

MAKING DISCIPLES



STUDY 02 THE WORD OF GOD

TEACHER EDITION

THE WORD OF GOD

Big Idea: To help your friend establish the Bible as God's Word and God's standard for their life so it is worthy of their time and devotion. Key word: "trustworthy"

2 Peter 1:20-21

Q. Where did the Bible come from?

- Men wrote the Bible, as they were "carried along" (meaning "directed" or "led") by the Holy Spirit.

Q. Do you believe the Bible is the Word of God?

Teacher tip: If they do not, ask if it is possible that God could have inspired his thoughts into a document for his people.
Teacher tip: If they do not believe, let them know this study will help them. Also direct them to Appendices A and B to look on their own.

I. The Purpose of the Word of God

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Again, we see that the Bible comes from the mind and mouth of God. It is a "trustworthy" source of truth.

Q. What is the Bible useful for?

- Teaching, reproof, correction and training, to equip us for every good work.

The Word of God ministers to every part of our life such as marriage, work, relationships, making decisions, etc.

Q. What role do you think the Bible should play in your life?

1 Timothy 4:15-16

The way we live and what we teach are both necessary for salvation. Illustration: A plane must have both wings to fly. Likewise, we need to know and believe the correct teaching, and to live out these truths.

Q. How can you know you are following the right doctrine/teachings in your life?

Q. How can you know you are living the life of a follower of God?

Romans 10:17

Reading the Word of God produces faith. The more we read, the more our faith grows and understands God.

Q. How can you plan to begin reading the Bible daily?

II. The Power of the Word of God

Hebrews 4:12-13

Q. What does the Word of God do?

- The Word of God is not boring, but relevant, living and active.
- It has the power to remove what is wrong with our life like a surgeon's knife removes unhealthy tissue.
- It has power to go inside us and transform us. It can change our spirit, mind, emotions and will.

Q. Which one of these characteristics of the Word of God stands out to you? Why?

John 8:31-32

Note that Jesus is speaking to people who already believe in him.

Q. What do these two scriptures tell us?

- Intellectual belief is not enough.
- One must hold to the truth to be a true disciple and to be set free.
- Sincerity is not truth for one can be sincerely wrong.

We need to hold the truths of the Word of God close to our heart and be committed to following them.

Q. Are you willing to begin the journey of holding to the truths in the Word of God to truly be set free?



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III. The Priority of the Word of God

Matthew 15:1-9

Q. What is Jesus saying about traditions?

- Religious traditions, or cultural practices can hinder us from following Jesus.

Examples of religious traditions could be prioritizing the teaching of pastors, parents, friends, denominations, etc. over the Word of God. This can make our worship of God pointless and empty.

Q. Are you willing to examine any religious traditions you may have?

Acts 17:10-12

Q. What attitude did the Bereans display?

- They had eagerness for they examined the scriptures daily.
- They had a personal pursuit of truth for they did not blindly accept what religious leaders were saying.

Teacher tip: Encourage the seeker that you see them as noble as they seek God (if you do).

Q. The Bereans are described as “noble.” What do you think “noble” means?

The definition is “having or showing fine personal qualities or high moral principles and ideals.”

Q. Do you want to be “noble” in God’s eyes by pursuing truth for your life?

John 12:47-48

Q. By what are we going to be judged?

- The words of Jesus as found in the Bible. Jesus came to save, but his words will judge us.

Conclusion

Ask them: “Are you willing to build your faith on what the Bible says? Do you believe your faith in the Bible is growing? Is this study helping you?”

Encourage them to imitate the Bereans and read the Bible every day to form solid convictions.

Teacher tip: This lesson is intended to build the faith of the seeker in the Word of God, not be an end study if they do not believe in its authority.

Teacher tip: Give the seeker the Bible Overview so they can understand the way the Bible is assembled. You would not go over it in the study however.

Additional Scriptures: Jn 20:30-31; Acts 8:26-40; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:32; 2 Pet 2:16-18; 1 Jn 1:1-4; Jn 14: 15-17; Jn 14:25-26; Jn 15:26-27; Jn 16:12-15; Col 4:16; 2 Pet 3:15-16; 1 Tim 5:18; Lk 10:7; Rom 10:17.



BIBLE OVERVIEW: OLD & NEW TESTAMENTS

Goal:

- To help you know how to read the Bible and know what you are reading.
- Example: Google earth allows you to zoom in and know where you are located.

