

## Lesson 1. The Bible: God's Holy Word

1 Peter 1:24-25 New International Version (NIV)

*<sup>24</sup> For, All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;*

*the grass withers and the flowers fall,<sup>25</sup> but the word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the word that was preached to you.*

The Bible is the source book for the Christian faith! It is the Christian's foundation of authority. It gives direction and purpose to your new life in Jesus Christ. This direction comes from **five** important sources that are outlined in

### 2 Timothy 3:14-16 New International Version (NIV)

*<sup>14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup> and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,*

This passage points out the 5 ways the Bible helps us.

1. It leads us to salvation through our faith in Jesus Christ by revealing God's redemptive plan.
2. It affords us a resource for teaching. That is, the Bible reveals God's standards of life and expression he expects us to work-out in our daily lives.
3. It's the basis for correction in one's life. This means that the Bible points out our shortcomings much as a mirror reflects our image. It is God's method, through the Holy Spirit, of convicting us of sin.

➤ **(MIRROR ON TABLE)** The Bible is Like a Mirror. (Truth)

4. It presents guidelines for correction. The Bible does not leave us standing convicted but shows us the way to correct our attitudes,--- (A.O.G.) Our speech, and behavior. In essence the Bible is the Christians' source of constructive criticism.

5. It assists us in training for righteousness. The Bible continually teaches us how to develop and maintain Right relationships.

There are five basic Relationships the Bible aids the Christian in developing:

- a. The relationship with God and Jesus Christ;
- b. The relationship between marriage partners;
- c. The relationship with one's children and vice versa;
- d. The relationship with one's neighbor;
- e. The relationship with one's self.

The purpose for all this direction is found in the next verse, 2 Timothy 3:17 *“that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”*

It is **God's** intention that his followers be “set” and outfitted” for the work he has called them to do. The Bible is his basic means of accomplishing this goal.

A Mentor of mine once Gale gave me excellent advice He said, “The Bible doesn't belong on the shelf, but rather, it belongs in your hand, under your eyes, and in your heart.”

### ➤ **Devises and Bible apps.**

Someone once called the Bible a Divine Library, and so it is. It is made up of sixty-six books. The Old Testament, originally written in Hebrew, contains thirty-nine books, while the New Testament, originally written in Greek, contains twenty-seven. The Bible, under God's authority, was written by as many as fifty-five different writers over a period of sixteen hundred years. Peter tells us how this task was accomplished in

**2 Peter 1:20-21** New International Version (NIV)

*<sup>20</sup> Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. <sup>21</sup> 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.*

**The phrase** “moved by the Holy Spirit” relays the idea of being “carried” toward a goal. This idea is best illustrated by the goal established the game of Chess. Just as the player approaches the game from his or her own perspective of preparation, personality, and thought, so the writers of the Bible were used by God to write out of their own social and religious backgrounds, understandings, and characters. God “moved” His message of redemption through the mind and hearts of his writers.

It is Necessary for us at this Point --- to Grasp the significance of two important words: **Inspiration** and **Revelation**.

The oldest Definition of Inspiration is “to breathe into deliberately and forcefully, such as blowing up a balloon.”

**(ON YOUR TABLE ARE SOME BALLOONS)**

The Bible teaches us that God “breathed” into His Word and it became alive. It’s because of God’s inspiration that His Word will not fall to the ground useless, but will accomplish what God intends for it to accomplish.

**Isaiah 55:11** (NIV)

*11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

When God inspires men and women they, too, become alive and suitable for the task for which they have been called. Revelation, on the other hand, means to draw back the drapes or to uncover something so that all may see what has been hidden. The combination of these two actions produces the desired result.

When God wanted his people to know a body of truth, he revealed the content of the truth to human beings. These persons were then inspired to communicate this truth to others. Both the truth and the communicators received inspiration and became alive.

Down through the years biblical scholars have debated the method God used to achieve the writing of his sacred word. Two main suggestions have come from these years of study and e-valuation:

(1) the Verbal Inspiration method.

