

The Basics of the Scriptures

The Bible
The Holy Scriptures
The Law of the Lord
The Living Word
The Sword of the Spirit
The Word of God
The Word of Life
The Good Book
The Sacred Writings
God's Word
The Word of Truth

I. Introduction

- A. Today very popular criticize Bible. Popular say Bible not important. Popular think Bible worthless.

Most of our schools and universities have removed the Bible from all classes. Have removed any mention of the Bible from everything they teach.

Today movies, news, TV often mock Bible and mock biblical principles. Often mock anyone who follows Jesus.

Our prisons in America are full overflowing. Think that shows trouble we have because we reject Bible.

- B. Nothing in all the world is more blessed than the Word of God. Nothing gives more benefit to us than the Word of God.

Everything began with creation.

Genesis 1:3 Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

- C. Adam and Eve had fellowship with the voice of God.

Genesis 3:8 (KJ21) And they heard the voice of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

- D. God continued to speak to people like Enoch, Noah, and Moses.

God spoke to them and spoke through them.

Enoch became a preacher of righteousness (Jude 1:14-15)

Noah announced God's message while he was building the ark.

God spoke to Moses face to face (Numbers 12:8)

E. The writers of the Bible had no idea they were writing the books of the Bible.

Some of the writers were put in prison, beaten, forced to leave the country, and some were murdered.

Usually the people who heard the prophets rejected their messages.

II. Canonizing the books of the Bible (Choosing which books will be in the Bible)

A. There were many conventions, there were many debates about which books should be accepted in the Bible and which books should be rejected. The books had to be inspired by God. They had a long list of requirements.

a. Sixty-six books were accepted as inspired.

b. The Holy Spirit guarded and guided the process.

B. When the canon (the whole accepted Bible) was established, scholars and monks devoted their lives to copying these Scriptures by hand.

a. Complete copies were very rare and too expensive for almost any one person to own.

C. When John Wycliffe (Bible scholar from England) dared to translate the Bible from Latin into English in 1380, he was excommunicated (forced out of the church).

a. Copyists worked for 10 months to complete just one copy of Wycliffe's Bible.

D. A German man named Gutenberg invented the printing press with movable type around 1450. The first book printed was the Bible.

E. In the early 1500s William Tyndale (an English language scholar) translated the Bible into English from the original languages (Hebrew and Greek). He printed it in Germany and smuggled it into England. Tyndale was eventually put in prison, strangled, and his body was burned at the stake.

F. The harder the religious and civil leaders have tried to destroy the Bible, the more widely it has spread around the world.

G. Today the Bible has been translated into almost every language and dialect in the world.

H. Wherever the Bible has gone, there has been an amazing impact on society.

I. The principles of the Bible brought the early pilgrims to America and guided the formation of the constitution.

III. The Bible's Source

- A. The Bible is different from other books because of the source.
 - a. **2 Peter 1:21** No prophecy ever came from what a person wanted to say, but people led by the Holy Spirit spoke words from God.
 - b. The Holy Spirit guided how people wrote the inspired words of God.
- B. It is necessary for Christians to know and believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.
 - a. We must submit ourselves to God's direction and correction.
- C. God's Book offers God's instructions for God's creation.
 - a. **Psalm 119:105** Your word is like a lamp for my feet and a light for my path.
 - b. **Psalm 19:7-9** The teachings of the Lord are perfect; they give new strength. The rules of the Lord can be trusted; they make plain people wise. ⁸ The orders of the Lord are right; they make people happy. The commands of the Lord are pure; they light up the way. ⁹ Respect for the Lord is good; it will last forever. The judgments of the Lord are true; they are completely right.

IV. The Bible's Structure

The Bible was formed by inspiration and revelation.

The Bible is a collection of 66 books. It was written by 40 or more people over a span of several thousand years. Most of the writers never met one another and did not even know about the written works of the others. Still they maintained a Spirit-inspired theme of God's revelation and plan of salvation.

The 66 books of the Bible have two main divisions we call the Old Testament and the New Testament. Each Testament has 5 subdivisions.

OLD TESTAMENT (39)

5 Pentateuch (Books of the Law) (the books of Moses) – Genesis to Deuteronomy

12 Books of History – Joshua to Esther

5 Hebrew Poetry – Job to Song of Solomon & Lamentations

5 Major Prophets – Isaiah to Daniel

12 Minor Prophets – Hosea to Malachi

NEW TESTAMENT (27)

4 The Gospels (Biographical) – Matthew to John

1 Historical – Acts

13 Pauline Epistles (Doctrinal) – Romans to Philemon

8 General Epistles (Practical) – Hebrews to Jude

1 Prophetic – Revelation

The Old Testament looks forward to Christ's cross.

The New Testament looks back to its finished work.

The Old Testament is a story of God's family (the Hebrews, Israelites, the Jews).

The New Testament shows us how we can be part of God's great covenant promises.

1 Corinthians 10:11 The things that happened to those people are examples. They were written down to teach us, because we live in a time when all these things of the past have reached their goal.

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are the Word of God to us.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for showing people what is wrong in their lives, for correcting faults, and for teaching how to live right. ¹⁷ Using the Scriptures, the person who serves God will be capable, having all that is needed to do every good work.

The major theme of the Bible is redemption.

The Bible doesn't usually explain HOW God did what He did. Even if He tried to explain His works, we wouldn't understand it.

Isaiah 55:8-9 The Lord says, "My thoughts are not like your thoughts. Your ways are not like my ways. ⁹ Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

1 Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written in the Scriptures: "No one has ever seen this, and no one has ever heard about it. No one has ever imagined what God has prepared for those who love him."

V. Searching the Bible

A. The first step to meeting God in His Word is, obviously, to read the Bible.

- B. Reading the Bible from cover to cover is not the difficult task that some people think. It can be done in only fifty hours.
- C. As you read, underline or highlight passages the Holy Spirit quickens to you.

VI. Studying the Bible

- A. The Bible needs more than to be read. It needs to be studied.
- B. Some primary tools for a Bible study are a Bible concordance, a Bible dictionary, paper, and pen. A study Bible, additional translations of the Bible, and commentaries are also valuable tools.
- C. The Bible is a big book. Don't try to master all sixty-six books all at once.
- D. Pick a book, preferably one of the smaller New Testament books, and read it through multiple times. Outline it. Read commentaries on it. Master it.
- E. Sometimes you may want to do a word study or a topical study in the Bible.

VII. Swallowing the Bible

- A. The best binding for the Bible is the human skin.

Psalm 119:11 I have taken your words to heart so I would not sin against you.

Psalm 119:130 Learning your words gives wisdom and understanding for the foolish.

We are like a light bulb – it can't give light until energy enters it.

- B. The purpose of God's written Word is not just to inform the reader. The Bible seeks to introduce men and women to Jesus.

The life that is available to us now is in Jesus.

1 John 5:11-12 This is what God told us: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life, but whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.