

THE BIBLE

The Bible is a book that can be found almost anywhere on the earth. It has been translated into more than 2000 different languages and dialects. It is also the world's most popular book. Every year more copies of the Bible are sold than any other publication and the number of sales is increasing.

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce you to the Bible. The lesson will tell you where the Bible came from, why it was written, how it is organized, and how to find references to specific parts of it.

With your studies of the Bible you will find the leading of the Holy Spirit in your life giving you direction for your future.

We as Christians need to know the wonderful opportunity we have to be part of the family of God and we need to know our Savior. This course will begin to teach you how to be effective in soul winning and you will grow to know Jesus Christ.

God bless you as you take your first steps in your walk with Jesus Christ.

Origin of the Bible

The Bible is one of the world's oldest books. Its oldest sections were written about 1500 years before the birth of Christ. Even its newest sections were written about 1900 years ago.

Clearly, then, having been written over a period of about 1600 years, the Bible was not written by one person. No one knows precisely how many people contributed to the Bible. It is estimated there were about forty authors.

One of the most important facts about the Bible is that those who wrote it did not claim to be the source of the ideas they wrote about. Sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly, the authors assert that what they were writing really came from God. For example, one of the writers, Paul, made this statement: ***All Scripture [i.e., the Bible] is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*** (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Another writer, Peter, wrote: ... ***For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*** (2 Pet. 1:21). Other Bible writers confirm the statements of Paul and Peter.

Through the years there were those to whom the writings of men such as Paul and Peter were sacred. They understood these writings originated with God Himself. Some of these people dedicated themselves to collecting, arranging, and preserving the Scriptures that existed in their day. Today the names of most of those who did this work are unknown to us. We do know that well before the time of Christ the Jews had already finished assembling the divinely inspired writings of the Hebrews. It is a collection of 39 books. In the list of Bible books appearing elsewhere in this lesson, it is called the ***Old Testament***.

Following Christ's life on earth, additional sacred books were written. Some of these books record historical events pertaining to Christ and His early followers. Others are letters written to explain Christ's teaching or to encourage the followers of Christ to practice the moral principles He taught. There are 27 books in this later collection. Together they form the ***New Testament***.

Purpose of the Bible

The Bible has been given to us to help us understand ourselves as well as give us direction in our life.

Many times we have made mistakes and always gave excuses for them but the Bible if followed will show us the right way to live. It will help us to follow the leading of the Lord and guide us onto the right path for our life now that we are a Child of God.

One of my early mistakes was to not read the Bible for myself and always just listened to pastors and other people whom I thought were closer to God than I was. When I started to read the Bible for myself I realized that what I had been taught many times from others was not what the word of God said and therefore I was not living the way I should.

It is important to read the word yourself and then ask the Holy Spirit to help you to understand what you have been reading. Seek out a good person of God to help you as your journey with Jesus.

The Bible makes similar statements about every human being: The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God.

They have all gone aside, they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one (Psa. 14:3).

Many of us at times have not done right but by the shedding of Jesus Christ blood at Calvary we all have the opportunity to now be washed clean of our past.

Before acceptance of Christ we were born in sin and therefore a price had to be paid to deliver us.

That price was paid at Calvary. Jesus Christ is now our Lord and Savior and we will go forth to tell others of what we have learned in these studies.

Bible References	
The Bible is divided into books, the books into chapters, and the chapters into verses. Several similar formats can be used to refer to specific chapters or to specific verses. The examples below illustrate the possibilities:	
References to Chapters:	
Gen. 1	Refers to chapter 1 in the book of Genesis.
Exo. 12-20	Refers to chapters 12 through 20 in the book of Exodus.
References to Verses:	
Gen. 1:1	Refers to verse 1 of chapter 1 in the book of Genesis
Exo. 12:22a	Refers to the first part of verse 22 of chapter 12 in the book of Exodus.
Exo.12:22b	Refers to the second part of verse 22 of chapter 12 in the book of Exodus.
Lev. 25:8-17	Refers to verses 8 through 17 of chapter 25 in the

Anything you do, or fail to do, that displeases God is called "sin." Whenever you sin, you drive a wedge between yourself and God: ***Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is His ear heavy, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear*** (Isa. 59:1-2). Unless something is done to erase your sins, you will remain separated from God forever. Paul compared committing sin to working at a job. He pointed out that ***the wages of sin is death*** (Rom. 6:23a). He was not referring to mere physical death but to spiritual death. Elsewhere he describes spiritual death as ***everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power*** (2 Thes. 1:9).

	book of Leviticus.
Num. 7:6,9	Refers to verse 6 and to verse 9 of chapter 7 in the book of Numbers.

