal Bible reading ministry. This guide provides the inspiration for this desperately needed ministry revolution and the growth of the gospel vine into every corner of our communities.

Colin Marshall

Author of *The Trellis and the Vine* and CEO of Vinegrowers

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Part I
**What, why
and how**

I am deeply grateful to Scott Polender for his contribution to the text of part I, and to Robert Kinney for his editorial work.

1 Some people you know

YOU PROBABLY KNOW SOMEONE, perhaps a co-worker, who is not really a church person.

Let's call him Andrew. Perhaps you've discussed religion with him; maybe you haven't. You're reasonably sure he's not a Christian, yet he seems curious about your faith. He also seems to have some misconceptions about what the Bible says. You've never had the time or the right opportunity to address his questions.

You also know a young woman at church. Let's call her Norah. She's in her early twenties and recently began attending your Bible study group. She seems to be a relatively new Christian and knows very little about the Bible, but is eager to learn more.

You probably know some others from church—perhaps a young man who is a likable, totally committed

Christian. Let's call him Julius. He, along with his wife, volunteers to help in the nursery one Sunday per month. People respect him and value his input, but he isn't normally tapped for leadership.

These are three ordinary people very much like the people in your life. They each have a different perspective on Jesus Christ and the Christian faith.

Now, let's imagine that you have been assigned to devise a plan for the spiritual growth and discipleship of all three of these people, or people in similar situations. What a task—and where to begin? Perhaps you could invite Andrew to the next big evangelistic event your church hosts. Check. And isn't there a discipleship program going on that might be good for Norah? Check. That leaves Julius. What are you going to do with him? By all outward appearances he is sailing along quite well. Perhaps a special interest class offered by your church might have some interest for him? Check.

Now, if any of those plans for growth were the kinds of things that came into your mind, I want you to know that you are not alone. After all, for generations we have been conditioned to think of spiritual growth mainly in terms of an *event* to go to, a *program* to register for or a *class* to take. The church often puts its creative energy into initiating events, programs and classes specially designed to win people to Christ and help them grow in the faith.

And yet, as successful as some of these plans have been, we might still be missing out on something more dynamic—something more straightforward and right for

this day and age—that returns gospel growth to the everyday fabric of personal relationship, rather than relying on church-run programs.

Imagine that there is some way that Andrew, Norah and Julius could all grow in their knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ by the same means. They could be guided in a deeper, more meaningful way than through an event, program or class. They could be guided on an individual basis by someone who cares for them.

What is this way? What is this activity that is so simple and so universal that it meets the discipleship needs of these three very different people?

We call it reading the Bible one-to-one.

But what exactly is reading the Bible one-to-one? Why should we do it? Who is it for?

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DAVID HELM is a pastor at Holy Trinity Church in Chicago, and Chairman of The Charles Simeon Trust, a ministry devoted to equipping expository preachers. He longs for all Christians to read God's word for themselves and with others.