Overview: The Bible is a collection of 66 books (39 O.T. and 27 N.T.) written by 40 different authors in three different languages over the course of 1,600 years.

Old Testament	New Testament			
Jesus The Prophets wrote about the coming of Jesus Old Testament Points to Jesus	Gospels Matthew - Mark - Luke - John (The Life of Jesus)	Acts The acts of... The early Church, The Holy Spirit, The Apostles	Epistles Letters written to... Churches and Disciples	Prophecy "Current" (at the time) and future events

The Bible is divided into 2 Testaments, or Agreements, God made with human beings.

I. The Old Testament

- The Old Testament was God's covenant, contract, or agreement he made with his people, Israel.
- The Old Covenant was written by God's Prophets. Men who spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21).
- Many Old Testament scriptures are written to prophesy the coming of the Messiah... Pointing to Jesus!
- Examples: Psalm 22: 1,000 B.C. / Isaiah 53: 750 B.C. (Both scriptures describe what will happen to Jesus on the cross).

II. The New Testament (The New Testament is divided into 4 main sections.)

- The New Testament is God's covenant, a contract or agreement made with anyone who wants to follow Him through his son, Jesus Christ.
- 1. The Gospels**
 - Four men wrote their own account of the life of Jesus while on this earth. (Matthew - Mark - Luke - John).
 - The word Gospel means - Good News... (The Good News of Jesus Christ).
 - If you want to know about the life of Jesus, then simply read the Gospels.
 - 2. The Book of Acts**
 - The book of Acts is a chronological, historical account of the early church written by Luke who wrote the Gospel of Luke.
 - Some refer to Acts as... The Acts or Actions of the Early Church, The Acts of the Holy Spirit, or The Acts of the Apostles. The book of Acts covers approximately 30 years.
 - It gives a historical account of the church after Jesus' resurrection, the first gospel sermon ever preached is in Acts 2, the growth of the early church, the apostle Paul's conversion and missionary journeys.
 - 3. The Epistles - The word "Epistle" means letter.**
 - A letter or multiple letters that were written to churches, to individuals or from individuals.
 - Letters written to churches in certain cities such as Rome... Romans or Corinth... 1 & 2 Corinthians.
 - Letters written to or from a disciple - Timothy, Titus, 1 & 2 Peter.
 - 4. Prophecy**
 - The book of Revelation addresses events in the first century and in the future.
 - It shows that God is in control and that Christians will ultimately be victorious no matter what sufferings we currently endure.



Q&A

Q. If you want to know about the life of Jesus, where in the Bible would you look?

- The Gospels – The Gospels tell you about the life of Jesus from his birth till his resurrection.

Q. If you want to learn about the Church in the 1st Century, where in the Bible would you look?

- The Book of Acts and the Epistles.

Q. If you want to see someone become a New Testament Disciple, where in the Bible would you look?

- The Book of Acts – It is the only place where you read about a person making a decision to become a New Testament Disciple / Christian.

Q. Why would you NOT find someone becoming a New Testament Christian in the Gospels?

- The 4 Gospels end with Jesus having just been raised from the dead.
- Jesus then tells the apostles to go to Jerusalem and the Holy Spirit will show them what they must do (Luke 24: 45-49).
- The New Covenant is based on the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.
- Without the resurrection of Jesus, our faith is in vain and he is no different than any other prophet (1 Cor. 15:14).
- The Gospels give us an account of the life of Jesus, but no one ever became a New Testament Disciple because Jesus had not yet conquered death and the message of salvation had not yet been preached.
- While on this earth, Jesus did have authority to forgive men's sin (Mark 2:5-12). Since we can't wait for Jesus to tell us our sins are forgiven, we must obey God's New Testament plan and respond to the message of salvation.

Q. Why would you NOT find someone becoming a Christian in one of the Epistles / Letters?

- These letters were written to churches or disciples who had already responded to the message of salvation and become New Testament Disciples / Christians.
- You will never find someone becoming a Disciple / Christian, but you will find references to when they made their decision to become a disciple.



APPENDIX A: THE RELIABILITY AND TRUTHFULNESS OF THE WORD OF GOD

The Bible is the best-selling book of all time. It was written by 40 different people over 1600 years (1500 BC to about 100AD). It was written over 2 continents, in 3 different languages and in many different cultures.

