



Who is Jesus?



What is Salvation?



Faith & Assurance



The Holy Spirit



Trials



Prayer



What God Expects



The Bible

EIGHT ESSENTIALS

Strengthen The Foundation Of Your Faith

F

foundation



Bible Study Part One

Who is the Real Jesus?

Begin memorizing Philippians 2:10-11

“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

(See also Hebrews 1)

Matthew 16:13-16 – *When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” “But what about you?” He asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”*

It is important to know who we believe in. If Jesus is ONLY a man or a teacher or a prophet or philosopher, then our faith is in vain, but He is much more! In this lesson you should learn:

- A. What others said about Jesus
- B. What Jesus said about Himself
- C. The Bible teaches that Jesus is God

Before you start, PRAY. Answer the questions briefly and in your own words.

RABBI means teacher or master. **MESSIAH** or **CHRIST** means the Anointed One, the One promised of God as the Great Deliverer.

1. Who did these people say Jesus was?

John (John 1:29, 34) _____

Andrew (John 1:40-41) _____

Nathanael (John 1:49) _____

Samaritans (John 4:42) _____

Peter (John 6:68-69) _____

Thomas (John 20:28) _____

2. Who did the father say Jesus was?

Matthew 3:16-17 _____

Matthew 17:5 _____

Hebrews 1:8 _____

3. What terms did Jesus use to describe Himself?

John 4:25-26 _____

John 6:33-35 _____

John 9:5 _____

4. Read John 10:22-33.

The religious leaders asked Jesus for a plain answer. How did He answer them in verse 30?

The religious leaders knew exactly what He meant by that answer. Who was He claiming to be in verse 33?

In Exodus 3:13-14 Moses asked God what he should tell the Israelites His name was. God said His name was "I AM." Jesus also refers to Himself by saying "I Am!" In some translations the word "he" is added in italics after I am for clarification. The word "he" does not appear in the original Greek text. ("ego eimi" – I am)

5. What happened when Jesus answered “I AM” to the Roman Soldiers?

John 18:4-6 _____

6. How did Jesus respond to the crowd’s questions of how Abraham has seen Him?

John 8:58-59 _____

(Jesus also claimed to be “I AM” in John 8:24, 28)

7. What characteristics of the Father can be seen in the Son?

Hebrews 1:3 _____

8. What does Jesus say about anyone who has seen Him?

John 14:8-9 _____

The Greek word LOGOS translated WORD in the book of John means “divine expression.” When John refers to Jesus as the LOGOS or WORD, he means Jesus is the exact image of the invisible God. The Father chose to reveal Himself to us through the Son.

9. Read John 1:1-5, 14, 18 and answer these questions:

How long has the WORD been around?

Verse 1 _____

Who does the Bible say the WORD is?

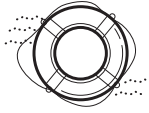
Verse 1 _____

What things were made by the WORD?

Verse 3 _____

What can be found in the WORD?

Verses 4-5 _____



Bible Study Part Two

What is Salvation?

Begin memorizing John 3:16

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

John 3:3, 7 – In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you truth, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God... You should not be surprised at my saying ‘You must be born again.’”

Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded us saying, “You must be born again.” In this study you should learn:

- A. Why we need to be saved.
- B. How God has provided for our salvation.
- C. How we can have that salvation personally.

Before you start, PRAY. Ask God’s Holy Spirit to open your heart to receive His Word and to show you how to apply it to your life. Do not copy the scriptures, but answer the questions briefly in your own words.

SIN is the failure to obey any of God’s commandments or laws.

1. How does the Bible define sin?

I John 3:4 _____

What are some of the Laws of God?

Exodus 20:3-17 _____

How did Jesus further explain the Law?

Matt. 5:21-22; 27-28 _____

How many of God's laws do you have to break before you are guilty?

James 2:10 _____

2. What is the result of sin?

Romans 6:23 _____

James 1:15 _____

To better understand the effects of sin, think of death as **SEPARATION**.

