



## GCFKIDS Bible Recommendations for Kids

There are so many choices out there for you as parents to sort through. It can get overwhelming at times. I hope this information is helpful in picking a Bible best suited for your child's interest and reading level.

The main thing to remember is that the best Bible for your child is the one they will read. If they get a really expensive Bible but never open it, it doesn't help them in any way. So keep that in mind as you pick out the perfect Bible for each one of your kiddos.

### 4 Questions to Consider

1. Is it readable?
2. Is it a Bible?
3. What kinds of helpful features does it have?
4. Does it fit your child's personality?

### Bible Types

#### **Storybook**

These types of Bibles are full of colorful pictures that really help illuminate the imagination of kids as they read or listen to each story. However, even though they have "Bible" in the name, I would definitely classify them more of a devotional.

They summarize large portions of scripture into a single page and skip major portions of the Bible, focusing on some of the "main-stream" stories we all know and love.

Are they bad? Absolutely not.

In fact, I think these make great books to read together as a family. Many will contain questions and other prompts to get your children thinking about how they can apply the story they just learned about.

#### **Paraphrase**

These types of Bibles are not word-for-word translations of the Bible. They attempt to capture the thought and essence of the original text. They can be good for kids (or adults) who want a new perspective on stories they've heard many times.

One caution. Because a paraphrase is based on the author's interpretation of the text, it is recommended that you use it in partnership with a literal or word-for-word translation.

The most well known paraphrase of the Bible is "The Message".

## Literal

A literal translation is considered a word-for-word or thought-for-thought translation of the original manuscripts in Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic. There are tons to choose from and many come with recommendations based on reading level. Literal translations are the most commonly used and a good starting place for kids who can read fairly well.

### Bible Versions

- ESV** The English Standard Version was written in 2001, and often helps the Bible to feel more like great literature than a manual for daily life. It's rated at a 10th grade reading level.
- HCSB** The Holman Christian Standard Bible was published in 1999 is a combination of word-for-word and thought-for-thought translations. It's strength is readability, but is still rated at a 7-8th grade reading level.
- ICB** The International Children's Bible is a thought-for-thought translation was specifically translated for kids. It's rated at a 3rd grade reading level.
- NIRV** One of our favorite translations for kids at a 3rd grade level of reading is the NIRV (New International Reader's Version) It has simplified words and sentence structures to allow for easier flow and understanding.
- NIV** The best-selling version by far is the New International Version. This thought-for-thought version was written a focus on clarity and readability. It's rated at a 7-8th grade reading level.
- NKJV** The New King James Version is a modern version of the tried and true KJV. Updated in 1982 by Thomas Nelson, it does a good job of highlighting the best parts of the KJV. It's rated at a 7th grade reading level.
- NLT** The New Living Translation is a thought-for-thought translation, and feels a little more informal. Originally published in 1966 by Tyndale House, it's rated at a 6th grade reading level.
- MSG** The Message is a paraphrase of the original texts. It reads like a letter from an old friend. It's rated at a 4th-5th grade reading level.

### Recommended Bibles (Literal Translation)

- [The Adventure Bible](#) - Available in multiple translations
- [Kid's Quest Study Bible](#) - Available in multiple translations
- [Kids Devotional Bible](#) - Available in multiple translations
- [Hands On Bible \(NLT\)](#)
- [The Airship Genesis Kids Study Bible \(NKJV\)](#) - More information at [www.airshipgenesis.com](http://www.airshipgenesis.com)
- [The Jesus Calling Bible for Children \(ICB\)](#)

## Recommended Bibles (Paraphrase)

- The Message

## Recommended Bibles (Storybook)

- Jesus Storybook Bible - Recommended for ages 4-8
- The Action Bible - Recommended for ages 8-12
- The Beginner's Bible - Recommended for ages 3-5
- My First Hands-on Bible - Recommended for ages 3-5