

# Getting to Know The Book that Knows Me

Series: Getting to Know THE BOOK that Knows Me  
Brad Bailey – January 15, 2017

*What are you building your life upon?*

Matthew 7:24-27

*"Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. <sup>26</sup> But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."*

## Getting Oriented

1. The Bible is a \_\_\_\_\_ of books.
2. The Bible is divided into \_\_\_\_\_... reflecting two primary terms by which God was relating to humankind.
3. The Bible is defined by what \_\_\_\_\_ declared to be from God.

*"I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law [of Moses] until everything is accomplished." - Matthew 5:18*

*"David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared..." - Mark 12:36*

*"He who receives you, receives me." - Matthew 10:40*

4. The Bible is "\_\_\_\_\_ " (Inspired)

2 Timothy 3:15-17 (HCSB)

*From childhood you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

*Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God. - 2 Peter 1:20-21 (NLT)*

John 5:39 (ESV)

*"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me..."*

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**Memory Verse:** *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." - Colossians 3:16a (NIV)*

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*What are you building your life upon?*

It might sound a **little strange to speak of “building a life”...because a life is not a building material** that is physically constructed upon a foundation.

**But in truth we do add to it with every day** and every year of life. And **we do build** based on what we consider to be **right or real... wise and best.**

And we make decisions on what we believe is **sound and solid**.... Not necessarily certainty...but confidence.

**So as we gather** here in the **early weeks of this year**... it seems **good to stop and consider** what we are building upon.

**Recent studies**... have found what we may naturally feel...which is a sense foundations being shaken. In just the past year... there has been

There is a **global dynamic** that is simply more complicated and reactive than ever before. Many feel rumblings in the nature of a more **global economy**...in **financial institutions**... in the nature of **terrorism and acts of hate**...in the **nature and bonds of family**...among other foundations.

**In 5 days** a man will become the leader of our nation...which those who support and those who oppose would both agree **brings less certainty of what to expect than usual.**

*So... What are you building your life upon?*

Jesus has everything to say. Jesus **never rooted his life** in the **human ideas or institutions**. He was **rooted in something** he understood as true and unchanging. When he was being **taunted and tempted** by the powers of this world... he didn't quote the roman ruler Caesar...or Kayne...he declared the living Words of God. He **drew upon that which** had been **divinely declared** in the **Scriptures**. These **held the unchanging truth** of God. And he knew **his own words were being added** to that truth.

**Jesus ended the Sermon on the Mount**, the most famous sermon in the Bible, by telling a story.

**Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV)**

"Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. <sup>26</sup> But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. <sup>27</sup> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

**Two lives each built homes...** one on sand...one on rock...and when they faced life's storms and winds...**the results showed how significant** their choice of foundations was.

**Jesus doesn't suggest** that there **MIGHT be forces** that are powerful and able to destroy the lives we should build...he says there are. **Not "if" but "when:" they come.**

So today we are going to begin to look at how we do that...**how we build our lives on the Bible** so that you're **building on solid rock**, so that when the storms and trials and difficulties of your life come inevitably, that you'll be able to handle it.

Today we are going to begin a series entitled: **Getting to Know THE BOOK that Knows Me.**

Over the next 6 weeks we are going to grasp afresh the power and process of how we can build our lives on a foundation that won't change.

We are going to look at:

1. Getting to Know The Book that Knows Me - Orientation
2. Why Can I Trust the Bible? - Integrity
3. The Bible's Unfolding Story - Integration
4. How to Read the Bible – Interpretation & Application
5. Engaging Difficult Parts of the Bible (Interpreting the difficult aspects)
6. How the Bible's Revelation Changed the World – Impact  
- Compassion, Justice, MLK

Over the next six weeks, we'll learn how to build our lives on the same foundation as Jesus...the one which doesn't get washed away.

This involves growing to **love God's Word** with our hearts, to **learn God's Word with our minds**, and to **live God's Word** with our lives. It's ultimately a matter of living it.

