

# COLIN SMITH

PASTOR, AUTHOR  
PRESIDENT, OPEN THE BIBLE



Colin Smith is the founder and president of [Open the Bible](#), a global teaching ministry aired on over 1,000 radio stations, with a digital presence that reaches millions around the world. Born and raised in Edinburgh, Scotland, Pastor Colin trained at the [London School of Theology](#), where he earned a Bachelor of Theology and a Master of Philosophy, and where he met his wife, Karen. He pastored the Enfield Evangelical Free Church in London for 16 years before moving to the United States in 1996 to lead [The Orchard](#), a multi-campus church in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, where he pastored for nearly 30 years and now serves as Pastor Emeritus. Colin is the author of more than 20 books, including [Heaven, How I Got Here: The Story of the Thief on the Cross](#), [Momentum: Pursuing God's Blessings Through the Beatitudes](#), and the three-book series [FLY Through the Bible](#), [DRIVE Through the Bible](#), and [HIKE Through the Bible](#).

## AVAILABILITY

- Avail Monday through Friday via phone, Zoom.
- Avail to travel for select opportunities.
- Central time zone (Chicago)

## DOWNLOADS

- [Colin Smith headshot](#)
- [Hi resolution book cover images](#)
- [HIKE Through the Bible manuscript PDF](#)
- [FLY Through the Bible manuscript PDF](#)
- [Open the Bible ministry artwork](#)

## ONLINE

Click the icons below to find Colin and Open the Bible online.



## Open the Bible® with Pastor Colin Smith

Open the Bible's mission is to build a movement of people who love to open the Bible themselves and are equipped to open the Bible with others. The ministry was founded in 1999 after Colin led a two-year journey through Scripture at The Orchard church and a radio producer who attended suggested that those sermons be broadcasted. Colin's clear, accessible teaching—always tracing how the grand story of the Bible fits together and points to Jesus Christ—found a growing audience. In the past 12 months, the ministry has reached more than 20 million people globally through teaching airing on over 1,000 radio stations that reaches audiences worldwide, online courses, live events, social media, podcasts, and other digital channels. A standalone UK ministry was launched in 2017, and just a few years later in 2020 a Spanish ministry, *Abre la Biblia*, was founded to reach millions more around the world with the gospel.

## WATCH, LISTEN



Click on the images to watch or listen to messages from Open the Bible or the HIKE Through the Bible podcast.



TO BOOK AN INTERVIEW, CONTACT:

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# ABOUT THE BOOK



[Click for additional info](#)

[FLY Through the Bible](#) helps readers grasp the whole Bible story in a single sitting. Using the analogy of a flight over the Grand Canyon, author Colin Smith takes readers over the whole landscape of Scripture — start to finish — in 15 short chapters broken into three parts: Five People from the Old Testament, Five Events in the Life of Jesus, and Five Gifts God Gives to Every Believer. This deliberately brief welcoming book is written for anyone curious about the Bible's story, whether they've never opened one before or have read it their whole lives. In just two hours, readers come away knowing who God is, who they are, who Jesus is, and what He offers.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- The whole Bible story organized into 15 short chapters, organized in three parts:
- Part 1 - Five People in the Old Testament: Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, Ezra
- Part 2 - Five Events in the Life of Jesus: Born, Tempted, Crucified, Risen, Ascended
- Part 3 - Five Gifts for Every Believer: The Holy Spirit, Faith, Forgiveness, The Church, Heaven
- Reflection and discussion questions at the end of every chapter.
- A high-altitude overview readable in under two hours, written for those new to the Bible as well as longtime believers.
- Discover the whole story in a single sitting and see the big picture of Scripture's story, maybe for the first time.

## HOW IS IT DIFFERENT?

- Covers the entire Bible in one short, readable sitting without needing any prior knowledge.
- This clean 15-chapter, 3-part outline (Five People, Five Events, Five Gifts) makes the story of Scripture easy to remember.
- Written explicitly for the skeptic, the beginner, and accessible to the longtime believer; the tone invites rather than assumes.
- The Grand Canyon flyover metaphor gives readers a memorable way to understand why a big-picture view comes first.
- Ends every chapter with plain reflection questions that work one-on-one or in a group.

## WHY IS IT RELEVANT?

- Meets a culture that is curious, unfamiliar, and short on time.
- An ideal outreach and invitation tool: a believer can hand it to a friend who might never pick up a Bible.
- Pairs well with church outreach events designed to introduce the Bible to newcomers.
- In a distracted age, brevity isn't a shortcut — it's what makes people willing to open Scripture in the first place.

## SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

- You often say people know Bible stories but not *the Bible's story*. What's the difference, and why does it matter?
- The Grand Canyon flight is the picture at the heart of *FLY*. Why is a high-altitude view the best place to start with the Bible?
- *FLY* is built around five people, five events, and five gifts. How did you land on those 15?
- You say what was true of Adam is true of every person, that we're made in God's image. Why does that ancient claim still matter?
- God sought out Abraham while Abraham was still worshiping idols. What does that say about how a person comes to faith?
- Moses's story runs through law, rescue, and a people set free. For someone who thinks of the Old Testament as just rules, what are they missing?
- David is remembered as both a great king and a deeply flawed man. What does the Bible do with a hero who fails so publicly?
- Ezra comes at the end of the Old Testament journey, after exile. What is his moment in the story, and why end the Old Testament arc there?
- You treat Jesus's birth as the hinge the entire Old Testament was pointing toward. Why is the manger the payoff of a two-thousand-year story?
- Jesus was tempted just as we are. Why does that matter to someone who feels they're failing their own battles?
- A Roman execution is treated as the best news in history. How do you help a skeptic understand why the cross is central rather than tragic?
- Christians stake everything on the resurrection. Why does it matter whether it literally happened, versus being a beautiful idea?
- The ascension is the event people understand least. What actually happened, and why does it change things for a believer now?
- For someone who finds the idea abstract or even strange, how would you explain who the Spirit is and what He actually does?
- You call faith a gift rather than something we manufacture. What do you mean by that, and what does it free a person from?
- Forgiveness is something almost everyone longs for and struggles to give. What does the Bible say makes real forgiveness possible?
- In an age when a lot of people are done with organized religion, why does *FLY* list the church itself as a gift?
- What does the Bible actually promise about heaven, and how is it different from the vague "better place" people reach for?

# ABOUT THE BOOK

[Click for additional info](#)



Most people know individual Bible stories but have never grasped the Bible as one story. [HIKE Through the Bible](#) is Colin Smith's 50-chapter journey through the whole of Scripture — from the first chapter of Genesis to the last of Revelation — showing how it all goes together and points to Jesus. Each short chapter is a stop on the trail, opening a single theme (Life, Curse, Promise, etc.) and building on the one before it. By the end, readers have walked the entire storyline and can see its shape for the first time. Written for hungry, new believers who might not know where to begin, as well as longtime believers who feel like they've never quite connected all the pieces. Each chapter includes reflection questions to be used individually or in a study group, trail markers, and a verse to memorize.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- A 50-stage journey from Genesis to Revelation — the whole Bible, one step at a time.
- Follows the Bible's real shape: creation and fall, promise and law, the story of Israel, the life of Jesus, and the gifts He gives His people.
- Every stage includes a Trail Marker (short summary) and a verse to memorize, so the journey sticks.
- Structured as a 52-week journey, pacing readers through one stage per week.
- Includes a companion podcast that expands on each stage's theme.

## HOW IS IT DIFFERENT?

- Treats the entire Bible as a single connected story rather than a collection of separate lessons, tracing one throughline from creation to the New Jerusalem
- 50 short, self-contained stages make the whole of Scripture walkable for an ordinary reader over the course of a year
- Built to work for both the curious newcomer and the seasoned churchgoer at the same time

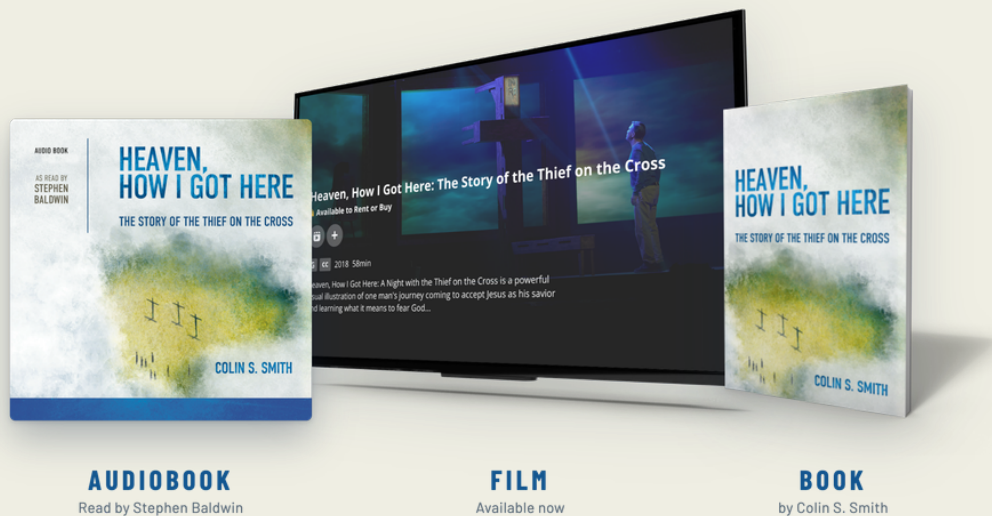
## WHY IS IT RELEVANT?

