

THE BIBLE



No matter how advanced one might be in his or her knowledge of the Bible, we must always look back and remember the fundamental principles of the Bible that have touched, not only our own lives, but the lives of millions of people for millennia. Nevertheless, even though millions of people have been influenced in the past, there is a tremendous opportunity today for Bible teaching in the religious world. This opportunity especially exists among those who name Jesus as a part of their faith.

The opportunity is that the religious world in which we live today is fast forgetting any knowledge of the Bible. Even those who name Jesus in their faith are fast going in the way of the apostate Israelites over 3,000 years ago. Through the prophet Hosea, God judged that generation of His people as He would judge this generation:

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge [of My word]. Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you so that you will be no priest to Me. Seeing you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children (Hs 4:6).

In reference to our generation today and our children, Jesus prophesied the same judgment in **Matthew 7:21**: “*Not every one who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in*

heaven.” This is a fearfully striking parallel to the judgment of Hosea 4:6 where God, centuries before Jesus, judged the nation of Israel. In Jesus’ statement of judgment He pronounced that those who have no knowledge of the will of the Father will neglect Him as the Father. It is for this reason that Jesus will reject them. So we read with fear the continued warning of Jesus in the context of His prophesy concerning those who would wilfully forget what their Bibles teach:

Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and performed many wonderful works in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you. Depart from Me you who practice lawlessness’ (Mt 7:22,23).

For those who live in the world of Christendom today, these are frightening words. They are such because many people today who profess “Lord, Lord” in their faith have very little knowledge of the Bible. In their ignorance of the word of God, therefore, they “practice lawlessness.” Their ignorance of the Bible, according to the preceding statements of God the Father and Son, will lead to their eternal destruction away from the presence of God (See 2 Th 1:6-9).

One can remain religious and do good works, but if the works are not directed by a the knowledge of God’s will, then they are often works of lawlessness.

A. Knowing the Bible:

A person has deprived himself of the best knowledge there is in the world if he has deprived himself of a knowledge of the Bible. On the foundation of the morals of this book, civilizations have been built and sustained. Only through the medium of the Bible can we understand who God is. If we forget the revelation of God in the Bible, then we will create a god who

conforms to our own desires. The same is true in reference to Jesus. If we forget the Jesus who is identified in the Bible, we will create in our minds a “Jesus” who is totally foreign to the dictionaries of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

For this reason, we must know well the “dictionary” (the Bible) that defines both God the Father and His Son. The word “Bible” comes from the Greek word *Biblia* which means “book.” The Bible is God’s book of instruction and definitions of those things we must know and believe. It is God’s “dictionary” wherein He explains Himself and His incarnation into this world. Therefore, no other written words of any book have affected so many people for so long in history. The reason for this is that people know that the Bible is God’s road map to truth that was revealed to direct our beliefs and behavior. It reveals that when the Son of God was incarnate into this world, His example became the model for millions throughout the world to live as He lived for us (See Ph 2:5-8).

The more we study the eternal sacrifice of the Son of God that is explained in the Bible, the better we will make our way through the struggles of this life.

The Bible is a library of sixty-six Holy Spirit inspired books and letters. Contrary to man-made religions that are usually based on the writings of one man, the Bible was written by over forty inspired men over a period of about 1,500 years. Though written by so many different people over a period of many centuries, there are no contradictions in the Bible.

There is one united theme throughout the entire Bible. This is the eternal salvation of man through the sacrificial offering of Jesus, the incarnate Son of God. The fact that all the writers of the Bible did not contradict one another throughout the centuries the Bible was being written by so many different people is evidence that the Bible could never have been the

product of human ingenuity.

Thirty-nine of the Bible books make up what is referred to as the Old Testament. These books, containing the Sinai law, were first written and given to the nation of Israel. The New Testament contains twenty-seven books that were written for Christians. Today, however, Christians receive their instruction for living primarily through the New Testament, though learning and admonition for godly living is also reaped from the Old Testament.

