

# What is the Bible?

*Part 1: Our Written Source of Truth*  
(3/22/26)

Please turn to 2 Timothy 3

## **The Bible is God's written truth here in this world.**

I was much younger and unsaved the first time I heard someone say *“life doesn't come with an instruction manual.”* I've never been an atheist and have always believed in God's existence. Thus when I began to hear people make this statement my first inclination was to agree but then think: if God truly exists, why didn't He give us a manual? Let's consider.

### **We need a manual that:**

- **Is an autobiography about God, written by Him.** His history, what He did, what He said, what He's like, what He thinks is right and wrong, and what He wants.
- We need this autobiography to tell us **how to get to know Him**, how to talk to Him, start a relationship, what He likes, what He doesn't like, and what He expects from us.
- We need it to tell us **right from wrong**, because there are so many opinions in the world. We need His clarity to be like a series of **bright streetlights** showing us where the road is in the dark.
- We need to see **past examples of other believing humans**, how they interacted with Him, what He said to them, and what they did.
- We need to see the times **they obeyed and the times they didn't**. How they succeeded and when they failed.
- We need to see how **God responded to them** no matter the circumstance.
- We need to be able to read about the **cost**, both good and bad, for following Him.
- We need to see **His plans for the present and the future**, and our part in it.
- We need it to detail **how to live life**, be married, have kids, and navigate through all the evil and trouble in this world.
- We need it to tell us **how to deal with US**. Not just our sins, but our thoughts, emotions, anxiety, problems, relationships, everything.

**Wouldn't it be astronomically unfair if we found ourselves standing at Judgment before Him and we had no access to any of this?**

**The good news is he did**, and now we arrive at today's reading. Timothy is Paul's disciple, his protégé. He has appointed Timothy as the pastor of the Church at Ephesus, and 2 Timothy is Paul's final letter of advice and wisdom to his young heir.

**[2Ti 3:10-13 ESV]** 10 You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, 11 my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra--which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. 12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13 while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Paul says lots of *deceivers and imposters* are in the area and that these people are successfully duping others. Sounds like right now! How can young Tim protect *himself from* this? Clearly he has, because Paul says “you have followed MY teaching” as opposed to the teaching of the false people. How did Tim do that? Let’s read on.

**[2Ti 3:14-15 ESV]** 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood ***you have been acquainted with the sacred writings***, which are able to **make you wise for salvation** through faith in Christ Jesus.

**Verse 15:** Tim has access to “sacred writings” and your translation might say ***“scriptures.”*** So there is writing, then there is “sacred” writing. The word sacred means it’s *inspired by God* and comes from Him. There are 66 books in the Bible and 40 authors, and said authors were inspired by the Lord to write what they wrote.

Paul says in the same verse that the Scriptures were able to ***“make him wise”*** and IDK about you, but in this crazy, messed up, confusing and evil world I needs lots of wisdom! What do I need it for? Paul says it: “salvation.”

**[2Ti 3:16-17 ESV]** 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.

Now we get to **my favorite verse in all of 2 Tim**, verse 16: ALL of the Bible is God-breathed. What does that mean?

**Breath = life. Breath = life giving spirit. Spirit = life.**

- Adam’s body was formed from the dirt of the earth, but he didn’t live until God BREATHED a life-giving spirit into him.
- Ezekiel saw the dry bones stand up and even get bodies...but they didn’t come alive until God **breathed** on them
- After the resurrection, Jesus BREATHES on the disciples and say “receive you the Holy Spirit.”

## **God didn't breathe on your physical Bible, but He did breathe on the authors recording it.**

Now we get back to my initial assertion in this sermon, where I said *“this is what I need the instruction manual to tell me.”*

- TEACHING. I need to be taught about God, I need the Truth of all things.
- REPROOF. All truth can be proven and vetted...the current word is “based.” It can stand against any tests thrown at it and any attempts to prove it wrong.
- CORRECTION. To this day, I get things wrong. Believe the wrong thing. I read my Bible, listen to a Bible based sermon or worship song, I talk with another Christian, and any false belief in my heart is exposed and the right one given to me.
- INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS. We need to know right from wrong, good from evil, and righteousness from sin. Everyone has their own opinion and no two agree. Thank God we have the written Word of God that tells us!

