

# How to Study & Understand the Bible

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## Lesson 1 – Course Introduction

**How to Study and Understand the Bible** is an online *DeafPah!* course that helps prepare church members to serve in their congregation's ministry. The instructor for this course is Rev. David Bush.

You may download the video lessons and this study guide for free from [deafjesus.org](http://deafjesus.org).

The videos were originally prepared as VHS videotapes for the Deaf Institute of Theology.

The textbook that originally was the basis for this course is no longer in print. However, we have included in this student guide reference materials cited in the videos lessons.

While you watch the videos, take notes, especially when the teacher describes a list of topics. At the end of each video lesson, reinforce what you have learned by answering the questions in this student guide.

If you are studying this course with a mentor, share your answers with your mentor.

Now please watch Part 1 video.

### **Video: Study the Bible #1**

Hi, my name is David Bush. I come from Fort Wayne, IN. Why did I learn sign language? My fourth cousin is Deaf. She taught me. Later I joined a sign class at the Seminary. Then I studied one year at Gallaudet University. There at Gallaudet Pastor Dan Pokorny taught me. I vicared one year in Washing DC with Dan Pokorny and Bob Muller. I learned a lot.

The Gallaudet Deaf students taught me a lot. What else happened at Gallaudet? I met my wife. My wife's name is Barbara. She is Deaf. We have four children hearing: David, Hannah, Stephen, and Benjamin. Their names all come from the Bible. I work as a pastor for the Deaf.

First, I worked twelve years in Memphis, TN. Second, I have now worked ten years in Fort Wayne at St. John Lutheran Church for the Deaf. I also teach about Deaf Ministry three courses on Sign language. Where? At Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. I also have other jobs:

1. The Director of the Church Interpreter Training Institute (CITI).
2. A member of Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID).

I took the RID test. RID evaluated me. I passed and I now have my certificate. My job now is to teach you lessons called Studying and Understanding the Bible, How? Your book is named "How to Study and Understand the Bible." I am excited to help you study and understand the Bible.

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**QUESTIONS**

1. What are some of your favorite Bible stories? ...and why?

2. What are your favorite Bible verses? ...and why?

**Lesson 2 – Names for the Bible**

Watch Part 2 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #2**

Introduction

Your course pamphlet refers to itself as a study guide. I will sign “course pamphlet.” Okay? Fine.

The Bible. The “Jesus Book” is the sign for the Bible. The Bible is about who? Jesus. Right! That name “Jesus Book” fits perfectly, why? The Bible is about Jesus from the Beginning unto the end.

That Word ‘Bible’ really comes from which language? French, German, Spanish, Greek. Do you know? Greek, right. The Greek word means “book.”

You see the name on the “Holy Bible” really means the “Holy Book.” Our course will help us learn more about this “Holy Book.” Some other words you will see in the course pamphlet also mean Bible:

Holy Scripture, God’s Word, Holy Book, Old Testament, New Testament, Revelation, Word of God, Written Word of God, Revealed Word of God, Latin Word: “Scriptura”, Law, Gospel, Holy Writings. Each word means the Bible.

As you read your course pamphlet you will see. I need to explain some of my signs. Sometimes the word “passage” you will see in the course pamphlet. Sometimes the word “verse” you will see in the course pamphlet. Sometimes the word “text” you will see in the course pamphlet. I will sign all three words “passage, verse, and text” the same “verse.”

Our course pamphlet is sometimes called “a study guide.” The “How to Study and Understand the Bible” course pamphlet uses the word Scripture many times.

The word “Scripture” means the Bible. Right! But we will sign “Bible” on this video tape. When you read the course pamphlet, remember the word “Scripture” means “Bible.” Okay?

You are ready to begin. Wonderful!

We Pray – Lord Jesus, we want to learn more about You. The Bible can teach us about You. Help us work together. Then we will learn how to study and understand Your Word. Amen.

## QUESTIONS

1. The word BIBLE comes from a Greek word that means \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why do we Sign “Bible” as “Jesus-Book”?
  
3. What are some other names that mean the Bible?

<b>Lesson 3 – Course Outline</b>
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Watch Part 3 video.

### **Video: Study the Bible #3**

Through our course what will you learn? I will explain the topics in a general outline. Later I will explain each topic more deeply.

First, I will explain how we got the Bible. The English Bible was passed down how? Second, our course pamphlet has six chapters. I will explain briefly now the six chapters.

**Chapter One** – The Book Called the Bible. What will you learn? The Bible is divided into different categories.

**Chapter Two** – How was the Bible recorded? The Bible came from where? How did God give us the Bible? Who wrote the Bible?

**Chapter Three** – Principles of Interpretation. We will learn five principles – five rules to help us clearly understand the Bible. I will list now the five principles. Later I will explain clearly each principle. What principles? One, observe the intended meaning. Principle One is hard to explain. But later we will teach you. Two, let the Scripture interpret itself. Three, observe the law of context. Do you know what the word “context” means? Don’t worry. I will explain clear later about the context. Four, interpret Scripture in harmony with itself. Five, interpret Scripture christologically. Wow! Don’t be afraid of this big

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word. You can learn it. No problem. Some words are big, wow, yes. I will explain more about these big words later. Don't worry. Okay.

**Chapter Four** – Tools for Understanding the Bible. Tools? What do you mean – tools? A hammer or a saw? We need a hammer and a saw to build a house. Right? In the same way we need tools to build and understand more about the Bible. I will explain more about Bible student tools later.

**Chapter Five** – Becoming familiar with the Old and New Testament. I will teach about different kinds of English language in the Bible. The Bible has chapters about: history, prophecy, poetry, Gospels, Epistles, and Revelation.

**Chapter Six** – Getting to Work and Enjoying the Scriptures. In Chapter Six I will explain that a right attitude is very important as we proceed with Bible study. I will explain three basic questions that you can use in Bible Study. I will explain how the Bible functions.

Finally, I will discuss about studying the Bible with other people. I will explain more later as I teach you. You can learn many things. Now you must be patient. Please do the homework. When you finish homework, you will understand and learn more.

God's Holy Spirit will help you.

## **QUESTIONS**

A friend tells you that she wants to start reading the Bible to learn about God. What advice would you give to your friend to help her to get the most benefit from reading the Bible?

**Lesson 4 – How we got the Bible (part 1)**

Watch Part 4 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #4**

Now we will read in the Appendix of the course pamphlet, page 45 and following. This is good information about the Bible through many generations. And there are good pictures in course pamphlet.

How We Got the Bible.

- 1) During Jesus time, every Jewish town had part of the Bible the Old Testament. The people wrote on scrolls using the Hebrew language. Sometimes people used the Aramaic language. The scrolls weren't kept in a home. The people kept the Old Testament scrolls in the Synagogue a Jewish church. In His home town named Nazareth, Jesus read from a scroll in the Synagogue. How did they make a scroll? The people sewed animal skins together. A scroll might be between 10 and 30 feet long. Each scroll had only one Old Testament book like Genesis or Isaiah. During Jesus time, the Bible language was Greek. The Greek Old Testament was called the Septuagint the Greek Bible.
- 2) The Good News. The New Testament is the history about Jesus. They wrote the history about the first Christians. Some Christian leaders wrote Epistles (letters) to friends or to other congregations. These letters are in the New Testament with the history of Jesus.
- 3) Jerome translated the Bible 410 A.D. The language was Latin. Why? Because during 410, all people in school learned Latin (signed Rome). Jerome worked many years, more than 25 years. He translated the Bible from Hebrew and from Greek into Latin. The name for the Latin language Bible is the Vulgate.
- 4) Martin Luther – born 1483 died 1546 A.D. Martin Luther said, "God's word controls his decisions about right and wrong." Martin Luther taught the people that the Bible is very important. He translated the Bible for the people. He used the German language. Today many people still read his German Bible.
- 5) William Tyndale – born 1494 died 1536 A.D. Tyndale translated the Bible into the English language. He wanted the people to read the Bible, but most people did not understand Latin. 150 years before Tyndale, Wycliffe attempted to translate the Bible into English but could not make many copies. There was no printing press, theses were handwritten.
- 6) The first English Bible was printed in 1525. The Tyndale Bible was printed not in England but in Germany. In England the king forbid printing the Bible. The people hid the Bible and brought it from Germany into England. Many people wanted the Bible in their own language.
- 7) The King James Bible was printed in 1611. King James ruled England. He wanted a new Bible for the English people. The king chose 54 scholar people to translate the Bible. The people finished the work in 1611. The King James



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Version was a success. Many people accepted it. They were happy to read an English Bible.

- 8) The New International version – NIV – Bible was printed in 1984. The NIV is a new translation. One hundred scholars translated the whole Bible.

Later more translations will appear. Why? The English language changes but God Word – His truth never changes. We see God’s promise in Matthew 24:35 – Jesus said “Heaven and Earth will pass away, but God’s Word will never melt.”

**QUESTIONS**

*Also, please read the appendix at the end of this study guide. There you find important information about how we got the Bible.*

1. The chief original languages of the Bible are:

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

**Read Matthew 24:35**

2. What does God promise about His Word?

**Read Revelation 22:18–19**

3. God commands us NOT to do two things to the Bible.

v. 18 \_\_\_\_\_

v. 19 \_\_\_\_\_

3. What English version (translation) of the Bible do you like best? (Examples: KJV, NKJV, NIV, NIRV, etc.) Do you have a favorite Bible version? Which one? Why?

**Lesson 5 – Course Goal**

Watch Part 5 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #5**

What is our course goal? You will improve in the skill to study and understand the Bible yourself.

Many Christians read the Bible but do not understand it. They are frustrated. A person reads but does not understand. Later he gives up and does not study Bible from then on. Several Christians try to read the whole Bible. But later they will stop. Why? Understanding the Bible is hard. A Bible student must remember that he can't understand everything in the Bible. He must read and study again and again. The Holy Spirit will help him understand bit by bit. Be patient.

Our goal now is to help you learn. Our lessons will help you learn a better way to study. Our goal for this course is to help you improve as you study and understand.

We believe the Bible is from God. He tells us about Himself. We believe people can learn and understand the Bible. Each Christian can study himself. We believe each Christian can daily study and read the Bible. After a person learn the rules about how to analyze the Bible, then he can have much joy as he studies and understands God's Word.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Do you have any books that you use to help you study the Bible and understand it better? (Examples: A Bible dictionary, a concordance, commentaries, a Bible with maps and footnotes that explain the verses.)

If your answer is yes, what books do you have?

Which of those books help you the most?

2. Are there internet websites that help you understand the Bible better?

If your answer is yes, what Bible websites do you often use?

*We recommend these Bible websites:*

***[biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com)***

***[biblehub.com](http://biblehub.com)***

***[blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)***

**Lesson 6 – HOW THE BIBLE IS ORGANIZED: Key Concepts**

Watch Part 6 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #6**

The book called the Bible.

I will tell you a story. In the past did you ever lose your keys? I lost my keys recently. For four weeks I searched and searched. Finally, I gave up. I stopped searching. I was frustrated and sad. My office I can't open. My house I can't lock. I can not drive my car and many other things. I lost more than ten keys. But one day, when I went to my office, I noticed the keys near the TTY. I looked. My keys! Wow! Someone found my keys and put them in my office. Yes! Fine, but who found my keys? Anyway, I thank you Lord!

Keys are important. Keys open doors. Each chapter in our course book has key concepts.

What are key concepts? Key concepts are important ideas. Why? Key concepts help us open the Bible ideas for us. Suppose an idea is closed? We cannot understand. But if we have a key concept, we can open the idea. That means we can understand the Bible verse clearly.

Chapter one has two key concepts.

1. First Key concept – God gives us the Holy Bible. It is His gift to us. We learn about God from the Bible. The Bible is the only truth about God our Savior.
2. Second Key concept – as we read the Bible, the Holy Spirit makes strong our faith. The Holy Spirit will bless our life.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read 2 Timothy 3:16**

This lesson teaches two key concepts for understanding the Bible:

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 7 – Open your Bible...**

Watch Part 7 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #7**

Imagine you have entered a library. You look around there are many books. Some famous people wrote the books. Some Deaf people also write books. You want to read one but which one will you choose? There are many books, deciding is hard. Do you leave the library and give up because there are too many books? No. You pick one you like. You start with that one. Later you can read another book.

The Bible is like a library. We see one book but we also see 66 different books inside. The course pamphlet has a picture. The picture shows the different books in the Bible. Many Christians want to read the Bible but cannot decide where to start. Which book? Maybe they give up. They do not read the Bible, period. I like to read the Bible. I can think of the same idea. I go to a restaurant. I read the menu the list of foods. It is hard to decide. I want to taste all of them but I can't order all the items. I pick one thing. I know later I can come again, and again, until I taste everything on the list of items. I read the Bible the same as I read a menu. I decide and pick one book. I study that one book. I know later that I can pick another book. I choose again and again until I finish studying every book in the Bible. You can think about the Bible like a menu

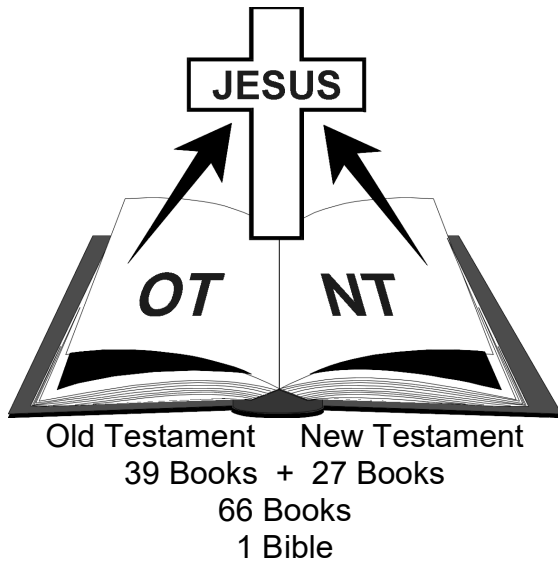
A Christian can pick one book. You can study that and finish it. Then you can begin to study another book. On and on. There are 66 books in the Bible. It takes a long time for you to finish studying every book. Remain patient. Enjoy your study the same as you enjoy your food at a restaurant.

