

PARENT CONVERSATIONS

What resources are available to help parents develop a lifelong love of Bible reading in their children's lives? Here are some recommendations from one family that has researched Bible story books for all ages. It's one of those articles that I plan to save and share because it's filled with so much useful information. May it bless your family as well!

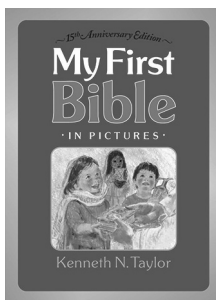
—Nicole Balza

WHAT ARE THE BEST BIBLE STORY BOOKS FOR FAMILY DEVOTIONS?

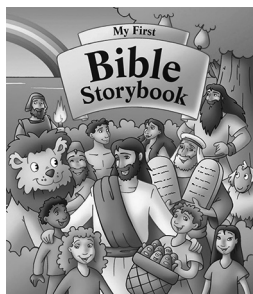
WHEN OUR children were young, my husband and I sifted through dozens of Bible story books to find the best Bible story books to read aloud.

As we chose books to read to our kids, we kept several things in mind. First, we made sure that the books added

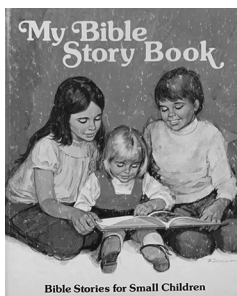
little detail to the original Bible account. When our children were young, we chose only books with engaging text and pictures. As our family grew, we tried to find books that appealed to different age levels. Most important, we chose books that did not contradict biblical doctrine.



My First Bible by Kenneth Taylor is the first Bible story book we used with our kids. The stories are very short and written with toddlers in mind. It's best for kids ages 0 to 2.

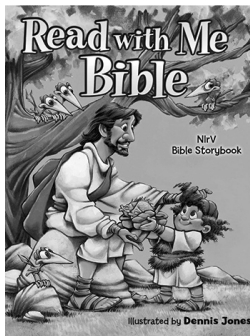


My First Bible Storybook published by Concordia is another excellent choice. The stories are accurate, engaging summaries of the Bible text. It's great for ages 3 to 6.

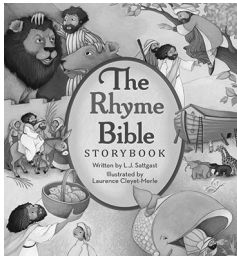


My Bible Story Book by Sarah Fletcher is a favorite from my childhood and is the perfect next step from Taylor's book. This is one of those books that adds a few things to the stories—but not too much (usually). I love how the author keeps Jesus as the center of the book, even with Old Testament stories.

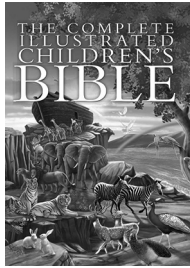
It's perfect for three-to five-year-olds.



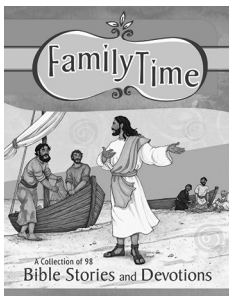
Read with Me Bible published by Zondervan was our first fat Bible story book. At first, we hesitated to use it because the pictures are cartoony and sometimes just plain silly. But the stories are well written, and the illustrations certainly kept our kids' attention! This book is ideal for ages 3 to 6.



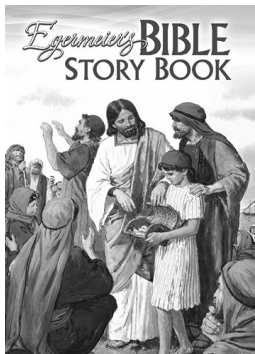
My only complaint about *The Rhyme Bible* by L. J. Sattgast is that it's too short! All of us enjoyed the illustrations and the lovely rhyming stories. Our kids especially liked this one as three- and four-year-olds.



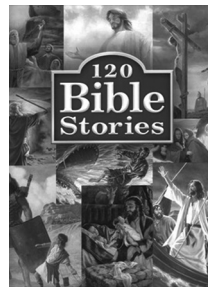
One thing I love about *The Complete Illustrated Children's Bible* by Janice Emerson is that it has so many stories. It goes beyond familiar characters like Moses and Jonah to include many lesser-known Bible characters and stories. My criticisms are that the storytelling style can feel a little boring at times and the author fails to mention Christ in many opportune places. If you feel comfortable adding that in yourself, the book is a fine choice. I recommend it for ages 5 and up.



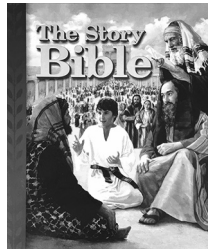
*Family Time** is another book we've read with our family. I love that the left side of each page is a Bible story and the right side is an application story. It's told in language that our children understood as preschoolers, but it was still engaging for our ten-year-old. The stories are Christ-centered and biblically solid. I highly recommend it for ages 5 and up. Younger children who are experienced Bible story listeners will enjoy it as well.



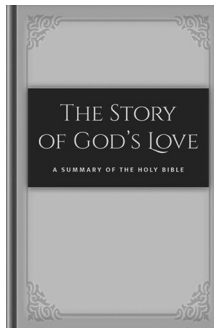
*Egermeier's Bible Story Book** is a republished classic. The 312(!) stories are beautifully told and doctrinally sound. The only challenge we had with this book is that the stories are often too long for our younger kids and there isn't a picture for every story. I recommend it for ages 6 and up. It really is a treasure!



*120 Bible Stories** is a great choice for older listeners. There are fewer pictures, but they're extremely well done and full of interesting detail. I love how each devotion offers a short Bible passage to memorize. I also appreciate the questions at the end of each story. I recommend the stories for ages 6 and up.



*The Story Bible** is a large Bible story book with stunning illustrations. I love that the stories come directly from the Bible, and I especially love the question, suggested activity, and prayer at the end of each story. However, I find it odd that the editors worked so hard to make the book one that kids could read themselves but included much of the stilted language of the English Standard Version translation of the Bible. Some of it was so awkward to read (and incomprehensible to our kids) that we had to revise the stories as we read aloud.



Finally, when our house became a mix of grade schoolers and teenagers, we started reading *The Story of God's Love**. This book is great for children who already know their basic Bible stories and have a longer listening span. It contains 250 readings of actual Bible text from all 66 books of the Bible. The kids enjoyed hearing lesser-known stories (like the story of Ehad and Eglon) that they had never heard in school or Sunday school.

May God bless you as you share his Word with the next generation!



Anna Geiger and her husband, Steve, are raising their six children in Mequon, Wisconsin. This column was originally printed on Anna's website for parents and teachers at themeasuredmom.com.

*Available from Northwestern Publishing House at nph.net or 800-662-6022.

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