As Jesus described...the solid foundation is built when one hears what he is saying...AND puts his words into practice.

There's a challenge there that speaks to our more academic oriented western culture. In the western culture we have developed a more academic view of knowledge. We **focus on information** more than **transformation**.

The Hebrew culture like many others...understood that you know something until you can live it. They understood that you need to study truth...to understand it....but **you didn't get it til it got you.**

So our desire is not getting **bigger heads**...but **bigger hearts**.

Towards this we are going to integrate some ways to know this book.

- Sunday Celebration
- Home Churches – engage more practically
- Daily Reading – Read through the Bible in one year (Set up on the app)

Our goal isn't to focus on just getting through...but on sowing the truth. "It's not how much of the Bible you get through every day; it's how deeply the Bible gets through to you."

- Weekly Verse to Memorize
- Resources – Book Nook – special books...and if you don't have a Bible, you can buy one there...and if you can't afford one...we'll give you one free.

So let's get started... with a bit of **an orientation**.

If you get **hired for a job** you go through their orientation program. If you **enroll in a college**, they typically require you some time during the summer to go to a freshman orientation.

We're going to go through a quick orientation ... so that **if you've never picked up a Bible before**, and know next to nothing, but you're pretty sure the name of Noah's wife was Joan of Ark ...which it may have been

## **Getting Oriented**

### **1. The Bible is a library of books.**

The first and perhaps most obvious bit of orientation is noticing that the Bible is a library. It isn't a single book. It's a **collection of books**.

**Sixty-six**, to be exact, written by over **forty authors** covering a period of **around 1500 years**.

**Most of the books** bear the **name of its author** and are pretty straightforward.

So the book of Isaiah was the book written by Isaiah. The book of Daniel was the book written by Daniel.

Sometimes the books carry the **name of the main event** that the book talks about.

For example, the book of Genesis is about the genesis – the creation, the beginning – of the world.

The book of **Exodus deals mostly with the great exodus**, or departure, of the Jewish people from slavery under the leadership of Moses.

**A lot of the books** were actually **letters**, and carry the **name of the people they were sent to**.

So Philippians is the name of the book, or letter, sent to the people who lived in the city of Philippi.

I and II Corinthians were the two letters sent to the people who lived in Corinth.

I and II Timothy were two letters a man named Paul sent to a man he was mentoring named Timothy.

So the Bible is a library of books, reflecting different times in history, different authors, different settings, and different emphases.

## **2. The Bible is divided into two Testaments... reflecting two primary terms by which God was relating to humankind.**

The second big headline is that this library of books falls into two parts, usually called "testaments."

The Old Testament, and the New Testament. The Old Testament is made up of 39 of the 66 books, and the New Testament is made up of 27 of the 66 books.

The word testament simply **means "agreement," or "covenant."** It refers to a pact, a treaty, an alliance, an agreement between two parties. And that tells you something about the content of the Bible.

**The Bible is a record of God's great covenants, or His promises, to us in regard to our relationship with Him.**

It's a record of God's dealings with us. **The Old Testament is a record of God's covenants, God's agreements, God's dealings with people before the time of Christ. The New Testament covers everything that happened when Christ came, and then what happened after His resurrection.**

The Old Testament builds toward the New Testament; it looks forward to the New Testament.

And then the **New Testament fulfills the Old**, completes it; it's as if **it writes the final chapters** to the story.

The Old Testament looks forward to the coming of Jesus, and the New Testament looks back on His coming.

So while it's 66 books, in two parts, it's **still one story**. In fact, that's why it's called the Bible. **The English word "Bible" comes from the name of the papyrus or byblos reed that was used for making scrolls and books.**

Because they were made from byblos reeds, books came to be known as bibles. But the writings of the Old Testament and the New Testament were **so sacred, so special, so revered, that they came to be known simply as THE book, or THE Bible.**

## **3. The Bible is defined by what Jesus declared to be from God.**

**What set apart these writings from others?** It is Jesus that defines what is deemed sacred and set apart. They are the one's **which Jesus set apart** as pointing towards him...or were recognized as direct testimony about him.

