

2026 Houston City Wide Bible Bowl Rules

1. Mission Statement

- 1.1. *The Bible Bowl will display the youth and adult skills and abilities in the study and retention of selected passages of God's Word through an individual and team competition. The goal is to inspire all to study God's Word for a closer relationship with our Heavenly Father!*

2. General Rules

- 2.1. *This competition is comprised of individual segments and teams. Participants can compete as individuals, and team provided they meet qualifications.*
- 2.2. *The competition will be held in person at **Trinity Gardens Church of Christ on Saturday, November 14, 2026.***
- 2.3. *Individuals should be youth grades 1st – 12th and Adults. Youth should be able to read independently on their own. Grades 1st-2nd (or younger) will have a reader for the individual segment.*
- 2.4. *A team is comprised of a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 12 players.*
- 2.5. *Each congregation shall designate one Team Coach, one alternate Team Coach, one Judge, one Alternate Judge and at least one grader when sending in their registration form.*
- 2.6. *There is no limit on the number of participants per congregation for the individual segment.*
- 2.7. *Only one youth team and one adult team is permitted per congregation.*
- 2.8. *Each team member must attend the congregation of the team he or she will be participating with.*
- 2.9. *Team members must be between the ages of 10-18 on the day of the Bible Bowl for the youth. Adult teams may consist of adults ages 18 and up.*
- 2.10. *All questions and answers will be taken from the **English Standard Version (ESV)** of the Bible.*
- 2.11. *Congregational Registration forms must be received by the Host Congregation's Bible Bowl Coordinator (uploaded through online portal) by **Wednesday, September 30, 2026,** to be eligible to participate.*
- 2.12. *All team members must be at their designated location at the time the competition begins. Individuals or Team members that arrive after the competition begins will not be permitted to participate.*
- 2.13. *Competition will start with an individual competition followed by the team competition. An awards ceremony will be held after the competition to recognize all participants. Lunch will be served at end of awards ceremony.*
- 2.14. *A short summary of the game play rules and points earned will be given at the start of each individual and team rounds.*
- 2.15. *If there are any errors found in any of the questions or rules, these issues should be brought to the attention of the Bible Bowl Coordinator, Co-Coordinator, or the Host Congregation's Contact as listed in the Bible Bowl Information Packet.*
- 2.16. *All rule changes must be communicated to all congregations for the rule change to be enforced during the competition.*

3. Individual Competition – General

- 3.1. *Individual competition is open to anyone grades 1-12, and Adults ages 18 and up.*
- 3.2. *Individuals compete by specific grade levels, and Adults compete in one Adult group. If limited number of youths in grade levels, they will be grouped as follows 1-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-10, 11-12*
- 3.3. *No electronic devices will be allowed*
- 3.4. *The categories are Scripture Search, Multiple Choice, Matching, and a possible Tie Breaker Round (only used in event of a tied individual score).*
- 3.5. *Each section of the individual competition is timed. Once the time is complete, writing utensils must be put down and tests will be collected.*
- 3.6. *Scripture Search is a 30 minute, open Bible (ESV) test with scriptures from any book in Bible.*
- 3.7. *Multiple Choice is a 50 minute, closed book test. Time may be adjusted depending on the number of questions on the test.*
- 3.8. *Matching is 10 minutes, closed book test. This test may be given along with the multiple choice test. Participants can complete this first or when they finish the multiple choice test.*
- 3.9. *Tie Breaker will consist of no more than 10 random questions that are selected from the General Memorization List. The tie breaker is only graded in the event of a tie. This is a closed book test. Tie breaker is 10 minutes.*