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<b>Old Testament</b>	<b>New Testament</b>
<p><b>History Books</b>            Genesis            Exodus            Leviticus            Numbers            Deuteronomy            Joshua            Judges            Ruth            1 Samuel            2 Samuel            1 Kings            2 Kings            1 Chronicles            2 Chronicles            Ezra            Nehemiah            Esther</p> <p><b>Poetry Books</b>            Job            Psalms            Proverbs            Ecclesiastes            Song of Solomon</p> <p><b>Prophecy Books</b>            Isaiah            Jeremiah            Lamentations            Ezekiel            Daniel            Hosea            Joel            Amos            Obadiah            Jonah            Micah            Nahum            Habakkuk            Zephaniah            Haggai            Zechariah            Malachi</p>	<p><b>History Books</b>            Matthew            Mark            Luke            John            Acts of the Apostles</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Gospels</b></p> <p><b>Epistles</b>            Romans            1 Corinthians            2 Corinthians            Galatians            Ephesians            Philippians            Colossians            1 Thessalonians            2 Thessalonians            1 Timothy            2 Timothy            Titus            Philemon            Hebrews            James            1 Peter            2 Peter            1 John            2 John            3 John            Jude</p> <p><b>Prophecy/Apocalypse</b>            Revelation</p>

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QUESTIONS



1. *"The Bible is like a library."*  
Explain what that means.
2. *"Reading the Bible is like eating at a restaurant."* Explain what that means.

<b>Lesson 8 – The Old Testament</b>
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Watch Part 8 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #8**

I explained that the Bible has many books. The Bible is like a library.

The Bible has two main sections.

The first section is called Old Testament.

The word ‘testament’ means a covenant or a promise.

The Old Testament has 39 books. Those 39 books have many promises. But one main promise is most important. The one main promise God will send a Savior someday. The Old Testament’s 39 books are divided into four categories:

1. Law – five books
2. History – twelve books
3. Poetry – five books
4. Prophecy – seventeen books

**QUESTIONS**

1. What does the word TESTAMENT mean?

2. What are the four main parts of the Old Testament?

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(c) \_\_\_\_\_

(d) \_\_\_\_\_

3. The Old Testament has many promises. What is the most important promise in the Old Testament?

**Lesson 9 – The New Testament**

Watch Part 9 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #9**

The Bible's second section is called the New Testament.

The New Testament has 27 books. Some books in the New Testament are letters called Epistles. The New Testament explains that God has sent a Savior. The Savior is named Jesus. The New Testament tells us that God has kept His promise. God has fulfilled His promise. The New Testament's 27 books are divided into four categories:

1. The Gospels – four books
2. History – one book (plus the four Gospel books)
3. The Epistles – twenty one books
4. The Apocalypse (Revelation) – one book

**QUESTIONS**

1. The New Testament reports that God kept (fulfilled) the most important promise that He made in the Old Testament. What did God do?

2. What are the four main parts of the New Testament?

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(c) \_\_\_\_\_

(d) \_\_\_\_\_



**Lesson 10 – The Canon of Scripture – How we got the Bible (part 2)**

Watch Part 10 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #10**

Sometimes the categories overlap.

Example: The Gospels and History. The Gospel's books are a history about Jesus. The Old Testament tells stories about God. The stories explain how God associated with His people. The New Testament tells stories about His Son Jesus. The stories explain about Jesus' life, His teachings, His suffering, His death, His resurrection and His promise. He promised that He will come again.

The Old Testament and New Testament – all 66 books are included in the Canon. The Canon means a list of books. The Holy Spirit inspired all these books. The word "inspired" means "God breathed." God the Holy Spirit informed men. The men wrote down God's Word. The Church put together the 66 books into the Canon. The Church accepted this list. All 66 books in the Bible are God's Word. The books in the Bible have names. Sometimes the name honors an historical event. Sometimes the name honors the person who wrote the book. Sometimes it honors the person or the group who received the book.

**QUESTIONS**

Read the article about the Canon of Scripture in the appendix of this student guide.

**Read:**

**2 Timothy 3:16**

**2 Peter 1:20–21**

1. The "Canon of Scripture" means what?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. The word INSPIRED means what?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Who inspired the writers of the 66 books of the Bible?

**Lesson 11 – Ways to use your Bible.**

Watch Part 11 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #11**

We use the Bible for three basic things:

1. Doctrine. Doctrine means teachings. The Bible teaches us about God and the Savior and about the Trinity which is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It teaches us about Baptism, Lord's Supper, and etc. The Bible teaches us about God. We ask, "Who is God?" The Bible answers. We ask, "Who is Jesus?" The Bible gives the answer. We ask, "How can we go to Heaven?" The Bible answers: John 3:16, "God loved the world so much. He sent His Son. Any person who believes in Jesus Christ, he will not die, no. He has eternal life." The Bible answers are what we call Doctrine.
2. Worship. We use Bible for lessons in church. We sing some songs from the Bible. We learn about worshiping God from the Bible. We learn prayers, like the Lord's Prayer from the Bible, etc. We use the Bible for worship in our worship in church and in our home.
3. To lead us to life. To live by. To learn about Christian behavior. The Ten Commandments are from the Bible. Jesus words, "Love one another" are from the Bible. "Forgive one another" is from the Bible. The Bible teaches us to live right approach to our God.

**QUESTIONS**

1. The word DOCTRINE means what?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How do we get eternal life (as the Bible teaches)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How does the Bible help us worship?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. How does the Bible show us the way to live?

**Lesson 12 – Steps for studying the Bible**

Watch Part 12 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #12**

Christians can study the Bible in many ways. One Bible teacher suggested four steps. The four steps help us study the Bible. When we follow the four steps, our life can change.

Step 1 is an expectant, hopeful approach to study the Bible. Step 1 means that we know God wants us to learn about Him. We study the Bible with faith. We are ready to learn and follow the Lord.

Step 2 is an honest inquiry approach. We ask questions. Step 2 means that we read the Bible passage. Then we ask, “Lord, you are telling me what?” Repent. Trust. You gave me what promise? You teach us to live the right way? You encourage me with Your Word? We ask God to help us to use these verses the right way.

Step 3 is a responsive prayer approach. Before we study we pray to God for help. After we read and study, we thank God for His Word. We can pray about the things that we learned from the Bible verse. Prayer means talking to God.

Step 4 is a purposeful action. We study with a purpose. We set up a goal for action. God’s word is not only for our head. It is not only for our heart. God’s Word is for our hands and our feet. God’s Word encourages us to action. God’s Word encourages us to go and tell others about Him. When we read and study the Bible, we internalize God’s Word. We put it in our mind. When we follow God’s Word and obey the Bible, we externalize God’s Word. God’s life reflects from us. I will explain “internalized” – inside our head and heart and “externalized” – outside our heart as other people can see our action. My example is that we are like the moon. We see the sun. The sun has its own light. Right. We see the moon. The moon does not have its own light. The moon receives its light from the sun internalize. Then the moon reflects that light to the earth externalize. We show God’s light to other people. The same. We receive God’s Word and learn from the Bible internalize. Our life, our actions, and our talk reflect God’s Word to other people externalize.

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**QUESTIONS**

1. This lesson teaches four steps for studying the Bible:

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(c) \_\_\_\_\_

(d) \_\_\_\_\_

2. We internalize God's Word, how?

3. We externalize God's Word, how?

<b>Lesson 13 – Chapters &amp; Verses</b>
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Watch Part 13 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #13**

The Bible has 66 books. Each book has some chapters. Each chapter has some verses. Not every book has chapters.

Chapter and verse numbers were added later by Bible students. The chapter and verse numbers help people find information.

With chapter and verse numbers, you can easily find the right place in the Bible. But there is one problem. The chapter and verse numbers do not always follow paragraph and sentence breaks. Chapter and verse breaks are not the same way that some people think.

Old translations, like KJV – King James Version, follow chapter and verse breaks.

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New translations, like NIV – New International Version, follow sentence and paragraph breaks.

When you compare KJV and NIV, you can see that two of them are different.

The King James Version (KJV) of the Bible starts each verse on a new line.

974      CHAPTER 1

1 *Preface.*    5 *Birth of John and Jesus foretold.*    57 *John the Baptist born.*  
67 *Prophecy of Zacharias.*

**F**ORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

2 <sup>b</sup>Even as they delivered them unto us, which <sup>f</sup>from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word;

3 <sup>a</sup>It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee <sup>e</sup>in order, <sup>v</sup>most excellent Thē-ōph'i-lūs,

4 <sup>a</sup>That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

5 ¶ **T**HERE was <sup>v</sup>in the days of Hēr'od, the king of Jū-dæ'á, a certain priest named Zách-a-ri'as, <sup>v</sup>of the course of Á-bí'á: and his wife was of the daughters of Aár'on, and her name was È-lis'a-béth.

6 And they were both <sup>v</sup>righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

7 And they had no child, because that È-lis'a-béth was barren, and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God <sup>v</sup>in the order of his course,

Most modern translations format the verses into whole paragraphs, and they add titles to each section, as we see here in the New International Version (NIV).

**LUKE 1:1**

*Introduction*

*1:1–4Ref—Ac 1:1*

**1** Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled<sup>a</sup> among us, <sup>2</sup>just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first<sup>a</sup> were eyewitnesses<sup>b</sup> and servants of the word.<sup>c</sup> <sup>3</sup>Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account<sup>d</sup> for you, most excellent<sup>e</sup> Theophilus,<sup>f</sup> <sup>4</sup>so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.<sup>g</sup>

*The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold*

<sup>5</sup>In the time of Herod king of Judea<sup>h</sup> there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah;<sup>i</sup> his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. <sup>6</sup>Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly.<sup>j</sup> <sup>7</sup>But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years.

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**QUESTIONS**

1. Original Bible writers did not write the Bible with chapter and verse numbers. Later Bible students added those numbers. Why?
  
2. How many chapters are in these books of the Bible:

Genesis____	Matthew____
Psalms____	Mark____
Isaiah____	Philemon____
Jonah____	Revelation____
  
3. Psalm 1 has how many verses\_\_\_\_
  
4. Psalm 117 has how many verses\_\_\_\_
  
5. Psalm 119 has how many verses\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 14 – The best way to read and study the Bible**

Watch Part 14 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #14**

Ready by paragraphs. Read a full paragraph. It will help you understand the Bible verse more clearly. When you are reading the Bible with only one verse, you can't understand the verse right way. You read verse by verse, but many times do not understand the verse. Maybe the verse is not a full sentence or not a full idea. Maybe the verse belongs to the previous paragraph. Or maybe the sentence belongs to the next paragraph. You need to read more than one verse. When you read the Bible, you can understand more clearly. When you choose a Bible with paragraph breaks and not verse by verse. Some Bibles you can use are:

1. God's Word for the Nations,
2. The New International Version,
3. Today's English Version,
4. The Bible for the Deaf – published by Baker.
5. The Concordia Study Bible.

Read whole chapters together. Read more than one chapter. Sit down and read several chapters before you stop. This is important in the Old Testament. Why? The Old Testament books have many chapters. Some Old Testament books you can read and read for hours.

The New Testament is different. Many books in the New Testament are short. You can sit and read one book in one hour or less. The Epistles – letters – in the New Testament are short. It is easy to read all the chapters. It is a good idea to sit and read all the chapters in the New Testament letters. It helps you understand the Bible more clearly. When you read the whole book or letter, you can see the purpose of the book more clearly. In the New Testament the Gospels are long. The four Gospels – each one – have many chapters. Maybe you will not have enough time to read the whole book. You can divide it up and read two or three chapters then later read two or three more.

In the new translations the NIV or TEV, etc. – you can easily see the paragraphs. These new translations have short sentences between the paragraphs. The short sentences explain the paragraphs. These short sentences look like titles. These short sentences are called "headings". Headings help us understand more clearly the Bible.

**How to Study & Understand the Bible**  
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**QUESTIONS**

1. Which is the best way to read and study the Bible? (Check the right answer.)

- Each verse separately by itself
- Whole paragraphs and chapters

2. Why is that the best way to read the Bible?

3. Some Bible versions (translations) have chapter headings. How do those chapter headings help us study the Bible with greater understanding?



<b>Lesson 15 – Meditating on Scripture</b>
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Watch Part 15 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #15**

Meditate on a single verse.

“Meditate” means to stop and think about each verse. Think about the words. What do the words mean? Think about the verse. Who is talking? What does God say in the verse? What must you do? Use an idea from that verse and say a prayer to God.

Reading God’s Word from the Bible and praying is meditation. The Bible reminds us that God is present. God is with us in His Word.

John wrote the Gospel with his name – John. John explained, “In the beginning was God, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Later in verse 14 John explains, “The Word became flesh and lived among people.”

We can read in Matthew 18:20, Jesus promised, “When two or three people meet together, there He is with them.”

The Bible reminds us that God is present with His Word.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What does it mean to **meditate** on a Bible verse? How should we meditate on Bible verses?

