

Back to the Basics - The Bible

The Bible is unique

- **The Bible is a cohesive book**
 - Two sections Old Testament & New Testament
 - 66 books in total, 39 in OT, 27 in NT
 - 40+ authors over 1,600 years
 - From all walks of life, peasants, kings, shepherd, philosophers, fishermen etc.
 - Written in various places dungeons, wilderness, comfortable rooms, etc.
 - Various circumstances from war to peace and everything in between.
 - Written in honest reflection of the authors mood from the most joyous and happiest times to the very depth of despair and sadness.
 - Multiple different genres history, law, poetry, biography, letters, prophecy, etc.
 - Written in three continents - Asia, Africa, & Europe
 - In three original languages - Hebrew, Aramaic, & Greek
 - All of this variety has the singular focus and theme of God's redemption of man
- **The Bible is widely circulated**
 - The Bible has been read by more people in more languages than any other book in all of human history
 - For over 2,000 years and in more than 2,000 different languages the Bible has been read by people.
- **The Bible has survived the test of time**
 - Composed before the invention of the printing press.
 - It was written, copied, and recopied by hand on perishable materials.
 - Yet all this time and copying have not caused significant changes or variation from the oldest to the newest manuscripts.
 - The Bible has more manuscript evidence than any other piece of classical literature.

The Bible gives us how we see and know God.

2 Peter 1:16-21

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," 18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. 19 And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- The Bible was written by men who spoke (prophesied) from God
- It was written exclusively by people who were inspired by God through Holy Spirit
 - Most of the authors were either eyewitnesses or closely connected to eyewitnesses of the events recorded in the book.
- This makes the Bible a reliable and true record of who God is and how He has worked throughout history
 - It is not written as myth or a good story to simply prove a point

The Bible is the word of God

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

- Every author was divinely inspired
- Every word is the word from God, recorded by human authors
- The Bible is essential for every person who believes in God
- The Bible shows us how to live a life that honors God and equips us with everything we need to do so.

The Bible is alive and powerful

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

- Though the Bible is old it has the unique ability to speak directly into our lives today so many centuries after it was written
- God through the Holy Spirit still speaks to people today through the word He gave us so long ago.

The Bible should produce change in your life

James 1:22-25

22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

- The word of God is powerful, God created the universe by His word alone
- God's word can have a similar powerful affect on us when we read and do what is says
- Its possible to read or hear the Bible and have little to no affect on our life, we must act on what we hear and read.
- When we read the Bible, God, through the Holy Spirit, will bring to mind how what we read applies to our life.
 - When He speaks in this way we have a choice to make a change to stay the same

How Do I Read the Bible?

What? So What? Now What?

- **What? - Put what you read in your own words**
 - What type of book was the passage you read? (History, poem, letter, etc.)
 - What happened in the passage you read?
 - Who was involved in the passage?
 - What did the characters in the passage do?
 - Where did that action or message of the passage take place?
 - What are the important parts of the passage? (Figure of speech, verbs, pronouns, etc.)
 - What happened immediately before or after the passage you read?
- **So What? - What did the passage say or mean to the original audience?**
 - How did the original audience hear or experience the passage you read?
 - What did the original author want the original audience to hear, change, or do?
 - What was the message from God to the original audience?

- **Now What? - What message does God have for you?**
 - How is your situation similar to the situation of the original audience? How is it different?
 - What in the passage can you relate to?
 - How can the message God had for the original audience apply to you?
 - What do you think God wants you to learn from the passage?
 - In response to the passage should you do something differently or start doing something new?

Use a Bible reading plan!

Pick a plan - any plan will work

- Use an app - Like youverson
- Read a chapter per day - Book of John in 21 days
- Read a subheading per day - Book of Matthew
- Foundational history - Genesis & Exodus
- Crazy stories of God's people - Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Esther
- Looking for wisdom - Read the date in Proverbs (Number of today's date = chapter in Proverbs)
- Want to be a leader? - 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus
- Interested in Theology? - Romans, Colossians
- Practically live out your faith - James

Discussion Questions

- What most stuck out to you about today's lesson?
- What makes the Bible different from other books you read in school?
- How does the uniqueness of the Bible make it seem more credible or important than other books?
- In your own words why is the Bible beneficial?
- Why is it important for us to learn about who God is?
- Why should we use the Bible to learn about God? Can we reliably use other sources to learn about God?
- In your own words, how is the Bible still relevant for us today?
- Do you think it is better to read the Bible yourself or have it read to you? Why?
- If you were to read the Bible on your, how long and where could you do that on a regular basis?
- What would you be interested in reading about in the Bible? What kind of plan could you follow to read the Bible?
- In your own words how does the Bible help us to live a successful life?