The Bible is very much concerned with sin--not just with your sin but with everyone's sin. The Bible reveals God's great plan for bringing about the forgiveness of our sins. When we follow the plan, God forgives our sins and will reward us with everlasting life: ***the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord*** (Rom. 6:23b). The Bible is about changing from death to life, from destruction to salvation.

I have often told people that the BIBLE is our roadmap. When you go on a journey you get a map or now we have many devices that we can punch in our destination and it will lead us to the proper place. The road map also tells us the direction in which we should take to get to the final place.

The Bible is our Road Map to Heaven. Along the way of course there will be different situations that will come our way but if we follow the path that is in the Bible we will end up at the right place which is heaven.

When we come to Jesus Christ and ask Him to forgive us of our sins and become Lord of our Life we begin a new journey.

We have not come to Christ to sit back and relax as we make our way to heaven. We are called to work now for the Kingdom of God.

We become a Family and are grafted into that Family of God through Jesus Christ. Now our Journey will begin and each day will be a new experience in our life serving Christ.

There will be times when we want to give up. At moments like that we must get our Bible and read. Pray and Read. Getting the word of God into our spirits is very important as that will bring direction as well as an assurance that we are not alone and that Jesus Christ lives in us and is with us through all that we go through.

I often have seen the picture of the man's footprints in the sand and the person says "But there are only one set of footprints" and God says... "Yes, that is when I was carrying you."

How wonderful to know that God Our Father now in the Family will carry us when we are too weak to walk alone.

Reading the word of God will help you to understand His Presence in your life.

The Unity of the Bible

The theme of salvation from sin, which runs throughout the pages of Scripture, is one of the attributes of the Bible showing its harmony and consistency. It is remarkable that such unity could be maintained by so many writers, who lived at different times, at different places, and in different cultures. They did not all speak the same language and did not all write in the same literary form. It is as if the books of the Bible are the instruments in an orchestra whose diverse sounds blend harmoniously under the direction of the conductor. When we recognize that the writers themselves were not the original sources of the information and ideas they expressed but were acting under the direction of God, we can understand why the Bible forms a unit.

Look at your hand for a moment. You have a palm, a thumb and 4 fingers. Each is very necessary to make your hand work properly. Each part works together to make a whole hand.

This is what it is like with those who wrote the Bible they worked together to make it a whole book inspired by the Holy Spirit.

You will find that in some places the wording seems a little different and that may be hard for you to understand, some will say that there are too many differences. Look at it this way. If you and I and a few others went to the park and saw a few ducks swimming in the pond, now in the pond was a man in a little boat fishing and flying overhead were some birds. How would we describe that?

I would say what lovely birds because I love birds. You may say the boat was so nice and the man looked like he was catching many fish. Another may say that the ducks were so cute as they swam in the water. Now we were all standing looking at the same thing but we all gave our opinion of what interested us the most.

That is like the Bible many times you will read from the disciples a story about a certain situation and each one will be a little different that is because they each saw it in a different way, but they all tell the story as they were there just as you and I were at the lake that day.

Always try to remember this as it will help you to better understand as you read.

Always remember too now that you belong to a family of many people who love Jesus Christ, many are only babies in their walk with the Lord and many have known Him a long time. Many are immature and need to know more of Him and many have given

their life to Him and then never went any farther but you will grow as you move forward in learning about Him.

The Content of the Bible

"How To ..." books and articles are popular today. It is not hard to find information on how to train a dog, how to wire a house, how to lose weight, how to quit worrying, how to increase one's vocabulary, or how to improve one's marriage. When we read these publications, we expect them to give us a point-by-point plan for achieving a goal. If you expect to find that kind of recipe for salvation in the Bible, you will be disappointed. God has not chosen to unfold his plan for removing sin as a simple list of "Do's" and "Don't's".

The Bible will give you an overview of the beginning in time to our present day.

We will learn about all the events that took place before Christ coming to earth and His stay here.

We will also learn what He went through in those three years of His Ministry.

We also learn of His death at Calvary and His resurrection.

Instead, God has chosen to unfold His plan by having us consider His dealings with certain groups of people over a long period of history. As we read the Bible we see how God interacted with these people. We learn more and more about the nature of God and about the kind of response He desires from us. From the Bible we learn how the human race began and how sin first entered the world and continued to be practiced. We learn about God's response to those who were wicked and to those who were righteous. Sometimes God's response involved miracles. More often than not, God's response was communicated through men He chose as His special agents. The record of what they said and wrote spans a variety of literary styles. Some parts of the Bible are simply the records of historical events. Other parts are prayers or thanks to God stated in poetic form. Still other parts are sermons that were preached, predictions that were made, or personal letters that were written.

As we read through the Bible, we begin to realize that we, like the men and women of the Bible, are going through some of the same situations that they did and we learn how they handled it by God's own words.

The central feature of God's plan is Jesus Christ. Jesus left heaven to come to earth to live as one of us. He experienced the temptations, disappointments, and heartaches that we experience. Then He died for us as a perfect sacrifice for sin.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life
(John 3:16).

The aim of the lessons in this series is to help you read, study, and understand the Bible.

If you decide to study all the lessons in this series, you will have made a choice that may have far-reaching consequences for you personally. The Bible can become a mirror that enables you to see yourself as God sees you and a messenger that tells you how to become what God wants you to be.

You are now part of the Family of God and we must learn how to join in that family and how we should live to enjoy the benefits and blessings that family have to offer.

God is a God of Mercy, but also a God of blessings and you will read the many ways that we can be blessed. Blessings are not just handed to us.

If you have a child, you do not keep giving that child candy every time it asks for it because you know what is best for your child. There may be times that you have to say NO.. that is like God our Father.. there may be times he will say NO but He knows what is best for us.

We will learn as we study to Trust His Judgement and learn to lean on His way as the best way.

Many times I thought my ways were the best and only found out that my way was only leading me into heartache. Now I lean on Jesus and if there is a question in my mind about which way to go I read my Bible and then I wait on the Lord.

That is why learning the Bible is so very important because it will help us through all that comes our way.

It will also teach us what to do to receive His blessings in our life. Nothing is easy and when we begin our new journey of faith it can be difficult because we do not understand it at first.

Many come to Christ and want to serve Him but then when things get hard they turn back into their old lifestyle which is easy for them. They have no peace doing that but they find that it is comfortable for them. BUT, they have also not read or studied their Bible, they haven't spent a lot of time with Jesus and learning of Him, so it is easy for them to go back into their old ways.

If they had learned how real God was and how much He loved them they never would want the old life.

Studying as you are doing will show you how real this journey will be and how real JESUS CHRIST is, because He will become real to you and you will never turn back .

The Books of the Bible

Study them and memorize them also this will help for future days of study and recollection.

We will also cover a summary of the books of the Bible. This will tell you what each book talks about and this will help you to understand the Bible better.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis

Exodus

Leviticus

Numbers

Deuteronomy

Joshua

Judges

Ruth

1 Samuel

2 Samuel

1 Kings

2 Kings

1 Chronicles

2 Chronicles

Ezra
Nehemiah
Esther
Job
Psalms
Proverbs
Ecclesiastes
Songs of Solomon
Isaiah
Jeremiah
Lamentations
Ezekiel
Daniel
Hosea
Joel
Amos
Obadiah
Jonah
Micah
Nahum

Habakkuk

Zephaniah

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

The New Testament

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

The Acts

Romans

1 Corinthians

11 Corinthians

Galatians

Ephesians

Philippians

Colossians

1 Thessalonians
11 Thessalonians
1 Timothy
11 Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews
James
1 Peter
11 Peter
1 John
11 John
111 John
Jude
Revelations

These are the Books of the BIBLE..

Each book has a different story to tell you and in the Old Testament you will read of the events that took place before Jesus Christ came to earth.

That is the History of the Bible

In the New Testament you will read of the Birth, Life and Death of Jesus Christ and then what took place after His return to heaven. You will also learn what the disciples did after Christ left this world and their journeys as Pastors and Prophets , their difficulties and their rejoicings. You will learn of things that will happen in the future in the book of Revelation.

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

The name “Bible” comes from the Greek word biblos, meaning “book”. This “Book” actually composed of sixty-six (66) separate books, is a collection of ancient Hebrew and Christian writings, each complete in itself.

The order of these 66 books in the Old Testament and New Testament is a logical one, giving, in general a consecutive history of mankind from the story of creation in the first chapter of Genesis to the close of history in the book of Revelation.

The order of Old Testament books in the English Bible is different somewhat from the order of the books in Hebrew Scriptures. The sacred writings of the Jews were divided into three parts:

1. The Law,

Five books setting forth the laws that God gave through Moses.

2. The Prophets,

Including the four Former Prophets,

JOSHUA
JUDGES
SAMUEL and KINGS.

And
The four Latter Prophets,

ISAIAH
JEREMIAH
EZEKIEL

And the Twelve (the Twelve consisting of twelve brief prophetic books contained in a single scroll, thus looked upon as a single book)

3. The Writings,

Which are divided into four sections..