## **What makes the Bible stand out from other books, religious or not?** What does it mean to be “inspired,” “God-breathed”, and “sacred”?

Ex: there are currently 2 billion Muslims in the world who all say the **Quran** is the word of Allah. Are we right and they're wrong?

We just finished a sermon series titled “What is the Church?” and in sermon #1 we covered that the **Church is otherworldly, supernatural.**

**The Bible is otherworldly and supernatural.** The words within flowed directly from God to human authors and were recorded for us to speak and read.

**Down here there's lot of confusion.** It isn't just that you and I have different opinions and perceptions, but so do entire organizations, political parties, religions, corporations, etc. We constantly fight each other over the truth, facts, and evidence. All the above entities become popular when they claim to have the same. We feel secure being part of one of them, believing we have some semblance of truth.

When it comes to religion, a skeptic will ask **“which religion is the right one?”** since they all claim to have the truth. Let's settle the question for you and I.

In the last sermon series, I quoted from Colossians which does an excellent job telling us **Who Jesus is:**

- God and equal to Father God.
- He created all things.

- All things were created for HIS enjoyment.
- He is preeminent, all powerful, all knowing.
- He is above and in dominion over all things of this world including Satan, evil, sin, humanity, and nature.

Now let's read a little more about Him:

**[Jhn 1:1-5 ESV]** 1 In the beginning was **the Word**, and the Word was with God, and the **Word was God**. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

John uses a **label for Jesus** that no one else uses...he calls Him "the Word." The Greek is "logos" and translates to "*saying, account, speech, a decree, instruction, teaching, doctrine, a narration.*"

**Why would John give Jesus that label?** Why not say "in the beginning was the LORD" or "in the beginning was the Creator"?

In the same Gospel, John records Jesus saying these things:

**[Jhn 14:6 ESV]** 6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and **the truth**, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

**[Jhn 6:35, 48, 51 ESV]** 35 Jesus said to them, "**I am the bread of life**; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. ... 48 **I am the bread of life**. ... 51 I am the **living bread that came down from heaven**. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

In the Bible, **bread = truth/the word and it's something we eat**. Just as the Hebrews ate manna that fell from heaven in the desert. Both Ezekiel and John (ironically!) are handed scrolls—Scriptures—during supernatural encounters and are **told to eat them**. Yummers!

**We must consume the words of Jesus like manna from heaven and those words are recorded in the Bible.**

**Now please remember these important truths:**

- Jesus is otherworldly; not subject to the corruption, sin, or confusion of this world.
- He created the church to be otherworldly so the world can't kill or stop us.
- His word is also otherworldly.

Jesus IS truth. ***Only truth exists in the Kingdom of Heaven***—no lies, deception, or confusion.

- Here in this world, it's the opposite.
- Truth doesn't come from this world, **it can only come from Jesus.**
- Truth is also otherworldly.

When Jesus came here to this earth 2000 years ago, **otherworldly uncorrupted God came to this world.**

Then **He created the church from Himself**—took a rib out of His side and formed it into us.

From the beginning to the end, **He breathed and spoke the Word of God** to 40 different Biblical authors from Moses to John, who faithfully recorded what He said into the 66 books of the Bible.

Jesus is the Word and **He imparted Himself into those words.** Over thousands of years, He miraculously preserved His word...not just its existence, but its integrity.

**Anyone or anything that's otherworldly cannot be defeated or marginalized by this world.**

- Jesus is otherworldly.
- The Church is otherworldly.
- The Bible is otherworldly.

Anyone or anything that's otherworldly will **ENDURE** the devil, sin, corruption, and any attempt to stop it.