Yet there is an unparalleled harmony and unity throughout its pages as it weaves the history of how God so loved mankind that he sent his son as a redeemer so willing individuals could have a personal relationship with God now and into eternity.

But what is the evidence that it is true, reliable and God-breathed? Read on.

Internal Evidence

- The gospels, for example, were written by eye witnesses or those who had access to eyewitnesses. Matthew and John are apostles and eyewitnesses of what they wrote. Mark was the scribe of Peter so the gospel of Mark is Peter's gospel. Luke "carefully investigated" and accumulated his information from "eyewitnesses" (Luke 1:1-3).
- The gospels were written soon after the recorded events. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are written in the 50s and 60s, John slightly later. Therefore, there was no time for legends or myths to infiltrate the New Testament. Many of those involved in gospel events were still alive and could have disputed the reporting. Opponents to Christianity would certainly have pointed out errors in their stories, but we do not find any such criticism.
- Fulfilled Prophecies. The Bible contains many prophecies fulfilled in the life of Jesus, written hundreds of years before Jesus' time. These include the place of his birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) and many specific details of his crucifixion (Isaiah 53).
- There is an unparalleled unity of thought and purpose from the Old to the New Testament that gives credibility to its message as being God-breathed.

Manuscript evidence

- There is an abundance of manuscript evidence, so we have great confidence that what we read in the scripture is what was written in the original. We have over 5,800 Greek manuscripts, over 18,000 translations of the Greek into other languages such as Coptic, Syrian, Latin, Georgian, Armenian and Ethiopian.
- We have very early copies of New Testament manuscripts. The earliest is from about 125-150AD, within 50 years of the writing of the gospel of John.
- The Bible has far, far more evidence than any comparable ancient document. For example: The Iliad by Homer has about 1,900 manuscripts, Plato (only 237 manuscripts), Herodotus (only 106 manuscripts), and Tacitus (only 36 manuscripts).
- Due to the huge number and recent dates of the Biblical manuscripts, we are certain of the truthfulness of any doctrine in the Bible.

External evidence

- Many contemporary non-Christians wrote about people and events mentioned in the New Testament. This includes: Josephus, a historian of the 1st century, mentions both Jesus and James his brother; Thallas, a first century Roman historian mentions the 3 hours of darkness; Tacitus and Suetonius, both 2nd century historians also mention Jesus as does Pliny the Younger, a Roman statesman. Even the Jewish Talmud mentions Jesus.
- Archaeological evidence: All archaeological finds confirm the truthfulness of the Biblical record. There are no archaeological findings that contradict the Biblical teaching.



APPENDIX B: RESOURCES ON THE BIBLE AS THE WORD OF GOD

The following resources will help you to understand the authenticity and the truthfulness of the Bible as the word of God.

How We Got the Bible and Why It Is Reliable

- "How We Got the Bible and Why You Can Trust It" by Mike Taliaferro
- Keydого: Prophecies About Jesus that Could Not Have Been Coincidence (9:01)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDaqffik7FM>
- ICOC Disciples Today: "Can You Trust The Bible? 3 Reasons to Consider" (7:26)
<https://youtu.be/pMYnxlZnZaY?si=wrqV62UbWZ8Vy6D6>
- Keydого Video: "The Bible's Indisputable Historical Accuracy" (7:44) at
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifs_N4svnPM

How to Understand the Bible

- "A Quick Overview of the Bible: Understanding How All the Pieces Fit Together" by Doug Jacoby
- "Getting The Most From The Bible" by Steve Kinnard

Evidences for God

- "Is There a God" by John Oakes
- "Reasons for Belief: A Handbook of Christian Evidence" by John Oakes
- "Field Manual for Christian Apologetics" by John Oakes
- "Answering Skeptics" by Doug Jacoby
- "That You May Believe: Reflections on Science and the Miracles of Jesus" by David Eastman and John Oakes

Evidence for the Christian Faith

- "Evidence that Demands a Verdict" by Josh McDowell and Sean McDowell
- "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist" by Norman Geisler and Frank Turek
- "Compelling Evidence for God and the Bible: Finding Truth in an Age of Doubt" by Doug Jacoby

Evidence for the Resurrection

- "More than a Carpenter" by Josh McDowell and Sean McDowell
- "Who Moved the Stone?" by Frank Morrison