A. Spiritual death – Your sins have separated you from God.

B. Physical death – It separates the spirit and soul from the body.

C. Eternal death – If you remain lost in your sins, they will separate you from the mercy of God forever. (This is the greatest punishment of hell.) To be **RIGHTEOUS** means “to do right; to be totally innocent before God in regards to obeying His commandments.” (See II Thessalonians. 1:8-9)

3. How many of us are righteous?

Romans 3:10 _____

4. How many of us have sinned?

Romans 3:23 _____

5. What word explains why God would send His only Son to die for us?

John 3:16 _____

6. Does He love us as sinners or do we have to become good enough for God to love us?

Romans 5:8 _____

7. Read each of the verses below and indicate if we are saved by Jesus only or if God allows another way for salvation.

1 Timothy 2:5 _____

Acts 4:12 _____

John 14:6 _____

God's Word says sin causes death. Jesus took that penalty upon Himself in our place.

8. How did Jesus take the penalty of sin for us?

1 Corinthians 15:3 _____

9. What must we do to have Him save us from the penalty of sin?

Romans 10:9 _____

Acts 16:30-31 _____

BELIEVE means "to cling to, trust in and rely on." CONFESS means "to admit guilt or acknowledge one's sin."

10. The Bible uses several words to show the contrast between "works" and "faith."

Next to each of the following scriptures, write the words that describe how we are saved.

Ephesians 2:8 _____

Titus 3:5 _____

11. Why does the Bible say we are not saved by our works?

Ephesians 2:9 _____

JUSTICE is getting what we deserve. If God were only a just god, we would all perish.

MERCY is not getting what we deserve. It is by His mercy that He can forgive us.

GRACE is getting something we don't deserve at all. By God's grace (not our own merit) He sent His Son and now we are getting more than we deserve.

FAITH is accepting as truth, things which cannot be proved by the senses. Faith is trusting God.

12. What should be the result of God's goodness and kindness to us?

Romans 2:4 _____

REPENTANCE (*metanoia*) means "a change of mind." It is through change in the hearts of men, away from sin and toward God. It should include:

- A. A genuine sorrow for our sins
- B. Cleansing from continually sinning
- C. A desire to submit to God's will

13. When we repent what happens in Heaven?

Luke 15:10 _____

We must RECOGNIZE our sin, we must CONFESS our sins, we must REPENT of our sins!

There are free will choices that will no doubt affect our eternity:

- 1. We can be born once – and die twice.
- 2. We can be born twice (born again) and die once.

(Read Revelation 21:7-8 regarding the Second Death)

The Greek word for "believe" is *pisteuo*, which means: to believe, to be persuaded of, to place confidence in.

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will or the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12-13

"Believe" is an action word. It is the action of placing our confidence in Jesus. The action of believing, and therefore allowing the POWER that IS God's Holy Spirit, to transform us into New Creatures.

"Belief" is accepting something as true. "Believing" is proving your acceptance by your actions toward it.

Have the angels rejoiced over you? All you have to do is pray this simple prayer and mean it from your heart: **"Jesus, I know I am a sinner. Forgive my sins and take control of my life. Amen."**



Bible Study Part Three

Faith & Assurance

Begin by memorizing I John 5:12-13

“He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

Hebrews 6:18-19 – “He has given us both His promise and His oath, two things we can completely count on, for it is impossible for God to tell a lie. Now all those who flee to Him to save them can take new courage when they hear such assurance from God; now they can know without a doubt that He will give them the salvation He has promised them. This certain hope of being saved is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls, connecting us with God Himself behind the sacred curtains of heaven.” (Paraphrased from *The Living Bible*).

It is a comfort to know that God intends for us to be sure of our salvation. He simply wants us to have faith, trusting Him and believing He will do everything He said. In this lesson you should learn:

- A. God is faithful and keeps His promises.
- B. He promises us eternal life.
- C. We can obtain His promises by faith.
- D. We can know we have the eternal life He promises.

Before you start, PRAY. Answer the questions briefly and in your own words. ASSURANCE means to have the evidence and proof to know for certain that something is true. (Remember: the Person behind the promise is its power!)

FAITHFULNESS refers to the character of someone who has shown he is trustworthy and can be relied upon to keep his word.

1. How is God described regarding His promises?

Hebrews 10:23 _____

2. If we don't believe or have faith, what happens to God's faithfulness?

2 Timothy 2:13 _____

3. What does God promise us?

1 John 2:25 _____

Titus 1:2 _____

4. How do we obtain or inherit the promises of God for ourselves?

Hebrews 6:12 _____

Faith is the key that opens the treasure chest of God's promises.