We must keep in mind that the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are recorded histories of the ministry of Jesus. Jesus' ministry took place during the Old Testament period when the Sinai law was still in effect. As a Jew, therefore, Jesus lived under the Sinai law that was given to Israel at Mount Sinai. These books are included as New Testament books, but they record the history and teachings of Jesus as He brought the Jews to the cross, and the establishment of the church on the day of Pentecost.

Though Jesus lived and died while the Sinai law was still in force, His purpose during His ministry was to lead the Jews to the cross, and subsequently accept Him as God's sacrificial offering for the sins of humanity.

B. The Bible is God's blessing to humanity:

The Bible came to us through years of God's work to inspire chosen men as to how we can please Him. This was the mission and work of the Holy Spirit through the word that He inspired dedicated men to write.

1. The Bible is God speaking through the words of man (Mt 22:43; At 1:16; 2 Tm 3:16).
2. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit

- through the words of man (Jn 14:26; 16:13; 1 Co 2:10-13; Hb 3:7; 9:8; 10:15; 2 Pt 1:20,21).
3. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit through inspired words of truth (Jr 36:4; 1 Co 2:13).
 4. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit, who in turn inspired men to write words of truth for humanity (Ex 24:4; 35:1; 2 Sm 23:2; Is 51:16; Jr 36:4-6; Ez 11:5; 1 Co 14:37).
 5. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit through men to all people throughout the world (Lk 1:70; At 28:25; Rm 1:2; 16:26).
 6. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit through inspired men to all people of all history (Ez 2:7; 3:4,10,11,17; 2 Th 2:14; 2 Tm 3:16,17; Hb 1:1,2).

Since God speaks all truth through the Bible today, then there is no truth revealed by the Holy Spirit today to any one individual outside the words of the Bible.

C. The Bible can be trusted:

God gave the Bible to people upon the foundation of miraculous proof. He not only inspired chosen men to preach and write His word, but He also sent confirming miracles to prove that His word was more than the mere word of men. Once God confirmed His spoken word through miracles, He no longer needed to confirm His word once it was written. In this way God expects us to be moved and directed by the written word, not by our personal emotional adventures that often lead us astray.

1. The Bible was confirmed by miracles. The word of God that was first spoken by the early messengers of God was proven to be from God by the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit (See 1 Kg 18:30-40; Mk 16:20; Jn 20:30,31; At 2:33; 4:29,30; 1 Co 2:1-5; 12:7; Gl 3:5; Hb 2:3,4).

2. The confirmed and spoken word was eventually produced in written form. The inspired writers of the Bible recorded their miraculously proven word for the posterity of humanity until the end of time (Rm 15:4,18,19; 1 Co 2:4; 10:11; 1 Th 1:5).

If God must throughout history continually confirm His word with miracles, then there is little hope for those who acquire a copy of the Bible, read and learn what they must do in order to be saved.

D. The Bible will change our lives:

We must give the Bible a chance in our lives. If we believe it to be the actual Spirit-inspired word of God, then we will treasure its message. Our lives will thus be transformed into lives that are pleasing to God. Because it is not possible for people to determine their own morals standards, it is incumbent on everyone to seek out God's moral standards that are recorded in the Bible (Jr 10:23).

1. The words of the Bible can dwell in our hearts (Cl 3:16; 1 Jn 2:14,24; 3:9; 2 Jn 2).
2. The words of the Bible can be laid up in our hearts so that we not sin against God (Ps 37:31; 119:11).
3. The words of the Bible can be written on our hearts when we honor its principles of truth and morality (Ps 40:8; Jr 31:32,33; 2 Co 3:3; Hb 8:10; 10:16).
4. The words of the Bible change our lives when we sincerely obey the principles of truth and morality in the Bible (Js 1:22-25; 1 Jn 1:6,7; 2 Jn 4; 3 Jn 3,4).