And the Bible we have is the one He set apart. Now let me walk you through that.

**First, we accept the Old Testament as Scripture because Jesus did.**

When Jesus made reference to the Scriptures, which he accepted as Scripture, he was referring to the Old Testament we have today.

When the New Testament records Jesus saying He believed in the Scriptures, that meant the Old Testament because the New Testament had not been written yet.

And here was His unqualified endorsement:

**"I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law [of Moses] until everything is accomplished." - Matthew 5:18**

And in what may be one of the **most intriguing statements He made** in relation to the Old Testament, Jesus introduced a quote from the Old Testament by saying:

**"David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared..." - Mark 12:36**

...and then went on to quote what David said in the Old Testament book of Psalms.

**Clearly, to Jesus, the Old Testament was no ordinary collection of writings.** He referred to the writers of the Old Testament as being inspired by the Holy Spirit, the very Word of God.

Now when we come to the New Testament, again, we look to Jesus for its establishment.

First, because a lot of it records just **what He said, what He taught.** And if He was God in human form and said something, I would call that Scripture! I think it soundly falls under that category.

**But he also laid the foundation for the writings of the rest of the New Testament to be accepted as Scripture through the apostles. [1]**

These were the men who were **to speak in Jesus' name and carry His word to others.** They **carried the authority of Jesus Himself** as they taught.

Jesus even said these words to them, as recorded in the New Testament book of Matthew:

**"He who receives you, receives me." - Matthew 10:40**

Which is why the teachings of the apostles were considered Scripture, and the mark of what would be included in the New Testament was simple:

**...was it written by, or based on, the teaching of Jesus or one of His apostles.**

So, when it comes to the Bible, it **wasn't something a bunch of church leaders** sat down one day and randomly picked.

Jesus had already embraced and affirmed the Old Testament as the Word of God;

The first four books of the New Testament capture His own life and teaching as God Himself in human form come to planet earth;

And the rest of the New Testament was personally commissioned by Jesus, written by His handpicked apostles, through a special working of the Holy Spirit as they wrote.

So when the ancient church made it official through the council of Jamnia **in A.D. 90 for the Old Testament**, and **in 397** for the **New Testament** through the Council of Carthage.

It **wasn't a selection process**. It wasn't like the NFL draft. It was a **confirmation process**.

It was about which books Jesus set apart! That's our Bible.

#### **4. The Bible is "God-Breathed" (Inspired)**

This isn't a normal book. It's inspired by God.

**Sometimes we use the word "inspired"** to mean that something was **wonderfully creative**, such as a **painting** by Rembrandt... a **song that moves us**...or some great performance in arts or sports. Sometimes we use the word to refer to something that we feel – how we **find a beautiful sunset** or a **powerful speech** to be inspiring.

That is NOT what is meant by the Bible being "inspired." The true and original meaning means quite **literally breathed out by God**.

When Paul was describing it in his second letter to Timothy, he put it this way:

#### **2 Timothy 3:15-17 (HCSB)**

From childhood you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

The Greek word Paul used for "inspired" literally means "**God-breathed**."

That's the idea behind the inspiration of the Scriptures. God-breathed. **Breathed out** by God. **Exhaled** by God. **Produced** by God.

**What it reveals** does **not ultimately emanate** from the **minds of men**.

It was **written by humans**, but as they were **moved by God**. It reflects their personality, vocabulary and writing style, but the insight and ideas were stirred by God. Inspired by God.

The idea of inspiration is that God used people to write the books of the Bible, but was so involved in the process that they wrote exactly what He wanted.

**One of the clearest expressions** of this idea is found in the New Testament book of **Second Peter**, which has this to say:

**Above all, you must realize that no prophecy in Scripture ever came from the prophet's own understanding, or from human initiative. No, those prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they spoke from God. - 2 Peter 1:20-21 (NLT)**

Now it's vital to understand that **the God who inspired** also **illuminates**...that is...the God who's Spirit revealed Himself through the writers...reveals Himself to us the readers.