5. What pleases God?

Hebrews 11:5-6 _____

6. Where do we get our faith?

Romans 10:17 _____

Our feelings and emotions change from day to day. On some days we may not "feel" like God loves us. Do not be deceived by feelings and emotions. The devil can use them to put doubt (opposite of faith) in our minds to try to destroy our faith. We should not put our trust in feelings that will change.

7. Who or what should we trust in, that never changes?

1 Peter 1:24-25 _____

Hebrews 13:8 _____

While our feelings come and go, we can have our faith steady and solid by basing it on what God has said in His Word. Here are a few of the things God has told us.

8. When we come to Jesus, what is one thing He has promised NOT to do?

John 6:37 _____

9. What can separate us from the love God has for us?

Romans 8:38-39 _____

10. When we yield to God's Spirit and let Him lead us, who does the Bible say we are?

Romans 8:14 _____

Can you choose to not be the child of your parents? Yes No

11. We are told to love one another. What does the Bible say about those who have God's love?

I John 3:14 _____

I John 4:7 _____

Luke 17:3 _____

12. Because God (our Father) disciplines us when we go against His will, what does this tell us about our relationship with Him?

Hebrews 12:6-7 _____

13. How can we be sure that we know God?

I John 2:3 _____

14. If we have Jesus in our heart and believe in Him, what do we have?

John 3:16 _____

1 John 5:12 _____

15. Jesus is called the Good Shepherd. How do we know we are His sheep?

John 10:27-29 _____

What about those who appear to have been snatched out of God's hand?

I John 2:19 _____

16. Are you one of His sheep?

Yes No

How do you know for sure?

(For more about FAITH, read Hebrews 11:1-40.)

Notes:



Bible Study Part Four

The Power of the Holy Spirit

Begin memorizing Acts 1:8

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 1:4-5 – On one occasion, while He was eating with them, He gave this command, “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

Jesus did not want His disciples to immediately begin telling others about Him. He told them to wait for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, because He knew the POWER they were to receive was essential for the task ahead of them. In this lesson you should learn:

- A. Who the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is for.
- B. What the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is for.
- C. How to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Before you start, PRAY. Answer the questions briefly in your own words.

BAPTISM means to be immersed or dipped into something “pickled.”

So that you will not become confused, you need to know that there are several terms that refer to “the Baptism of the Holy Spirit,” and they all mean the same thing:

Acts 2:4 - “Filled with the Holy Spirit”

Acts 2:33 - “The promise of the Holy Spirit”

Acts 2:38 - “The gift of the Holy Spirit”

Acts 11:15 - “The Holy Spirit fell (came) on them” (‘Epi’ - see Question 1)

Luke 24:49 - “The promise of My Father”

1. Who does the Bible say the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is for?

Acts 2:38-39 _____

Has God called you to salvation? Yes No

Is this promise for you? Yes No

In John 14:16-17 Jesus told His disciples that the Spirit had been WITH them and would soon be IN them. The Spirit came inside them in John 20:22. After Jesus had been resurrected, He spoke to them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." Before we are saved, the Holy Spirit is WITH us, calling us to Jesus. When we are born again, the Spirit comes INSIDE us to teach and guide us. All true believers have the Holy Spirit living inside them. But Jesus went on to tell His disciples in Acts 1:8 that the Spirit would also be ON or UPON them.

‘En’ = In is Unique to the New Testament

‘Para’ = With (John 1:14) Old Testament Believers only had this

‘Epi’ = Upon (Acts 1:8) Old Testament Believers only had this also

2. What did Jesus tell His disciples they would receive when the Holy Spirit came ON them?

Acts 1:8 _____

The Greek word for **POWER** is "dunamis," where we get our word "dynamite" and "dynamic." It is also translated strength, ability, authority and might.

Jesus knows our weaknesses and that we do not have the strength we need to continually follow Him or do things for Him, so He supplies us with the POWER (*dunamis*) we need. We do not have to do it on our own!

3. The Father strengthens us through the power of His Spirit in our inner being for what purpose?

Ephesians 3:16-21 _____

4. After the disciples received this power, what would it give them the ability to be?

Acts 1:8 _____

WITNESS – To be a witness means to testify that something is true. The disciples went out testifying that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God and Savior of the world.

5. When Peter and John were released from jail, they gathered together and prayed. What did they pray for the Lord to enable them to do?

Acts 4:29 _____

6. The Lord answered Peter and John’s prayer almost immediately. What did the Lord do to give them the boldness that they asked for?