4. Individual Competition – Scripture Search

- 4.1. *Scripture Search round will test participants ability to navigate quickly through all books of the Bible.*
- 4.2. *Scripture Search is a 30 minute, open Bible (ESV) test and may consist of the below noted format by grade*
 - 4.2.1. *Grades 1-2: 25 questions with 1 blank each (this age group will have a reader)*
 - 4.2.2. *Grades 3-5: 25 questions with 2 blanks each*
 - 4.2.3. *Grades 6-8: 25 questions with 3 blanks each or up to 75 questions with mixture of blanks where Chapter and verses have to be filled in from the book of study or random scriptures in the bible*
 - 4.2.4. *Grades 9-12 & Adults: 25 questions with 4 blanks each or up to 100 questions with mixture of blanks where Chapter and verses have to be filled in from the book of study or random scriptures in the bible*
 - 4.2.5. *Each blank is worth 1 point.*
 - 4.2.6. *Answers must be written legibly and spelled correctly to earn the point.*
 - 4.2.7. *Book, chapter, and verse may not be provided.*
 - 4.2.8. *Scripture search can be from any scripture in any book in the Bible. (will not be limited to the book of study)*

5. Individual Competition – Multiple Choice

- 5.1. *Multiple Choice round will test individual participants ability to retain Bible Bowl study material. Correct answers will be what is referenced in the packet.*
- 5.2. *Multiple Choice is a 50 minute, closed book test and will consist of the following (each question is worth 1 point):*
 - 5.2.1. *Grades 1-2: 50 questions*
 - 5.2.2. *Grades 3-5: 75-100 questions (dependent on book of study)*
 - 5.2.3. *Grades 6-12 & Adults: 100-200 questions (dependent on book of study)*
 - 5.2.4. *Answers must be marked clearly and correctly to receive points*

6. Individual Competition – Matching

- 6.1. Matching round will test individual participants ability to retain overall Bible Bowl study material, and some general memorization list. Correct answers will be what is referenced in the packet.
- 6.2. Matching is a short 10 minute, closed book test and will consist of the following (each question is worth 1 point):
 - 6.2.1. Grades 1-2: 10 questions
 - 6.2.2. Grades 3-5: 15 questions
 - 6.2.3. Grades 6-12 & Adults: 20 questions
- 6.3. Matching tests may be given during the Multiple choice test and time extended by 10 minutes to allow for completion of both tests. Participants may complete tests in any order.

7. Individual Competition –Tiebreaker

- 7.1. Tie Breaker round will test individual participants ability to retain General Memorization List. It is only graded in the event of an individual tie per grade or Adult level. Tie breaker may be replaced with matching test and not needed for competition.
- 7.2. Tie Breaker will consist of no more than 10 random questions that are selected from the General Memorization List. There will be 10 minutes to complete this test.
 - 7.2.1. The tiebreaker will only be graded in the event of a tie.
 - 7.2.2. Answers must be written legibly and spelled correctly to earn the tiebreaker points.
 - 7.2.3. The points earned in this round will only be used in the event of a tie based on the previous rounds

8. Individual Competition –Thematic Comprehension Questions (For HS & Adult Competitors)

- 8.1. Thematic comprehension questions round will test HS (9th -12th) and Adult individual participants ability to comprehend the book of study. The thematic comprehension questions may be used in place of the matching and/or tie breaker questions or kept as an additional round to challenge HS and adult competitors.
- 8.2. Thematic comprehension questions will consist of no more than 6 random questions that are selected from the Discussion questions in the study packet. There will be 10 minutes to complete this test.
 - 8.2.1. The comprehension questions will test basic understanding of the text of study.
 - 8.2.2. Answers must be written legibly and spelled correctly to earn points.
 - 8.2.3. The comprehension questions based on the discussion questions are only for HS (9th – 12th) and Adult individual participants.
- 8.3. Comprehension tests may be given during the Multiple choice test and time extended by 10 minutes to allow for completion of tests or questions may be added to the end of the Multiple choice tests for HS (9th-12th) and Adult individual participants. Participants may complete tests in any order.
- 8.4. The thematic comprehension questions may or may not be used dependent on the selected book(s) of study.

9. Individual Competition - Readers

- 9.1. Eligibility Rules
 - 9.1.1. Readers must be at least 19 years of age.

