

Preface

One misty Saturday morning several years ago I [N] was sitting on my surfboard at a local surf spot waiting for a wave with my kids. The surf was small that day and everybody in the water was waiting for the next wave in silence.

When the wave came, I noticed a very small boy, who didn't know how to surf, attempt to catch the wave. He did not know the basics of surfing and was not in the right place to catch the wave nor was he balanced on the surfboard to paddle efficiently. So he missed or got clobbered by most of the waves he tried to catch.

His father stood on the shore—fully clothed and dry. As a wave approached, his father would boom out commands to his struggling son, “Turn around. Paddle! Paddle Harder! You could have gotten that. You've got to try harder!” The father's voice echoed up and down the beach and must have embarrassed the young boy.

After a while, the surfers started exchanging knowing glances of sympathy for the boy's plight. So, I turned to my kids and asked what the father should be doing. They said the father should be in the water—next to his son—helping him succeed rather than shouting commands from a distance.

Many Quiet Time books stand on the shore and shout commands to their struggling readers from a distance. We don't do that. We provide real help.

Just like catching a wave depends on the proper functioning of interrelated skills, developing a successful Bible reading time depends on the balancing of several skills like the improvement of your ability to study the Bible, the negotiation with your motivation, and the management of your time.

Which of these skills to focus on and which to lead with, make all the difference between catching a wave or just getting tired and giving up.

In this journey, we get in the water with you. We help surface the desire God has given you to be with Him. We help you learn to read the Bible in simple steps so God can speak to you. And we help minimize the influences that would push down or choke out your motivation.

By carefully reinforcing your desire for God, at the same time as enhancing your Bible study skill, you will be able to hear and respond to what God says to you.

If you decide to take this journey and do the assignments, rest assured your life will never be the same.

Organization of the Book

The book is divided into three parts and an appendix.

The Book. The first part presents the content of the eight sessions in an easy to read format.

The Assignments. The second part is a workbook of assignments and space to write the assignment in the book. Included with the assignments is a devotional commentary on the passages you have studied so you can check your work.

The Notes. If you are attending a Bible study that is going through this book, the third part provides fill-in-the-blank-style note pages for taking notes during the sessions.

Appendix. The appendix includes an annotated list of Bible study tools, answers to the assignments, a collection of promises you can claim during prayer, a handy reminder card, and additional background information on the authors.

How to Use this Book

As an Individual. If you are going through this book as an individual, go through the eight sessions beginning on page 15 and do the assignments mentioned at the end of each session.

As a Small Group. If you are going through this book as a small group, one person could read the session (first one begins on page 15) and the others could fill in the blanks in *The Notes* (first one begins on page 207). Everyone does the assignment at home and comes back to discuss the assignment at the beginning of the next small group meeting.

Acknowledgements

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If you have suggestions or simply have benefited from this book, feel free to drop us a note at the address below. Unfortunately, we probably will not be able to reply, but we would love to hear from you.

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