Acts 4:31 _____

7. When Saul (later his name was changed to Paul) was filled with the Holy Spirit, what did he begin doing right away?

Acts 9:17-20 _____

8. Who decides which spiritual gifts each of us will have in the body of Christ?

I Corinthians 12:18 _____

9. What are some of the gifts that the Spirit gives to different parts of the Body?

I Corinthians 12:8-10 & Ephesians 4:10-15 _____

10. What should we desire to do with our spiritual gifts?

1 Corinthians 14:12 _____



Bible Study Part Five

Trials

Begin memorizing I Corinthians 10:13

“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful: He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so you can stand up under it.”

I Peter 4:12-13 “Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when His glory is revealed.”

Soon after we are born again the Lord begins to TEST our faith. He often removes the emotions and feelings we have been experiencing to cause us to walk by faith. This does not mean He has deserted you! In this lesson you should learn:

- A. What trials are
- B. How God uses trials
- C. What we should do when we are in the middle of the trial

Before you start, PRAY. Answer the questions briefly and in your own words.

A **TRIAL** is when God allows temptations, tribulation (hardship or affliction), or our relationships with other people to **TEST OUR FAITH**. It is the process He uses to refine us, make our faith stronger and teach us to trust Him more. Note: Testing is for us, not God. He already knows!

1. Becoming a Christian does not mean we will stop having troubles. How did Jesus describe our lives in this world?

John 16:33 _____

2. What should be our attitude when we are having our faith tested by trials or temptations? Why?

James 1:2-4 _____

3. What are some results of trials?

Romans 5:1-5 _____

I Peter 1:6-7 _____

PATIENCE or **PERSEVERANCE** means steadfastly enduring adverse circumstances with joy.

CHASTEN or **DISCIPLINE** in the Greek means to train, educate, instruct, correct, reprove or admonish. It is a positive, loving method of eliminating evil and encouraging good. It is NOT harsh punishment.

4. When our Father disciplines or chastens us, He is demonstrating our relationship to Him. What is that relationship?

Hebrews 12:5-8 _____

5. Why does God discipline or chasten us?

Hebrews 12:9-10 _____

HOLINESS means morally perfect or free from sin.

6. What are the end results when our Father disciplines us?

Hebrews 12:11 _____
Another way God tests our faith is by allowing Satan to tempt us. Each time the Lord helps us to resist another temptation, we learn to trust Him more. He uses it to build our faith in Him.

TEMPTATION is when Satan tries to get us to sin. He may tempt us by something we see. He may tempt us by putting evil thoughts in our minds. He may tempt our flesh or our pride; he has many temptations. It is NOT sin to be tempted! It is only a sin when we give in to the temptation.

7. Satan's temptations are strong, but what promise do we have that is stronger?

I John 4:4 _____

8. Read I Corinthians 10:13 and answer these questions:

Are your temptations ever new, something no one else has gone through before?

Will the Lord allow your temptation to be so strong that you will be unable to resist it?

What will the Lord provide when you are tempted? _____

9. When we ask our High Priest, Jesus, for help with our temptations, how can we be sure He understands what we are going through?

Hebrews 4:15 _____

10. In Matthew 4:10-11 when Jesus was tempted by Satan, what did He use to respond to Satan's temptations?

Matthew 4:4, 7, 10 _____

11. What results when we give in to temptation?

James 1:13-15 _____

12. If we realize that we have sinned, what should we do about it? How will Jesus respond to us?

1 John 1:9 _____

II Corinthians 4:17-18 tells us three things about trials:

- A. They are trivial compared to the sufferings of Christ and the glory we are to have in heaven.
- B. They are temporary compared to the eternity Jesus has prepared for us.
- C. They are transforming. They cause us to be conformed to the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

13. What encouragement does the Lord give us concerning every event and circumstance that happens to us in the world?

Romans 8:28 _____

14. We see that God uses ALL the events in our lives to shape us and mold us. Whose likeness is He trying to make us into?

Romans 8:29 _____

Jesus told us in John 14:27 that the peace He gives us is not like the peace the rest of the world has.

His peace does not depend on favorable circumstances. His peace comes from knowing that regardless of how things appear, God is still in control and we can trust Him to see us through the rough times. The hardships we suffer are not a surprise to Him. They are part of His plan. By them He prepares us, not for a temporary life of comfort, but for an eternity of holiness.

