

## *To all who read the bible in our services at St Bede's*

Thank you for taking on this special role at church. As a people who revere the scriptures as the Lord's word to us this day, the public reading of that word is vital. At the moment you stand and read, the living God is addressing us as a body of believers. For this reason, that time of open reading is a high point of our time together.

With this in mind, I want to encourage you to continue in this privileged role and remind you of some helpful ways to prepare for Sunday. This may be very familiar ground, but it always helps to refine our approach so that the scriptures are presented and received all the more clearly.

### *In preparation to read*

1. Pray that God will help you to understand what this passage means and give you the ability to read it with clarity at the service
  2. Read through once silently
  3. Read a second time out loud
  4. Consider the key points of emphasis in the passage. This helps you to read/speak it to the congregation as if you were the author yourself. (It might help to imagine you are reading to a group of blind people who cannot read along. They are relying on your clarity of voice and emphasis to catch the writer's meaning) Some like to print the passage out, highlight key parts and read from that copy on the day.
  5. Read through a 3rd time out loud
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6. When you arrive for the service collect an order of service sheet at the door so you know when you are to read
  7. Direct the congregation to the black bibles in the pews,
    - State the title of the Book (eg Romans, Isaiah etc),
    - Chapter and verses you will be reading
    - provide the page number
  8. Pause to give people time to find the passage.
  9. Please avoid giving a summary of the passage or some commentary on it before you read. It is the preacher's task to expand on the passage and there is a risk of confusion if the preacher's emphasis clashes with your own. Some statement of the context of the passage may be appropriate if it is part of a longer narrative (eg. If reading Exodus 20, you could say that these commands were received by Moses on Mt Sinai)
  10. Close with "*This is the Word of the Lord*" - The congregation responds with "*Thanks be to God*"

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May you be blessed as you serve the Lord & his people in this ministry

Yours in Christ

*James Macbeth*