

The Price of Bibles

We are often asked what Bibles cost and why we at Bibles for Believers say that it costs us an average of R100 (US\$14.50) per Bible for each Bible that we place into the hands of a believer. The answer is not simple. There are a multitude of factors that influence the cost and availability of Bibles. Here are some of the important facts about Bibles.

1. In most cases Bibles are obtained from the various Bible Societies around the world, including the Bible Society of Southern Africa, the United Bible Society and the International Bible Society. Bibles for Believers has a healthy relationship with the various Bible Societies.
2. In some cases the licence/copyright for particular translations or editions have been sold to Christian publishers and in some cases even to secular publishers (e.g. Struik Publishers now has the licence for the standard NIV Bible in South Africa) This has pushed the prices up in many instances.
3. In the past Bibles were printed in South Africa with most of the African Languages being available here in large quantities. Today, Bibles are printed in Brazil, China, Thailand, India and other countries – mainly in the East. Bibles are then sent directly to the relevant Bible Societies. E.g. Bemba Bibles go directly to the Zambian Bible Society in Lusaka.
4. The Bible Society uses gifts from individuals and churches to sponsor some Bibles in order to keep their prices affordable – often the main language in a country. In South Africa currently a sponsored Bible costs about R48.00 (US\$7.00). In Zambia about R65.00 (US\$9.28) and in Malawi over R70.00(US\$10.00). A non-sponsored Bible can cost up to R140.00 (US\$20.00) depending on the language and where it is being sold. E.g. Lozi Bibles currently cost R140.00 at the Bible Society in South Africa.
5. Some Bible Societies have fixed prices for their Bibles – e.g. recently Bibles in Tanzania cost US\$20.
6. Fluctuating currency exchange rates also seriously affect the purchase of Bibles.
7. Bibles for Believers purchases Bibles for people in several Southern African nations, some at the sponsored lower price and many at full price – thus the average of R100 (US\$14.50).
8. PLEASE NOTE: Our price of R100 (US\$14.50) INCLUDES purchase, transport and delivery to individual churches wherever they might be. It ALSO includes the cost of training people in the paperless discipleship method we call “the Gift and the Prize” which teaches people to read and understand the Bible for themselves.
9. Bibles are not always available. Many translations are on order at any given time and we often have to wait for delivery.
10. Bibles can be obtained more cheaply when ordered in large quantities – generally about 10,000 in a particular language at a time.
11. Bibles for Believers tries to give mother tongue translations as far as possible – depending on availability. In some cases the Colonial languages are used. (e.g. Portuguese in Mozambique, French in the DRC, etc.)