If you find yourself in a trial, seek guidance from God's Word and from Him in prayer. You might pray something like this: "Lord, help me to learn from this; help me to become what You want me to be; help me to trust You through everything."

Notes:



Bible Study Part Six

Prayer

Begin memorizing Philippians 4:6-7

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God; and the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Jesus set an example in His prayers. The disciples saw that His prayers were intimate, like talking with a close friend. They wanted to learn how to have the same close relationship with the Father that Jesus did. In this Bible study you should learn:

- A. Reasons why your prayers are and are not answered.
- B. How to be sure your prayers are answered.
- C. The different types of prayer.

Before you start, PRAY! Answer the questions briefly and in your own words.

1. Why would God not give us what we ask Him for? (Give two reasons.)

James 4:1-3 _____

Psalms 66:18 – If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear.

Isaiah 59:2 – But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.

James 5:16 – Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

2. From the verses above, do you think God hears our prayers when we are living in continual disobedience to His word?

3. If there is sin in our lives, what should we do before bringing our requests to the Father?

1 John 1:9 _____

Read about the prayer of the tax collector in Luke 18:9-14.

What is one reason that the Lord wants to give us what we pray for?

John 16:24 _____

4. When we have needs that need to be met, what should our attitude be when we come to God in prayer?

Hebrews 4:16 _____

5. How can we pray so that we will be sure God will answer our prayers?

1 John 5:14-15 _____

6. When we don't know what God's will is or how we should pray about something, who will intercede for us?

Romans 8: 26-27 _____

7. What three words describe what we need to do to receive good gifts from our Heavenly Father?

Matthew 7:7-12 _____

Verse seven in the Greek could be better translated “keep seeking, keep knocking, keep asking.” In other words, be persistent!

Read the parable about persistence in Luke 18:1-8.

Sometimes God answers prayer with “WAIT!” If we believe our prayers are in accordance with God’s will and He doesn’t answer with a definite “yes” or “no,” we should be patient and wait for His answer. Keep asking! The Lord not only has the perfect answer, He has the perfect time to give His answer.

8. What happens when we pray for something according to the will of God in the name of Jesus?

John 16:23 _____

9. Why do we pray in the name of Jesus?

1 Timothy 2:5 _____

To ask “in the name of Jesus” means to come to the Father based on the righteousness and finished work of Jesus, not our own righteousness or merits.

10. What promises does Jesus give us if we will abide or remain in Him?

John 15:17 _____

ABIDE means to remain in one place and not change. A good example of abiding is a tree. To abide in Christ means to continue in His teaching and not wander from it.

11. What two things should we do to be sure that the Lord hears us?

Mark 11:24-25 _____

AMEN comes from the Hebrew word for “true” or “faithful.” When we use it in prayer, it is our way of saying we believe the Lord will answer our prayers.



Bible Study Part Seven

What God Expects

Begin memorizing Matthew 22:37

**“Love the Lord your God with all
your heart and with all your soul
and with all your mind.”**

Deuteronomy 10:12 – And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and soul. (See also, Micah 6:8)

As Christians, we should always remember what God expects from us. In this lesson you should learn:

- A. We should fear God.
- B. We should love Him and obey Him.
- C. We should serve Him from our hearts.

Before you start, PRAY. Answer the questions briefly and in your own words.

FEAR in this sense does not mean to be terrorized. It is a fear of the known, not a fear of the unknown. It can also include the idea of having reverence for His holiness and being in fearful awe of His majesty and glory.

1. What does God promise for those who fear Him?

Luke 1:50 _____

Acts 10:35 _____

2. When God judges the whole earth, who will He have rewards for?

Revelation 11:18 _____

Proverbs 1:7 – The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

Proverbs 9:10 – The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

3. What is produced by fearing the Lord?

Proverbs 15:16 - Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and turmoil with it. LOVE - The Greek word AGAPE, translated LOVE or CHARITY in some translations, means the selfless, giving love that comes from God. It is a sacrificing, caring love that seeks what is best for others and not itself.

Read 1 John 4:7-16 to get a better idea about AGAPE.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 defines AGAPE. Read it and substitute the name Jesus in the place of love or charity to see if He fits the definition. Then try it with your own name and see how it fits you!