**Read John 1:1–14**

2. Who is “The Word”?

**Read Matthew 18:20**

3. As Christians come together to study God’s Word and prayer, who else also joins that group?

**Lesson 16 – Divine Authorship of the Bible**

Watch Part 16 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #16**

**Key Concepts**

In the past, God did important things for His people and for us.

The Bible informs us about God's actions. The Bible is God's Word. Today God still communicates with His people. God communicates to us through the Bible. What is God's goal? He wants to save us. God inspired men to write the Bible. Why? God wants us to learn about His plan. His plan shows us His love. God's plan? To save us through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.

The Bible is not like other books in the world.

God inspired Moses beginning about 1500 B.C. Moses died and later God inspired other people. They wrote some of the Bible books. Those men died. Later God inspired other men to write His words. For more than 1500 years God chose men, prophets, kings, shepherds, and others. Finally, after 1500 years the Bible was finished. But Bible is not like other books. Even though many men for many years wrote the Bible, still God is the writer. How? He gave the words to all the different men during those years. God permitted the men to write in their own language.

In the beginning the first language used was Hebrew. Some men used Aramaic. Hebrew and Aramaic are the languages used in Old Testament. In the New Testament the men use the Greek language for New Testament.

How did God write the Bible? Chapter 2 will help us understand.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Today God communicates with us, how?
  
2. What is the most important thing that God tells us the Bible?
  
3. How is the Bible different than all other books?
  
4. If Moses and other people wrote various parts of the Bible, how is God the real author of the Bible?

**Lesson 17 – How God Communicates With People**

Watch Part 17 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #17**

The Bible is God's revelation of Himself. Why did God give us His Word?

He wanted to reveal himself to all people in the world.

Revelation means to inform people about things they can't know. God's tells His people to proclaim His Word. God used a variety of means to communicate with people. God sometimes communicated to his people with a vision.

God came to Abraham in a vision (Genesis 15:1). Sometimes God communicated to his people in a dream. We can read about this story in Matthew 2:19. God came to Joseph in a dream. God told Joseph to leave Egypt. He should go home and take Mary and Jesus home.

In Old Testament we read that God gave His word to a prophet. God sent His word to Jeremiah. We can read about this in Jeremiah 1:4-6.

John explains in his Gospel that God sent an angel. The angel came to John. We can read about this in Revelation 1:1-2.

God used different ways to communicate to His people. Sometimes God used visions, sometimes He used dreams, sometimes God used a prophet. Sometimes God used sent angels to communicate with His people.

## QUESTIONS

1. The word REVELATION means what?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. In Bible times, God communicated with people various ways. In the following verses, how did God communicate? (Circle the right answer.)
  - (a) Genesis 41:15–25  
(angel - dream - prophet - vision - voice - writing)
  - (b) Exodus 24:12  
(angel - dream - prophet - vision - voice - writing)
  - (c) Judges 6:7–10  
(angel - dream - prophet - vision - voice - writing)
  - (d) Judges 6:11–12  
(angel - dream - prophet - vision - voice - writing)
  - (e) 1 Samuel 3:1–10  
(angel - dream - prophet - vision - voice - writing)
  - (f) Matthew 2:11–12  
(angel - dream - prophet - vision - voice - writing)
  - (g) Luke 1:26–38  
(angel - dream - prophet - vision - voice - writing)
  - (h) Acts 9:10–12  
(angel - dream - prophet - vision - voice - writing)
  - (i) Acts 11:4–6  
(angel - dream - prophet - vision - voice - writing)
  - (j) Acts 11:27–29  
(angel - dream - prophet - vision - voice - writing)

**Lesson 18 – Powerful Acts of God**

Watch Part 18 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #18**

The Bible reveals God's mighty acts. Sometimes God reveals himself in a big way. He shows his power. Every time God reveals himself, we learn more about His plan to save us.

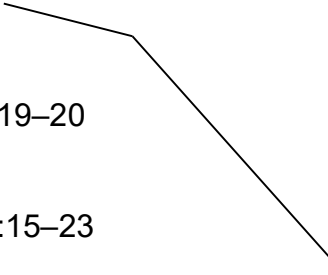
God demonstrates His love, grace, and mercy. God also demonstrates His anger against sin. There are five mighty acts of God. These five events are important to help understand God's plan for salvation and His love for us.

1. God creates the world. You can read about this in the first book in the Bible. The book's name is Genesis. Read chapter 1 and 2.
2. God frees His people from Egypt and gives His people named Israel and His Law on Mount Sinai. This event is named Exodus. The book called Exodus tells the story about the Exodus, people leaving the Egypt.
3. God punished Israel. They did not obey God. He forced them leave their home and go to a foreign country named Babylon. Later, God lets his people return home. The story is in the books named Kings and Ezra.
4. God revealed Himself in His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus became man, was born and lived among God's people for about 30 years. Then he died, and on the third day rose. These great events, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John put down in four books. The four books are called Gospels.
5. God's fifth mighty act happened on Pentecost. God sent the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gave men power. Now the men could understand more clearly God's Word. Those men preached to many people. 3000 people became Christian in one day. Wow! You can read about God's great action in the book called Acts.

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**QUESTIONS**

**Match powerful acts of God with sections of the Bible that describe those acts:**

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| (1) Genesis 1 & 2                 | (a) God revealed Himself in His Son Jesus Christ, through His life, crucifixion, death, and resurrection. |
| (2) Exodus 12–14; 19–20           | (b) God freed His people from Egypt & gave His Law on Mt Sinai.   |
| (3) 2 Chronicles 36:15–23         | (c) God created the world.  |
| (4) Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John | (d) God sent the Holy Spirit's power to the Disciples to help them preach about Jesus to the world.       |
| (5) Acts 2                        | (e) God punished Israel in the Babylonian captivity.  |
- 

**Lesson 19 – God’s Messengers**

Watch Part 19 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #19**

God completely revealed Himself by sending His son, Jesus Christ.

In Old Testament God spoke to the prophets. The prophets told God’s people His Word. The prophets wrote God’s Word and saved that Word.

Now, we have the Word that God gave to His prophets.

During the 400 years before Jesus was born, God did not speak to His prophets. God was quiet, but one night an angel appeared to Mary and explained. “You will have a son. You will call him Jesus.” Wow! Mary was young and humble. She was not married. She had not yet lived with a man. Mary was puzzled. She asked the angel, “How can that happen? I have no husband?” The angel explained “God will come to you. The Spirit from God will come over you. Born from you is His Son. People will call the Son “Immanuel”. Why? ”Immanuel” means “God with us”. And later the angel was right! Mary had a son. His name? Jesus.

Now God does not use the prophets. God uses His Son. His Son revealed God to us. His Son informs us about God’s love and plan to save us. In the Bible book called Hebrews, 1:1-2. We read, “In past God spoke to us. How? The prophets told us God’s Word. Many times, and in various ways in dreams, visions, angels etc. God spoke. But now, during these last days, God spoke to us thru His Son Jesus.”

I think that the people when they saw Jesus were very excited. Other people were not happy to see Jesus. Later the unhappy people killed Jesus on the cross.

Imagine that you lived long, long ago. Imagine that you saw Jesus. Question? Were you happy and excited or unhappy? Which?

**QUESTIONS**

**Read Hebrews 1:1–3**

1. In the Old Testament times, whom did God send to tell people about Him?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. In the New Testament times, who showed us what God is like?

**Lesson 20 – Why God gave us the Bible**

Watch Part 20 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #20**

For what purpose do we have Scripture? Why did God give us Scripture?

A story: maybe you have had this experience. My wife told me to buy milk, butter and hot dogs. Fine. I drove to the store. I buy the hot dogs. I buy the butter. I drive home. My wife looks in the bag. My wife asked me, “Why did you not buy the milk?” I forgot about the milk. I was embarrassed.

Do you forget? I forget again and again. But my wife? She never forgets. Never. Why? My wife writes down a list on paper.

God does not want us to forget. God gave His Word to Adam. For many years people remembered God’s Word. But later the people forgot and became evil. Finally, God became angry and sent a flood to destroy the world. Only eight people remained. Noah and his family were safe on the Ark.

God always told His people to remember. But they forgot. In the same way Mom and Dad tell their children but the children forget. Mom and Dad must tell them again and again. God wants His people to remember His Word. God wants His people to remember His work and mighty actions. God is the same as our father and mother, He wants us to remember to act right. He wants us to learn to live right.

In New Testament God inspired Paul to write a letter to Timothy. Paul said, “Since you were a baby you know the Holy Scripture. That Scripture makes you wise about God’s plan to save you. God inspired men to write the Scripture. All Scripture is from God. You can use the Scripture to teach others about God’s plan to save people. You can use Scripture to show people their sin. You can use Scripture to correct people. You can use Scripture to train people to live holy and right before God. When you use and study Scripture you become skilled and ready to do good works.” 2 Timothy 3:15-17

**QUESTIONS**

1. Why did God give us His Word, the Bible? (What is the MOST IMPORTANT reason?)

**Read 2 Timothy 3:15–17**

2. These verses list important ways the Bible helps us. Write that list here:



**Lesson 21 – Inspiration of Scripture**

Watch Part 21 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #21**

Christians believe that the Bible is special. The Bible is different. It is not like other books. Men's words are in other books. God's Word is in the Bible.

The Bible is 'divine.' Divine means it comes from God. Other books are human books. Human means it comes from people.

The Bible is inspired. The word "inspired" has two meanings.

1. Inspired means: Example: Did you see the Rocky Mountains before? Wow! The mountains are beautiful. Many people see the mountains and they feel inspired. They feel something. Some people feel inspired and take a picture of the mountains. Some people feel inspired and send a post card with a mountain picture to a friend. Some might even write a poem or a song. Why? The beautiful mountain inspired them. They must do something. The first meaning for inspiration does not come from the Bible.
2. The second meaning, what does inspiration mean? What do we mean when we say "the Bible is God's inspired Word?" I will explain. A long time ago there was a man named Isaiah. He works hard every day. One day God came to him. God opened up heaven. Isaiah could see God and all the angels in Heaven. Isaiah becomes afraid and he wanted to leave. He thought that he would die. Why? He was a sinner and was afraid God would punish him. But God sent an angel and God forgave Isaiah. Isaiah saw heaven, wow! Beautiful. God talked to Isaiah. Isaiah became inspired. He became a prophet for God. Now he listened to God. He wrote God's Word, not his own words. Many years later Isaiah died. But people did not forget Isaiah and they did not forget God's Word. Why? Isaiah wrote down God's Word. Many years later Jesus read from a book of Old Testament. The book was called Isaiah. Paul also saw God. Paul became inspired. He wrote many letters to God's people. God did not want His people to forget His word. God inspired Paul and Paul wrote many books for the Bible. Name one letter that Paul wrote. He sent one to a man named Timothy. There Paul explained the word inspired. Inspired means "God breathed". 2 Timothy 3:16 Remember the story about Adam? God made Adam from clay. But Adam was not yet alive. Then God breathed and Adam became alive. God's Word is God's breath. The Word can make you alive. Peter knew that Jesus' words had eternal life. In the book named John Peter says to Jesus, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." Now Christians believe God's Word.

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We say God's Word is special and different from other books. The Bible is inspired. God gave us His Word. His Word is true. It is never wrong. In His Word we find eternal life.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read 2 Timothy 3:15–17**

1. The word INSPIRIED has two different meanings:

(a) The world's meaning

(b) The Bible's meaning

**Read John 6:66–69**

2. In these verses, Peter says that Jesus' words give us what?

**Lesson 22 – Bible Writers**

Watch Part 22 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #22**

God used many different writers to write His Word in the Bible. These men had many different jobs. Some worked in the temple for God. Some were prophets, some were kings, some were shepherds, some were farmers, some caught fish, one man was a doctor, and others.

Even though each man's job was different, each man was the same. How? God called each man. God gave each man another job. What job? God told each man to proclaim His Word to God's people. Each man must write down God's Word, then the people would not forget God: not forget His love, His blessing and His plan for salvation. God used these men. Now we have the Bible. The Bible is important for us. It is important that we read the Bible every day. Then we will not forget God and His Word. Then we will not forget His love. Then we will not forget Jesus. We study God's Word. We study God's Word. Then God can use us to help others learn His Word.

A story: The first time we meet a person, perhaps we don't understand him well. Then we learn to know the person and we understand him better. Maybe we become good friends. We meet again and again. We love our friend more. Now we understand him clearly.

The same idea, we meet God in His book. Soon we know Jesus well. We learn more and more. We understand Jesus clear. Why? Because we meet Jesus every day in the Bible.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read 2 Peter 1:12–21**

1. What were various occupations (jobs) of the writers of the Bible?
  
2. Why are their words in the Bible really God's words?
  
3. It is important that we read and study the Bible every day. Why?

**Lesson 23 – The Word of God**

Watch Part 23 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #23**

The Bible is the Word of God. We learn from John, chapter 1:1 that long ago, when God made Heaven and earth, “The Word was with God. The Word was true God.” Later in the book called John chapter 1:14, we read “The Word became flesh and lived among people.” The Word of God is Jesus. We also called the Bible the Word of God or God’s Word.

What does the Word of God mean?

Word of God has four different meanings:

1. Sometimes the Word of God means God’s power. We read in Psalm 33:6 “By the Word of the Lord, God made the Heavens and the stars with His breath.”
2. Sometimes Word of God means Jesus – God’s Son. We read Revelation 19:13 “He is dressed in a robe – the robe is dipped in blood – His name is Word of God.”
3. Sometimes Word of God means the Gospel story. We read in Ephesians 1:13, “And God included you in Christ when you hear the Word of truth – the Gospel of Salvation.”
4. Sometimes the Word of God means the Bible. We read 2 Peter 1:19 “And we have the Word from the prophets made more certain. You will benefit when you pay attention to the Word, the same as a light helps you when you stand in a dark place.”

