

Lesson One: The Bible

The Bible is the Word of God

It is important for a new or renewed Christian to start right; therefore, the first lesson is designed to help establish your faith in the Bible, for it IS the word of God. Keep in mind that the Bible is not a book of philosophy, although it is philosophical. Do not go to the Bible for a scientific argument. However, there is no discrepancy between ascertained facts of science and the Bible. The Bible is not a book of history, but is found to be accurate when recording history. The Bible was given to us from God, revealing Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and God the Son, the only Savior John 14:6. He is the center and the circumference. It is Christ from Genesis to Revelation John 5:39.

The Bible is as high above all other books as the heavens are above the earth. Someone has said of the Bible: "Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe and practice it to be right."

- 1) **The Bible claims to be the inspired word of God** – (II Timothy 3:16-17): 16) "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17) that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

All scripture is given by inspiration of God." Upon this statement of fact, evangelical Christianity stands. The Bible claims to be the inspired Word of God. By "inspiration" we mean that the Holy Spirit exerted His supernatural influence upon the writers of the Bible. The writings were inspired – not necessarily the writers, for the Bible nowhere claims to have been written by inspired men.

- a) **The Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible** (II Peter 1:21). Christ told His disciples that he would leave "many things" unrevealed, and that the Holy Spirit would come and choose certain persons and through them reveal His perfect will unto man; and that the Holy Spirit would be the believer's teacher (John 16:12-15).
 - b) **Man is the instrument used by the Holy Spirit to write the Bible**
 - c) **Results:** the infallible Word of God. Therefore, the Bible is free from error and absolutely trustworthy. (Psalm 119:89, and Matthew 24:35)
- 2) **The Bible is a difficult book** (I Corinthians 2:14-16): 14) "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15) But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16) For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ."

The Bible is a difficult book because it came from the infinite to the finite – from the unlimited, all powerful God, to limited man. Therefore, you cannot understand the Bible as you would understand the writings of Plato or Socrates. You can study the great philosophers with the natural mind, and by diligent application, grasp their profound meanings. If the Bible could be understood by natural man, it would be a natural book and could not be the Word of God. Since the Bible is from God, and therefore spiritual, before you can receive its teachings, you must be born of the spirit John 3:6 and filled with the Spirit Ephesians 5:18. Always approach the Bible praying that the Spirit will be your teacher and will guide you to a better understanding of His Holy Word, or it will remain a difficult, closed book John 16:12-15

- 3) **The Bible is a book of oneness (2 Peter 1:21): 21)** "for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

The oneness or unity of the Bible is a miracle. It is a library of 66 books, written by over 35 different authors, in a period of approximately 1,500 years. Represented in the authors is a cross section of humanity, educated and uneducated, including kings, fishermen, public officials, farmers,

teachers and physicians. Included in the subjects are religion, history, law, science, poetry, drama, biography and prophecy. Yet its various parts are as harmoniously united as the parts that make up the human body.

For 35 authors, with such varied backgrounds, to write on so many subjects, over a period of approximately 1,500 years, in absolute harmony, is a mathematical impossibility. It could not happen! Then how do we account for the Bible? The only adequate explanation is: "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

- 4) **The Bible claims special power (Hebrews 4:12): 12** "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

"For the word of God is living and powerful..." The Bible claims:

- a) **Dividing power as a sword (above verse).** The Bible will separate man from sin II Psalm 119:11 or sin will separate man from the Bible Isaiah 59:2
 - b) **Reflecting power as a mirror James 1:22-25.** In the Bible, we see ourselves as God sees us – as sinners Romans 3:23
 - c) **Cleansing power as water Ephesians 5:26.** David prayed that God would "wash him from iniquity" and "cleanse him from sin." Psalm 51:2
 - d) **Reproductive power as seed 1 Peter 1:23.** We are children of God because we have been born into the family of God by the incorruptible seed of God. This is the new birth John 3:1-7
 - e) **Nourishing power as food 1 Peter 2:2.** The Bible is spiritual food for the soul. No Christian can remain strong in the Lord and not study the Word of God
- 5) **The Bible commands the believer to study the scriptures (2 Timothy 2:15) 15** "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

"Study to show thyself approved unto God" is a command. As you study the Bible, you will discover that it does not just contain the Word of God – it **IS** the Word of God. You must also keep in mind that the Word of God contains the **words** of God, as well as the words of Satan, demons, angels and man – both good and bad. God is truth and cannot lie. Satan "is a liar and the father of it" John 8:44. Man is natural and is therefore limited, and does not always speak the truth. To illustrate: Matthew 22:15-46. In this portion of Scripture, we have the words of Jesus, of the Pharisees, of the Herodians and of the Sadducees. The Pharisees, Herodians and Sadducees were trying to entangle Jesus in His teachings, that they might accuse Him of breaking God's law. Their words were spoken with evil intent, revealing the thinking of the natural man, along with the words of God that came from the lips of Jesus.

As you study the Bible, ask yourself these questions:

- a) Who is speaking: God, demon, angel or man?
- b) To whom is he speaking: to the nation Israel, to the Gentiles, to the Church, to men in general or to some individual man or being?
- c) How can this Scripture be applied to my own life to make me a better Christian?