4. Why do we love God?

1 John 4:19 _____

5. What did Jesus say the most important commandment was?

Mark 12:29-30 _____

6. What other commandment did He say was also important?

Mark 12:31 _____

7. If we are to love God, what else must we do?

1 John 4:20-21 _____

8. What will we do if we truly love the Lord?

John 14:23 _____

1 John 5:2-3 _____

To serve God involves putting our faith into action. Our faith demonstrates itself through our good works.

Read James 2:14-26

9. James said we should not just be hearers of God's Word. What else should we do?

James 1:22 _____

10. What does Jesus say about the man who hears His words and then puts them into action?

Matthew 7:24-27 _____

11. When we do good works or deeds for others, who does Jesus say we are really serving?

Matthew 25:31-40 _____

12. What was God's purpose for creating us in Christ Jesus?

Ephesians 2:10 _____

13. If a Christian does lots of good works, but love (agape) is not the reason for doing them, what does the Bible say about that person?

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 _____

14. The Bible says we are to do good works. Are we saved by doing them?

Ephesians 2:8-9 _____

Titus 3:5 _____

Proverbs 21:2-3: "Every man's way is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the hearts. To do righteousness and justice is desired by the Lord rather than sacrifice."

All works should be from inside your heart, not just an outward show for others to see. When your works are judged by the Lord, He does not see the outward appearance of the work, but the inward motive.

The outward actions of going to church, witnessing, doing good works, etc., do not make you a Christian.

Going to church does not make you any more of a Christian than going to McDonald's makes you a hamburger! You are a Christian because Jesus has come inside your heart. Your outward actions show others what has happened inside your heart.

15. When we serve God from a true heart, what will unbelievers do when they see our good works?

Matthew 5:16 _____

1 Peter 2:12 _____

Write out your memory verse below:

Jesus said, "Come to Me..." and "learn from Me..." (Matthew 11:28-29). You have come to Him and are learning from Him through Bible study and memorization. Keep it up. For Jesus also said, "**If you continue in My word, you are My disciples indeed**" (John 8:31).

God bless you as you continue to grow in Jesus.

Notes:



Bible Study Part Eight

The Bible

Begin memorizing 1 Peter 3:15

**“...Always being ready to make a defense
to everyone who asks you to give account for the hope
that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.”**

In this study you should learn that:

- A. The Bible is historically and prophetically reliable.
- B. God speaks to us through the Bible.

There are three tests proposed by C. Sanders for determining the historical reliability of any literature from antiquity. (The language is big, but it's simple.)

1. Bibliographic test
2. Internal test
3. External test

*All literature must be given the same test equally.
(Isn't that fair?)

1. The Bibliographic Test

1. The Bibliographic Test: This test examines the textual transmission by which the documents reach us. It asks the question, “How reliable are the copies we have in regard to the number of manuscripts, and the time interval between the original and the copies we have today?”

A. Number of Manuscripts

Why is this important? The more manuscripts we have of a literature, the more accurate the text is as to what it is asserting as true.

The **New Testament (NT)** has more bibliographic evidence than any other 10 pieces of classical literature put together - over 25,000 manuscripts for the NT compared with the next highest, 643 manuscripts for Homer’s Iliad. Also, the time span from the original writing to the earliest copy is very short (80 years) compared to other ancient literature. (For example, Caesar’s Gallic Wars were written around 50 B.C. but the earliest copies are 1,000 years older.)

B. Time Interval of original and the copies we have today.

- Why is this important? Some say that because the NT was not written down until well into the second century, myth and fallacy were interpolated or written into the text, since the eyewitnesses themselves did not record the events immediately. It is very important to the Christian faith to prove otherwise.

Evidence that the NT was written down within the first century while eyewitnesses were still alive:

- **John Rylands MS** (130 AD) - Portions of John
- **Bodmer Papyrus II** (150-200 AD) - Most of John
- **Chester Beatty Papyrus** (200 AD) - Major portions of NT
- **Diatessaron** (160 AD) - 4 Gospels. Small portions extant
- **Codex Vaticanus** (325-350 AD) - Nearly all of the Bible
- **Codex Sinaiticus** (350) - All of NT, half of OT

The number of manuscripts and the time interval of the NT is more reliable than any other piece of literature from ancient history.

