

Youth Bible Reading Age Guidance

The Holy Bible contains content that addresses all aspects of human behavior, which could be viewed as including the good, the bad, and the ugly. **As a result, parents/guardians need to make the final decision on what age is appropriate for their youth to read the entire Bible.**

The author of *Know His Word Bible Study* highly recommends that regardless of the youth participant's age, **parents/guardians should read along with their youth, or at a minimum engage in regular conversations with their reader. This is to provide clarification and guidance as needed.**

The movie industry created a rating system for movie content. The rating system provides parents/guardians with some advance understanding of the type of content the movie contains. This facilitates parents/guardians in deciding if a movie is appropriate for their youth to view, with or without them being present.

Some movies also provide brief word descriptors to categorize content that is rated higher than the "G" rating which is deemed suitable for general audiences. Examples of these descriptors are "strong violence, language, sexual content, nudity, disturbing material."

This author asked a few parents how they would rate the overall Bible content if using the movie industry rating system. While it was difficult for anyone to agree on a rating for the entire Bible, the general feedback was that they would rate some content as being G (for general audiences), some content PG (needing parental guidance), some content PG-13 (inappropriate for children under 13), and a few passages as being R (anyone under 17 requires a parent or adult guardian).

With the above in mind, herein is a list of some passages that parents and guardians should be aware of, which will help them decide the age their youth should read the entire Bible. Alternately, parents/guardians could have their youth skip reading these passages until they are older, or they could engage in a discussion before the youth does the reading to prepare their hearts and minds. This will also ensure that the takeaway messages the parents want their youth to learn are communicated.

Youth Bible Reading Age Guidance

Content for Parent/Guardian Youth Bible Reading Age Assessment

While the Bible provides God’s guidance on what is righteous behavior, it also records wrong behavior performed even by those who are endeavoring to live for Him. Then God progressively reveals corrective action. If youth do not understand this, they may misinterpret the actions of wrong behavior as being approved by God, simply because it is written in the Bible. **This is why parent/guardian guidance is needed for youth readers, and ideally, they should read along with them.**

The below passages are identified because of how clear the Bible content is written on those difficult topics, which may cause youth to need assistance in understanding what they should learn from them. **This list may not be exhaustive from the viewpoint of every parent, but these are the ones the author feels most significant to highlight.**

Note: Some Bible versions use the most discrete and poetic expressions possible for difficult topics. Two such Bible examples are the King James Version (KJV) and Tree of Life Version (TLV)¹.

This second edition of *Know His Word Bible Study* has also been updated to use more discrete expressions. This allows parents/guardians to have the greatest latitude in discussing delicate topics with their youth.

<u>Bible Passage</u>	<u>Page Number</u>	<u>Content Descriptor</u>
----------------------	--------------------	---------------------------

Know His Word Bible Study–1st Quarter

Genesis 19:4-8	1-22, 1-23, 1-25	sexual
Genesis 19:30-38	1-22, 1-23, 1-25	sexual

Know His Word Bible Study–2nd Quarter

Judges 4:21	13-18	strong violence
Judges 19:22-30	14-14	disturbing material
Song of Solomon/Songs	23-6 to 23-9	sexual

Know His Word Bible Study–3rd Quarter

Lamentations 2:20-21	35-6	disturbing material
Lamentations 5:11	35-6	disturbing material

Know His Word Bible Study–4th Quarter

Revelation 17:4-6	52b-30, 52b-31	disturbing material
-------------------	----------------	---------------------