

WELCOME!

Welcome I hope you enjoy this course and find these course transcripts helpful and beneficial. I wish you a pleasant reading and discovery of God's Word in the Bible. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of reading the Bible. These course transcripts are only to guide your reading of the Bible and reading these is not a substitute for reading the Bible.

You already have knowledge of the scriptures, but if this is your first time to seriously read the Bible I want to say "Welcome" to you. I am sure that you will find the Word of God in the Scriptures immensely rewarding. If this is your first time doing any serious study of the Bible, naturally it would be much easier for you to do so if you had the support of a group so you need to go slowly and be patient and gentle with yourself.

THIS COURSE

After this introductory chapter you will notice that there are simultaneous lessons on both the Old Testament and New Testament. I have deliberately structured the course in this way to ensure that you do not read only the New Testament, as this would be missing out on half of God's Word to you!

The course is structured as follows

FIRST HALF	Old Testament	Psalms
	New Testament	Mark, Luke, Matthew, Infancy Narratives Humanity of Jesus, Parables
SECOND HALF	Old Testament	Wisdom Literature
	New Testament	Miracles, Sermon on the Mount
		Passion Narratives, Resurrection Narratives
		Acts of the Apostles

In this course, therefore, you will cover approximately one third of the Old Testament and one third of the New Testament.

There are three things we can do with the Bible

1. We can read the Bible
2. We can study the Bible
3. We can use the Bible to help us pray.

In this course we do all three:

1. During each lesson you will see a Bible to tell you the Scripture reading for that lesson or part of a lesson which you should read before continuing. Usually this occurs at the beginning of the lesson.



2. You are then ready to use these transcripts. Hopefully you can complete one lesson each week but if necessary take longer. Read as many of the Scripture references as possible during each lesson. Sometimes I will ask you a question during the lesson or ask you to work out something or reflect on something. You will see a question mark. I also suggest further reading.



3. Finally each lesson helps you use some of the Scripture passages for prayer or gives suggestions for using Scripture for prayer.



If this is your first time to read, study and pray the Bible, you may be surprised at the amount of detail I give in this course. You may find more information here than you require, but as you get to know the Bible better these lessons will take on much more meaning for you. At the end of the course hopefully you will reread these transcripts again and they should mean a lot more to you then. I am trying to make this course as spiritual and meaningful as possible for you and I ask you not to make any premature judgment on the course. Please bear with course. I am continually updating and improving this course as well as working on future courses. This is the best that I can offer you at this moment.

If you are not already familiar with the Bible you will need to become familiar with where the various books are in the Bible. The method I use is to learn the books off by heart as one does the alphabet, and it is as quick to find a book as any other way. Another method is to purchase sticky cellophane tabs in a religious bookstore with the name of the book already printed. There is one tab for each book and you stick it on the first page of that book. The name of the book then stands out clearly at the edge of your Bible. As you will be checking my references you should quickly become familiar with many books.

THE BIBLE, YOUR LIFE AND PRAYER

The emergence of so many Lectio Divina groups in the Church in recent years and other Bible Study groups and prayer groups using the Bible has drawn attention to the desire in the heart of all of us that the Bible speak directly to our own heart. The Bible is not a dead word but a living word that can speak to every generation and person (Isa 55:10-11). It is God's gift to the Church in every age. This is so personal that obviously only you will appreciate fully God touching you in this way. The most important part of the course I give is using the Bible for prayer. I always tell students that while the Bible is meant to be read and studied, it is above all a book to help us to pray, to draw us closer to God, to feed our spiritual lives. Therefore I lead a guided biblical prayer session each week as part of the course. That has proved to be the most popular part of the course and due to many requests I have recorded samples on CD and cassette. The biblical meditations are accompanied by specially commissioned soothing background music. They are for private prayer at home but would also be useful for group prayer, in school,

for holy hours. You may listen to samples at <http://www.frtommylane.com/prayingbible.htm>

WHICH BIBLE?

I recommend [The Ignatius Bible: Revised Standard Version - Second Catholic Edition](#)

CHAPTERS, VERSES AND ABBREVIATIONS

When I refer you to chapters and verses I use the following method:

Luke 3 = chapter 3 of Luke

Luke 3:2 = chapter 3 verse 2

Luke 3:2-3 = chapter 3 verses 2-3

Luke 3:2,6 = chapter 3 verses 2 and 6

Luke 3:2-4:1 = chapter 3 verse 2 to chapter 4 verse 1

If a verse is long, so that you know what part of a verse I am referring to, I will refer to the first half as 'a' and the second half as 'b'. If it is very long it might even be divided into three sections, a,b,c. So Luke 3:7b = 2nd half of verse 7 in chapter 3

In dates c 80 AD = around 80 AD.

OT = Old Testament

v = verse

3:1ff = Chapter 3, verses 1 and following

NJBC = *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*

Books of the Bible are usually abbreviated to the first three or four letters, e.g. Isa = Isaiah.

NJB = New Jerusalem Bible

NT = New Testament

vv = verses

Titles of books are printed in *italics*.

CCC = Catechism of the Catholic Church

As you embark on this wonderful voyage of discovery of the Word of God I wish you well and I am very happy that you have chosen to do so using my course. I ask you to please pray for me and my ministry as I pray for you.

Wishing you God's Blessing,
Fr. Tommy Lane