

Bible Golf

by Quillon Harpham

Test your Bible knowledge by playing a round of Bible Golf. All you need is a Bible and a Bible Golf course, such as the one below. Here are the first two holes of an example course:

No	Description	Par	SI	Shots								Your Score	
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
1	Jonah is swallowed by a big fish.	3	17										
2	Paul urges us to "Put on the full armour of God".	4	9										

The description of each hole is matched by a verse in the Bible. To complete the hole you must identify and turn to the verse described. Each hole has a Par, as on a normal golf course, which is the number of attempts that are expected to pick out the verse precisely. Each hole also has a stroke index (SI) which is a rank from 1-18 indicating how hard it is (1 = the hardest hole on the course, 18 = the easiest).

For example, John attempts hole number 1 above: 'Jonah is swallowed by a big fish':

1. He guesses that this verse is Jonah 3:10. This is his first shot which he enters against Shot 1. Using the index in his Bible he turns to Jonah 3:10 (on page 928 in an NIV Bible). He immediately sees that this is not the correct verse, but he is close and it is probably on the page before (927 in an NIV Bible). He keeps his Bible open on page 928.
2. He makes his second guess of Jonah 1:10, enters this against Shot 2 and then turns to the page showing this verse (the previous page). Jonah 1:10 is not the verse he is looking for but the correct verse (Jonah 1:17) is open in front of him. You could say that he is on the green, since an examination of the page he has open will reveal the correct verse.
3. He examines the page carefully and sees that Jonah 1:17 is the correct one and makes this his third guess, entering it against Shot 3. He has therefore completed the hole in three shots, equal to the par for the hole. He enters "3" against his score for hole 1.

After the first hole, his Scorecard looks like this:

No	Description	Par	SI	Shots								Your Score		
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
1	Jonah is swallowed by a big fish.	3	17	Jonah 3:10	Jonah 1:10	Jonah 1:17								3

Some other rules:

- A player can never score more than 8 shots on a hole. If they have had 8 guesses without identifying the correct verse then their score for that hole is 8.
- If a verse guessed by a player is not in the Bible, then this shot is 'out of bounds' and they must concede a penalty shot, close their Bible and begin again by taking another guess.

For example, John continues with hole 2, 'Put on the full armour of God'? He hasn't got a clue where this is and so he makes a series of guesses. He completes his scorecard as he goes:

No	Description	Par	SI	Shots								Your Score		
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
1	Jonah is swallowed by a big fish.	3	17	Jonah 3:10	Jonah 1:10	Jonah 1:17								3
2	Paul urges us to "Put on the full armour of God".	4	9	Romans 3:20	Romans 8:38	1 Cor 6:25	Penalty Shot	Gal 5:12	Eph 6:1	Eph 2:8	2 Thes 2:5			8

His third guess, 1 Corinthians 6:25, is not in the Bible since 1 Corinthians 6 has only 20 verses. He therefore takes a penalty shot which he enters as his fourth guess, closes his Bible and makes his fifth guess.

His sixth guess, Ephesians 6:1 in most Bibles is on the same page as the correct answer, Ephesians 6:11 and so is visible at the same time. Had he looked more carefully he could have identified the correct verse for his seventh guess. You could say that he was on the green, but putted off. He enters a score of "8" for hole 2.

To play a full round of Bible Golf complete all 18 holes (in two sets of 9, 'out' and 'back') and add up your total score. Compare your score with other players and whoever completes the course with the lowest score is the winner.

For those who are familiar with the rules of Golf, Bible Golf can also be played in "Match Play" format and in teams with 'Foursomes', 'fourballs' and 'greensomes'. If you have a good understanding of handicaps and stroke indexes you can also factor these into the game.

Tips for Writing Bible Golf Courses:

1. Select verses where it is obvious to the player when they have found it; Bible Golf courses aren't usually supplied with answers.
2. Try to pick a mixture of verses, some which are easy to find and some more difficult.
3. Try to select verses that players will know the approximate location of, but not exactly. For example an event which is "somewhere in the second half of Acts" rather than famous verses like John 3:16.
4. If you select verses in the gospels then either make sure they only occur in one gospel or be prepared for more than one correct answer. This is also true of some passages in the Old Testament and some of Paul's letters.
5. You can pick up teaching themes by creating a course containing verses about the same topic e.g. 'The End Times Course'.

Below is an example Bible Golf course for you to print out and try and also a blank Bible Golf course form.

Enjoy the game and challenge your leaders!

Bible Golf Course: The Ridgeway North Course – Par 72

Out:

No	Description	Par	SI	Shots								Your Score	
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
1	Three wise men give the baby Jesus gold, incense and myrrh.	4	16										
2	God gives Noah the dimensions of the ark.	4	10										
3	Esther becomes queen of Persia.	4	15										
4	Augustus takes a census of the entire Roman world.	4	12										
5	Daniel is put in the lion's den.	3	17										
6	Jesus begins the story of the rich man and Lazarus.	5	3										
7	A burning coal is touched upon Isaiah's mouth.	3	9										
8	The ravens feed Elijah.	5	6										
9	Paul teaches us that love is patient and kind.	4	7										
Par for Holes 1-9:		36		Out (Total Score for Holes 1-9):									

Bible Golf Course: The Ridgeway North Course – Par 72

Back:

No	Description	Par	SI	Shots								Your Score	
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
10	An Old Testament prophet is told to go to Nineveh.	3	18										
11	It is prophesied that a ruler of Israel will be born in Bethlehem.	4	4										
12	Balaam's donkey talks for the first time.	5	8										
13	Ruth becomes the wife of Boaz.	4	14										
14	Saul is anointed as the first king of Israel.	4	13										
15	There is a time for war and a time for peace.	4	5										
16	An Old Testament prophet criticises the people for putting their wages in a bag with holes in it.	4	2										
17	The Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost with tongues of fire.	3	11										
18	Bildad the Shuhite makes his first speech.	5	1										
Par for Holes 10-18:				Back (Total Score for Holes 10-18):									
Par for Whole Course:				Total Score:									
72													

Bible Golf Course:
Out:

No	Description	Par	SI	Shots								Your Score	
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
1													
2													
3													
4													
5													
6													
7													
8													
9													
Par for Holes 1-9:				Out (Total Score for Holes 1-9):									

Bible Golf Course:

Back:

No	Description	Par	SI	Shots								Your Score	
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
10													
11													
12													
13													
14													
15													
16													
17													
18													
Par for Holes 10-18:				Back (Total Score for Holes 10-18):									
Par for Whole Course:				Total Score:									