



Groups

Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides!

If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some basic instructions towards the end of the document.

- These study guides will be written by thoughtful and experienced Life Group Leaders.
- Use these guides as a head-start in your own preparation as the needs and culture is different from each group.

Outline

- I. Introduction and Main Scripture Readings
- II. Group Discussion Questions
- III. The Journey Resources
- IV. Support for the Leader

How to Use These Study Guides:

1. **Before the meeting:** Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
2. **Check In:** Begin each meeting with a short time checking in with one another.
3. **Read Scripture:** You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
4. **Ask Questions:** Don't feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with and see how the conversation flows.
5. **End with Prayer:** Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

If your group meets over Zoom:

- Expect to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
- Be sensitive to attention spans over zoom. Keep meetings shorter than they would be in person.

Group Leader Support:

- Please reach out to your Campus Pastor if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic.
- If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor [Tim Ghali](#) or [Grace Lee](#) from the Group Life team.

LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

for Sermon given on April 21, 2024

by Pastor Bryan Wilkerson

“WHY I STILL BELIEVE IN THE BIBLE” – Various Texts



Prayer In Transition:

As we enter this transition of senior pastors at Grace Chapel, we invite you to consider the significance of this moment and to incorporate a time of prayer for Pastor Bryan, Pastor Joshua, and Grace Chapel.

I. Introduction

Over the course of the next four weeks, I'd like to share with you why after a lifetime of following Jesus, and 40 years as a pastor, I believe as strongly as ever in God, in the Bible, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and in the local church. Some of what I share will sound familiar to those who've been listening to me for a while, but I don't want to miss one last chance to affirm some foundational truths as we look to the future, and to speak into the challenging and deconstructing conversations that are happening in the church today, especially among younger generations. I'll also be sharing some of the ways my beliefs have matured and even changed over the years. Because while I still believe in God, the Bible, the gospel, and the church – I may not believe exactly the same way I did 40 years ago.

BIG IDEA: I still believe the Bible is inspired, and worthy of our trust, engagement, and rediscovery.

Let's begin in prayer before we begin reading and discussing our text.

Main Scripture Readings:

2 Timothy 3:16

¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness

2 Peter 1:20-21

²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Luke 1:1-4

1 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, ² just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. ³ With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴ so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

Hebrews 4:12

¹² For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Psalms 119:105

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light on my path.

John 1:1, 18

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

II. Group Discussion Questions:

- 1) Pastor Bryan begins with WHAT he still believes about the Bible; “I still believe the Bible is inspired by God.” The Greek word used for inspired is **Theopneustos**, and it is the only time it is ever used in the Bible.
 - Read 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:20-21 as a group.
 - What does it mean that Scripture is “all-breathed/inspired?”
 - What words or phrases stand out to you regarding God’s Word?
 - How has the Word been useful to you for *teaching? Rebuking? Correcting? Training in righteousness?* How has the Scripture equipped you in your life?
- 2) Pastor Bryan offers three reasons WHY he believes the Bible is inspired by God.
 1. **Beauty** – 66 separate books written by 40+ unique personalities, in three different languages, a variety of genres, over a period of 1500 years. And yet it tells ONE story from beginning to end.
 2. **Reliability** – more evidence for the reliability of the Bible than we do for any works of antiquity
 3. **Vitality** – brings LIFE to every aspect of human experience.
 - Why do you believe that the Bible is inspired by God? What else would you add to the list of reasons?
 - Which of the three reason Pastor Bryan offered resonated most with you? which reason is least compelling to you?
 - Read Hebrews 4:12 together as a group. How is the word of God alive and active in your life?
- 3) Pastor Bryan speaks to HOW he believes we need to approach the Bible as we look to the future. He asserts that the Bible is worthy of our **trust**, our **engagement**, and our **re-discovery**. Feel free to focus on one or two the three words.

TRUST

- a. Pastor Bryan points out that there are two errors people tend to make in regard to Scripture:
 1. **Bibliolatry** – temptation to worship the Bible instead of the God who gave us the Bible (ie: religious leaders).

2. Literalism – the critical question isn't "What does the Bible say?" but "What does the Bible MEAN?"

- How prone are you to make the either of the two errors regarding Scripture? (Feel free to share other errors you have made)
- Pastor Bryan notes that discerning what the Bible means may require some time, effort, research, and teachability. How can you cultivate and increase discernment in applying what the Bible means?

ENGAGEMENT

b. Pastor Bryan affirms that the Scripture is worthy of REFLECTION, STUDY, DISCUSSION and to LIVE it in everyday life.

- Take a moment to self-check: how are you with spending time alone with the Scripture? Have other sources of spiritual nourishment like podcasts and social media unintentionally become your main source?
- How can you commit to spending more time with God through the Scripture this week? How can the group be an accountability partner for you?

RE-DISCOVERY

Jesus himself had to rebuke the religious leaders of the day who were steeped in their study of the Scriptures and yet often got it wrong (Mark 12:24). If they could get it wrong, so can we.

- What has the Lord been doing or speaking in your life that is allowing you to re-discover the Word again? OR What have been or are some challenges you are wrestling through in God's Word?

4) Scripture ultimately points to the Person of Jesus Christ. He is the word of God Incarnate. All of Scripture find its fulfillment and perfection in Christ.

As we conclude in prayer, let us confess and repent in the ways we have elevated the Bible above the Giver, the ways we falsely misrepresented God and mistaught His teachings and commands.

Let us then pray that God would give us an increase of love for His presence and His word.

Finally, as we read the Scriptures, in our stumbling or struggling, let us pray that we will experience a vitality of hope and life in Jesus Christ.

Conclude the time of prayer in reading and praying the words of Psalm 119:105

Psalm 119:105

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp for my feet,
a light on my path.

Take Home Message:

Ultimately, we want to remember that as inspired and valuable as the Scriptures are, the full and final revelation of God's character and work is found in the Person of Jesus Christ, who was and is the very Word of God.

In the beginning was the Word, John tells us, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God....No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God...has made him known. John 1:1, 18

Jesus is the word of God Incarnate; brought to life. And ALL of Scripture, from the opening chapters of Genesis to the closing chapters of Revelation, find it's fulfillment and perfection in Christ. * Which means that whenever we find ourselves stumbling over or struggling with a passage of Scripture, we are to interpret that passage in light of what Jesus says and does.

May you and I and Grace Chapel continue to build our lives and church upon it, and upon the Savior we meet in its pages. And that's who we'll talk about next week. Let's pray.

5) The Journey



We're all on a journey. Where is yours taking you?

The beauty of the way of Jesus is that it's not just good for us, it is good for the world around us. But that kind of beautiful life doesn't come from just hearing the words of Jesus. It comes from putting them into practice.

Three kinds of practice, actually:

- The **with-God life** of our personal habits and routines;
- The **with-others life** of our genuine and life-changing relationships; and
- The **for-the-world life** that makes an impact beyond our immediate homes and families, into our communities and beyond.

Growing as disciples of Jesus will make a Kingdom difference in our world and a transformative difference in our lives as believers and as a group. And these resources are helpful in identifying the next steps for our journeys.

The Discipleship Planning Tool

We invite your group to [take the assessment](#) and to spend a session to share about the practice and perspective you chose to focus on for the next three months.

6) Support for the Leader

These Teaching Points are provided to help the group leader make connections from the message to their group with both insights from the Biblical text and opportunities in the life of our church.

Teaching Points: