

# Lesson 1: The Bible

## Begin with a word of Prayer

Greet and Engage

What's your favorite Bible verse and why?

## Introduction

We Christians realize that the most important parts of our lives are those that make an impact for eternity. The study of God and his relations to, purposes for, and work within the created universe - Matters!

Welcome to our Link Group where we focus on biblical small groups grounded in the teachings of the bible. Our goal is to ground biblical believers and to develop disciples that make disciplines!

## What is the Bible?

The word "Bible" comes from the Latin and Greek words meaning "book." The Bible is the oldest book in existence. It required 16 centuries to write it; the first writer died 1450 years before the last writer was born. The Bible lends itself to translation and has been translated in whole or in part in more than 1000 languages and dialects. The Bible was written by approximately 40 different authors over a period of about 1,500 years.

## The Wonders of the Bible

### ***Formation***

One book written in one place in one language, another book written in another country centuries later in another language.

### ***Unification***

It is a library of 66 books, yet only one book, for it has but one author, the Holy Spirit. There are no contradictions.

### ***Age***

It is the most ancient of all books.

### ***Sales***

It is the bestseller of all time.

### ***Interest***

It is the only book that is read by all classes and ages of mankind. It is read by sages and children; read by all nations.

### ***Language***

It was written largely by uneducated men, yet it is considered a literary masterpiece.

### ***Preservation***

It has been the most hated of all books. Time and again kings and governments have sought to burn and abolish it. Yet God has preserved it for us today and it can be found in almost every home.

## **Symbols of the Word of God**

### ***A Sword***

The Bible is a pointed Word that convicts the hearer. Hebrews 4:12, "For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit."

### ***A Hammer***

The Bible is powerful and breaks the resistance of the hearer. Jeremiah 23:29, "Is not My Word... saith the Lord... like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

### ***A Seed***

The Bible is a living Word regenerating the hearer. I Peter 1:23, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible (seed), by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

### ***A Mirror***

The Bible is a faithful Word, revealing the individual to himself. James 1:23-25 likens the Bible to a mirror, in which the sinner (or saint) looks and sees a true reflection of himself as portrayed by the Lord Himself.

### ***A Fire***

The Bible is a burning Word, consuming the dross in the hearer. Jeremiah 23:29, "Is not My Word like as a fire? saith the Lord." Jeremiah 20:9, "But His Word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones."

### ***A Lamp***

The Bible is an illuminating Word guiding the believer day by day. Psalm 119:105, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

### ***Food***

The Bible is nourishing food, feeding the soul (providing meat and drink). I Peter 2:2, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." See also Hebrews 5:12-14. I Corinthians 3:2, "I have fed you with milk, and not with meat." Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

The Word of God convicts, breaks, regenerates, reveals, consumes, illuminates and nourishes the individual.

## Why We Need to Preach God's Word

In Mark 2:2, Jesus faced the multitude and made a tremendous decision; it was to preach the Word of God. We are sent to preach not a new Church but Christ as He is revealed in the Bible. We insist on preaching the Bible because it endures for time and eternity.

Isaiah 40:8, "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand for ever."

### ***Conviction of Sin***

Comes through the preaching of the Word of God, Acts 2:14-37. In Peter's Pentecost sermon nine verses out of 23 are quotations from the Old Testament.

### ***Faith***

Comes by hearing the Word of God. Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

### ***Cleansing***

Comes from the Word of God. II Corinthians 7:1, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

### ***Assurance***

Comes from the Word of God. I John 5:13, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

### ***Comfort***

Comes from the Word of God. I Thessalonians 4:18, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

### ***Truth***

Comes from the Word of God, Acts 17:11, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica..."

### ***New Birth***

Comes from the Word of God. I Peter 1:23, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God."

## Why We Don't Read God's Word

Jeremiah 15:16

### ***Ignorance***

Ignorant of its truths; ignorant of its formation and the information available.

### ***Already Eaten***

Feeding on ashes, Isaiah 44:20; feeding on politics, comics, etc.

### ***Sickness***

A sin-sick soul has no appetite for the Word of God.

### ***Lunching Between Meals***

Living in the light, frivolous non-essentials of life.

### ***Lacks Flavor***

Business, sports, education have taken prime interest.

### ***Too Sweet***

Revelation 10:8-10; the Book was sweet as honey in the mouth. Some think the Bible is only for the sick, aged and the dying.

### ***Too Bitter***

Revelation 10:8-10; as soon as he had eaten the Book it became bitter in his belly.

Jeremiah 15:16, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

## **Things to Remember When Reading the Bible**

Read it Lovingly – Psalm 119:11

Read it Reverently

Read it Prayerfully

Read it Meditatively

Read it Systematically

Read it Resolutely

Read it Daily

## **Conclusion**

Make the Bible your constant guide and companion in life. The Bible is the Word of God; it is worthy of being believed. Breathe a prayer for the Holy Spirit to help you understand the sacred pages. The Word of God, if neglected, will be our Judge at the last day, John 12:48.

Lord, teach me to treasure this volume highly; to defend it when necessary and make me bold to proclaim the whole counsel of God.

## **Link Questions**

What makes the bible hard to read?

What makes it difficult to study the bible?

Does your Church faithfully teach the bible?