- Jesus was crucified and died...but ***He rose from the dead 3 days later*** and is coming back as an all-powerful conquering King.
- The Church has been ***persecuted for 2 thousand years*** by the most powerful empires in the world. Yet Rome is gone, Persia is gone, the Ottomans gone, Soviet Union gone...and the Church remains.

**Over the last 2000 years, the Bible has endured more attempts at suppression, destruction, rewriting, and marginalization than any other book.**

It remains, even today, **the best-selling and translated book on the planet.** More than any dictionary, manual, the Quran, or some popular fiction novel.

**Empires, nations, and other great powers have spent time**, blood, and treasure to suppress or stop the Bible over the last two millennia, and all have failed.

- ROME. From the 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, the Roman Empire did its best. Emperor Diocletian ordered churches burned and all copies of the Bible seized. They were burned in public squares and Christians were forced to hand over any copies they had under threat of torture and execution. That ended with Constantine.
- THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. From the 9<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> centuries the CC suppressed non-Latin translations. Keep in mind, the common man and woman could not read Latin—only the priests could. Translations into any other language was considered heresy.
- In 1080, Pope Gregory VII issued a *papal decree* that the Latin Vulgate was the only acceptable version and all others were to be burned. He declared anyone translating or owning another version to be excommunicated.
- REFORMATION/COUNTER REFORMATION. When the Reformation began in 1517, there was a surge of Bible translations into local languages. William Tyndale translated the Bible into English and was burned at the stake for it in 1536. The CC issued another decree listing all Protestant Bibles as heresy and threatened excommunication for anyone reading one.
- ENLIGHTENMENT of 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries, aka “the Age of Reason” saw a surge in atheism and skepticism in Europe. French philosopher Voltaire led the charge during this era, declaring the Bible as follows: *“That is what fools have written, what imbeciles commend, what rogues teach and young children are made to learn by heart.”*
- Another philosopher during that time was Friedrich Nietzsche who famously said: *“God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers?”* Hitler, BTW, drew much of his inspiration from Nietzsche....
- Of the Bible, he said: *He called Paul "the first Christian" and inventor of "Christianness," describing the New Testament as originating from a tormented mind: "when one opens the Bible one does so to 'edify' oneself... All the world still believes in the authorship of the 'Holy Spirit'..."*
- He mocked the idea of *reading the Bible for personal consolation or divine revelation, seeing it as psychological self-deception.*
- 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY ATTEMPTS AT SUPPRESSION:
- NAZI GERMANY had the “Institute for the Study and Eradication of Jewish Influence on German Church Life” (founded with Hitler’s backing) produced a “dejudalized” Bible. It removed or altered Old Testament references, rewrote the New Testament to portray Jesus as Aryan (not Jewish), and eliminated “Jewish” elements. Hebrew Bibles were burned during Kristallnacht and other purges. The goal was to create a “German Christian” faith stripped of Jewish roots.
- **Soviet Union:** State atheism led to widespread Bible burning, church closures, and bans on printing/distribution. Smuggling (via underground networks) became common.

- **China** (especially Cultural Revolution era): Bibles burned as part of antireligious campaigns; state-approved versions only allowed under strict control. Smuggling persists.
- **North Korea** (ongoing): Owning or distributing a Bible is punishable by imprisonment, torture, labor camps, or execution (often for entire families). It is treated as evidence of “hostile” Western influence.
- 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY EXAMPLES.
- Here in the west, the main effort to suppress or change the Bible comes from the progressive left, mostly academia...i.e. schools, colleges, libraries, etc.
- Almost every Islamic & communist country suppresses the Bible.

**In the US alone, 9.7 million Bibles were sold in 2019.**

**Covid was bad**...but God can take what the devil does and make a victory out of it. During the pandemic when we were all stuck at home, Bible sales surged setting records.

In 2025, 19 million copies of the Scripture were sold in the US which is an **all-time high!**

Nothing and no one can suppress the Word of God! The devil has lost! The world has lost!

**Jesus, Who is the Word, remains victorious!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**