Author	When written	Earliest copy	Time span	#of copies
Caesar	100-44 BC	900 AD	1,000 yrs	10
Plato	427-347 BC	900 AD	1,200 yrs	7
Aristotle	384-322 BC	900 AD	1,400 yrs	49
Homer	900 BC	400 BC	500 yrs	643
New Testament	40-100 AD	130 AD	30 yrs	25,000+

2. Internal Evidence Test

2. Internal Evidence Test:

When you apply this test to see if there are any textual inaccuracies, errors, fraud, or known factual inaccuracies, you will find that the NT documents are beyond reproach.

A. Textual Reliability: The NT is 98.33% pure.

“...only about one-eighth of all the variants had any weight, as most of them are merely mechanical matter such as spelling or style. Of the whole, then, only about one-sixth rise above ‘trivialities,’ or can in any sense be called ‘substantial variants.’ Mathematically this would compute to a text that is 98.33% pure.” (Geisler and Nix).

Types of errors:

1. Words together
2. Paragraph skip
3. Orator/Narrator

B. The Bible claims eyewitnesses, and unless it can be proven to be untrustworthy, the benefit of the doubt must go with the authors.

The burden of proof is with the accuser!
(For more on this, see Bible Study, part 2)

C. Acts 26:24-28 - There were plenty of eyewitnesses to keep the authors of the NT honest.

- FF Bruce writes, “And it can have been by no means so easy as some writers seem to think to invent words and deeds of Jesus in those early years, when so many of His disciples were about who could remember what had and had not happened.”

3. External Evidence Test

What do other authors of that time, apart from the documents under investigation, have to say about the reliability of the NT?

- **Eusebius quoting Papias, Bishop of Heirapolis,** “[Mark] paid attention to this one thing, not to omit anything that he had heard, not to include any false statement among them.”
- **Irenaeus (180)** “So firm is the ground upon which these Gospels rest, that the very heretics themselves bear witness to them, and, starting from these documents, each one of them endeavors to establish his own particular doctrine.” (Against Heresies III)
- **Clement, Ignatius, Josephus, Tatian, Tacitus, Suetonius, Thallus, Pliny the Younger...**

THE BIBLE, Internal Evidence

One of the most basic things a Christian should master is a proper understanding of the Bible. This is because as Christians, we base the content of our beliefs on the teachings of the Bible. But why should we? Why not some other religious or non-religious book? What makes the Bible so unique and authoritative? These are all good questions... Are there good answers? Yes. There is a tremendous amount of evidence to prove that the Bible is inspired and reliable. This includes (but is not limited to) the enormous number of manuscripts that were written in different areas of the world, at different times, by different authors, who did not speak with each other, yet, all writing the same thing and translating their manuscripts the same way.

Another proof of substantiation for the reliability of Scripture is prophecy, and the odds against these prophecies ever being fulfilled just by chance are astronomical. The Bible stands alone in its proclamation of Prophecy. Sixty percent of the Bible is Prophecy, and 80% of these have already been fulfilled literally. No other "holy book" comes close to placing its credibility on the line by giving exact names, dates, and circumstances hundreds, sometimes thousands, of years in advance.

For example, God gave the prophecy that a man named Cyrus would deliver the nation of Israel from the coming Babylonian captivity. Read Isaiah 44:28. God gave this prophecy about 200 years before it happened. This prophecy was fulfilled when Cyrus the Great came and freed the Jews from their captivity. In the Book of Daniel, we see the prophecy of the exact date that the Messiah would come into Jerusalem in His first coming. Read Daniel 9:25. The call to rebuild Jerusalem came on March 14, 445 BC, and Jesus came into Jerusalem on April 6, 32 AD -- the exact date it was prophesied to occur.

There are numerous other prophecies that prove that the Bible is reliable and therefore is to be trusted and obeyed, but space is too short to give a running list. Besides prophecy and the numerous manuscripts, there is the archaeological evidence that shows that the Bible is reliable and therefore, is to be trusted.

The following outline shows why the Bible is the inspired Word of God:

- a. The New Testament states that Jesus claimed to be God.
- b. Jesus' claim to be God was miraculously confirmed by:
 1. His fulfillment of prophecy;
 2. His sinless and miraculous life;
 3. His prediction & accomplishment of His resurrection from the dead.
- c. Therefore, Jesus is God.
- d. Whatever Jesus (who is God) teaches, is true.
- e. Jesus taught that the Bible is the Word of God.
- f. Therefore, the Bible is the Word of God.