The Bible is the Living Word of God... because it is inspired and illuminated by the living God. We are not simply a people of the Book...but a people of the God of the Book.

It is ultimately about a relationship with the God of the Book.

That is **the purpose of this Book**.

...Look again at what was described in Second Timothy...

**2 Timothy 3:15-17 (HCSB)**

From childhood you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

**The Scriptures had given the wisdom to be saved... and to know the savior.**

And what does this Living breathing Word lead to? It's all summed up with the final phrase that begins **"SO THAT"**...everything else mentioned are means to that end...and that end is to **make us "complete" and able to do good.**

**So the Word of God has the purpose and power to know the One who saves ...and become complete (who we were meant to be)...and live accordingly.**

Jesus made a statement to some of the religious leaders that should challenge us all.

**John 5:39 (ESV)**

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me..."



They sought the book but missed the author. They had their own ideas and couldn't understand the author's real intent.

Engaging the Bible is **not just a matter of the head but the heart**... about our posture... attitude.

The Bible describes God's Word as seed...and our souls to be like soil. The ability to receive it is not about the seed but the soil. Our hearts receptive? Do we want to hear God?

So let me close with a challenge. to realize that what it's all about is knowing Jesus.

Now I know that whether or not to believe in the Bible is a personal decision – and we'll talk more about that in the weeks to come.

We'll dig into the questions and the issues....and I trust it will help you think more clearly about what you believe.

**The central question is that of Jesus.** He is bound to this Book...but he is the one we are meant to actually know. **He is the author...and the one it is all about.**

So I want to challenge you – even now – that **where you land on this** will be a decision that will **determine where your spiritual journey will take you.**

It will determine whether you accept Christ, or you reject Him. Whether you do **life with Him,** or **apart from Him.**

Because there is no way that you can reject the Bible, and accept Jesus.

Many may know the name **Billy Graham**... I read this week of how he faced the challenges of understanding and believing the Bible. [2]

He had a friend named Chuck Templeton at the time.

Chuck was a fellow minister, and was facing the same decision. In fact, he was considered by most the better speaker.

But Chuck couldn't understand some parts of the Bible...and he began to spiral into doubts... and finally withdrew from his faith altogether.

And he worked hard to persuade Billy to view it the same

During that time, Billy was at a student conference at Forest Home...the retreat center in the San Bernadino Mountains near Los Angeles. He went for a walk in the surrounding pine forest.

And he prayed: "Oh God, I cannot prove certain things. I cannot answer some of the questions...some...people are raising, but I accept this Book by faith as the Word of God."

And that, Billy said, changed everything.

It was that decision by which Billy Graham was able to be used by God to change the world.

Chuck Templeton slowly devolved in many regards.

He was recently interviewed at the age of 83...before his death.

Asked about his decision...he rambled about his perplexities...but then he was asked...about Jesus. He stopped...began to speak of Jesus as the most profound and inspiring life he'd ever known... and then he broke down crying.... And said that he missed Jesus.

Billy didn't miss Jesus.

One choice, about one book, made all the difference. Because it's that kind of book.

Don't miss Jesus.

PRAYER

**Memory Verse:**

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” – Colossians 3:16a (NIV)

**Resources:** This message was drawn and adapted from James Emery White's initial message from “How to: Bible” series. During this series I will also draw from Rick Warren's 40 Days in the Word Campaign. The series we are launching is different in various aspects of we are choosing to include in our focus, but I am indebted to both for the foundational messages for such a series...and the heart of the campaigns which they developed.

**Notes:**

1. Jesus chose the word “apostle” for twelve of His disciples in order to indicate their role. The word “apostle” means “those who have been sent”, and the mission Jesus sent them on was that of preaching and teaching.

The word is used only of the 12 originally chosen by Jesus, and a handful of select others, most notably the Apostle Paul. The apostles had received a unique commission from Jesus Himself – never to be repeated – to assume a prophetic role and speak God's word to the people. Each apostle was given a personal commission by Jesus Himself – they were never self-appointed;

As the literal Greek has Jesus saying to Paul in Acts 26, Jesus said to him, “I apostle you.”