- Bible literacy is falling even among churchgoers.
- Its year-long, 50-stage design fits how people actually learn today and build habits: short stretches, one step at a time
- Anchors a companion weekly podcast, giving audiences a way to make the journey together rather than alone
- A natural small-group and fall-launch resource for churches looking to move people from Bible stories to the Bible's story
- Speaks to the ache underneath the culture's noise: the desire to know whether life has an author and a purpose

## SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

- **HIKE** has 50 stages, from "Life" to "City." Why structure the whole Bible as a hike?
- **HIKE** opens at "Life" and moves almost immediately to "Curse." Why start the whole journey by facing what went wrong with the world?
- Early stages carry names like Promise, Blood, and Atonement. For a reader unfamiliar with those words, what thread ties them together?
- The trail runs through the King and the Prophet before it ever reaches Jesus. Why does the Old Testament spend so long building toward someone who hasn't arrived yet?
- One stage is simply called "Exile," followed by "Hope." What does it mean that the Old Testament ends with a people waiting?
- You've said people know Bible stories but not *the Bible's story*. Walking these Old Testament stages in order, what suddenly clicks for readers?
- After thirty-some stages of buildup, the trail reaches "Born." Why does the manger land differently once you've walked everything that came before it?
- One stage is called "Sovereign," placed right in the middle of Jesus's suffering. What are you helping readers see there?
- The journey doesn't stop at "Risen," it continues to "Ascended" and even "Returning." Why keep walking past the resurrection?
- For a reader who has always seen the crucifixion as a sad ending, how does **HIKE** reframe it as the center of the whole story?
- What's different about encountering Jesus at the end of a long trail versus meeting Him cold in the Gospels?
- The later stages turn to the believer's own life, Justification, Assurance, Union. For someone anxious about whether they measure up, what do those stages offer?
- One stage is named "Battle." What is the Christian life a battle against, and why include that on the trail?
- Near the end comes "Progress." What does spiritual growth actually look like over a lifetime, not a weekend?
- Why does the church get its own stage this late in the journey, after so much about the individual?
- The whole **HIKE** ends at "City," the New Jerusalem. Why end the entire Bible, and this book, there?

# Resources



Colin Smith has a unique gift for making Bible characters understandable and relatable by telling their stories in the first person. The clearest example is his best-selling, globally translated book [\*Heaven, How I Got Here: The Story of the Thief on the Cross\*](#).

What if you woke up one morning knowing it was your last day on earth? That's what happened to the thief on the cross, who died a few feet from Jesus. His last day was extraordinary: it began in the misery of a prison cell and ended in the joy of heaven. Told in his own words as he looks back from paradise, it's the story of a man with no works to offer and no time to turn over a new leaf, who simply turned to Jesus and asked to be remembered. It captures the Bible's clearest picture of grace and delivers it in a fresh, powerful way, that there is hope in Jesus even for the person who feels far from God. The story has also come to the screen. The 60-minute film, [\*'Heaven, How I Got Here'\*](#), stars actor Stephen Baldwin who brings the thief's final hours vividly to life. It is a natural companion to the book and a strong talking point for any interview, especially around Easter. A full-length motion picture is now in development. Colin is glad to discuss the project in general terms, and media and audiences can learn more at [thiefonthecrossmovie.com](http://thiefonthecrossmovie.com).

## HOW IS IT DIFFERENT?

- Told in the first person by the thief on the cross, looking back from heaven — a perspective almost no book on the crucifixion has taken before.
- Stays true to the Gospel accounts: Colin never invents words for Jesus, so the story stays biblically accurate while still feeling alive.
- Teaches deep truths — sin, grace, justification, and atonement — through a gripping story, not a lecture. Readers absorb the theology without realizing they're being taught.

## WHY IS IT RELEVANT?

- Speaks directly to the questions people avoid until they can't: what happens when I die, and is it too late for me? The thief had one day and no good deeds, which meets every reader who fears they're beyond hope.
- Its one-sitting format makes it a rare thing in a distracted culture, a book about the gospel that a skeptic will actually finish, and that a believer can hand to a friend without a sermon.

## SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

- This man had one day left and no good deeds to his name. Why is that the most hopeful starting point imaginable, not the most hopeless?
- A lot of people quietly assume they've done too much wrong to be forgiven. What does the thief's story say to them?
- You were careful never to put invented words in Jesus's mouth. Why did that discipline matter so much to you as a writer?
- The thief asks simply to be remembered, and Jesus promises him paradise that day. What's happening in that exchange that people miss?
- The book deals with law, justice, and mercy all at once. How does one dying criminal's story hold all three together?
- Fear of death sits underneath a lot of modern anxiety. What does this book offer someone who's genuinely afraid to die?
- People picture heaven in vague, sentimental ways. How does telling it through the thief change what heaven actually means?
- You've said this book is easy to give away. Why does a story reach a skeptic in a way an argument often can't?
- The other thief mocked Jesus with his dying breath. Why does the Bible show us two men, so close to the same Savior, going opposite ways?
- What do you say to someone who believes they need to clean up their life first before God would accept them?
- The thief had no chance to be baptized, join a church, or prove himself. What does that tell us is actually required for heaven?
- You've spent decades teaching the Bible. Why does this single scene at the cross carry so much of the gospel in it?

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