

# Jesus Christ: The Center of the Bible

Distribute at least one week before the first session.

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John 20:31; Genesis 3:1–15; Isaiah 52:13–53:12; Psalm 23; Hebrews 13:8

### Resources for Worship

Use these resources for your daily study and at the week’s assembly.

### Hymn

How firm a foundation, O saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!  
What more can He say than to you He has said  
Who unto the Savior for refuge have fled?

Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,  
For I am your God and will still give you aid;  
I’ll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,  
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.

When through fiery trials your pathway will lie,  
My grace, all-sufficient, will be your supply.  
The flames will not hurt you; I only design  
Your dross to consume and your gold to refine.

Throughout all their lifetime my people will prove  
My sov’ reign, eternal, unchangeable love;  
And then, when gray hairs will their temples adorn,  
Like lambs they will still in my bosom be borne.

John Rippon, alt.

### Prayer

*Jesus, still lead on  
Till our rest be won;  
And although the way be cheerless,  
We will follow calm and fearless;  
Guide us by Your hand  
To our Fatherland.  
Amen.*

Nicolaus L. von Zinzendorf; trans. Jane L. Borthwick, alt.

### Digging Deep My Personal Study for Week 1

#### Day 1 • Read John 20:31

1. Authors write books for a purpose. A book can entertain, inform, chronicle, comfort, motivate, inspire. The Bible, God’s book, does all this ... and much more. How does God describe the purpose for His book in John 20:31?

2. What are some benefits you receive as you read the Bible?

3. Most books have a central character or event on which they focus. What do these passages say about the central focus of the Bible?

a. Luke 24:13–27

b. Ephesians 2:19–20

c. Numbers 21:8–9 and John 3:14–15

4. Suppose someone tried to read the Bible not realizing that Jesus is its central focus. What erroneous conclusions might such a person draw from that kind of study?

6. Through the ages some Christians have thought of the Old Testament as being primarily about God’s Law and His message of judgment. In actuality, the Old Testament is loaded with examples of God’s *grace*. We’ve seen evidence of God’s grace already in Genesis 3:15. How is that grace evident in these Old Testament passages?

a. Exodus 14:29–31

b. 2 Samuel 7:11–16; 23:3–5

c. Jeremiah 31:31–34

7. **Challenge question.** From your own reading and study of the Old Testament, what other examples of God’s grace come to mind?

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**Day 2 • Read Genesis 3:1–15**

5. From Genesis through Revelation, God’s work of redemption for His people is the focus. God’s plan to save the world from sin and Satan was first revealed in today’s reading from Genesis.

a. Carefully reread verses 14–15. How and to whom are these verses a curse?

b. How and to whom is verse 15 a blessed promise?

c. What does this promise, given by God so soon after the first sin, show you about Him and about His message to us in the Bible?

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**Day 3 • Read Isaiah 52:13–53:12**

8. Messianic prophecies punctuate the Old Testament with great regularity. When Jesus finally came, He fulfilled these prophecies—each one of them. The New Testament documents the ways in which He did this. While some predictions could have been coincidental, and while our Lord had control over some life events, many fell completely outside the realm of His control. Nonetheless, each prophecy was fulfilled, just as the prophets had declared. The verses from Isaiah (*above*) you will read today are quoted more frequently in the

# The Holy Scriptures—God’s Word

*Distribute at the end of session 1 for use in session 2.*

John 1:1–4, 14; 2 Timothy 3:16; Romans 1:16–17; John 8:31–32; Psalm 119:41–48

*Resources for Worship*

## Hymn

Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways  
To keep His statutes still!  
Oh, that my God would grant me grace  
To know and do His will!

Order my footsteps by Your Word  
And make my heart sincere;  
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,  
But keep my conscience clear.

Assist my soul, too apt to stray,  
A stricter watch to keep;  
If ever I forget Your way,  
Restore Your wand’ring sheep.

Make me to walk in Your commands,  
A most delightful road;  
Nor let my head or heart or hands  
Offend against my God.

Isaac Watts, alt.

## Prayer

*Heavenly Father, Your Word is flawless. We believe the Holy Scriptures are Your Word of love in Jesus to us despite our sin. Your Word has power—power to save and power to change lives. Help us truly love Your Word. Open our hearts so that as we study Your Word it will bring us closer to You. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.*

## Digging Deep

### My Personal Study for Week 2

Day 1 • Read John 1:1–4, 14

1. *The Bible is God’s Word.* This statement is true, but Scripture uses the term *God’s Word* also in other ways.

a. What is meant by the “Word” in John 1:1–4, 14?

b. What further information concerning Jesus, the Word, do you gain from 1 John 1:1–2 and 5:11?

c. Read John 14:23–24. What do these verses tell you about the origin of Jesus’ words?

2. God has spoken to us in Jesus, the living Word. God also spoke to His people through His Old Testament prophets and through His New Testament evangelists and apostles.

a. Read Zechariah 7. As you do, underline the phrase, repeated again and again, that tells you the source of the prophet’s words. What is this phrase?

b. Why do you think the prophet used this phrase so frequently?

c. Read Colossians 1:3–6. What do these verses say about the Word of God as proclaimed by the apostles?

d. In what sense is the sermon spoken by your pastor each week “God’s Word” also?

3. God’s Word spoken by His Old Testament prophets, by Jesus, and by the apostles and evangelists eventually became God’s written Word—the Bible (Holy Scripture). Christian leaders often speak about the importance of being “in the Word.” Keeping in mind all that is meant by the “Word of God,” what does it mean to you to be “in the Word?”

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**Day 2 • Read 2 Timothy 3:16**

4. At the time the words of 2 Timothy 3:16 were written, the apostle Paul referred primarily to the Old Testament. Today this verse applies to the entire Bible.

a. What does the term *God-breathed* tell you about Scripture’s origin?

b. How does 2 Peter 1:20–21 further explain the nature and origin of the Bible?

c. Why is it important *to you* that all of Scripture is God-breathed?

5. **Challenge question.** The direct activity of the Holy Spirit upon the writers of the Bible enabled them to write what God wanted us to know. What joy and excitement can you have knowing that God inspired *people* to write the Bible, rather than having it fall from heaven or delivering it through an angel?