

The Scriptures

By David L. Allen

Scripture to Memorize “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.” 2 Timothy 3:16

Session Goal Consistent with God’s Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand the nature and importance of the Bible as the Word of God and why it is vital to their Christian life and growth.

The Nature of Scripture

Do you have a burning desire to know the Bible, a thirst to get into the Bible for yourself, and a desire to use it for daily living? If so, you are embracing the one thing that really makes the Christian life tick more than any other. You must have an understanding of the purpose and place of the Bible in your life if you are to really grow as a Christian.

No other book in all of history is like the Bible. It was written over a period of sixteen hundred years by more than forty authors from many walks of life. It was written on three continents, in three languages (Hebrew for the Old Testament, Greek for the New Testament, and a little Aramaic in the Old Testament). Its subject matter includes hundreds of controversial topics, yet the Bible speaks with one voice about God’s one unfolding story of redemption through Jesus Christ.

Now, imagine you have a friend at school who is not a Christian and does not believe the Bible is a special book. Your friend thinks the Bible is no better than any other religious book. How would you go about explaining to your friend just how the Bible is different from all other religious books?

Read 2 Timothy 3:15–16 out loud.

Studying the Passage, vv. 15–16 Verse 15. able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Scripture is essential. The Bible contains the gospel: the good news of salvation through Christ. The gospel is the most important thing in your life.

Verse 16. All Scripture. In Greek this means every part of Scripture is inspired by God. From the first verse of Genesis to the last verse in Revelation, the Bible is God’s Word. **inspired.** The Greek word here means literally “God breathed.” All Scripture is God’s Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Though God used human authors to write the Bible, He supervised their writing in such a way that the resulting text of the Bible is the Word of God.

The result of this inspiration is twofold. First, the Bible is without error (inerrant). Though humans make mistakes, God never does. Though the Bible is not a science book, yet when it speaks on science, it does so with 100 percent accuracy. Though the Bible is not a history book (it contains lots of history!), its historical accounts are completely accurate. The Bible is a book by God that teaches us spiritual truths (doctrines). These truths are totally accurate and without error because of inspiration.

Second, because of this inspiration, the Bible is totally sufficient for your life. Everything you need to live a godly life, a successful life, a happy life, is found in Scripture. Everything you need to know about God, creation, humanity, sin, salvation, the church, the Holy Spirit, the end times, etc., is found in the Bible. Though the Bible does not tell us everything, it tells us enough. It is sufficient for all your spiritual needs, which are the most important needs you have. Whatever your situation is, God’s Word breaks through!

Verse 16. profitable. Scripture is profitable for several things according to 2 Timothy 3:16: **teaching.** Just as we go to school to learn the subjects necessary to help us all through our lives, so we go to school when we read and study the Bible. It teaches us about God and the things of God. True doctrine comes only from the Bible. **reproof.** This word in context means “to rebuke on account of our sin.” This is the work of Scripture: to rebuke us, to point out where we have gone wrong. **correction . . . training.** These words relate to your conduct in a negative and a positive way. The Greek word translated *correction* has the meaning of “straight.” God’s Word straightens us out when we are not thinking and living right! Training is the positive side of the

coin: God's Word trains you how to think and live biblically and righteously.

Read Acts 17:11 out loud.

Studying the Passage, v. 11 Verse 11. In this verse Luke gives us some principles about the importance of Bible study for the Christian life. **received the word with great eagerness.** Notice how the Berean Christians first received the Word. How should you respond to the Bible when you read it or hear it taught or preached? With great eagerness! Just as a young woman would respond to the man she loves when he proposed marriage to her: with great eagerness!

Verse 11. examining. This Greek word means "to search out." We study the Bible to "search out" its meaning for us. Like Paul said to young Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God." **daily.** Paul tells us that we should be reading and examining the Bible daily, not just on Sunday. Staying in close fellowship with God is impossible apart from being daily in the Bible, His word.

Discussion Question

Those who do not eat enough food daily can become anorexic, lacking the sufficient nourishment their bodies need. Spiritually speaking, how can believers who do not take in Scripture daily become similar to a person who is anorexic?

Studying the Passage, v. 11

When you come to the Bible, your attitude should be one of submission. You must have a teachable spirit. Like Samuel, you say, "Speak, for Your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10). You must be willing to find and follow God's truth at all costs.

We will never understand all the Bible contains. It is like a deep ocean of truth. But that should not deter us from diving into it daily. Satan will fight you here. He will do everything possible to keep you from reading and studying your Bible.

James uses the metaphor of a mirror to describe the Bible. When we look into it, it shows us what we are. When we stay in the Bible daily, we will gradually become more like Jesus.

Discussion Question

The Bible says, "Prove yourselves doers of the Word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves" (James 1:22). Can you recall periods of life when you knew what the Bible says but you chose not to obey it?

At Home: Nail It Down In this lesson we have looked at what the Bible says about itself and what it says concerning our reading and response to it. We have seen that the Bible is a unique book unlike any other in history. It is a book of authority because it has God for its ultimate Author. In the Bible, God Himself speaks. It is an inspired book. God the Holy Spirit has inspired the biblical writers so they wrote exactly what God wanted written. As 2 Peter 1:21 says: "No prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." Second Timothy 3:16 teaches us that "all Scripture is inspired by God." Because the Bible is inspired by God, it is also inerrant (without error). Because the Bible is inspired by God, it is also sufficient (it meets all our needs). Because the Bible is inspired by God, it is profitable (for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction). Because the Bible is inspired by God, it should be read and studied daily (Acts 17:11). Just as we eat three meals a day for nourishment and health, so we need a steady daily diet of the Bible for our spiritual health. This is the only way to become spiritually strong and mature. When we first become Christians, we are to desire "the milk of the word" (see 1 Peter 2:2 and 1 Corinthians 3:2), the basic teachings. But as we grow spiritually, we need to move on to "the meat of the word" (see Hebrews 5:12-14), more solid doctrine. May God help you to be a doer of the word and not a hearer only (James 1:21)!