## QUESTIONS

This lesson describes four different meanings for “WORD OF GOD.”

(1) **Read:**

**Psalm 33:6**

**Isaiah 55:10–11**

**2 Peter 3:3–7**

In these verses “Word of God” means \_\_\_\_\_

(2) **Read:**

**John 1:1 & 14**

**Revelation 19:11–16**

In these verses “Word of God” means \_\_\_\_\_

(3) **Read:**

**Ephesians 1:13**

**Colossians 1:3–5**

In these verses “Word of Truth” means \_\_\_\_\_

(4) **Read:**

**Ephesians 6:17**

**2 Peter 1:19**

**Hebrews 4:12**

In these verses “Word of God” means \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 24 – Authority of Scripture**

Watch Part 24 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #24**

The Bible has authority. What does that mean?

Christians believe that the Bible is only true book about God. Christians believe that we can learn about God's plan for salvation only from the Bible. When we teach about God we must teach and use the Bible. Many people write books about God. But we must compare those books and the Bible.

All other books about God and our Lord Jesus must agree with the Bible or the other books are wrong.

We read in John 10:35, "the word of God came and the Scripture cannot be broken." People make mistakes. People can have wrong opinions. But the Bible is never wrong. Jesus said "You are wrong because you do not know the Scriptures or the God's power."

Martin Luther required that the Bible is first. The Bible is most important. Everything pastors teach must agree with the Bible. Why? The Bible has authority.

The "Lutheran Confessions" is the book with Lutheran doctrines. The Lutheran Doctrine is strict. The Lutheran Doctrine teaches that all doctrine must agree with Bible. Why? The Bible has authority. The Lutheran Confessions say, "The Holy Scripture remains the only judge, rule, and measure." The Bible judges all doctrine. Then we know that the doctrine is right or wrong. The doctrine agrees with Bible then the doctrine is right. The doctrine does not agree with the Bible, then the doctrine is wrong. As you study the Bible you learn about God's Word.

Later you can read the Lutheran Confessions. You can see that the Lutheran Confessions agree with Bible. The Bible has authority.

Summary for Chapter:

In this lesson, you learned about the Bible.

- 1) How did God give us the Bible? You already learned.
- 2) Why did God give us the Bible? You already learned.
- 3) What does inspiration mean? You already learned.
- 4) What does it mean that the Bible is the Word of God? You already learned.
- 5) What does it mean that the Bible has authority? You already learned.

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I pray God continues to help you with your lessons. You can watch the video tape again if you have missed a lesson or have not understood. God will bless you when you learn more from His Word.

Thank you for watching me.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read:**

**Luke 24:27**

**John 5:39**

**Acts 17:11**

**Acts 18:28**

**Romans 15:4**

1. In what ways does the Bible have AUTHORITY?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How can we know if any religious teaching or doctrine is right or the teaching is wrong?

**Lesson 25 – PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING THE BIBLE**  
**#1. Follow the intended meaning.**

Watch Part 25 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #25**

Now I will talk about principles.

Principles are rules.

When we talk about interpreting the Bible now, we do not mean from English to the Sign Language. No. In our lesson interpret or interpretation means to analyze and understand the Bible correctly. We have learned that the Bible is God's Word. It is important that we follow the principles for interpreting the Bible.

The first key concept for our lesson? Bible students must use the correct principles when they study Bible.

The second key concept for our lesson? We believe that the Bible explains clearly about God's plan to save us. All rules help us understand that Jesus is most important. The Bible focuses on Jesus from the beginning to the end.

You maybe think, "Wow! Understanding the Bible is hard. I am not a pastor. I did not attend the seminary." It is true – understanding the Bible is deep and hard.

But following principles helps us understand the Bible. This lesson will teach about five principles to analyze and to understand the Bible.

Principle 1: Observe the Intended Meaning.

When you become a Bible student, you must learn many new words. You will also learn more about English. You maybe will learn new signs too. Principle 1 uses words "intended meaning." I will explain. Suppose I write a letter to you. I write about my experience and I say,

"I drove back and forth all day. All day back and forth, back and forth. When sun went down. I drove home. The next day again I drove back and forth back and forth."

What do I mean? Why back and forth?

Maybe you think that I was lost or maybe I was wasting gas. What is my "intended meaning." What do I mean when I write those words?



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I grew up on farm. I drove a tractor. I prepared the field and sowed seeds. I had to drive back and forth if I wanted to cover all the field. Now my words make sense. You understand my letter and what I mean. Now you understand more clearly.

The first principle for interpreting the Bible is to find out what the Bible writer meant. Then we can explain it to other people more clearly.

An example: in the Gospel called John chapter 10, verse 11, Jesus calls himself a shepherd. But in the Old Testament David was a shepherd before he became king over God's people. Is David and Jesus the same person? We have to look at the "intended sense." What did the write mean in 1 Samuel, chapter 17, verse 15? When we read the verse in 1 Samuel we see Samuel means that David's father had sheep. David watched the sheep for his father. Samuel means that David is shepherd. Why? He took care of the sheep. That mean we are following principle 1 intended meaning.

## QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean that we INTERPRET the Bible?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Bible students must use correct principles when they study the Bible. Why is this is important?

### Read Acts 6:7

See the sentence:

"So the word of God spread." (NIV)

"So God's word spread." (NIRV)

"And the word of God increased." (KJV)

"Then the word of God spread." (NKJV)

"And the word of God continued to increase." (ESV)

3. What does that sentence mean?

**Lesson 26 – PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING THE BIBLE**  
**#2. Understand the difference between**  
**LITERAL and FIGURATIVE (SYMBOLIC) text**

Watch Part 26 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #26**

God the Holy Spirit gives God's Word to men to write.

But some words have a literal meaning. That means an exact meaning. But some words do not have a literal meaning. Sometimes words are used to represent another idea. When words represent another meaning we call that a 'figure of speech.'

For example, Jesus says, "I am the Door." Does Jesus mean that He is a real door? Jesus is not a "literal" door. Jesus represents a door. That means he is the only way into heaven. When we trust and love Jesus he forgives us and lets us into heaven. Jesus is the way to God our Father. A figure of speech gives us a picture that we can see in our mind. The Holy Spirit uses word pictures to help us understand about Jesus Christ.

Three other figures of speech include:

1. A simile. It compares two things using words "like", "as" or "the same as". An example: God's arm is like steel. What does that mean? God is strong.
2. A metaphor. It compares two things but does not use "like" or "as". Example: Jesus says, "I am the Light of the World." It means Jesus shows us the way to heaven. With a light we see our way on a dark path. With Jesus we see our way to heaven.
3. A parable. It compares a story on earth with things in heaven. An example: in the Gospel called Luke, chapter 15, verse 4-6, Jesus talks about a lost sheep. Jesus really means that He wants to find lost sinners and bring them home to heaven.

Now you know about Principle 2 for analyzing and understanding the Bible.

**How to Study & Understand the Bible**  
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This lesson describes three kinds of symbolic figures of speech that we find in the Bible.

(a) SIMILE (pronounced: SIM-a-LEE).

compares two things, using the words “like” or “as” or “similar”.

Example: Psalm 1:1–4 (NIV)

*Blessed is the one... whose delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and who meditates on His law day and night.*

*That person **is like** a tree planted by streams of water...*

*Not so the wicked! They **are like** chaff that the wind blows away.*

(b) METAPHORE (pronounced MET-a-FOR)

compares two things without using words “as” or “like” or “similar.”

Example: John 10:7–9

*Jesus said, “I am the door [or gate] for the sheep.”*

(c) PARABLE (pronounced PAIR-a-BUL)

a story that compares things on earth with things in heaven.

Example: Luke 15:4–6 The parable of the lost sheep

Often poetry (as we find in Old Testament psalms and prophets) uses picture language to describe a feeling or experience, mixing together both literal and figurative meaning.

Bible texts that describe visions of heaven or future events (like Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation) use strong symbolic pictures. When we read these hard texts, we must remember that those writers intended that their word-pictures have a figurative meaning.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Read the Bible verses below and decide if they are literal or figurative:

- (a) Exodus 14:21–22    \_\_\_figurative    \_\_\_literal
- (b) Psalm 23:1–2        \_\_\_figurative    \_\_\_literal
- (c) Isaiah 55:1–2        \_\_\_figurative    \_\_\_literal
- (d) John 2:19–21        \_\_\_figurative    \_\_\_literal
- (e) John 13:4–5         \_\_\_figurative    \_\_\_literal
- (f) Acts 28:1–6         \_\_\_figurative    \_\_\_literal

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2. Write the meaning for Jesus' symbolic words:  
a) "I am the gate for the sheep."(John 10:7)

b) "You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world..." (Matthew 5:13–16)

A SIMILE compares two things, using the word **like** or **as**.

**Read Matthew 13:44–46.**

3. Here Jesus compares what?

v. 44 \_\_\_\_\_ is like \_\_\_\_\_

v. 45 \_\_\_\_\_ is like \_\_\_\_\_

**Read Luke 8:4–8.**

4. Explain the word pictures in this parable. (Hint: Read Luke 8:11–15.)

(a) the seed = \_\_\_\_\_

(b) the seed falling on the path = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(c) the seed on the rocky place = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(d) the seed among the weeds (thorns) = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(e) the seed falling on good soil = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 27 – PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING THE BIBLE**  
**#3. Read and understand every verse of the Bible in its CONTEXT**

Watch Part 27 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #27**

The word “context,” what does it mean? I will explain. Suppose I say, “I love you.” What does it mean? It depends on the context.

An example: Watch my face, “I love you?” what does it mean – “I love you.” If you look at my face you see an expression and you know that I am asking a question. You know that I mean I am surprised that you think I love you. Right.

Context means that you must look at everything around the word or the verse. We need more knowledge before we understand the right meaning. We can learn more from reading the whole book.

We read the Bible in context when we think about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We read the Bible in context when we see the Bible as the story of God’s plan to save us. God’s plan to save us means: Through God’s grace we trust in Jesus Christ and God saves us.

This is the most important doctrine in the Bible. We read the Bible in context when we remember there are two major doctrines in the Bible:

1. **The Law** -- those things God demands from us.
2. **The Gospel** -- those things God does for us to save us.

**QUESTIONS**

1. How do we read a Bible verse in its context?

**Read Matthew 24:40–42.**

2. These verses teach about the second coming of Jesus Christ. Many Christians swallow false teaching about these verses because they forget to read the context.
  - a. Those who are “taken” = \_\_\_ saved people. \_\_\_ unbelievers(lost people).
  - b. Those who are “left” = \_\_\_ saved people. \_\_\_ unbelievers (lost people).

*IMPORTANT HINT: Read the context (verses 37–39).*

3. What is the most important teaching of the Bible?

**Lesson 28 – PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING THE BIBLE**

**#4. Interpret Scripture in harmony with itself**

Read and understand every verse as it fits with every other verse of the Bible

Watch Part 28 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #28**

We believe God is the writer for both Old Testament and New Testament. Scripture always agrees with Scripture. One bible verse is not in conflict with another Bible verse. The Bible has the same theme in the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Bible theme – God saved people thru His Son Jesus Christ. All of the Bible helps us to believe that Jesus forgives our sin and God is not angry from now on.

The word “harmony”. That word often is used to talk about music or art.

In chapter 2 we talked about beautiful mountains. The different colors, different shapes, the land, the clouds, the trees and the birds – everything together makes a beautiful picture.

But suppose someone puts a junk yard in the picture. That junk yard conflicts with the beautiful mountains. That junk yard does not belong in the picture. Right.

This is the same ideas. There are 66 different books in the Bible. All together they agree about God. All of them agree about Jesus. All together the Bible gives us a beautiful picture about God our Savior. If we think one verse conflicts with the Bible, we do not understand the verse in the right way. The Bible has beautiful harmony. It fits together perfectly.

An example: In the Old Testament, Psalm 23 says, “The Lord is my Shepherd.” Who is the shepherd? Jesus. We know that because we can analyze and understand the Bible using principle 4. In the New Testament Jesus says, “I am the Good Shepherd” in John chapter 10, verse 11 and again in verse 14.

Sometimes Jesus is called the “bridge” between the Old Testament and the New Testament. What does it mean “Jesus is the bridge”? A bridge connects two lands. Jesus – God’s Son is in the Old Testament but is not often seen clearly. The New Testament helps to explain the Old Testament. Now we can find Jesus easily in the Old Testament.

When you go to the airport to pick up a person that you have not yet met, you will have a hard time picking him up the first time. But after you have met him and talked to him, the next time it is easy to find your friend among many people. Why? You know what he looks like.

The same is true with Jesus. Now we know about Jesus. We know what He did. Now when we look for Jesus in the Old Testament, it is more easy to find him.

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Harmony means that the Old Testament and New Testament have the same story about Jesus. There are not two different stories.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read:**

**Psalm 23**

**John 10:11–18**

**1 Peter 2:24–25**

1. How do **John 10** and **1 Peter 2** help us understand **Psalm 23**?

**Read:**

**Genesis 1:1**

**Psalm 33:6**

**2 Peter 3:3–7**

2. What is the connection between the way the world **began** and the way the world will **end**?

3. What do these verses teach us about the power of God's Word?

<b>Lesson 29 – PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING THE BIBLE</b> <b>#5. Interpret Scripture Christologically (Christ focus)</b>
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Watch Part 29 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #29**

I explained before about harmony in Principle 4. I explained that all of the Bible books agree each other. There is no conflict. All of the Bible fits together. Why? Jesus. Sign language has a good sign for the Bible. The two signs together mean “Jesus book.” All of the Bible is about Jesus Christ.

