

LESSON 1: THE WORD OF GOD

“What is the significance of the Bible in my life?”

KEY = Infallible Guide

What separates Christianity from any “religion” in the world is its claim to an absolute written authority from God. Having the Word of God, the Bible, is essential to a Christian’s growth in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. The standards by which a Christian is to govern his life in every detail are found in the pages of the Word of God.

Let’s begin by understanding how the Word of God comes alive in our lives.

I. The Word of God is active in salvation.

- A. The Word of God is the agent which brings about new birth. 1 Peter 1:23 says that you are born again “*by the word of God.*” Verse 25 says, *...And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*

Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:17; James 1:21

- B. Paul’s summary of the gospel contains *four* parts in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4:

1. Jesus Christ died for our sins.
2. Was buried.
3. Rose from the dead.
4. *ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES.*

- C. You must believe **what the Bible says** about God’s judgment, your sin and guilt for having broken God’s Law, your condemnation and deserved punishment in hell, and God’s plan of salvation through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ in order to be saved.

John 16:8-11; Romans 2:16; 3:19-20; 1 John 3:4; James 2:10; John 3:17-19, 36; Matthew 7:13-22; 10:28; Acts 17:30-31; 20:21; 28:20; Romans 10:9-13; 1 Corinthians 15:1-2

Since you are saved by the Word of God, it must be your absolute, infallible guide to tell you how to live. To illustrate: Every major purchase (car, appliance, etc.) is accompanied by an owner’s manual, which tells you how to operate it. If you don’t go by the book, it won’t work the way it is designed to work.

Likewise, the Bible is God’s owner’s manual or road map for your life. God would not save you and call you to service without clear, exact instructions; but you must “follow directions.”

Joshua 1:8 says, *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

II. What is the purpose of the Word of God for a Christian?

Getting acquainted with the basics of the Bible and how it relates to everyday life will help you begin to understand how its principles are to guide every facet of your walk with Jesus Christ.

A. The Word of God equips you for service. See Ephesians 6:10-18

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable

for doctrine, (what’s right – guidelines, Psalms 119:128)

for reproof, (what’s wrong – shows our error, Proverbs 6:23)

for correction, (how to correct what’s wrong – change and repentance, Proverbs 1:23)

for instruction in righteousness: (keeping it from going wrong again – growth and stability)

“That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

B. The Word of God sustains you. This is illustrated in the Bible as “spiritual food.” See Job 23:12 and Jeremiah 15:16. It is a complete and balanced diet.

1. *As newborns babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*
1 Peter 2:2

2. *How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*
Psalm 119:103

 3. *...It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.*
Luke 4:4

 4. *That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,*
Ephesians 5:26

 5. *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.* 1 Corinthians 3:1-2
- C. The Word of God keeps you clean to please God.
- Psalm 119:9-11; John 15:3

III. Is the Bible completely reliable?

If I am going to accept the Word of God as the final authority in every area of my life and apply it, I must recognize its reliability.

- A. It is more sure than the audible voice of God. This is a very critical point. It must be understood that all “experiences” are to be judged by the infallible standard, which is greater than any experience. Peter said the Word of God was MORE SURE than the physical appearance and audible voice of God.

See Matthew 17:1-9 followed by 2 Peter 1:16-21

- B. The universe was created by the spoken Word of God.

Hebrews 11:3; Psalm 33:6; Genesis 1:3

- C. A brief history of the Bible
1. The Bible has a total of 66 books, written by more than 40 authors over a time span of about 2,000 years.
 2. The Bible is totally accurate in all matters of history, prophecy, and science and contains no contradictions.
 3. The Bible fits together perfectly as if written by one man.

IV. How do I learn the Bible?

The Bible was written so that all who seek after Him would be able to learn of Him. It is not something you can do unless you have truly repented and trusted Christ alone for salvation.

- A. The Holy Spirit of God will lead and guide you into all truth. God may use other instruments to aid in teaching (books, preachers, etc.), but ultimately, truth is revealed by the Holy Spirit.

John 14:26; John 16:13-15

- B. The Bible is learned by comparing scripture with scripture, relying on God's Spirit to teach you and not your own natural intellect. *"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God."*

1 Corinthians 2:9-16

V. Where should I start reading?

As a young Christian, focus on the primary places that deal with your new relationship with your Heavenly Father. The Gospel of John, the Epistle of 1 John and Psalm 119 are excellent places to begin.

- A. The Gospel of John is written that you might believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 20:31

- B. The Epistle of 1 John is written that you might have complete assurance of salvation.

1 John 5:13

- C. Psalm 119 is the greatest chapter in the Bible on man's love for the Word of God.

- D. If you find something you do not understand, don't get upset about it. God will reveal it to you in time—when you are ready. John 16:12

Be sure you live what you do understand. God will not give you more than you are capable of handling. As you put into practice the things you are learning, God will entrust you with more.

VI. Read this famous quote concerning the Bible.

“The Bible contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true and its decisions are immutable.

Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword and the Christian's character.

Here paradise is restored, heaven opened and the gates of hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good its design and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart and guide the feet.

Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory and a river of pleasure. It is given to you in life, will be opened at the judgment and remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labor and condemns all who trifle with its holy contents.”

VII. Memory Verses

Psalm 119:9 Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Peter 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.