These were the men who were to speak in Jesus' name and carry His word to others. They carried the authority of Jesus Himself as they taught. Jesus even said these words to them, as recorded in the New Testament book of Matthew: “He who receives you, receives me.” - Matthew 10:40

And then each apostle was given a special inspiration for their teaching from Jesus Himself through the Holy Spirit.

While all Christians have the Holy Spirit within them from the moment of conversion, Jesus promised the apostles a special ministry of the Holy Spirit in regard to their teaching and writing.

The Holy Spirit would give them a remembrance of the teaching of Jesus, and inspire them to teach other truths as well, that would be from God.

Jesus also said that they would be guided into all truth. In fact, this is what He said to them: “The Spirit shows what is true and will come and guide you into the full truth...by taking my message and telling it to you.” - John 16:12, 14 (CEV)

Which is why the teachings of the apostles were considered Scripture, and the mark of what would be included in the New Testament was simple:...was it written by, or based on, the teaching of Jesus or one of His apostles.

This is why we read in the second chapter of Acts, which records the history of the early church, these words:...“[the early church] devoted themselves to the apostle’s teaching.” (Acts 2:42, NIV)

See they knew exactly what Jesus had done – they had heard Jesus appoint them! They had heard Jesus teach about what kind of role the apostles were going to have.

They knew that Peter and John, James and Paul were not ordinary men. To receive them was to receive Christ, to reject them was to reject Christ.

2. More of the full story of Chuck Templeton doubting Bible and ending life missing Jesus Is included in these articles:

Pathetic Preacher Dies in Unbelief!

<http://www.cstnews.com/bm/other-hot-topics-for-informed-christians-cstnews/pathetic-preacher-dies-in-unbelief~print.shtml>

Billy Graham’s shadow: Chuck Templeton and the crisis of American religion WRITTEN BY ALAN BEAN

<https://friendsofjustice.wordpress.com/2015/08/03/billy-grahams-shadow-chuck-templeton-and-the-crisis-of-american-religion/>

# Home Church Study

## “Getting to Know The Book that Knows Me”

Series: Getting to Know THE BOOK that Knows Me  
Week following January 15, 2017

This week we are launching Home Churches and beginning a new series entitled: “*Getting to Know The Book that Knows Me.*” We are going to be doing something that ultimately changes our lives...which is learning to build our lives on the foundation of the Bible... God’s Word. It will be helpful for each individual to begin bringing a Bible and a pen.

### Getting Started

1. If this is a new group, take a few minutes to introduce yourselves.
2. What is one of your first memories of hearing or reading the Bible?
3. How do you think this series / study could help you?

### Exploring

1. James 1:19-25 contains key thoughts on how to build your life on the Bible. Read this passage silently to yourself and choose a word or phrase that stands out to you. Explain your choice.

James 1:21-25 (NIV)

Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. <sup>22</sup> Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. <sup>23</sup> Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror <sup>24</sup> and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. <sup>25</sup> But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.

2. What does it mean? Look through James 1:19-25 again. Write down the action words in the passage. How can these actions be used to study the Bible in more depth?
3. What does it mean to be blessed?

### Practice

One way to engage what God’s Word says to us is to allow focus on each word. Read this week’s memory verse – Colossians 3:16a (NIV) over and over again, but emphasize each word in the verse...one at a time. After each word, stop and write down your thoughts, even if it’s just a word or two.

LET the word of Christ dwell in you richly.  
Let the WORD of Christ dwell in you richly.  
Let the word of CHRIST dwell in you richly.  
Let the word of Christ DWELL in you richly.  
Let the word of Christ dwell IN you richly  
Let the word of Christ dwell in YOU richly.  
Let the word of Christ dwell in you RICHLY

Which word has the most meaning for you? Why did you choose that word?

How does this verse apply to your life right now?