- A. Psalms, Proverbs, Job.
- B. Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations,
Ecclesiastes, Esther.
- C. Daniel
- D. Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles.

In English translations of the Old Testament, the 39 books may be regarded as falling into four categories.

1. History, The books from Genesis to Esther, including the Pentateuch: derived from the Greek means : Five Books and is used to designate the first five books of the Old Testament.
This section is called “THE LAW” or “THE BOOK OF MOSES” following the Jewish tradition that these five books were written by Moses.
2. The twenty seven (27) New Testament books are also divided into four categories.
 - A. History, including the four Gospels (Books proclaiming the Good News) and the book of Acts.
 - B. Paul’s Epistles :
The books of Romans through Philemon.
 - C. The General Epistles:
The books of Hebrews through Jude.
 - D. The Apocalypse:
The Book of Revelation.

Now, let us study each book individually and see what each book talks about.

Each day you must study and memorize the books of the Bible.

This will get you familiar with God's word and get it to go deep in your heart.

Each Book Defined

GENESIS

Genesis is the first book of the Old Testament and is a collection of early Israelite information concerning the beginning of things. The book has two main divisions. The first is the history of the early mankind, telling of :

The Creation

The Fall

The Flood

The Dispersion.

The second section concerns the lives of :

Abraham

Isaac

Jacob

Joseph

EXODUS

Exodus tells of the History of the Israelites from after the death of Joseph to the building of the Tabernacle by Moses.

This book gives an account of the wandering in the wilderness of Sinai and the giving of the Law to the nation.

LEVITICUS

Leviticus is also called “The Book of the Law of the Priests” as it contains very little historical matter, concerning itself with priestly legislation and the practice of the Law among the people. A lot is placed on the importance of the separation of Israel from all heathen influences so that the nation may retain its religious purity.

NUMBERS

Numbers is a continuation of Exodus, recording the stay of the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai until their arrival at Moab. The title of the book comes from the two numberings of the people recorded here.

DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy is a sequel to Numbers. It is made up of three speeches and two poems spoken by Moses in Moab before the crossing of Jordan, in which he gives the Ten Commandments to the chosen people. A minor narrative in three of the chapters tells of the last days of Moses.

JOSHUA

Joshua tells the story of Moses’ successor. It was Joshua who led the people into the Promised Land after the death of Moses. The book is also a story of the conquest of Canaan and the division of the land among the twelve tribes of Israel.

JUDGES

Judges tells the times of many rulers or judges of Israel from the possession of Canaan until the time of Samuel. Also found in Judges is the recounting of the adventures of Samson.

RUTH

The Book of Ruth tells the story of Ruth, the Moabitess and her mother in law, Naomi. The two woman return to Naomi’s homeland, Judah, where Ruth the foreigner, marries Boaz. Ruth was the great grandmother of David, the ancestor of Jesus.

TWO BOOKS OF SAMUEL

The 1st and 2nd Samuel contains valuable historical material concerning religious and moral conditions of the period. Samuel is the great prophet and judge who help to unite the scattered tribes under one king, Saul. The history of the reigns of Saul and David is also recorded.

THE TWO BOOKS OF KINGS

The 1st and 2nd Kings follow the monarchy under Solomon and the nation's division, decline, and fall under Jeroboam and Rehoboam, Kings also gives an outline of the double captivity of Israel under the Assyrians and Judah under the Chaldeans.

THE TWO BOOKS OF CHRONICLES

The two books of Chronicles have a lot in common with the books of Samuel and Kings. They contain genealogical tables from Adam to the death of Saul, the reign of Solomon, the division of the kingdom, the Exile, and the proclamation of Cyrus.

EZRA – NEHEMIAH

These books are companion books continuing the narration of Chronicles. Ezra gives details of the first return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon and the rebuilding of the Temple. Nehemiah tells of the rebuilding of Jerusalem and of the efforts to bring religious change to the people.

ESTHER

Esther is the last of the Historical books and contains an early example of Jewish persecution. Esther a Jewess is chosen as the new queen for Ahasuerus, the King of Persia. Her uncle Mordecai has incurred the enmity of Haman the evil court favorite and so brought the threat of death to his people. Esther, through her position, is able to change the tragedy and save her people.

JOB

Job is the first of the Poetical books, it deals with the problem of suffering. God allows satan to afflict Job, who is a prosperous and pious Jew, with many hardships in order to test his faith. Job loses his children and his worldly goods and is afflicted by a terrible

disease. Finally when God questions Job, he is forced to admit to the limits of human wisdom and bows humbly before the will of God. With this new humility his faith is strengthened and Job finds peace.