When we study the Bible, we study and try find out about Jesus, his background, his family, his promise, his goal, his work, his ideas, on and on and on. Our reason for studying the Bible is to meet Christ. We interpret the Bible Christological. It means that we look for Christ in the Bible which is the Good News about His love for us.

An example: We know Psalm 23 It begins, “The Lord is my shepherd.” Who is the shepherd? Jesus. We know that because we can analyze and understand the Bible using principle 5 – The Bible talks about Jesus.

Analyzing and studying the Bible with Christ as our focus means that we expect to find the Gospel in both Old Testament and New Testament.

The Gospel is the good news. God frees his people from sin, death and the devil. The Lord’s Supper and Baptism is the Gospel. When we read the Bible and focus on Christ, we read the Bible Christological.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read John 5:37–40**

1. Where in the Bible do we find the Gospel about Jesus Christ?

- Old Testament
- New Testament
- The whole Bible – both OT and NT.



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2. Study the following prophecies of the Old Testament and their fulfillment in the New Testament. Write down what was fulfilled:

<b>PROPHECY</b> <b>What will happen</b>	<b>FULFILLMENT</b> <b>What happened</b>
Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-25
Psalm 78:2	Matthew 13:34,35
Zechariah 11:12-13	Matthew 27:3-9
Joel 2:28-32	Acts 2:1-21

**Read Genesis 12:1-3**

3. God made a four promises to Abram (Abraham).
- (a) What was the last thing that God promised to Abram?
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- (b) How is that promise fulfilled by Jesus Christ?  
(Hint: Read Matthew 1:1 and John 3:16.)

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**Read:**

**Numbers 21:4–9**  
**John 3:14**

4. How do the following points in the Old Testament snake story apply to our connection with Christ?

(a) The people rebelling = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(b) The people's sickness & death = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(c) The snake on the pole = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(d) The way people were healed = \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 30 – Tools for Understanding the Bible**

Watch Part 30 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #30**

The two key concepts for chapter four are:

1. Students of the Bible need to develop skills. One skill? Examine the grammar (English language rules) for Scripture within its historical background and its culture background.
2. Bible students must understand the Law and the Gospel. Then the Bible student must analyze a verse and decide into which category to put the verse – in the Law category or the Gospel category. Putting the verse into the right category helps understand Scripture more clearly. It is important not to confuse Law and Gospel.

Tools are important to help people do their job. A doctor studies medicine for many years. He learns to use special tools for his job. His tools help him do his job. The same is true with a Bible student. He or she must practice using the tools to help understand the Bible. Without special tools the Bible student cannot analyze and understand Bible. When the Bible student uses tools he can understand the Bible deeply.

In Chapter four we will learn to understand the past. Then we can use our knowledge to help us understand the Bible for our life. When a Bible student learns to use the tools well, he or she can apply the Bible to life. He can help others understand the Bible too.

Two types of Tools

In Chapter 4 we will learn about the two categories of tools a Bible student must use to understand the Scripture.

The first category tools are called “Grammatical – Historical.”  
The second category tools are called “Theological.”

I will explain the tools in both categories in this chapter.

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**QUESTIONS**

1. As we study the Bible, we must analyze each verse to see where that verse fits into two important categories:

\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_

2. The last part of this lesson names two kinds of tools we use to study the Bible:

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

*In the next eleven lessons we will explain more about those tools  
and you will practice using those tools.*

<b>Lesson 31 – TOOLS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE</b> <b>Language &amp; Grammar</b>
---

Watch Part 31 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #31**

1) The Grammatical – Historical tools.

There are three Grammatical – Historical tools.

- 1) The tools called language and grammar.
- 2) The tools called Historical Setting or History background.
- 3) The tools called Culture.

**1. The tools called language and grammar.**

At seminary, students learn Hebrew, Greek and sometimes Aramaic. Then the students can study the Bible in its original language. But you are not at the seminary here. You will depend on the English language Bible for your study. That means you will need to continue improving your English. When you use an English Bible you can compare two or three English versions of the Bible. Then you can see the different ways scholars interpret the Bible. Comparing two or three English versions will help you understand English more too. Some English Bibles see often are

- 1) Today's English Version – TEV
- 2) New International Version – NIV
- 3) New American Standard Bible – NASB
- 4) New Life Version
- 5) The English Bible for the Deaf Version. And some people like the King James Version – KJV but the KJV is hard to understand. The English is very old. The teacher would not suggest the KJV to us for a Bible study. Instead maybe we could use
- 6) The New King James Bible – NKJV.

Use the grammar tools to understand the English words in the verse. Each word is important. If you do not know what the English word means you can use a **dictionary** and learn about that word.

Read each sentence and paragraph. What is the writer talking about? Maybe the paragraph has a simile, a metaphor, or a parable. Maybe the paragraph is a story. Maybe the paragraph is a poem. Maybe the paragraph is history.

The names and places are important. A map book called a **Bible Atlas** can help you find the towns and the countries.

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If you want find the same word in a sentence in another verse in the Bible, you can use **Concordance** book. This book will help you find any word in the whole Bible. An example: You want to find the Word “love” in the other Bible verse. You get a Concordance. You look up the word “love”. There you see a list of verses in the Bible using the word “love”. You will find many verses in that list. A Concordance is important for the Bible student. Or a Bible bookstore sells how the Bible on CD Rom for computer. It is easy for a Bible student to look up many things. It is really good for Bible study.

God uses human language to communicate with us. The Bible writers used different kinds of human language to communicate God’s Word to us. The Bible student needs skill to understand the rules for the English language. The rules for English language are called ‘grammar’. That is why this lesson is called Language and Grammar.

The Old Testament was written mostly in **Hebrew** & a little bit of **Aramaic** (which is a lot like Hebrew).

The New Testament was written in **Greek** (often called “Koine” [pronounced KOY-NAY] Greek, meaning “common” Greek).

After we recorded this course, more English translations became available:

**New International Readers Version (NIRV)** is the Bible in easy English, similar to the English Version for the Deaf.

**English Standard Version (ESV)** is similar to NKJV (New King James Version).

ASL Bible online from **deafbible.com** (or **deaf.bible**)

Online Bible study tools

[biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com)

[biblehub.com](http://biblehub.com)

[blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org)

**QUESTIONS**

**Concordance exercise**

*For questions #1 and #2 below, use a concordance (look in the back of your Bible) or use an online Bible search website, like [www.biblegateway.com/keyword](http://www.biblegateway.com/keyword)*

1. Find three Bible verses that talk about FAITH.

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(c) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Where in the Bible is the story about David adultery with Bathsheba? (What chapters?)

**Read:**

**Mark 1:16–18**

**Luke 10:1–3**

**Matthew 28:19,20.**

3. What points in these three Bible texts are similar (the same)?

4. What information in these three Bible texts is different?

**Lesson 32 – Historical Background Tool**

Watch Part 32 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #32**

**2) The tools called Historical Setting.**

What is the goal for Bible study? To find out the writers intended meaning.

Why did the writer write the book?

What happened in the history during the writer’s time?

What happened in writer’s time is called “then and there” in the course pamphlet.

What happened in history during the time the writer lived?

What country or place did the writer live in?

A Bible student will try to answer questions like these. He will try to answer the question why. It will help him understand the historical background. The historical background helps us understand the writer’s words. Bible history books can help the student learn more historical background about the Bible book he wants to study. A student can learn important information. Then he can understand Bible more clearly.

Some Bible includes a historical introduction for each book. A historical introduction is important. Deaf people know that history is important. Why do Deaf people ask where another Deaf person went to school? Why do want they want to know. Where a Deaf person was born? Why do we want know these things? These things help us understand the Deaf person better. The same idea is true about the historical background for the Bible.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read Luke 1:1–5**

1. Luke wrote his gospel for whom? (verse 3) \_\_\_\_\_

2. From whom did Luke get his information about Jesus? (verse 2) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Luke’s gospel about Jesus began at what time in Israel’s history? (verse 5) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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**Read Luke 2:1–7**

4. Who was ruler of the Roman world when Jesus was born?
  
5. The Roman emperor made a political decision that affected Mary and Joseph at the time of Jesus' birth. What was the emperor's command?
  
6. Why did Joseph and Mary go from Nazareth to Bethlehem?
  
7. Look at a New Testament Bible map:
  - (a) Where in Israel is Nazareth?
  
  - (b) Where in Israel is Bethlehem?
  
  - (c) What is the distance between Nazareth and Bethlehem?
  
  - (d) Why did Mary and Joseph lay baby Jesus in a manger (animal feeding box) instead of a normal bed?

**Read Galatians 1:1–6**

8. Who wrote this letter? \_\_\_\_\_
  
9. To whom did he write this letter? (verse 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  
10. What serious problem did these people have? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
11. Who made Paul become an Apostle? \_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson 33 – The Tool of Culture

Watch Part 33 video.

### Video: Study the Bible #33

- 3) Tools called Culture. Culture is an important tool for understanding people. In the Deaf culture you can point and wave your hands. But in a hearing culture it is not polite to point and some people are not comfortable if you gesture too much. When we understand a culture, we can understand people better. We can understand their way of thinking. Long ago cultures were very different. No airplanes, no internet, no TTY's and no Deaf schools. When we think like people in America we cannot understand people in the Bible lands of long ago. It is important that we learn about life long ago during the Old Testament and also the New Testament. The Old Testament had a different culture than New Testament. In the Bible you learn many cultures: Greek, Jewish, Egyptian, Babylonian and others. When we study a language we also study culture. Sometimes one culture does not have words to describe a foreign culture. The Bible talks about many cultural groups. When you study the Bible you will need to understand which cultural group to study.

Another DIT course named, "Everyday Life in Bible Times," teaches the Bible culture. When you understand the culture, you can understand Bible better. Then you can use the Bible for your daily life. Now you have learned a little about the "Grammatical – Historical" tools.

You learned there are three kinds of tools in this category.

1. Language and Grammar
2. Historical Setting or History background
3. Culture

These tools can help us to analyze and understand the Bible and the writer's "intended" meaning.

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Describe some differences between Deaf culture and Hearing culture.

### **Read Ruth 4:1–10**

*This story describes many things in the culture of that time and place, things that we don't do in our culture today.*

2. Make a list of those different cultural practices in this story.

### **Read 1 Corinthians 9:19–23**

*Paul understood that we must understand differences in cultures when we want to share the Gospel with other people.*

3. What Paul do did to introduce people in various cultures to Jesus.

*To get a deeper understanding about the culture in Bible times,  
study the DeafPah course: "Everyday Life in Bible Times."*

<b>Lesson 34 – Theological Tools</b>
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Watch Part 34 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #34**

2) the second category of tools is called Theological Tools.

These tools help us to understand the Bible in the right way. You will want to learn more about the tools in this category. Lutheran Bible students are careful with these three important tools:

1. Understanding Law and Gospel
2. Using Law and Gospel in a proper way.
3. Justification by Grace through Faith

Understanding Law and Gospel.

The first major doctrine is the Law. The law tells us “do something.” God demands we obey Him.

Second major doctrine is the Gospel. God shows us everything He does to save us.

When we read the Law, we tremble. We feel humble, ashamed, guilty and afraid. Maybe God will punish us. We read about God destroying the city named Sodom. God punished their sin. We read about the flood. God destroyed almost all the people in the world. The Law scares me. The Law shows me my sin.

But when we read the Gospel we relax. We feel comfortable. We have joy in our hearts. We desire to trust and love God. We learn about God’s love for us in Jesus Christ. He suffered and died for us. The Gospel is the story about God’s love for us. The Bible Old Testament and New Testament have both the Law and the Gospel. When we read the Bible, we must decide which doctrine this verse is teaching us. Does the verse teach us Law or Gospel? Which?

Long ago Martin Luther explained that understanding the difference between Law and Gospel is difficult. But with practice and discussions with your mentor, you can learn this important skill.

In the next lesson I will explain more about the theological tool called the Law.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What are the two chief teachings of the Bible?

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Summarize each of those teachings in one or two sentences:

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 35 – The Law of God: “Curb”**

Watch Part 35 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #35**

The theological tool called the Law has three functions or goals:

- 1) Curb
- 2) Mirror
- 3) guide

**1. Curb**

The first law function is “curb”. Let me tell a story. In my town many people have dogs. Everyday people bring their dog outside to walk it. The town rule says, “You must curb your dog.” What does “curb” your dog mean? Well, when dog goes to the toilet, the dog must be near the street and not in a yard. Other people get mad if the dog goes toilet in their yard. Suppose a person walks and steps there? Eeewwwe. The curb is the side of the road – the little rise along the road. Then next to that is grass and next to that is the sidewalk. The dog goes toilet there – not on the lawn. “Curb your dog” means you must control your dog. The dog must go to the toilet on the grass near the curb. If man cannot control the dog the man must pay a fine.

The Law functions like a curb. How? In the same way that a man controls his dog, a curb controls sinners. How? The curb threatens you. When you break God’s Law, God will punish you. The curb uses fear to control people. You know the Law functions as a curb. How? You become afraid when you disobey God’s Law. You are afraid that God will punish you. The Law functions as a “curb.”

**QUESTIONS**

**Read Romans 13:1–5**

How is the Law of God like a “curb”?

**Lesson 36 – The Law of God: “Mirror”**

Watch Part 36 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #36**

We have learned about the first Law function a curb.

Now we will talk about the second Law function a mirror.

I will tell you another story. In the morning when you wake up, do you look pretty? You don't know? What do you do? You go look in a mirror. Wow! Scare me. Look awful. What can I do? I shave, comb my hair and brush my teeth. Now I look in the mirror again. Aw, better!

**2. Mirror**

The mirror shows our face. We see if we look fine or awful. Right? The law functions as a mirror. How? In the same way you look in a mirror in your home.

The law shows you are a sinner. How? When you read the Law you compare your heart and life with God's Law. What does the Law show? You are not perfect. You make mistakes. You know that the Law functions as a mirror in your life. How? You feel guilty when you disobey the Law. The Law functions as a mirror.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read:**

**Romans 3:19–20**

**Romans 7:7**

How is the Law of God like a “mirror”?

**Lesson 37 – The Law of God: “Guide”**

Watch Part 37 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #37**

We have studied the first Law function a curb and the second Law function a mirror.

Now we will study the third Law function a guide.

I will tell you another story. Imagine that you go on a vacation. Where? Yellowstone National Park. I am excited. I am eager to see the Park. I arrive. The Park cop asks me if I want a guide to help me see the Park. No, thank you. I will go around and look around myself. Fine. I start walking in the Park. There is a sign over there. I do not pay attention. I go the wrong way. I do not watch. Ouch! Wow! I jump. Why? I have stepped into hot mud. I burn my foot. Now I walk with a limp. I decide to rest and eat lunch. I do not notice the bear behind me. The bear hugs me. Ouch! It hurts my rib. I am lucky to escape but the bear eats my lunch. Now I walk with a limp and I hold my side. Pain. Wow! I look around. I am lost. I don't know where to go. I look for a map. It is gone. The night comes. It is dark. It starts to rain. I have no place to sleep. I am restless all night. In the morning I try find a way. Finally I find the road. I follow it. Finally I find my car. I had a good vacation. Right? Lousy. I think in my mind, “The next time I will not be proud. I will follow a guide.”

**3. Guide**

The Law functions as a guide for Christians. A Christian loves and trusts God above all other things. A Christian knows that God loves and forgives them. Now God is not angry. We are not afraid that God will punish us. Now we do not feel guilty. Jesus accepted our sin, our punishment and our guilt. This law does not punish us. This law does not blame us. Now the Law is good. Why? It guides us in the right way. It avoids trouble.

The Law shows us the right way to live before God. I know the Law functions as a guide. How? I read God's Word. I am happy to obey and follow Jesus' way. Why? Jesus loves me and I love Jesus.

**QUESTION**

**Read Psalm 119:9–11**

How is the Law of God like a “guide”?



**Lesson 38 – Three Functions of the Law**

Watch Part 38 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #38**

A story. A few years ago I met a woman named Barbara. Now she is my wife. Before we married I invited her to go with me to restaurants, parks, museums, church and a book store. I knew that she did not really enjoy a bookstore, but she went with me anyway. Why? Her love was growing. She wanted to be with me. She enjoyed being with me. It doesn't matter what I go and I do. She only wants to be with me. She wants to make me happy.

The same idea the Christian's love grows. The Christian wants to be with God. He wants to make God happy. The Christian follows God's command. Why? To make God happy. We are willing to obey God.

Our attitude is different when we trust and love God. We don't obey God because we have to. No. We obey God because we want to make God happy. When a Christian has faith, he has a right attitude. Now the Law functions as a guide. That is a good thing.

A guide helps us act right. A guide shows us God's way. Then we can be with God daily. We obey God with joy in our hearts because we know that the Law functions as a guide.

Now we have learned the three Law functions

- 1) A curb
- 2) A mirror
- 3) A guide

For a Christian, the most important function of the Law is as a guide. The Law shows us our sins. The law shows us that we need God's forgiveness. But for Christians, we have joy and delight when we learn and obey God's Law.

In Psalm 1, King David says "I delight in the Law of the Lord." David has joy in his heart because first he loves God and second he loves God's Law. Why? God's Law shows David and us the best way to live.

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**QUESTIONS**

Read these Bible texts. Check if they use the Law as a **curb**, **mirror**, or **guide**.

- |                      |                               |                                 |                                |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Psalm 119:10- 106 | <input type="checkbox"/> Curb | <input type="checkbox"/> Mirror | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide |
| 2. Proverbs 24:21-22 | <input type="checkbox"/> Curb | <input type="checkbox"/> Mirror | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide |
| 3. Romans 3:20       | <input type="checkbox"/> Curb | <input type="checkbox"/> Mirror | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide |
| 4. Romans 7:7        | <input type="checkbox"/> Curb | <input type="checkbox"/> Mirror | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide |
| 5. Galatians 6:2     | <input type="checkbox"/> Curb | <input type="checkbox"/> Mirror | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide |
| 6. Ephesians 5:15-20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Curb | <input type="checkbox"/> Mirror | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide |
| 7. 1 Peter 2:13-14   | <input type="checkbox"/> Curb | <input type="checkbox"/> Mirror | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide |

**Lesson 39 – Law and Gospel**

Watch Part 39 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #39**

The Gospel is different than the Law.

The Gospel is always good news for us. What is the goal of the Gospel? To convince a listener that God has grace and mercy for the sinner. God offers the forgiveness of sin free. Jesus obeyed God's Law perfectly for us. Then Jesus suffered punishment instead of us. Jesus arose and now sits with God the Father. There he talks to our heavenly Father for us. Before Jesus helped us, we were enemies against God. But now Jesus has helped us. We are now reconciled a friend again with God. The Law cannot save us. The Gospel tells us that Jesus has saved us. Praise God. The Gospel has the power to change a sinner heart. The sinner repents. He does not try to save himself. Now He lets Jesus save him. The Holy Spirit uses the Gospel's power to create faith in a sinner's heart. Faith is gift from God. The Gospel is different than the Law. The Gospel has power to save. The Law only has power to blame and condemn.

The Law and the Gospel are different in three ways:

1. The Law teaches us the things we must do. But the Gospel teaches us the things God did and continues to do to save us.
2. The Law shows us our sin and shows us God's anger. But the Gospel shows us our Savior and God's grace.
3. The Law is preached to everyone, but it is very important to preach it to people that are not sorry for their sin. The Gospel is preached to sorry sinners. Their sins bother them and weigh on their minds. They need the Gospel for forgive their sins.

The Law and Gospel should not be confused. The Law and Gospel are very different.

It is important not to make the Law weak or to make the Gospel become a new Law. God's Word is divided into two categories – the Law and the Gospel. It is important to divide God's Word rightly. Dividing God's Word is a Bible student's job.

With each verse in the Bible, we must decide – is it Law or Gospel? Then you can analyze and understand the Bible more clearly. The Lutheran doctrine book emphasizes that we must be careful as we use this theological tool.

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I will give you an example. Do you remember the story about Daniel in the lions den? God closed the Lions' mouths. The Lions did not hurt Daniel. Is the story about Daniel – Law or Gospel?

If we think the story is in the category of the Law, we will explain that God means we must brave when we have trouble. If we think story is in the category of the Gospel, we will explain that God means "God rescued Daniel. God is wonderful." We can expect Him to rescue us when we have trouble.

Where does the story fit? Law or Gospel? Gospel! Right! The Bible always teaches us that God saves His people.

## QUESTIONS

Check each statement as LAW or GOSPEL

1.  Law  Gospel: Teaches what we are to do and not to do.
2.  Law  Gospel: Teaches us what God has done, and still does, for our salvation.
3.  Law  Gospel: Shows us our sin and the anger of God.
4.  Law  Gospel: Shows us our Savior and the grace of God.
5.  Law  Gospel: Must be preached to everyone, but especially to sinners who are not repenting.
6.  Law  Gospel: Must be preached to sinners who are sorry about their sins.

Check each text as LAW or GOSPEL

7.  Law  Gospel     Matthew 23:27–28
8.  Law  Gospel     Mark 7:20–23
9.  Law  Gospel     John 10:14–18
10.  Law  Gospel     Acts 2:37–39
11.  Law  Gospel     Romans 1:16
12.  Law  Gospel     Romans 1:18
13.  Law  Gospel     Romans 5:1
14.  Law  Gospel     Ephesians 2:7–8
15.  Law  Gospel     Colossians 1:13–14

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**Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther** (“C. F. W. Walther”) was a Lutheran pastor who came with a group from Germany to the United States in 1839. They settled in two communities in Missouri near the Mississippi River – in the city of St. Louis and also south in Perry County.

Walther and his group established a log-cabin college which grew to become Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. He also helped to unite his group with other German immigrant churches into *The German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States* – today it is called *The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod* (LCMS). In 1847 this new denomination elected Walther as their first president.

In 1884 and 1885 Walther gave a series of lectures at the seminary, teaching his students about Law and Gospel. Those lectures have been translated from German to English and are now published by Concordia Publishing House ([www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org)) in a book titled ***The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel***. This book is a very helpful resource to help us clearly understand and apply the Bible’s teaching of Law and Gospel.

**Lesson 40 – Justification and Grace**

Watch Part 40 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #40**

C.F.W. Walter was an important man. He helped establish the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod in 1847. He was a scholar. He wrote a book named “The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel.” Walther wrote about 25 topics. Each topic helped a person divide Scripture into Law and Gospel. Each topic helped a Bible student learn to use Law and Gospel in the right way.

Justification by Faith is the Bible’s Main Doctrine. Justification means that God declares sinner innocent. God does not blame the sinner for his sin. God does not condemn the sinner. Jesus takes away the sin and the blame from the sinner. Now God is no more angry with the sinner. God saves the sinner.

“Justified” by Grace. Justification. Wow! What a big word. What does it mean? I will try explain. This word and concept is the most important idea in the Bible. Justification is theme of the Bible. All doctrine – all Bible verses – supports this justification theme.

A Bible student will want to study this justification theme. He also wants to make sure that every Bible verse agrees with this justification theme. If the verse does not agree, then the student is making a mistake. He does not understand the verse in the right way. He must study more.

Other words help explain what Justification means -- imputed, redeemed and more. These words the Bible student will want to learn. When a Bible student analyzes the Bible verse and studies, he will learn more about justification.

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What does the word “grace” mean? Grace means God’s love but we do not earn His love. His love is a gift to us.

What does the word “faith” means? The Bible tells us that faith is a gift from God. Faith holds unto God’s Word and trusts His Word. Faith means that the sinner depends on Jesus to save him.

Justification means, “we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.”

## **QUESTIONS**

**Read:**

**Romans 3:21–26**

**Ephesians 2:8–9**

**1 John 1:5–10**

1. What does JUSTIFICATION mean?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What does GRACE mean?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. The Bible teaches that God **justifies** us by **grace** through **faith**.  
What does that mean?

**Lesson 41 – Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth**

Watch Part 41 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #41**

A summary for Chapter four.

Now we have learned about the tools used to understand the Bible. The tools are divided into two categories.

The first category is the Grammatical – Historical tools and the second category is the Theological tools.

We learned that

- 1) Language and Grammar,
- 2) History background and
- 3) Culture

All three are important to analyze, study and understand Scripture.

We also learned about theological tools:

- 1) The Law & The Gospels
- 2) Properly dividing Law and Gospel, and
- 3) Justification.

Chapter four has many important concepts. Learn to use the Bible study tools and you will understand the Bible more clearly. Then you can use your knowledge about the Bible to live with joy in your heart.

Also, you can help others learn about God’s wonderful love in Jesus Christ.

Continue your study. God will bless you.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read 2 Timothy 2:15** in various English versions on your Bible app, or on [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com). Read this verse in:

- ESV (English Standard Version)
- NIV (New International Version)
- NIRV (New International Readers Version)
- NKJV (New King James Version)

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1. How does a student of the Bible “rightly divide the word of truth”?

**Read Romans 6:23**

2. Which words of this verse teach Law?

3. Which words of this verse teach Gospel?

**Read John 3:14–18**

4. Which verses of this text teach Law?

5. Which verses teach Gospel?

**Read and compare:**

**2 Corinthians 5:17–19**

**John 3:1–17**

6. 2 Corinthians 5 says, “The old has gone, the new has come.”  
What does that mean?



**Lesson 42 – Important Old Testament Concepts**

Watch Part 42 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #42**

Getting Familiar with the Old and New Testaments

Key concepts:

The first key concept: God communicates to his people in different literary forms. For example, poetry, history, Gospels, letters, etc. A Bible student we want to learn how to understand the different forms.

The second key concept: We believe that the Bible even though it has many books is really one book. God is the writer. The principles of interpretation are the same for both the Old Testament and the New Testament. What is the one Bible goal? To reveal Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Our goal is to examine different literary forms and to apply the Bible principles to analyze and understand God's Word.

Remember that Bible students use the same Bible rules to analyze and understand Scripture for both Old Testament and New Testament.

What is the basic goal of the Old Testament? To tell the story about God with His people. Old Testament answers many questions. For example, where did the earth come from? How did God chose Jewish people? Does God keep all His promises? What will the Messiah look like? How do we know who is the Messiah? The Old Testament stories about God teach us about God's character. The Old Testament informs us about all the covenants that God promised to His people. All together the Old Testament prepares us for the Messiah to appear and to help us understand the Messiah's job. The Messiah's job is to save God's people and to open the door to heaven for all believers.

The Old Testament has two important verses to help understand the Old Testament and later to help understand New Testament.

