

THE ONE YEAR®

BOOK OF
BEST-LOVED
BIBLE VERSES

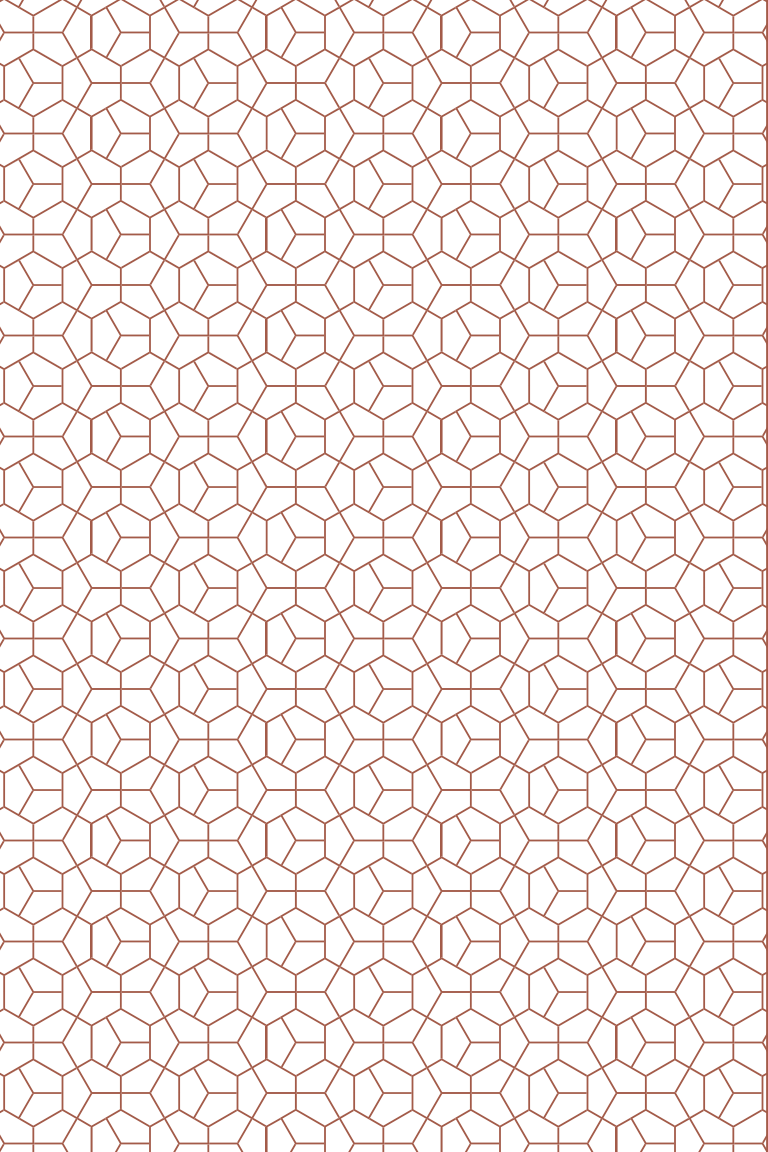
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LEN WOODS



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INTRODUCTION

At the bottom of a dusty trunk, you find a Bible that is scuffed and scarred, held together by dried-out rubber bands and old, yellowed tape. Why does it look like it's been through a war or two? Because it has been!

You gently open the crumbling cover. You carefully examine the tattered text. Here is what you discover: from beginning to end are verses—some familiar, some not—that have been underlined, starred, highlighted. Many are accompanied by tiny cursive notes in the nearest margin.

These are someone's favorite passages, of course.

In a life full of joy and grief, faith and doubt, there are particular passages of Scripture that have been the go-to verses for many across the long history of the church. They are the divine assurances and reminders that have often served as eternal anchors and ropes of hope in a stormy, scary world. Here is a treasury of holy messages—things *always* true even when they don't *seem* true.

In these pages I've collected a year's worth of such verses for you. Understand this: these 365 best-loved Bible verses certainly aren't more inspired than the rest of Scripture. But many report how these verses seem to jump off the page and how perfectly they capture the human experience. Memorable, profound, endlessly reassuring—no wonder people keep highlighting and underlining them (and posting them on social media)!

So—from the poetry of David and the wisdom of Solomon to the teachings of Jesus and the apostles—here are the verses that millions of Christians through the ages have found most inspiring, encouraging, comforting, and life changing.

Through his Word, God reveals himself to seekers. As you seek, my prayer is that you will be as blessed by these passages as all those who have gone before you.

JANUARY 1
OUR HEART'S DESIRE

*Take delight in the LORD, and he will
give you your heart's desires.*

PSALM 37:4

This beloved verse doesn't mean that God gives us anything we ask for. What wise, responsible father does that?

