

# 2: THE WORD

## Timeless Truth, Daily Bread

Those who were added to the church in her beginnings devoted themselves to the *Apostles' teaching* (Acts 2:42).

The teachings of the apostles, along with the Old Testament and Jesus' own words were brought together, under the supervision of the Holy Spirit, to form the complete Bible we have today.

In this unit we shall consider the importance of the Word of God in our lives as believers who have been *added to the church*.

### ACTIVITY

#### Read 2 Tim 3:14-4:2

*How would you describe what the Word of God means to you?*

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### WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

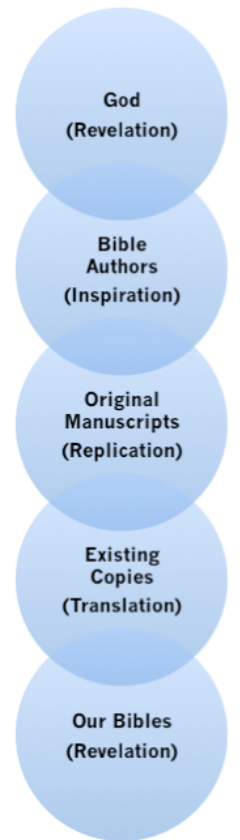
In the present pluralistic age, where 'truth' is always up for debate, it is important for us to begin by defining what we mean by the Bible.

The Bible comprises of the Old and New Testaments. It is the written record of God's revelation of Himself to mankind. It is God's Word to us! In this it is utterly unique and does not compete with any other book claiming being to be 'scriptures' or 'holy'.

The place and authority of the Bible in our lives is one of the most defining things about us.

Let's look at 5 important characteristics:

- 1. Inspired** – The Word of God is inspired by the Holy Spirit, literally 'breathed-out' by God Himself (2 Ti 3:16). The Bible itself testifies that its writers were 'carried along' by the Holy Spirit to record God's own words (2 Pet 1:20-21).
- 2. Infallible** – Given the Bible did not originate in the mind or will of man but from God, it is infallible, just as He is. The Holy Spirit has overseen the process of His Word coming from Him to us, through inspired Bible authors, to manuscripts that were meticulously replicated and eventually translated into more than 350 modern languages (the gospels into over 2,000 languages and dialects).



*"As for God, His way is perfect: the Lord's Word is flawless"*  
(Ps. 18:30)

- 3. Absolute Truth** – This also means that the Word of God does not compete with other philosophies for a monopoly of the truth. Living in a pluralistic age where absolutes are frowned upon and considered judgemental to others, many people think there are lots of equally valid truths. The Bible does not merely contain truth, **it is THE truth!**

*"Sanctify them by the truth; Your Word is truth."* (John 17:7)

The Bible is God's plumbline against which all other opinions and experiences must be judged.

- 4. Eternal** – The inspiration of the Scriptures means they are not just a product of their time and culture but speak with God's authority to

every time and culture. Like God, His Word is eternal.

*The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.* (Isa 40:8)

**5. Final Authority** – The Bible carries God’s ultimate authority.

*For you have exalted above all things your name and your word.* (Ps 138:2, ESV)

The whole Christian faith stands on the authoritative truth of God’s Word. The Word testifies about itself.

- **Jesus** – submitted to and confirmed the Old Testament (Matt 5:17-19, 4:4,10) and acted to fulfil it.
- **The Holy Spirit** – His witness to the Word in our hearts
- **The Apostles** – taught from the OT and recognised each other’s writings as ‘inspired’ Scriptures (2 Pet 3:15-16).
- **Our Lives** – We can live in the power of His Word.

**BIBLE OVERVIEW**

The Bible is made up of **66** books (39 OT and 27 NT), written by over 40 authors across 1,600 years.

|                   | Old Testament   | New Testament                         |
|-------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>HISTORY</b>    | The Law and History of Israel<br><b>(17 books)</b>                    | The Gospels Acts<br><b>(5 books)</b>  |
| <b>EXPERIENCE</b> | Job Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs<br><b>(5 books)</b> | Letters/Epistles<br><b>(21 books)</b> |
| <b>PROPHECY</b>   | Major Prophets Minor Prophets<br><b>(17 books)</b>                    | Revelation<br><b>(1 book)</b>         |

**DAILY BREAD**

The Word itself is clear about how and when we should read it.

*Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"* (Matt 4:4)

The Word will build our faith, enable us to receive personal revelation through which God can bring our lives in line with His will and reveal His purposes to us.

It is important for all of us to have a daily pattern of consuming the ‘bread’ of the Word. Here are some guidelines to help us get the most out of it.

- Pray first – ask the Spirit to teach you, for He is its author.
- Expect to receive.
- Put yourself there.
- Don’t rush or cram too much in.
- Have a daily pattern.
- Ask the Spirit to help you apply the Word.
- Don’t get religious or legalistic.
- Read in line with the preached word.

What are the challenges for you: (1) In reading the Word? (2) In applying the Word? (3) In seeing the truth of the Word outworked when facts or culture oppose it?



**THE WORD – KEY POINTS**

- The Bible is God’s word to us!
- Various authors and themes, but all inspired.
- The Bible is our ultimate authority, and is loved by everyone who loves God’s Kingdom!
- It is our daily bread.
- The Word works!
- We must put it into practice.
- We must interpret culture through the lens of the Word, not vice-versa.