The first Important verse we read from Deuteronomy, chapter 6, verse 4 "Hear Israel: the Lord our God, The Lord is One."

The second important verse we read from Exodus, chapter 19, verses 5 and 6. God says, "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then you are special among all nations. You will become my treasure. Anyway, all the earth is mine, but you will be priests for me. You will be a holy nation."

**QUESTIONS**

**Read Deuteronomy 6**

1. This chapter summarizes important Old Testament concepts.

List the most important concepts in this text:

(a) verse 1–2 \_\_\_\_\_

(b) verse 4 \_\_\_\_\_

(c) verse 5 \_\_\_\_\_

(d) verse 7 \_\_\_\_\_

(e) verse 14 \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are some other important lessons that the Old Testament teach us?

3. What is the main goal of the whole Bible, both Old Testament and New Testament?

**Lesson 43 – Important New Testament Concepts**

Watch Part 43 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #43**

The basic goal of the New Testament is to show Jesus Christ as Messiah the Son of God and the Savior of the World. Jesus succeeded to save the world. How? He suffered, died, rose again and ascended into heaven. Now all people who believe and trust in Him will have eternal life with God in heaven.

There are two important verses to help us understand the theme for the New Testament. We read from John, chapter 1, verses 1 and 14 *“That Word became Man. He lived among us.”* Another verse, we read from 2 Corinthians, chapter 5, verse 17 and 19 *“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new person. The old sinner person is gone. Now a new person appears.”*

What is God in Christ working for? He is making people His friends again. He stops blaming people for their sin. What does He give us His story about? How will He make us friends with Himself again.” Often in the New Testament you will read that because Jesus came as our Savior, people can become different and live with new life and with hope.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read:**

**John 20:30–31**

**2 Corinthians 5:20 – 6:2**

**1 John 1:1 – 2:2**

What is the basic goal of the New Testament?

<b>Lesson 44 – Analyzing and Understanding History</b>
--

Watch Part 44 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #44**

- 1) Analyze and understand Bible History. In the Bible there is much history. When you read history, you need to remember two guide lines.

First, the history in the Bible is about God saving us. God is a doer. God controls history and the universe. God became involved with human history.

Second, two different writers wrote down their story. What is their story or their perspective? Each writer paid attention to a different part of God' story. Remember when we read Bible history, we read about God working on His plan for saving us. God inspires people to write them down for Him.

**QUESTIONS**

**Read:**

**Luke 1:51–52**

**Jeremiah 18:1–10**

1. God used the example of a potter to teach Jeremiah a lesson about what?

**Read:**

**Matthew 28:1–15**

**John 20:1–18**

2. Compare those two stories about Jesus' resurrection:
  - (a) How are the two stories the same?
  - (b) How are the two stories different?
  - (c) How do both stories together give us better understanding about Jesus' resurrection?

**Lesson 45 – Analyzing and Understanding Prophecy**

Watch Part 45 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #45**

2) Analyze and Understand Prophecy.

The most books about prophecy are in the Old Testament. The New Testament has only a little bit of prophecy in Revelation.

The prophets, during Bible times, were special speakers for God. God inspired them. God chose them to speak His word to His people. Many times, the people did not listen very well. What is the prophets job? To admonish (scold), warn and encourage God's people. The prophets encourage God's people to obey and do His will. When God's people rebel and sin, God sends a prophet to tell the people to repent. Sometimes the prophets talk about future events. Sometimes future events talk about the punishment of God's people. Many times, God encouraged His people with a promise to forgive them and bless them.

Analyze and understand prophecies. How?

The first guide line: Look for the intended meaning in the prophet's words. Study the grammar carefully. Learn about the prophet's historical background and culture.

The second guide line: Remember, the intended meaning maybe a figure of speech. The prophet may use a name, but that name maybe really talks about the New Testament times. For example: Israel, or Jerusalem in the Old Testament sometimes can really mean the New Testament times.

The third guide line: Understand the difference between a verbal – straight word – prophecy and a typological prophecy. Typological prophecy is really talking about Jesus. We find an example of verbal prophecy in the prophetic book named Micah. The prophet called Micah is an example. A Savior is born in Bethlehem. An example of typological prophecy is Moses. The same as Moses delivered people from Egypt same as so Jesus delivered people from sin, death and the devil.

The fourth guide line: Remember the Christological principle in analyzing and understanding prophetic Bible verses. Jesus is the center of every promise from God.

## QUESTIONS

### The Prophet's work

Read:

Isaiah 42:18–25

Isaiah 58:1–8

Ezekiel 16:1

Jonah 1:1–2

Haggai 1:1–8

1. The prophets received their message from whom?

2. What was the prophets' main work?

### Intended Meaning

LITERAL PROPHECY

Read Jeremiah 25:1–14

3. The Lord said what will happen to the land of Judah?

4. How many years will the people of Israel serve the King of Babylon?

5. Then what will happen to Babylon?

**FIGURATIVE PROPHECY**

**Read Ezekiel 37:1–14**

6. Ezekiel saw a vision of dry bones. Those bones represented whom?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Those bones in Ezekiel's vision became living humans. That represented what?

**Read Isaiah 53**

8. The following New Testament verses point to Isaiah's prophecy. Write the number of the verse from Isaiah 53 we find in each the following New Testament texts. (The first one is done for you as an example.)
  - (a) Matthew 8:16–17 → Isaiah 53: 4
  - (b) Matthew 27:57–60 → Isaiah 53: \_\_\_\_\_
  - (c) John 1:10–11 → Isaiah 53: \_\_\_\_\_
  - (d) John 12:37–38 → Isaiah 53: \_\_\_\_\_
  - (e) Acts 8:26–37 → Isaiah 53: \_\_\_\_\_
  - (f) Romans 5:18–19 → Isaiah 53: \_\_\_\_\_
  - (g) Romans 8:34 → Isaiah 53: \_\_\_\_\_
  - (h) 1 Peter 2:21–22 → Isaiah 53: \_\_\_\_\_
  - (i) 1 Peter 2:24 → Isaiah 53: \_\_\_\_\_
  - (j) 1 Peter 2:25 → Isaiah 53: \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 46 – Analyzing and understanding Poetry in the Bible**

Watch Part 46 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #46**

3) Interpreting Poetry in the Bible.

In Old Testament poetry was commonly used. Where? In Psalms, Job and Proverbs. Many new Bible versions show poetry with indented lines.

God used poetry to touch people's hearts and emotions. Often the Bible writers used poetry to describe strong human feelings. Long ago – in God's Temple in Jerusalem – God's people sang psalms. Today psalms still are sung in Christian churches.

There are three guidelines to help analyze and understand poetry in the Bible.

1. Hebrew poetry in the Old Testament is different from English poetry. Hebrew poetry uses "parallelism". Hebrew poetry does not use words that sound the same as other words. Hebrew poetry has the same meaning in two different lines in the poem but uses different words. Many times, the first line says one idea, but second line says the opposite and different thought. But the thoughts are always parallel.
2. When you analyze poetry, you must know the historical background and culture. Poetry has a tight relationship with their experiences and emotions. For example, Psalm 90, is a prayer of Moses. Some psalms look forward and focus attention to Jesus – the Messiah. Some psalms focus on Jesus and are named Messianic Psalms.
3. Remember poetry often uses a figure of speech and lets off literal – straight word meanings. Poetry verses? We read them and easily identify with them. Why? We often experience the same feeling that the writer explained in the poem.



## QUESTIONS

(1) **Read Psalm 145:8**

(a) Explain how the two lines are similar:

(b) Explain how they are different:

(2) **Read Psalm 145:10**

(a) Explain how the two lines are similar:

(b) Explain how they are different:

(3) **Read Psalm 145:20**

(a) Explain how the two lines are similar:

(b) Explain how they are different:

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**(4) Read:**

**Psalm 22:1–18**

**Matthew 27:35–46**

(a) Psalm 22 is a **messianic psalm** because it has prophecy about Jesus Christ in future years. What specific things did Psalm 22 predict about Jesus' crucifixion?

(b) Psalm 22 has both LITERAL and FIGURATIVE language. Describe some of the **figurative word-pictures** in Psalm 22.

*(Example: verse 6. "I am a worm and not a man.")*

**(5) Read Proverbs 15:13**

Find the first part and the second part of this verse. Write two things from the first part that are "opposite" of two things in the second part:

**1<sup>st</sup> Part**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Part**

(a) \_\_\_\_\_ is opposite of \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_ is opposite of \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 47 – Analyzing and Understanding the Gospels**

Watch Part 47 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #47**

4) Analyze and Understand the Gospels.

The Bible includes four Gospels:

- 1) Matthew,
- 2) Mark,
- 3) Luke and
- 4) John.

All four Gospels proclaim the same story about Jesus Christ. In Old Testament, God promised to send a Savior. In the New Testament, the four Gospels show that God kept His promise. Each Gospel in their own way proclaim Jesus' life, ministry, death on the cross and resurrection from the dead. Each Gospel has their own perspective about Jesus.

For example:

- 1) Matthew showed that Jesus is the Messiah from the Old Testament. Jesus is the Messiah from God.
- 2) Mark showed Jesus had a very busy ministry. He showed Jesus is the Son of Man.
- 3) Luke showed that Jesus brings salvation to poor and lost people.
- 4) John focused on Jesus as the Word of God. God became Man and lived among people. John emphasize the incarnation that means God become man.

All four Gospels show us that Jesus is wonderful and that we can trust Him as our Lord and Savior. What is the writer's goal for us? To trust in Jesus for full salvation.

We have three guide lines to help analyze and interpret Gospels:

- 1) Remember the Gospels do not give us a story for every day that Jesus lived on earth. We know almost nothing about Jesus' teen years.
- 2) Matthew, Mark, and Luke the first three Gospels are called the synoptic Gospels. Why? These three Gospels use almost same outline for their books.
- 3) All four Gospels emphasize discipleship. Discipleship means we trust Jesus and accept His invitation and follow His way for our life. All four Gospels show Jesus is our Savior and He invites us to follow him.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Names the four gospel writers:

- (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(c) \_\_\_\_\_ (d) \_\_\_\_\_

**Read Matthew 10:2–4**

2. Which of the gospel writers belonged to Jesus' 12 Disciples?

- (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_

**Read Matthew 9:9–13**

3. What was Matthew's job before Jesus called him to follow?

**Read Acts 12:25**

4. Mark help two men in their work. Who were those two men?

- (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
(b) \_\_\_\_\_

**Read Colossians 4:14**

5. What was Luke's job?

**Read Matthew 4:18–22**

6. What was John's job before Jesus called him to follow?

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**Read:**

**Matthew 1 – 2** (two chapters)

**Mark 1** (one chapter)

**Luke 1 – 2** (two chapters)

**John 1** (one chapter)

7. Which two gospels describe the things that happened during Jesus' birth (the Christmas story)?
- (a) \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) \_\_\_\_\_
8. Those two gospel versions of the Christmas story have some information that is the same in both, and they have information that very different.
- (a) What information in those two gospels is the same in both?
- (b) What information in those two gospels is different?
- (c) Make a guess as to reason that the two gospels are different in the way they tell the Christmas story.
9. Which two gospels report Jesus' genealogy (family tree)?
- (a) \_\_\_\_\_
- (b) \_\_\_\_\_
10. Which gospel tells about something that happened when Jesus was a young boy?

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**Read:**

**Matthew 1:22**

**Matthew 2:23**

**Matthew 12:17**

**Matthew 2:15**

**Matthew 4:14**

**Matthew 13:35**

**Matthew 2:17**

**Matthew 8:17**

**Matthew 27:9**

11. What sentence or phrase did Matthew often use in his gospel?

12. What point was Matthew trying to prove when he wrote that phrase?

**Read Matthew 28:18–20**

13. This is the **Great Commission**. Write a summary of these verses in your own words: Jesus sends us to do....what?

**Read Luke 1:1–4**

14. Why did Luke write his gospel about Jesus?

**Read John 20:30–31**

15. Why did John write his gospel about Jesus?

16. What is the benefit of having four different gospel reports about Jesus' life (instead of having just one gospel)?

**Lesson 48 – Analyzing and Understanding the Epistles**

Watch Part 48 video.

**Video: Study the Bible #48**

5) Analyzing and Understanding the Epistles.

The word “Epistles” means letters. The New Testament has 21 letters. Sometimes we call them books. St. Paul wrote many of them. He wrote 13 letters. What is the form used for the letters? The same as other letters people wrote during the New Testament Times.

The form of the letter has five parts.

- 1) the writer introduces himself.
- 2) the writer greets the people.
- 3) the writer puts down the theme for the letter.
- 4) the writer puts down the “body of the letter”.
- 5) the writer puts down the final greetings.

We have 3 guidelines to help analyze and interpret epistles:

- 1) The first guideline to analyze and interpret a letter is to remember the form of the letter. The five parts of letter.
- 2) The second guideline is to learn about the writer who sent the letter and why he sent it. Many time the writer is trying to help the churches solve a problem. Sometimes the letters encourage Christians. Sometimes the letter encourages a member to remain faithful to God and their Savior Jesus Christ.
- 3) The third guideline is that people need help to apply the Gospel to their lives. The epistles help apply the Gospel in their life. For example, the letter to Romans explains “why Jesus died? Jesus died to influence me, how? What is the letter to Phillipian’s focus? Joy for believers in Christ.

Epistles – letters – show Christians ways to apply the Bible to their life. You will enjoy the study of the letters in the Bible.