- 9.1.2. *Cannot be a parent of a Bible Bowl participant.*
- 9.1.3. *Can be a coach of a congregation.*
- 9.2. *Responsibilities*
 - 9.2.1. *Must arrive at the bible bowl competition no later than 7:45am and be ready to perform all responsibilities.*
 - 9.2.2. *Readers will assist youth competitors in grades 1st and 2nd grade*
 - 9.2.3. *For scripture search, one reader will read the book, chapter, and verse and scripture for this grade level.*
 - 9.2.4. *The Reader cannot assist the participant in locating the scripture in the Bible. Each participant is required to locate the scripture on their own.*
 - 9.2.5. *For multiple choice and tiebreaker round, one reader will read each question and allow time for participants to answer (some youth may choose to move ahead)*
 - 9.2.6. *Reader and reader assistant should monitor the time to assure participants have enough time to complete each question.*
 - 9.2.7. *Reader and reader assistants will also perform classroom monitor duties.*

10. Individual Competition - Classroom Monitors

- 10.1. *Eligibility Rules*
 - 10.1.1. *Judges must be at least 19 years of age.*
 - 10.1.2. *Cannot be a parent of a Bible Bowl participant.*
 - 10.1.3. *Can be a coach of a congregation.*
- 10.2. *Responsibilities*
 - 10.2.1. *Must arrive at the bible bowl competition no later than 7:45am and be ready to perform all responsibilities.*
 - 10.2.2. *A lead classroom monitor should be designated to provide the rules for each section before handing out tests.*
 - 10.2.3. *Classroom monitors must assure that each participant writes their name, grade, and congregation on each test prior to starting each test.*
 - 10.2.4. *Classroom monitors will assist in handing out test for each section of the individual competition rounds.*
 - 10.2.5. *Classroom monitors will assist in collecting completed tests for each section of the individual competition rounds*
 - 10.2.6. *Classroom monitor should designate a timekeeper to assure tests are done in the allotted time for each section. No additional time can be given for any participant who has not completed test.*
 - 10.2.7. *Classroom monitors cannot assist any participant in locating scriptures, spelling, or providing any answers.*
 - 10.2.8. *Classroom monitors should assure that participants do not talk or disturb other participants during the timed sections*
 - 10.2.9. *No electronic devices are allowed in the room during the competition.*

11. Individual Competition - Graders

- 11.1. *Eligibility Rules*
 - 11.1.1. *Graders must be at least 19 years of age.*
 - 11.1.2. *Cannot be a person who has or will help any child prepare for the current year's Bible Bowl competition.*

- 11.1.3. *Cannot be a parent of a Bible Bowl participant.*
- 11.1.4. *Cannot be a coach of a congregation.*
- 11.1.5. *Graders must be familiar with the competition rules and point scoring system.*
- 11.2. *Responsibilities*
 - 11.2.1. *Graders will grade each section of the competition using a colored pen.*
 - 11.2.2. *A second grader will confirm the scoring of the first grader for each section of the competition.*
 - 11.2.3. *Graders will record scores on each test and in the official electronic scoring system.*
 - 11.2.4. *Graders will confirm the placement for each participant by grade level in the competition based on scores entered in the scoring system.*
 - 11.2.5. *The tiebreaker round score should not be used in the final score tally.*
 - 11.2.6. *For each grade level, in the event of a tie, graders will use the tiebreaker score to determine the final placements.*
 - 11.2.7. *Graders cannot reveal the results of the individual competition to any participants, coaches, or parents in the competition.*

12. Team Competition - General Game Play

- 12.1. *There will be five regulation rounds. Each round will consist of different type of questions. The rounds, question types, and points per correct answer will be as follows:*