(2) the Thought inspiration method.

- Those scholars holding to the Verbal inspiration idea say that God inspired every word and that the writers were simply stenographers.
- The group supporting the Thought inspiration idea suggest that God inspired the thought and that each writer wrote from his own perspective and through his own personality.

Regardless of which method God used, we know that the Holy Spirit Guarded the writing by moving the author to write what God wanted written.

It is interesting to note that the Bible has a theme of unity and has only one main key to its understanding. The theme is “The unfolding of God’s redemptive purpose for mankind.” The key to this theme is Jesus Christ the Son of the living God. **Once** a person has accepted Jesus Christ as personal savior, the Bible will open up like a flower, releasing its wealth of beauty, excitement, and message.

### **How to Study the Bible**

**2 Timothy 2:15** --- (NIV) <sup>15</sup> *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

The study of the Bible, God’s Holy Word, is extremely important in the spiritual growth of a Christian. There is No way to Grow “in Christ” apart from the study of the Bible.

If you are to gain what the Lord has in store for you through the Bible, you will have to adhere to several important principles.

**First**, you should provide yourself with a version of the Bible with which you feel comfortable and which you can understand. It should be of convenient size to carry and have a good clear print of readable size. Your Bible should have cross references, maps, and concordance. The selection of a Bible is very important.

It would be wise to ask a mature Christian friend in the selection of your Bible.

**Second**, set aside a definite time and place for your Bible study. The time should be when you are at your best. The place should be free from distraction if possible.

**Third**, consider this time as an appointment with God and strive to keep it at all costs. Remember, there is no substitute for studying your Bible.

**Fourth**, you must fight off all urges to do other things in place of your study. This is a battle a Christian must fight constantly—the battle between the GOOD and the BEST.

**Fifth**, it is important to pray before you begin your study. You will need to ask for the Holy Spirit to interpret God's will to you.

Since the Holy Spirit is really the author of the Bible, he is the only one who can adequately reveal its truths to you. You will need to ask God to help so you understand what you have read.

**Sixth**, you will need to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance and then apply His truth to your everyday life. It is also necessary that you read expectantly, thoughtfully, and carefully. You will need to ask yourself four important questions:

1. What is the setting of the Scripture passage?
2. What does this passage teach me to believe?
3. What does this passage teach me to become?
4. What does this passage teach me to do?

**Seventh**, when you read the Bible, be sure to read slowly and with imagination. Try to picture the action in your mind's eye. Mentally "crawl" into the picture, look around, watch the people, listen to their words, and try to grasp the mood of the scene. It would be helpful to "read" with a pencil. Jot down impressions, ideas, and lessons. Where the Lord reveals an important truth, write it down so you can look at it later. Be sure to close your study with prayer, asking the Lord to help you to use and share what you have read. Don't forget to thank him for "speaking" to you heart.

ED ---LOOK AT THE TIME ???

**There are many methods you could use to study the Bible.**

**The following - 5 - methods are the most commonly used today:**

1. **Cover-to-Cover Study Method**  
This method is simply to start at the beginning and read straight through the Bible. This is a rewarding method and should be done at least once in order to gain the overview of the whole biblical narration.
2. **The Book-by-Book Method** More Bible scholars use this method than any other. This method of study is very rewarding when a few simple rules are followed. History of People and places.
3. **The Great-Chapter Study Method**  
There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible, but usually only 40 are singled out for concentrated study. These have been called the “heart” of the Word of God.
4. **The Topical Study Method**  
This is a favorite study method of many people. It is a method that will take you on a crisscross venture of the Bible touching many people and situations. The main strength of this method is that it zeroes in on one topic at a time.
5. **The Biblical-Personality Study Method**

It allows you an immediate identification with a “face” or personality. You can gain much from his or her experiences as the person lives before you.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Regardless of which method or combination or methods you choose to assist you in studying of God’s Word, be sure that:

1. It is consistent, day by day.
2. It is organized.
3. It has a goal.
4. It is saturated with prayer.