PSALMS

Psalms is a collection of poems written over a long period of time by various authors. They express the heart of humanity in all generations through a variety of religious experiences. Originally the poems were chanted or sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument.

PROVERBS

Proverbs is a part of the Wisdom message of the Old Testament. In the book of Proverbs there are short, smart sayings of common sense and sound advice that relate to all walks of life.

ECCLESIASTES

Ecclesiastes contains writings of a wealthy Jew who suffered from the sorrows and disappointments of life and now tries to discover the true value and meaning of life the God. The author of the book calls himself “The Preacher” “The Son of David” and “King of Jerusalem” but whether this was Solomon or a later “Son of David” is uncertain.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

Song of Solomon is also called “Song of Songs” and “Canticles”. This is a collection of love songs that have many interpretations. This love relationship could signify the relation between God and His people, or that between Christ and the Church

ISAIAH

Isaiah is the first collection of prophecy of the four major Hebrew prophets. Judgment to come is one of his teachings. A New Jerusalem will arise up as a City of the faithful and Christ’s coming is also found.

JEREMIAH

A book of the prophet Jeremiah who receives the divine call to prophesy while very young. It is his mission to predict doom upon his nation for its many sins. He was hated by the priests and the people. Jeremiah emphasis a personal religion.

LAMENTATIONS

Lamentations consists of five poems about the fall of Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity. The first three describe the terrible plight of the nation, the fourth compares the past history of Jerusalem and her present state, and the last is a prayer for compassion and deliverance.

EZEKIEL

Ezekiel was written by the prophet in Exile. This book is divided into two sections. The first denounces the sins and abominations of Jerusalem and the second looks to the future with the hope that the city will be restored after it was been cleansed.

DANIEL

Daniel is also divided into two parts. The first six chapters tell of Daniel's faith and the greatness of his God over the idols of Babylon. The last six chapters contain the four visions of Daniel and their interpretations.

HOSEA

Hosea is the first book of the twelve Minor Prophets. Hosea urges to return to God as the times were very sinful and immorality rages and assures that God will show mercy and forgiveness.

JOEL

The book of Joel was written during a locust plague, a time of great distress for the people. The prophet sees in the devastation of the locusts an indication of the coming day of the Lord. Therefore all must repent with fasting and mourning. With repentance there is a promise of relief and God's blessing for Israel.

AMOS

Amos is the book of the herdsman from Tekoa, a small town in Judah. He receives a direct call from God to prophesy against the unrighteousness of both Judah and Israel. Amos is the first prophet to proclaim that God is the ruler of the whole world.

OBADIAH

Obadiah contains only one chapter and it is the shortest book of the Old Testament. It is given a prophetic interpretation of a great calamity that has already occurred in Edom and a prediction of a universal judgment.

JONAH

Jonah is a story of a prophet who is sent by God to Nineveh. Jonah does not want to go and runs to Tarshish. During the sea voyage a storm arises and he is thrown overboard and swallowed by a great fish sent by God. The prophet is saved and goes on to Nineveh to successfully convert the people .

NAHUM

Nahum has two poems. The prophet tells of the fall of Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian nation. God is depicted as revengeful to those who conspire against Him. The book of Nahum contains a classic rebuke against warfare and militarism.

HABAKKUK

Habakkuk is a book of prophecy, it is concerned with the problem of unpunished evil in the world. It is revealed to Habakkuk that the Chaldean armies are to be God's means of punishing the wicked and that evil will destroy itself. The book finishes with a poem of thanksgiving and great faith.

ZEPHANIAH

Zephaniah tells that only the judgment of God can cleanse Judah of the sins that she has committed. The day of the Lord is coming and the nation must prepare for its salvation. Zephaniah was active during the reign of King Josiah.

HAGGAI

The book of Haggai is a report on the utterances of the prophet Haggai during the second year of the reign of Darius, king of the Persian Empire. The prophet is concerned with the rebuilding of the Temple and restoring the nation's purity. Haggai also believes that a great messianic age is at hand.

ZECHARIAH

Zechariah is a book of prophecy. Zechariah urges people to rebuild the Temple for he believes the imminent coming of the messianic kingdom. Both Zechariah and Haggai are concerned with the messianic hope and establishing Judah's role in the fulfillment of the glorious hope.

MALACHI

Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament and belongs to the period of Nehemiah. The prophet's message is to the priests and the people, charging them with indifference, doubt and immorality. Malachi tells of the coming day of the Lord and closes the book with a prophecy of John the Baptist.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament which has a total of twenty seven books (27) begins with four Gospels, which record the life and teachings of Christ from four different viewpoints. Although the original autographs no longer exist, church tradition has assigned them to the four evangelists. Because of their striking similarity of form, language and content the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels; the Gospel according to John is in a different tradition.

The New Testament is usually given to New Converts to read first as it is easier to understand and tells of the life of Christ. The Book of St. John is an excellent book for people to read because it covers a simple Gospel truth and is very easily read.

MATTHEW

Matthew has been the Gospel of the church. It tells us of God's love for Israel and of the fulfillment in Christ of God's promise to the nation. It gives the complete story of Jesus' Ministry, death and resurrection. The Sermon on the Mount and some most precious of Jesus' parables are contained in this Gospel.

MARK

Mark is the earliest of the Gospels and contains much of the teachings of Peter. This Gospel presents Jesus as the man of power, the strong and active Son of God; its climax is reached when Peter makes his great confession, "You are the Christ".

LUKE

The Third Gospel, was written by "the beloved physician" the companion of the apostle Paul. Only in Luke are found the Magnificat, the story of the birth of John the Baptist, the Christmas story of the shepherds, the parables of the good Samaritan, the lost sheep, and the prodigal son, and the great hymns- The Gloria in Excelsis and Nun Dimittis. Jesus is presented as a compassionate Savior, healer, redeemer, and friend of the weak.

JOHN

The book of John was written by “the disciple whom Jesus loved,” tells us of who Jesus was and what He is; what He can always mean to those who love Him. This Gospel contains more than the other Gospels about the stories of Lazarus and Nicodemus and Jesus’ trial, crucifixion and resurrection and about the disciples Andrew, Philip and Thomas.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Were written by the author of the Gospel according to Luke, is the account of what Jesus’ disciples did after His resurrection. It tells about the early Christian church and its missionaries, the baptism of Cornelius, the Council in Jerusalem and about the conversion of Paul and his journeys to establish churches and to teach. Acts emphasizes that the church is guided continually by the Holy Spirit.

ROMANS

The book of Romans was written from Corinth about A.D.58. The purpose of the letter is to secure the active support of the church in Rome for his missionary program. Paul stresses the universality of man’s sin but that God saves all men through faith in Christ. He discusses the place of Israel in God’s plan of salvation and how Christians should conduct themselves.

1st CORINTHIANS

The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians were written from Ephesus about A.D.57. The Christians of Corinth have found it hard to live as they know they should and question Paul about their difficulties. In First Corinthians Paul answers their question, points out what they have done wrong and encourages them with his message. “You are Christ’s”.

2nd, CORINTHIANS

Second Corinthians contains Paul’s message of thanksgiving and love. Then he goes on to describe the tribulations he has suffered while preaching the Gospel of Christ.

GALATIANS

Galatians written in A.D. 57 or 58, probably from Antioch, is the cornerstone of Christian freedom. In Galatians Paul tells of his own conversion and of how he stood firm in his belief that Christ was the Savior of people everywhere, not just those who observed every detail of the Jewish law.

EPHESIANS

Ephesians was written about A.D. 62, seems to be a general letter to the churches of Asia Minor. Paul presents God's eternal purpose to save men through faith in Christ; "The dividing wall of hostility" between Jews and Gentiles has been broken down through the cross of Christ. Paul extols us to live as worthy, true Christians.

PHILIPPIANS

The book of Philippians was written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome. This letter, Paul's farewell message is filled with gratitude and affection for his Philippian friends, the church which was perhaps dearest to him.

COLOSSIANS

Colossians was written by Paul, while he was a prisoner in Rome, to the Christians at Colossae in Asia Minor. Paul writes to encourage them with real truth... that through Christ they have the everlasting love of God.

THESSALONIANS

Thessalonians was written by Paul from Corinth about A.D.52. These two letters are the earliest writing so of the New Testament. Paul tells these Christians what sort of persons they must be and that they must do their duty every day and not stand idle, waiting for the Second Coming.

1st TIMOTHY

Timothy was written by the apostle to his friend Timothy at Lystra telling of the conditions in the church and describes the qualifications and duties of church officers.

2nd TIMOTHY

Second Timothy contains Paul's request that Timothy come to Rome to see him.

TITUS

This book encourages Titus "Paul's true child in a common faith" to lead the church at Crete.

PHILEMON

Philemon is a personal letter in which the apostle urges Philemon to take back a runaway slave, Onesimus. The slave had come to Rome, where Paul was being held prisoner, and there had been converted by Paul.

HEBREWS

The authorship of Hebrews has been long debated, this book urges the Hebrew Christian Community not to fall back into Judaism,

JAMES

The book of James was written by the brother of our Lord. It provides ethical instruction for all Jewish people who have become Christians.

1st PETER

This book was written by Peter from Rome between A.D. 64 and 67 to Christians who had fled Asia Minor. It encourages the pilgrims to have hope and courage and to trust in the power of GOD.

2nd PETER

This book was also written by Peter in the middle of the first century. It warns of false teachers who had come into the early church and urges Christians to be brave and patient.

THE EPISTLES OF JOHN

1st JOHN

These were written by John who also wrote St. John (Fourth Gospel and Revelation). This book testifies that God is Love and that love is the test of religion.

2nd JOHN

Is written to the “Elect lady and her children” probably a church.

3rd JOHN

Third John is written to “The beloved Gaius”

JUDE

Jude designates its author as “A Servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James”. Its message was for Christians wherever unity was threatened by heretical teaching and where Christian doctrinal and moral standards were questioned.

REVELATIONS

This Book is a revelation of Jesus Christ to St. John. Another name is “The Apocalypse”. It is the only prophetic book in the New Testament. Written by John one of the apostles of Christ, the book is addressed to the seven Christian churches in Asia Minor, whose members are being persecuted by Roman officials. The images and allusions of the Revelation are difficult for us to understand today, but to the persecuted members of the seven churches John’s message is clearly one of hope, courage, and faith in times of trouble; it proclaims that on the Lord’s day the faithful will be greatly rewarded.

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

The Bible is the greatest book that has ever been written. In it God Himself speaks to men. It is living, the Living Word of God. It is a book of divine instruction. It offers comfort in sorrow, guidance in perplexity, advice for our problems, rebuke for our sins and daily inspiration for our every need.

The Bible is not simply one book. It is an entire library of books covering the whole range of literature. It includes history, poetry, drama, biography, prophecy, philosophy, science and inspirational reading. Little wonder then that all or part of the Bible has been translated into more than 1,200 languages and every year more copies of the Bible are sold than other single books.

The Bible tells us of where we came from, where we are and where we are going. Why we are here and How we can know the truth.

The Bible tells us of the God of truth, explains the origin of man, points out the only way to salvation and eternal life, and explains the age old problem of sin and suffering.

The great subject of all the Bible is the Lord Jesus Christ and His work of redemption for mankind. The person and work of Jesus Christ are promised, prophesied and pictured in the types and symbols of the Old Testament. In all of His truth and beauty, the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed in the gospels; and the full meanings of His life. His death, and His resurrection are explained in the epistles, His glorious coming again to this earth in the future is unmistakably foretold in the book of Revelation.

The great purpose of the written Word of God, the Bible is to reveal the living Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ..

As we read the Bible and study it we will see that

- (1) The Bible convicts of sin
- (2) The Bible cleanses us from sin
- (3) The Bible gives us strength
- (4) The Bible instructs us in what we are to do
- (5) The Bible provides us with a sword over sin
- (6) The Bible makes our lives fruitful
- (7) The Bible gives us power to pray

You do not need a whole library of books to study the Bible. The Bible is the complete book and with much study and prayer of the Bible you will grow in the Lord and see that Jesus Christ is alive and is there to help you through anything.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

There are many ways to study the Bible. One can have a personal time, when you are alone and meditate and read and pray. This time is good when you have the time to be alone. Always make the time to be alone and read God's word.

Always begin your Bible reading with prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to be your guide as you read the scriptures.

When you first begin to read the Bible as a new Christian it is always good to start in the New Testament and St. John is one of the best. This book will cover the life of Jesus and you will get to know who Jesus Christ is and why he came to earth.

When reading it is best at times to read one chapter and then go back and read it again. Pray and ask the Lord to open up His word to you. You will find that each time you read the Word of God a new verse may jump out at you and it will speak to you.

As you read the Bible ask the Lord to reveal His word to you. If you can memorize passages this is good too. All of the Word that you read will remain in you and you will find that on different occasions what scripture you have read will come out of your mouth as you speak to encourage others. God is alive and when His word is spoken it will produce results.

When you are reading in your personal devotions keep a notebook beside you at all times and write down the different passages that stand out to you. Remember you are getting ready to help others and all this information will be helpful for you in the future.

Always obey the Word of God. Many times I ask the Lord to cleanse me from sin, and to reveal to me the sins I may have and do not know about. As you read the Word of God you will see that maybe a thought of something you are doing is not right and conviction will come into your heart. Ask the Lord to forgive you and write that scripture down for you have grown through that word that you just read.