<i>Round 1 – True-False Questions</i>	<i>5 points/per team member</i>
<i>Round 2 – Multiple Choice Questions</i>	<i>10 points/per team member</i>
<i>Round 3 – Comprehension</i>	<i>15 points/per team</i>
<i>Round 4 – Scripture Quotation</i>	<i>25 points/per team</i>
<i>Round 5 – Speed Round</i>	<i>2 points/per team or (60/40/20 points per 1st, 2nd, 3rd finisher if electronic method used)</i>
- 12.2. *15 minutes before the Team Competition begins, each team will be assigned a number based on the number drawn by the Team Captain. This team number will determine the order in which teams answer questions in rounds 3-4.*
- 12.3. *The same person does not have to be the Team Captain for rounds 3-4.*
- 12.4. *There will be no partial points earned in any of the rounds.*
- 12.5. *Four team members from each team must participate in every round. For example, if a team only had the minimum of 4 players, all four players would have to play all 5 rounds.*
- 12.6. *All team members must participate in at least one round.*
- 12.7. *Team player changes can only be made between rounds 1-4, or between the 5 speed rounds, and the player must be one who is listed on the Team Lineup Form.*
- 12.8. *Team scores will be totaled at the end of each round.*
- 12.9. *Team scores will be announced at the end of each round in the order of highest to lowest score.*
- 12.10. *Points from the first four rounds will be totaled and the highest score will be used to determine a first, second, and third place.*
- 12.11. *In the event of a tie for first, second, or third place, and additional speed round will be played between those teams and used to break the tie.*
- 12.12. *Any question used as part of the Bible Bowl competition will only be asked once.*
- 12.13. *The noted answer in the Bible Bowl Study Material will be the correct answer in the competition for a given question.*
- 12.14. *Adult teams participating in team competitions will compete against other participating adult teams for main competition. (Youth will compete against youth teams only)*

13. Judges

13.1. Eligibility Rules

- 13.1.1. Judges must be at least 19 years of age.
- 13.1.2. Cannot be a person who has or will help any child prepare for the current year's Bible Bowl competition.
- 13.1.3. Cannot be a parent of a Bible Bowl participant.
- 13.1.4. Cannot be a coach of a congregation.

13.2. Responsibilities

- 13.2.1. Must arrive at the bible bowl competition no later than 9:00 am and be ready to perform all responsibilities.
- 13.2.2. The official score for Rounds 1 and 2 will be maintained via the Smart Response System (or selected response system). However, the judges will keep official scores for their assigned team during Rounds 3, 4 and 5.
- 13.2.3. The Smart Response Clicker (or selected response system) will be utilized to determine correct answers during Rounds 1 and 2 of the competition. However, the judges will determine correct answers during Rounds 3, 4 and 5 of the competition for their assigned team.
- 13.2.4. Monitor their assigned section during Rounds 1 and 2 to ensure compliance to all rules.
- 13.2.5. Monitor their assigned team during Rounds 3, 4 and 5 to ensure compliance to all rules.
- 13.2.6. Will be responsible for knowing all rules before the date of the Bible Bowl.
- 13.2.7. Both the judge and the alternate judge will need to attend the mandatory Judge and Coach Training, to be held on **Saturday, November 7, 2026 @ 9:00am at Trinity Gardens Church of Christ.**
- 13.2.8. Will obtain the Team Member List and Team Lineup Form for their assigned Team's Coach before the start of the Bible Bowl competition.
- 13.2.9. Ensure that correct players are participating in each round according to the Team Lineup Form.
- 13.2.10. Will be able to cast one vote for each and every issue that is brought forward by the Mediator during the competition.

13.3. General Rules

- 13.3.1. Before the start of the Bible Bowl competition, each judge will be randomly assigned a section during rounds 1 & 2 by pulling a section number; each judge will randomly draw a congregation from the entire congregations participating which they will judge for Rounds 3 thru 5.
- 13.3.2. A Judge cannot be assigned to the team from their own congregation.

14. Mediator

- 14.1. A Mediator will be selected and designated by the host congregation.

14.2. Eligibility

- 14.2.1. Cannot be the Bible Bowl Coordinator.
- 14.2.2. Must be at least 19 years of age.

