



The Growing Christian

Study #3: The Bible

Basic Discipleship Course

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THE BIBLE

The Bible is the final authority of faith, doctrine and practice in the Christian life. To know and believe the Bible is essential to grow in the grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Bible, God's Word, has all the principles by which a Christian can live his/her life successfully.

The purpose of this lesson is to teach the new Christian the Biblical fundamentals that relate to his everyday life, so that he/she may begin to walk in the principles that will guide him/her in the walk with Jesus Christ. They are as follows:

1. The Word of God is alive and powerful in the process of salvation.
 - a. 1 Peter 1:23 shows us that the Word of God is the powerful agent that brings the new birth: "having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the Word of God which lives and abides forever."
 - b. Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us "For by grace you have been saved through faith." Romans 10:17 says that "faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."
 - c. James 1:21 says that the Word of God "can save our souls."

- d. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Paul gives a summary of the gospel. It has four parts:
- I. Jesus Christ died for our sins
 - II. He was buried
 - III. He rose from the dead
 - IV. According to the Scriptures
- The gospel is the message of salvation and the hope of humanity.
- e. Believe what the Bible says about sin, your condition and the plan of God for your salvation. Once you are saved through the Word of God, it should be your absolute and infallible guide. The Bible will teach you how to live.
- f. As when you purchase a car or an appliance, they come with a manual that explains the right way to operate that object. If you don't follow the instructions in that manual, it will not work according to the maker's guidelines. The Bible is the manual for living. God gives us the Scriptures so that our lives run according to His will. God saves you and calls you to serve Him with clear and precise instructions from His Word.
- g. The Word of God equips the Christian to serve so "the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped

for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Ephesians 6:10-18.

2. The Word of God sustains you. The Bible is the best “spiritual food.” Read Job 23:12 and Jeremiah 15:16.
3. The Word of God has the complete and balanced spiritual diet. It describes itself as:
 - a. Milk: 1 Peter 2:2.
 - b. Honey: Psalm 119:103; Proverbs 16:24.
 - c. Bread: Luke 4:4.
 - d. Water: Isaiah 55:10-11; Ephesians 5:26.
 - e. Meat: Hebrews 5:12-14; 1 Corinthians 3:1-2 (solid food).
4. The Word of God keeps you morally and spiritually clean. God is pleased when we live according to His principles. Psalm 119:9-11, John 15:3-4.
5. The Bible is more secure than any personal experience. This is a very important point. All personal “experiences” must be judged by an infallible standard that is greater than any experience. The Apostle Peter wrote that the Word of God is more secure than a physical appearance or

than an audible voice from God. Read and compare 2 Peter 1:16-21 with Matthew 17:1-9.

6. The universe was created with the power of the Word of God. Hebrews 11:3, Psalm 33:6, and Genesis 1:3.

7. The Holy Spirit of God will guide you to all truth. Even though God uses other instruments to help us learn from the Bible (the teaching of pastors, Bible commentaries, concordances, etc.), only the Holy Spirit could reveal the Word of God with sufficient impact and transforming power to affect our lives. John 14:26 and 16:13-15.

8. The Bible is studied by comparing scripture to scripture and depending on the Holy Spirit of God to teach you and not depending on your own understanding. The natural man does not perceive the things that are from the Spirit of God. 1 Corinthians 2:9-16.

Interesting Facts About the Bible

1. It is divided in two parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament.
2. It has a total of 66 books, 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.

3. It was written by over 40 authors with different positions of power and responsibility, and of different social and economic backgrounds.
4. It was written within a period in history of approximately 2000 years.
5. It is totally truthful in its historical facts and prophecies.
6. There are no contradictions.
7. It agrees perfectly as if only one man wrote it.
8. The verse that is in the center of the Bible is Psalm 118:8 that reads: "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man." The word in the center of the Bible is: "Lord." The Lord is the center of the Bible.
9. Read this famous essay about the Bible:

"The Bible contains the mind of God, the condition of man, the way of salvation, the destiny of sinners, and the joy of believers. Its doctrines are Holy, its precepts are immutable, its stories are true, and its decisions immovable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be saved, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to sustain you, and consolation to encourage you. It's the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's guide.

In it paradise is restored, heaven opened and the gates of hell discovered. Christ is the great central theme.

It was designed by God for our benefit. The Glory of God is its ultimate goal. It should fill our thoughts, govern our hearts, and guide our feet in the way of life.

Read it slowly, with frequency, and in an attitude of prayer. It is a fountain of richness, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It shall be opened in the final judgment and it shall be forever remembered. Its pages have the most important mission, it rewards the noblest work and condemns those who mock and change its holy content.”

Common Questions

1. Where do I begin to read the Bible?

To start, focus on the chapters and verses that deal mainly with your new relationship with your Heavenly Father. The book of the gospel of John, the first letter of John and Psalm 119 are excellent texts to begin to study the Bible in detail.

- a. The Gospel according to John was written so that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. John 20:31.
- b. The Epistle of 1 John was written so that you may be completely certain of your salvation. 1 John 5:13.

- c. Psalm 119 is the great chapter of the Bible that speaks about the love and respect for the word of God.
2. What do I do when I do not understand something?
- a. Be patient. God will reveal it in due time. Please read John 16:12-13, Deuteronomy 29:29 and Romans 11:33.
 - b. Live according to what you understand. God does not reveal more than what you are able to bear. Put to practice the things you are learning and God will confide and reveal more to you.
3. When and where should I have my devotional (daily time with God)?
- The best is to read a portion of the Bible early in the morning. In that manner you will begin each day with God. We also have examples of how David and Jesus Christ had a special time apart in the morning (Psalm 5:2 and Mark 1:35). Obviously, this implies that you would have to wake up earlier than what you are accustomed to, but it is worth it. Look for a place that is quiet and without distractions.

Decide as soon as possible to have a daily time with God; look for an early time and a peaceful place to have your devotionals.

Review

1. The Word of God is a powerful agent of change in the process of salvation. Briefly explain how the following verses apply in salvation.

a. 1 Peter 1:23

b. Romans 10:17

c. James 1:21

2. What are the four main elements of the gospel according to 1 Corinthians 15:1-4?

3. When we read 2 Timothy 3:16-17, we understand that all scripture is useful to...
4. It could be said that the Bible (**Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth**) is the instruction manual of God for your life. Explain why.

5. Your body needs food to function normally. Also your spiritual body needs to be fed. Quote two Bible verses that teach this truth.

6. According to 1 Corinthians 2:9-16, why can't the natural man understand well what the Bible teaches?

Verses to memorize:

2 Peter 1:21, Psalm 119:9 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Notes