The Holy Spirit changes lives when people read in the Bible the instructions by which God seeks to direct our lives.

E. The Bible is sufficient for all people:

The Bible is all-sufficient to furnish the Christian with all direction that is necessary to be acceptable to God. The Bible has the power to accomplish the following in our lives when it is revered as the word of God:

1. Power to change lives (1 Th 4:1,2; 1 Pt 2:1,2; 2 Pt 1:3; 3 Jn 3,4).
2. Power to give eternal life (Jn 8:51; see Jn 5:24; 11:26).
3. Power to eternally save (At 11:14; 20:32; Js 1:21).
4. Power to give freedom (Jn 8:32; Js 1:25).
5. Power to minister to others (Ep 4:11-16).
6. Power to teach (Ps 119:103,104; Pv 22:6; Rm 15:4).
7. Power to admonish (1 Co 4:14; 10:11; 2 Tm 4:1,2; Ti 1:9).
8. Power to live a godly life (Cl 1:5-10; 1 Tm 3:14,15; 1 Pt 5:12).
9. Power to reprove, rebuke and correct (2 Tm 3:16; Ti 1:9).

The power of the word of God is revealed in the fact of how people respond to what they read in the Bible, as well as their respect for the Bible as God's book.

F. The Bible is God's final word:

The Bible claims to be God's only and final revelation of truth to humanity. With the writing of the document of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, God discontinued all revelation of truth that He desires that any person know in any period of history.

1. God revealed His will to the fathers of extended family groups in the Old Testament times before the giving of the Sinai law to Israel on Mount Sinai (Hb 1:1,2).
2. God revealed His will to Israel on Mount Sinai, which revelation of law was eventually written by Moses in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy (Ex 19:4-6; Dt 4:1,13; 5:1-5; Ne 8:1; Rm 3:1,2).

3. God revealed His will through the Old Testament writers who recorded examples from which Christians can learn (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11).
4. God finalized the revelation of all truth through the New Testament writers in the first century (Jn 14:26; 16:13).
5. We have all necessary instruction today in the Bible that was recorded for our teaching and moral behavior (Gl 1:11,12; Ep 3:3-5; 2 Tm 3:16,17; 2 Pt 1:3). Therefore, we must not add to or subtract from the principles and truths of the Bible (Dt. 4:2; Gl 1:6-9; 2 Jn 9-11; Rv 22:18,19).

The fact that God has concluded all revelation of truth through the Bible assumes that all that one must do in order to live according to the will of God is revealed in the Bible.

G. The Bible is the medium of God's work:

Since God is our creator, He seeks to direct us to Him. He intends that His word function in the following ways in the lives of those who seek a relationship with Him, and thus desire to submit to His direction. Through the Bible, God is able to do the following in the life of every individual:

1. Produce faith in our hearts (Jn 20:30,31; Rm 10:17).
2. Sanctify our souls of sin (Jn 17:17; Ep 5:26).
3. Cleanse our hearts and souls (Jn 15:2,3; Ep 5:26; 1 Pt 1:22).
4. Quicken our souls (Ps 119:50,93; Ep 2:1,5).
5. Enlighten our minds (Ps 19:8).
6. Give us understanding (Ps 119:104,130; Ep 3:4).
7. Lead our lives (Ps 73:24; 119:105).
8. Comfort our hearts (Rm 15:4; 1 Th 3:2; 4:18).
9. Strengthen our hearts (At 20:32; Rm 16:25; 2 Tm 2:1,2).
10. Produce in us spiritual growth (At 20:32; Cl 1:10,11).

If our knowledge of and obedience to the word of God is necessary in order to please God, then we can assume that those who do not know the Bible will not be directly affected by its principles.

God revealed His word to us in order that we find our way to Him. Without His revelation to us, we could not know who He is or how to please Him. In other words, without the Bible no one can find their way to the one true and living God.