Delighting in God means enjoying him, finding great pleasure and satisfaction in him. As we do this, we come to see that we were made by God and for him. And we realize our deepest longing is for *him*, not for any earthly blessings he might give.

If your desires are jumbled, consider the honest prayer of an old saint, Teresa of Avila: "Oh God, I don't love you, I don't even want to love you, but I want to want to love you."

*Even if he does not bring you the answer you want,
he will bring you himself. And maybe at the secret heart
of all our prayers that is what we are really praying for.*

FREDERICK BUECHNER



JANUARY 2

TRUSTWORTHY INSPIRATION

All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16

People speak of books that *inspire*, but the Bible claims to *be inspired*. *Inspiration* means that God's Spirit superintended the human authors so that they accurately conveyed God's revelation to the world through their own unique writing styles and personalities.

Since God speaks only truth, his Word can be trusted. Let it be a mirror today, showing you where your life is flawed. Let it be your toolbox, helping you repair what's broken. Let it be your GPS, guiding you in the right way.

Don't believe everything you think. You cannot be trusted to tell yourself the truth. Stay in The Word.

JERRY BRIDGES



JANUARY 3
DOING THE WORD

*Don't just listen to God's word.
You must do what it says.*

JAMES 1:22

A group of Christians held a Bible study on the topic of prayer. Each Tuesday they spent two hours learning about prayer. But, except for a quick “closing prayer” each week, they didn’t do any praying!

In the information age, it’s easy to fall into the information trap. We can gorge on great books and podcasts, stuff our heads full of theological truth—and remain essentially unchanged.

This isn’t what the Christian life is meant to be. Following Jesus is not a thought experiment. It’s obeying what God has said. Every time we close the Bible, we need to ask: *How will I live differently?*

*The Bible was not written to satisfy your curiosity;
it was written to transform your life.*

HOWARD HENDRICKS

JANUARY 4

GOD IS SPEAKING

The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known.

PSALM 19:1-2

Perhaps you know someone who has heard the audible voice of God. Maybe you think, *How come I've never heard God speak like that?*

God speaks in a host of ways. We can hear his voice throughout his Word, and his voice can seem especially clear as we encounter Jesus within the pages of the Word. If you are eager to hear from God, the Gospels are a great place to start.

The psalmist reminds us today that God also speaks through creation, which makes him known. Even in life's mundane moments, the Holy Spirit is whispering. So pay attention, or as Jesus put it, "Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!" (Matthew 11:15).

*[God] is by His nature continuously articulate.
He fills the world with His speaking Voice.*

A. W. TOZER



JANUARY 5
BIG GOD,
LITTLE PROBLEMS

Who else has held the oceans in his hand? Who has measured off the heavens with his fingers? Who else knows the weight of the earth or has weighed the mountains and hills on a scale?

ISAIAH 40:12

Someone once quipped, “Little god, big problems. Big God, little problems.” However simplistic that saying might be, it is nevertheless true. Seeing the magnitude of our Maker puts everything else in right perspective.

In describing the immensity of God, Isaiah imagined the Almighty scooping the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans into one hand while palming the Milky Way with the other. Then he described God placing the Himalayas and Rockies on a scale.

Are you getting the picture? God is infinite and limitless. This means he’s plenty big enough for whatever you’re up against.

*Happy the soul that has been awed
by a view of God’s majesty.*

A. W. PINK



JANUARY 6

HIDDEN REALITIES

We live by believing and not by seeing.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:7

Most people live according to what they can *see*. For example, you may survey your life and conclude, *I have zero job prospects, no friends, and no money to pay my bills. I'm ruined!*

The problem with this mind-set is that it's limited by space and time. It forgets that reality transcends what is visible here and now. It neglects the following twin truths: (1) At every moment, God is orchestrating and coordinating a trillion details. (2) We can see precious little of all God is doing.

Since you don't know about that phone call you'll be getting next Friday or the surprise that awaits you tomorrow at 9:32 a.m., opt to live by faith, not by what you can or cannot see.

Some things have to be believed to be seen.

RALPH HODGSON



JANUARY 7
NO OTHER GODS

*Dear children, keep away from anything that
might take God's place in your hearts.*

I JOHN 5:21

Ancient cultures weren't the only ones susceptible to idolatry.

An idol is anything other than God that we depend on to save us or give us meaning. An idol is often a *good* thing—marriage, an ability, a career, children, financial success—that we treat as an *ultimate* thing. We wrap our hearts around it and think, *Without this, my life's not worth living.*

This is the essence of sin—giving our hearts to anything but God. Are there things in your life that receive more attention, affection, and adoration from you than God receives?

The human mind is, so to speak, a perpetual forge of idols.

JOHN CALVIN