In those quiet moments spent reading God's Word you will find that peace will come into your heart, tears may even flow from your eyes as you see the Word become real to you.

Your heart will become full of GOD's love for others and you will want to share the many things you have read. Do not be discouraged when you try to tell others about what you have read. Many will not understand you because they have not experienced what you have. But, love them anyway and pray for them.

When reading the Bible think of the situation that it was written. Also take time to see who wrote it, why it was written and what lesson is there to learn from it.

Do not get too eager to keep reading but take your time and study the scripture. You are being trained in how to live a new life now in Christ and how to help others to serve God.

You will enjoy these quiet moments that you have reading alone. This is time spent just with you and the Lord. Read, Pray and just sit at His feet and relax and let Him speak to you too.

GROUP BIBLE STUDY

This is a time of Bible Study that can be done with family or friends. You may gather in your home or someone else. You may go to the park and all join in reading.

Always pray first when opening up this time of fellowship. Invite the Holy Spirit to be present and to open each one's eyes to the truth of the Gospel.

Then proceed to read the scriptures. Each one can take a turn as you go around everyone or there may be one main person that will do all the reading. But always make sure that when you read you take your time to meditate on the words that you are reading.

When the scripture has been read it can be a time for talking about it or asking questions regarding it. Do not get into heavy arguments about what one person believes and another may believe. This is a time when there should be quietness and reverence and always make sure that this time does not get taken over by someone who only wants to do all the talking. Remember you are there to glorify GOD and Him alone. All things must be done in order and good communication. The Bible

says that when there is two or three together meeting that He is in the midst. The Holy Spirit is with you and there must be a reverence for Him.

It is always best to have someone with a group or family who knows the Word of God and will help explain some of the questions that may arise. If a question comes up do not try to answer if you are not sure of the answer. It is better to wait and speak with someone about it and bring the answer to the next Family or Friendship Study. That is where a notebook will be handy as you can write down the scripture and question for easy access.

Always remember that the Bible was written many years ago and there may be some things in it that only pertain to that time. But as I said it is always best to ask someone who has more knowledge about these things and do not make up your own ideas about what you think it might mean.

It is always good to PRAY...

Prayer gives you communication with the Lord before you start to read and after you finish. That quiet time of prayer is very important and always must be done.

It is like when you are in a relationship with your wife or husband. If you did not communicate you would not know what the other was thinking, and eventually there would be no relationship. So take those special moments and spend them in communication with the Lord before reading the Bible and afterwards.

God wants us to speak to Him. Remember He loves you so much it doesn't matter what you have done or if you make mistakes. HE loves you. HE wants you to talk to Him and tell Him how you feel. He wants you to tell Him if you are hurting or feel sad. Speak to Him, do not be ashamed and think you can handle things by yourself, He does not want it to be that way.

When we first come to Christ we do not understand all this and maybe think that we are bothering Him, so we try to work things out by ourselves and then we get discouraged. HE is waiting to listen to us and to help us.

The Bible is His Book to you to help you to understand His love towards you and how He wants to lead you on this journey of Life and bring you home to be with Him.

Life at times can be a hard struggle and when we give our life to Christ and become part of His Family we need to have the Bible with us to help us know that Jesus Christ is with us and will be there to help us fight our battles.

Remember you are on a new journey in life now and it will be very exciting. You will find many turns in the road, but you will also find many happy times that you did not expect.

One thing you must remember is that everything that comes into your life has already been seen by God and He knows that everything that happens to you will benefit you in some way.

My life has been full of ups and downs and I have found out that all those times of tears and wondering what was going to happen in my life taught me that God is alive and that God loves me no matter what I have done.

Full surrendering your life to Jesus Christ and His will is the only way to bring happiness and peace.

The Bible will tell you what His will is. Often I heard people say, “ I do not know what God’s Will is for my life” and I used to wonder what they meant. God’s will for your life is in the Bible.

Follow the scriptures and pray for wisdom. God will lead you many places and you will see many things take place in your life and as the years go by you will look back on your life and know that JESUS CHRIST is alive and has walked right beside you all the time. When there are good times HE is there. Where there are bad times HE is there.

You have a friend that is closer than a brother and the Bible will tell you all about that.

This is the best book that you could ever read.

A Test will be accompanied with this book.

When you complete the answers please forward the work to:

Rev. Anne Skinner
Hannah House/The Lighthouse/Prison Letters
MPO Box 2813,
Niagara Falls, New York, 14302

It will be marked and returned to you.

When you mail the test please ask for the next Lesson to follow.

May God richly bless you as you Study His Word and learn of Him.