Before you start, PRAY. Answer the questions briefly in your own words.

1. Jesus claimed to be God. (John 8:53-59; Exodus 3:14)

What did Jesus say that made the people try to stone Him? _____

2. Fulfilled prophecy and the Resurrection support this claim to be God.

What are some prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus?

Isaiah 7:14 and Matt. 1:21-25 _____

Micah 5:2 and Luke 2:4-7 _____

Isaiah 40:3; Mal. 3:1 & Matt. 3:1-2 _____

There are over 60 major messianic prophecies such as these. The odds of just 8 of these prophecies being fulfilled by one person are 1 in 10 to the 17th power. Of 48 prophecies, 1 in 10 to the 157th power.

(That is 1 with 157 “os” after it.) There are less atoms in the entire universe than this amount. According to the probability theorists, anything with lower odds than 1 in 10 to the 50th power is mathematically impossible. Besides prophecy, what other things support that the Bible is reliable?

Read John 20:11-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-8.

Who were some of the eyewitnesses of the resurrected Jesus?

How do we know that these witnesses are trustworthy?

Discuss why these witnesses are significant.

3. Therefore Jesus is God.

4. Whatever God teaches is true.

Since Jesus is God and God cannot err and the Bible is the Word of God, then the Bible cannot err.

5. Jesus (God the Son) taught that the Old Testament was the inspired word of God and He foretold the coming of the New Testament and that it would be just as authoritative (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; Luke 16:17 and 22:37; John 10:35; John 14:25-26 and 16:13).

A. We see the apostles viewed each other's writings as scripture.

1. Peter refers to Paul's letters as scripture (2 Peter 3:15-16).
2. Paul refers to Luke's writings as scripture (1 Tim. 5:18 [Luke 10:7]).

So, Jesus validated the Old Testament, as authoritative and the New Testament writers viewed each other's writings as scripture. This implies that the New Testament is also authoritative. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that both the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God.

B. How does the Bible explain inspiration?

2 Peter 1:20-21

God did not dictate the words of Holy Scripture to the writers, but rather, both God and men were involved in the writing of scripture. As the biblical authors wrote, the Holy Spirit carried them along and directed their words. (Acts 4:25) The personalities and writing styles of the Biblical writers were maintained even while they were being directed by the Holy Spirit.

Inspiration can be defined as the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit, who through the different personalities and literary styles of the chosen human authors, invested the very words of the original books of Holy Scripture alone and in their entirety, as the very Word of God. They are without error in all that they teach or imply, including history and science, and the Bible is therefore the infallible rule and final authority for faith and practice of all believers.

Read 2 Timothy 3:15-17.

Another translation for "inspired by God" is "God-breathed."

What portions of scripture were inspired of God? _____

What are some of the benefits that can come from the scriptures?

6. Therefore, the Bible is the Word of God.

Not only did God inspire the writers of scripture, He also enlightens the minds of those who read it so that they can understand it. This is the work of the Holy Spirit who illuminates the scriptures and guides believers to understanding. (1 Corinthians 2:12-17)

The Bible is God's communication to us. As such, it is our final authority.

What then should be our attitude toward the Bible?

James 1:21-25

- Spend some time praying and asking God to give you a hunger for reading the Bible and for the ability to understand it and apply it to your life.
- One of the most important habits that will help you grow as a Christian is to memorize scripture. Psalm 119:11 says, "I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I may not sin against You."
- Memorizing Bible verses and applying what they say to your life will help you fight temptation and do what is right.
- Consider memorizing the verse below to help remind you of the importance of scripture.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - *"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."*

For further study on the reliability of the Bible, read:

Josh McDowell	"Evidence That Demands a Verdict"
Norman Geisler	"When Skeptics Ask"
	"I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist"

Congratulations on making it to the end of this study! You have taken a big step in knowing how the Lord works in the life of a believer.

We hope you have been blessed by this eight-part Foundations teaching. We encourage you to use this resource to help disciple others and share the Good News about Jesus. You may be surprised at how much more you will learn about God when you teach His Word to others.

We also encourage you to get plugged into a local Bible-believing church in your area. When evaluating a good church, be sure to use the essentials you learned through this study.

If you live in Oahu, feel free to learn more about One Love Ministries at www.OneLove.org. We would love to help get you connected to other believers in our church to help you grow in the Lord.

May God richly bless you in Christ Jesus!



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