

THROUGH THE BIBLE September 6, 2017

What are your experiences when it comes to studying Scripture?

The kind of Bibles we have in our homes and/or workplaces

The resources (outside of the Bible) that we use for our devotions and/or times of prayer

Our reasons for turning to Scripture:

We often read the chapters that interest us while leaving the rest for future reference.

We need to read it from the beginning to the end.

It offers us a comprehensive understanding of how God worked throughout history.

The various translations of the Bible

Good News Translation

Uses simple, everyday language and is popular for children and those learning English.

King James Version

The first version authorized by the Protestant church and commissioned by King James I.

New International Version

It is considered to be a highly accurate and smooth-reading version of the Bible.

New Revised Standard Version

It preserves the best of the older versions while incorporating modern English.

The Message Bible

It paraphrases the original languages and offers a fresh and unique Bible reading experience.

Overview Theme

There is often confusion, disagreement, and misunderstanding concerning the Bible.

We tend to know bits and pieces of the Bible but we do not know how they fit together.

We use the Bible to spin our own tale.

We are missing the string that holds the whole Bible together.

We tend to know the well-known stories of the Bible.

What Biblical figures do we recall from Scripture?

What Scripture passages do we know well (and can name by chapter and verse)?

Our study will not contain the minor details of the Bible but more of a panoramic view.

The Bible offers us the very mind and will of God.

It provides rules for living and for finding true happiness and fulfillment in life.

It has the power to increase our faith and fortify us against temptations.

It enables us to know the God we worship and how to respond to him.

Its truths are eternal and its applications are universal.

The Bible has one predominant theme – **The Redemption of Humankind**

In Genesis 3 (when Adam and Eve disobeyed God) death entered the world.
Fellowship with God was broken.
At the moment of judgment God inaugurated his plan of salvation.
God gave a promise that a deliverer would come to crush the head of the serpent, Satan.
God would redeem a wrecked and ruined world.
God would make provision for a full restoration to our relationship with him.

The Sections of the Bible

The Bible is divided into two major sections – The Old and New Testaments.
The word *testament* means *covenant* or *agreement*.

The Old Testament is an account of God's covenant with a nation, Israel, which was founded and nurtured by God. Their redemption was through the law (or so it seemed) which was a preparation for the new covenant that one day would be instituted through faith. It would be written on their hearts instead of on tablets of stone.

The New Testament is an account of the One through whom the new covenant would come – Jesus Christ, who died for our sin and made possible the restoration of our relationship with God. It also provided the promise of eternal life.

The New Testament does not nullify the Old Testament.
It completes and fulfills it.

The first five books of the Old Testament are known as the *Pentateuch* or *The Law*.
Here the entire plot of the Bible is disclosed –

- God created the perfect world
- The dilemma of sin
- The calling out of a nation
- The establishment of a conditional covenant
- The giving of the moral and ceremonial laws
- The journey to the Promised Land

The twelve books that follow are called the *Historical Books*.
They show Israel's constant failure to live up to the requirements of the law.
It also shows their need for redemption.

The third section of the Old Testament comprises the *Poetic Books*.
These are the books we turn to for comfort, encouragement, wisdom and devotion.

The final seventeen books of the Old Testament are books of *Prophecy*.
A prophet was a messenger from God.
Some of the prophets were sent to decry the national and social sins of the people.
They came with a message from God about the present as well as the future.
They prophesied concerning sin, God's certain judgment, and the coming Messiah.
Some are called the *Major Prophets* primarily due to their length.
The *Minor Prophets* are considerably shorter and are not arranged chronologically.

Between the Old and New Testaments is a gap of about 400 years.
They are commonly called the *Silent Years* although there were anything but silent.

The New Testament was written by at least 8 men –
Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, Paul, James and Jude
The first section is composed of four gospels which record the life and teachings of Jesus.
The New Testament contains only one historical book – The Book of Acts.
Acts records the growth of the early church.
It also records the spread of the gospel throughout the known world at that time.

The Epistles are a collection of letters sent by the apostles to various churches and individuals.
They give us great insight into the life of the early church.
The Church Epistles – First 9 listed
The Pastoral Epistles – 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus
The Personal Epistles – Philemon and Hebrews
The General Epistles – Last 7 listed

The New Testament has only one prophetic book – The Book of Revelation.
Within its pages are revealed the final outcome of history.
It shows the culmination of the plan of redemption that began in Genesis 3:15.

Every Week ...

We will read the Bible.
We will study the Bible.
We will pray for God's guidance.
We will pray for each other.

Assignment for next week

- 1) Complete Lesson 1 in the Workbook
- 2) Read all of Genesis or the parts outlined on Page 11 of the workbook
- 3) Take notes / reflections on Genesis to share next week
 - What did you learn about the nature and will of God in Genesis?
 - What characters / stories did you relate to the most in Genesis?
 - What messages found in Genesis challenge you?
 - What messages found in Genesis offer you comfort and strength?