14.3. Responsibilities

- 14.3.1. Receive all complaints, issues, concerns that are expressed by a participating team's coach.
- 14.3.2. Mediator will disregard any concerns that are brought forward by anyone who is not a team coach as listed on the **Congregational Registration Form.**
- 14.3.3. Between rounds, the Mediator will call a quick meeting with all judges and the Bible

Bowl coordinator to address any concerns brought to the Mediator during the course of the previous round.

14.3.4. The Mediator will conduct a vote to resolve the issue. One vote will be given by each judge.

14.3.5. If judge's vote results in a tie, the host congregation's Bible Bowl Coordinator will cast the deciding vote.

14.3.6. Before the competition begins, he or she will oversee the pulling of numbers by the team captains and the pulling of congregation names by the judges.

14.3.7. During rounds (1 & 2), a Team Coach or Judge may request that the mediator address equipment issues (clickers or selected response system). Mediator may request alternate equipment if it is the issue.

14.3.8. During rounds (3-5), A Team Coach or Judge may request that the mediator; request of participant for a repeat of response if observed that corresponding team judge did not hear or score response correctly. Mediator may override the Judge's response and score if found to be in error.

15. Team Coaches

15.1. Team Coaches will have the following responsibilities

15.1.1. Turn in the Team Lineup Form to the judge assigned to their team of the names of the 4 players that will compete from their team during each round.

15.1.2. Solely responsible for giving complaints, contesting judge decisions, or identifying rule infractions to the Mediator on behalf of their team. Only exception is if the Team Coach informs the mediator that the Alternate Team Coach will assume the coaching role.

*15.1.3. Both the coach and the alternate coach will need to attend the mandatory Judge and Coach Training, to be held on **Saturday, November 7, 2026 at 9:00am @ Trinity Gardens Church of Christ.***

15.2. The only person that can assume the Team Coach role once the competition begins is the person designated as the Team Coach Alternate on the teams Team Lineup Form

15.3. The Team Coach must inform his team's assigned judge when the Alternate Team Coach will be performing the coaching duties.

16. Round 1 (True/False) & Round 2 (Multiple Choice)

16.1. Rounds 1 & 2 will consist of 15 questions.

16.2. All four players for each team will receive their own Smart Response Clicker (or selected response system). The proper use of the Smart Response Clicker (or selected response system) will be explained and demonstrated before the start of Rounds 1 and 2.

16.3. All teams will be asked the same question simultaneously. Players will have 10 seconds to submit their answer via the Smart Response Clicker (or selected response system). Only responses received via the Smart Response Clicker (or selected response system) will be accepted.

16.4. During rounds 1 and 2, players cannot converse with anyone regarding answers to questions.

16.5. The Smart Response System software (or selected response system) will record the answers of each of the four players for each team and will be utilized to total the points scored for each question.

16.6. The Smart Response System (or selected response system) will be solely responsible for determining if a player has not given an answer in the time allotted.

- 16.7. *The Smart Response System (or selected response system) will be solely responsible for determining if a player has given a correct or incorrect answer in the time allotted.*
- 16.8. *Points will be earned for each correct answer given per player, per question. For example, in Round 1, three out of the four players give the right answer for the question. Each right answer earns a team 5 points for Round 1, in this example, the team would get 15 points for that one question.*

17. Round 3 Comprehension

- 17.1. *Rounds 3 will consist of 5 questions given to each team.*
- 17.2. *A Team Captain will be used as designated on the Team Lineup Form.*
- 17.3. *Team Captain can be different from round to round.*
- 17.4. *Teams will be asked different questions based on the number pulled by the Team Captain before the start of the Bowl.*
- 17.5. *Once all teams have been asked their first question, then teams will be asked their second question based on team's numerical order.*
- 17.6. *The team may converse among themselves to determine the answer to a question. However, only the Captain designated for that round may verbally answer the question.*
- 17.7. *Teams will have one minute for both discussion and answering of the question. After conversing with their team (sitting or Huddling), the Team Captain must say the entire answer before time expires. **Once the team captain stands to deliver their response (answer) they can no longer converse with their other teammates.***
- 17.8. *The judge assigned to each team will record the points awarded for each question.*
- 17.9. *Each team's assigned judge will be solely responsible for determining if a player has not given an answer in the time allotted.*
- 17.10. *Points will be earned for each correct answer. Correct answers must be given by the Team Captain as close as possible to word for word just as given in the question packets received by all congregations. For example, if the answer to a question was "the Holy Bible," a player giving only "Holy Bible" as an answer may be counted correct if deemed close to the printed answer by the Team Judge.*
- 17.11. *Only the team Captain's first response is accepted. Once the Captain begins answering a question, they may stop and repeat an answer, but they cannot change the original answer given.*
- 17.12. *Each Judge will determine if answers provided show comprehension of the question and appropriate answer if not given verbatim.*

18. Round 4 (Scripture Quotation)

- 18.1. *Round 4 will consist of 2 scripture quotations given to each team.*
- 18.2. *Each team will be given the book, chapter, and verse and required to quote the scripture from the English Standard Version. The scripture must be quoted word for word without exception.*
- 18.3. *Scripture may be given with missing words. In this case, only the missing words are required to be given to earn points.*
- 18.4. *The team will be given 20 seconds to decide which of the four players will quote the scripture.*
- 18.5. *The team will have 60 seconds to quote the scripture. **Once the player stands to deliver their team's response (answer) they can no longer converse with their other teammates.***
- 18.6. *Only the player's first response is accepted. Once the player begins answering a question, they may stop and repeat an answer, but they cannot change the original answer given.*

19. Round 5 (Speed Round)

- 19.1. *The speed round will consist of 5 rounds of 4 questions (20 questions total) open to all participating congregations at once (a free for all).*
- 19.2. *Each team will be given one buzzer (or selected electronic buzzer system) and the four team players will take turns answering each question. (Ex: For question 1, each team will send one player forward to attempt to answer it. For question 2, each team will send a different player to answer and so on rotating through all four team members until the end of the 4 question round. Each of the four players must attempt to answer a question.)*
- 19.3. *After each round (every 4 questions), each team will be given the option to swap out any of the four players.*
- 19.4. *The first team to buzz must answer the question immediately.*
- 19.5. *If the correct answer is not given, the question will be open to the next fastest team to buzz in.*
- 19.6. *Questions will be open for all teams. The first team to buzz in with the correct answer will win points for their team.*
- 19.7. *Responses must be given word for word just as given in the question packets received by all congregations.*
- 19.8. *Speed round may be conducted using electronic methods such as Kahoot. If this method is used, all participants must have their own electronic devices.*
- 19.9. *If electronic method for speed round is used, the top three finishers will earn points for their team as follows: 60 points – 1st place, 40 points – 2nd place, 20 points – 3rd place (for Youth / Adult accordingly)*

20. Round 6 (FUN Round)

- 20.1. *The FUN round will consist of 5 rounds of 4 questions (20 questions total) open to all participating Adults who competed in the individual competition willing to take on the youth in a fun test of knowledge*
- 20.2. *It will be Youth vs. Adults (All Youth form one team, All Adults form one team)*
- 20.3. *Each team will be given one buzzer (or selected electronic buzzer system) and the four team players will take turns answering each question. (Ex: For question 1, each team will send one player forward to attempt to answer it. For question 2, each team will send a different player to answer and so on rotating through all four team members until the end of the 4 question round. Each of the four players must attempt to answer a question.)*
- 20.4. *After each round (every 4 questions), each team will be given the option to swap out any of the four players.*
- 20.5. *The first team to buzz must answer the question immediately.*
- 20.6. *If the correct answer is not given, the question will be open to the next fastest team to buzz in.*
- 20.7. *Questions will be open for all teams. The first team to buzz in with the correct answer will win points for their team.*
- 20.8. *Responses must be given word for word just as given in the question packets received by all congregations.*
- 20.9. *This round may be altered to include electronic method of competition.*
- 20.10. *This round may be omitted if electronic method is used for speed round.*