The Bible reveals that Jesus is the only way to God (Jn 14:6). As the incarnate Son of God who came in the flesh of man, Jesus said, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments”* (Jn 14:15). If anyone wants to find his or her way to God, and how to show one’s love for Jesus, the Son of God, then he or she must follow the commandments of Jesus. The only way to know the commandments of Jesus is by reading the Bible (See Jn 12:48).

The beginning to knowing Jesus is to do what He stated we must do to join Him on our gospel journey with Him into eternal glory. We thus must keep Jesus’ commandments by first obeying the gospel (See Jn 6:45; Mk 16:16; At 2:38; 22:16; Rm 6:3-6; 1 Pt 3:21). Through faith and obedience of the gospel, one becomes a member of Jesus’ body, the church (1 Co 12:13; Cl 1:18). This church of gospel-obedient people who are on their way to eternal glory in the arms of God.

Group Review Discussion Questions

[After reading the text of this bookito, answer the following questions in a discussion group with others.]

1. What was one reason why God brought judgment on the nation of Israel?
2. How can religious people of faith, who have no trust in the Bible work lawlessness by performing works of their faith?

3. How does the great number of writers of the Bible throughout the centuries prove that the Bible could not have been the product of man?
4. Why must Bible believers accept the fact that God does not speak to anyone today other than through the Bible?
5. Why is it not necessary that the Bible be confirmed again today through miracles?
6. Why are those who have no knowledge of the Bible unable to live completely according to the instructions of God?
7. Why is it necessary to believe the truth that God terminated all revelation to man when He completed the book of Revelation?
8. Why is the power of the word of God revealed in what it does in the hearts of those who firmly believe in the Bible.
9. What did John say in Revelation would be the consequences for those who would add to God's final revelation to man?
10. Why must one be confident that the word of God can work in one's life to the point that God is pleased with Him?

ABBREVIATIONS

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis - **Gn**, Exodus - **Ex**, Leviticus - **Lv**, Numbers - **Nm**, Deuteronomy - **Dt**, Joshua - **Ja**, Judges - **Jg**, Ruth - **Rt**, 1 Samuel - **1 Sm**, 2 Samuel - **2 Sm**, 1 Kings - **1 Kg**, 2 Kings - **2 Kg**, 1 Chronicles - **1 Ch**, 2 Chronicles - **2 Ch**, Ezra - **Er**, Nehemiah - **Ne**, Esther - **Et**, Job - **Jb**, Psalms - **Ps**, Proverbs - **Pv**, Ecclesiastes - **Ec**, Song of Solomon - **Ss**, Isaiah - **Is**, Jeremiah - **Jr**, Lamentations - **Lm**, Ezekiel - **Ez**, Daniel - **Dn**, Hosea - **Hs**, Joel - **Jl**, Amos - **Am**, Obadiah - **Ob**, Jonah - **Jh**, Micah - **Mc**, Nahum - **Nh**, Habakkuk - **Hk**, Zephaniah - **Zp**, Haggai - **Hg**, Zechariah - **Zc**, Malachi - **Ml**

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew - **Mt**, Mark - **Mk**, Luke - **Lk**, John - **Jn**, Acts - **At**, Romans - **Rm**, 1 Corinthians - **1 Co**, 2 Corinthians - **2 Co**, Galatians - **Gl**, Ephesians - **Ep**, Philippians - **Ph**, Colossians - **Cl**, 1 Thessalonians - **1 Th**, 2 Thessalonians - **2 Th**, 1 Timothy - **1 Tm**, 2 Timothy - **2 Tm**, Titus - **Ti**, Philemon - **Pf**, Hebrews - **Hb**, James - **Js**, 1 Peter - **1 Pt**, 2 Peter - **2 Pt**, 1 John - **1 Jn**, 2 John - **2 Jn**, 3 John - **3 Jn**, Jude - **Jd**, Revelation - **Rv**

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