**How to Study & Understand the Bible**  
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**QUESTIONS**

1. The word "epistle" means what? \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. The video lesson describes five parts to the form of New Testament epistles. What are those five parts:
  - (a) \_\_\_\_\_
  - (b) \_\_\_\_\_
  - (c) \_\_\_\_\_
  - (d) \_\_\_\_\_
  - (e) \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Read the first few verses in each of the New Testament epistles. Identify who wrote the letter and to where or to whom he sent the letter:

Read chapter 1:	This letter is FROM whom?	This letter is TO where or whom?
<b>Romans</b>	v.1	v.7
<b>1 Corinthians</b>	v.1	v.2
<b>2 Corinthians</b>	v.1	v.1
<b>Galatians</b>	v.1	v.2
<b>Ephesians</b>	v.1	v.1
<b>Philippians</b>	v.1	v.1
<b>Colossians</b>	v.1	v.2
<b>1 Thessalonians</b>	v.1	v.1
<b>2 Thessalonians</b>	v.1	v.1
<b>1 Timothy</b>	v.1	v.2
<b>2 Timothy</b>	v.1	v.2
<b>Titus</b>	v.1	v.4
<b>Philemon</b>	v.1	v.1–2
<b>Hebrews</b>	(unknown)	(To Jewish Christians in Rome)



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<b>James</b>	v.1	v.1
<b>1 Peter</b>	v.2	v.1
<b>2 Peter</b>	v.1	v.1
<b>1 John</b>	John the Apostle	(not identified)
<b>2 John</b>	v.1	v.1
<b>3 John</b>	v.1	v.1
<b>Jude</b>	v.1	v.1

4. Who wrote most of the letters in the New Testament?

**Read Romans 1:10–13**

5. Why did Paul write this letter to the Christians in Rome?

**Read Romans 1:17**

6. What is the theme of Paul's letter to the Romans?

**Read 1 Corinthians 1:10–11**

7. Why did Paul write this first letter to the Corinthians?

**Read 2 Corinthians 1:3–7**

8. Why did Paul write this second letter to the Corinthians?

**Read Galatians 1:6–9**

9. Why did Paul write this letter to the Christians in Galatia?

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**Read Philippians 4:14–19**

10. Why did Paul write this letter to the Christians in Philippi?

**Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13 – 5:11**

11. What important teaching did Paul give the Christians in Thessalonica?

**Read Philemon 10–16** (or Philemon 1:10–16 in internet Bibles)

12. Who was Onesimus?

**Read Hebrews 1:1–2**

13. The Letter to the Hebrews is about whom?

<b>Final Exam</b>
-------------------

**Read Acts 17:10–12**

1. Describe the Bereans' attitude about God's Word.

**Read Deuteronomy 6:6–9**

2. What should be our attitude about the Bible?

**Read Matthew 6:25–34**

3. A teenager and a senior citizen may read these verses in different ways, as they apply Jesus' words to their lives.

(a) What might these verses say to a teenage Christian?

(b) What might these verses say to a senior citizen?

**Read 2 Corinthians 13:12**

3. Paul tells Christians to "greet one another with a holy kiss."  
How may this passage be applied in the "culture" in church fellowship today?

Three basic steps of Bible study are
--------------------------------------

- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Observation ("What does the Bible text <u>say</u>?")</li><li>2) Interpretation ("What does the Bible text <u>mean</u>?")</li><li>3) Application ("What does the Bible <u>mean to me</u>?")</li></ol> |
|---|

Select ONE of the texts below. Use these steps in your study of this passage:

Psalm 23:1

Psalm 23:4

Matthew 7:15–20

Romans 8:37–39

5. The text I chose is \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What does the text say? (in your own words)

7. What does this text mean?

8. What does this text mean to me?

## How We Got the Bible

from DeafPah! course:  
“Everyday Life in Bible Times”

Long ago in ancient times, when a king gave a formal announcement, his statement was engraved (carved) in stone, like we see on many old buildings and also the Ten Commandments.

But chiseling stone is no good for everyday writing. So what did they do? How did they write?

During Abraham’s time, people in the Middle East wrote on clay tablets. While the clay was still wet, they had a stick they pressed into the clay. When the writing was finished, they let the clay dry in the sun. Then they put the clay tablet in fire to make the clay hard and the writing permanent.



But during Israel’s time, they wrote their history, their stories, their letters, their songs, and their contracts not on clay and not on stone. They wrote on animal skins – sheep or goats.

They scraped the skin very clean and very thin almost like paper. That animal skin for writing is called **parchment**.

The Hebrew language is written right to left. They wrote in columns. When the ink was dry, they rolled up the parchment. That made a **scroll**.

And when they needed to add more columns, they sewed on another animal skin. That made the scroll longer. Parchment scrolls could be 10 – 30 feet long.

Animal skins are really wonderful for writing, because they stay good thousands of years. Our oldest Bible scrolls that we have found, are written on animal skins. Those Old Testament Bible scrolls are called **the Dead Sea Scrolls**.

Today we use paper for writing. Back during Bible times, Egyptians made paper from tall grass that grew in water. That grass was called **papyrus**.

They lay the grass stalk side by side. Then they lay a second layer of grass, perpendicular to the first, like a thin mat. When that was finished, they pressed the grass mat and let it dry. Then they trimmed the edges straight. Papyrus became like paper for writing a letter.

The prophets, poets, and historians of the Old Testament wrote on parchment. New Testament writers probably used both parchment and papyrus. Papyrus was cheap, but it quickly fell apart. Animal skin parchment remains good a long time.

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**Scribes**

Long ago, people did not have printing presses. They did not have copy machines. No Xerox machines. They did not have computers, email, or printers. All writing was done by hand.

A scroll that has writing is called a **manuscript**, which “hand written.” And a person that does writing for his work, his job, that person is called, a **scribe**, a “writer.”

Professional scribes worked for kings and government officials, writing laws and history. Scribes in Israel were responsible for copying God’s Word, and they taught God’s people.

Also, when Paul wrote his letters in the New Testament, Paul did not write those letters himself. He spoke while a friend wrote for him. Then at the end, Paul wrote his short personal greeting, like a signature.

Scribes wrote using pen and ink. The pen was a thin wood stick, or a grass stalk. Ink was kept in a cow’s horn that had a cap.

**Bible copies vs. original manuscripts**

When the Apostle John wrote his New Testament letters, John wrote on parchment or papyrus. Other people wanted share or have their own copy of John’s letters, so they read it line by line, and as they read it, they wrote their own copy. Many people did that, so many churches had hand-written copies of John’s letters. Then more people wanted copies of John’s letters, so they made their own copies from earlier copies.

Every time someone makes a handwritten copy of someone else’s letter, the copyist may make a mistake – accidentally change a word or leave a word out. That could be a problem, because somehow, somewhere the letters that John wrote himself (the original manuscripts) were lost or destroyed. All we have left are thousands of handwritten copies of his letters.

So we must ask the question: Are those copies of John’s letters accurate? Do they say exactly what John wrote in the original manuscript?

Absolutely YES! We have so many copies that were made soon after John’s original writing, it is easy figure out what John wrote. *(See the article about the reliability of Scripture later in this appendix.)*

**Scrolls vs Books**

When you read the Bible, New Testament, often you read the word “book.” The Greek word is *biblios*, and that word means book.

Today when we see that word “book,” we visualize a normal book with pages. Wrong. They did not have books in Bible times. They had scrolls. Books were not invented yet. So when you read the word “book” in the Bible, visualize a scroll, not a book.

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When did scrolls change to books?

Remember that Hebrews in the Old Testament wrote on animal skin scrolls. They wrote from right to left, and they arranged their columns from right to left. Greeks and Romans wrote from left to right, and they also arranged their text into columns. When they needed more columns, they sewed on more animal skin parchment.

If you wanted to bring your Bible to a meeting, you carried an armload of scrolls. If you wanted to find a specific chapter or verse, you must unroll the scroll, until you find the verse. Then when you wanted to find another verse, you must roll the scroll again. That wastes a lot of time.

Jewish people solved that problem by memorizing a lot of God's Word. So they did not always need to look up verses. But that did not help Christians in Greece, Italy, and other countries.

So the Romans invented a good trick.

If we open a scroll – unroll it – and use a sharp knife to cut the scroll between each column of text., then stack the pieces of parchment, and sew or glue left side of the stack and cover it, when you finish, you have a book. It is easy to flip pages to find verses. And you can carry a book more easily than scrolls.



Also, on scrolls you can write only on one side of the parchment. But you can write on both sides of book pages.

The formal name for “book” is “**codex.**”

But always remember, when you see the word “book” the Bible, visualize a scroll

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## The Canon of Scripture

by Rev. Ron Friedrich

### Who chose the books to include in the Bible?

No one... and everyone. I will explain...

This question assumes that the Bible was compiled by a person, or a committee, or a convention of church leaders. No, that is not how it happened. Nor was there a secret organization that ran all over the Roman Empire cutting out so-called "banned" books from the Bibles in every church and in Christian homes. None of that happened.

What DID happen?

As godly Jewish people read the messages of the prophets, the prayer-songs (psalms) of David, and the history of Israel (from God's point of view), the people all over Israel recognized that those writings were inspired by God, and they were different than all other songs and histories. The people of Israel called these writings the *Torah* and *Tanach* -- the Scriptures. Christians call them the Old Testament.

Centuries later when Christian people shared and read the letters of Paul, Peter, and John, those readers understood that they were not reading just any ordinary letters; these letters were the Word of God, Himself!

A lot of people wrote a lot of "gospel" stories about Jesus. Something did not seem right about most of those stories. Only the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John taught the truth of God's grace in Jesus Christ. True believers all over the Middle East, Europe, and North Africa recognized that these four gospels also are the Word of God, and they universally rejected the fake gospels.

Today we call the collection of those gospels and letters the New Testament. The 39 books of the Old Testament and 27 books of the New Testament are the "**canon**" of the Bible. (Canon is a Greek word that means "rule" or "list.") The New Testament canon of 27 books developed gradually, until it was widely accepted about the year AD 100. Since then church councils meeting to respond to spreading heresy occasionally affirmed the canon of Scripture.

### Why do Catholic Bibles have 81 books? Our Bible has only 66 books.

The 66 books of the Bible with which you are familiar are the 39 books of the Jewish Scriptures, which we call the Old Testament, and 27 books of the New Testament. If you look in a Roman Catholic Bible, you will find in some copies a third part, between the OT and NT, called the Deutero-cononical books or **Apocrypha**. (Find that word in a dictionary and read what it means.)

Books in the Apocrypha were mostly written in Israel during the time gap between the OT and NT. It has Jewish history, prayers, poetry, advice for godly living, visions, and some fictional additions to the OT books of Ezra, Daniel, and Esther.

For many centuries, the authoritative translation of the Bible for the Catholic Church was the Latin Vulgate, attributed to St. Jerome. Jerome himself did not believe the Apocrypha should be



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included in the Bible. But church leaders ignored Jerome's advice and they added the Apocrypha to Jerome's Latin translation.

The 16th Century Protestant Reformers confessed their faith based on the 39 books of the Old Testament Hebrew Scripture and 27 books of the New Testament. Catholic bishops responded at the Council of Trent by emphatically affirming that they also included the Apocrypha.

After Luther translated the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek into the German language, Luther's friend Philip Melanchthon translated the Apocrypha. Some early publications of the German Bible included the Apocrypha between the OT and NT. Martin Luther said about the Apocrypha: "These books are not held equal to the Scriptures, but are useful and good to read."

Some modern publications of the Catholic Bible mix books of the Apocrypha in with the Old Testament, so that the average reader is not able to discern the difference.

## **Getting the Bible in Our Own Language**

Old Testament scrolls were written on parchment scrolls, one scroll for each book of the Bible. They were kept in the synagogues. The text was written by hand in the Hebrew language, and small parts in the Aramaic language (similar to Hebrew)

In the year 285 BC Hebrew scribes and rabbis began translating the Old Testament scrolls into the Greek language, a task that took over 100 years to complete. According to Jewish tradition, the translation was done by 72 translators, six from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. From this tradition, the Greek translation of the Old Testament is called the **Septuagint** and is commonly abbreviated as **LXX** (Roman numeral 70). The Septuagint was the translation that Greek speaking Jews used during the time of Jesus and the Apostles. The Apostles and Gospel writers often quoted from this Greek translation of the Old Testament.

The Apostles and Gospel writers wrote the New Testament in the Greek language. When they quoted the Old Testament, they usually quoted from the Greek Septuagint translation. In AD 410 Jerome translated the Hebrew Old Testament and the Greek New Testament into Latin, the official language of the Roman Empire. Jerome's Latin Bible was called the **Vulgate** translation and it became the officially accepted translation of the Roman Catholic Church. After the fall of the Roman Empire, the Latin language faded, so many generations of Christians did not have the Bible in their own languages.

In 1521 Martin Luther translated the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament into the German language. The invention of the printing press made it possible for many copies to be printed quickly, so everyone in Germany had the opportunity to read God's Word for themselves in their own language.

About the same time Luther offered his German translation of the Bible, William Tyndale in England began translating the Bible from the original Greek and Hebrew texts into the English language. His work was banned by the Church of England and by King Henry VIII. They condemned Tyndale as a heretic and had him killed before he was able to finish translating the Old Testament. His friend Miles Coverdale complete Tyndale's work and published the first complete English Bible in 1537.

King James of England wanted the British people to have solid, up to date English translation of the Bible. He assigned the task to 54 Greek and Hebrew scholars. They completed their work and published the King James Version (KJV) in 1611.

Since the English language has changed since the days of King James, scholars offer us today fresh translations of Scripture in our own language.

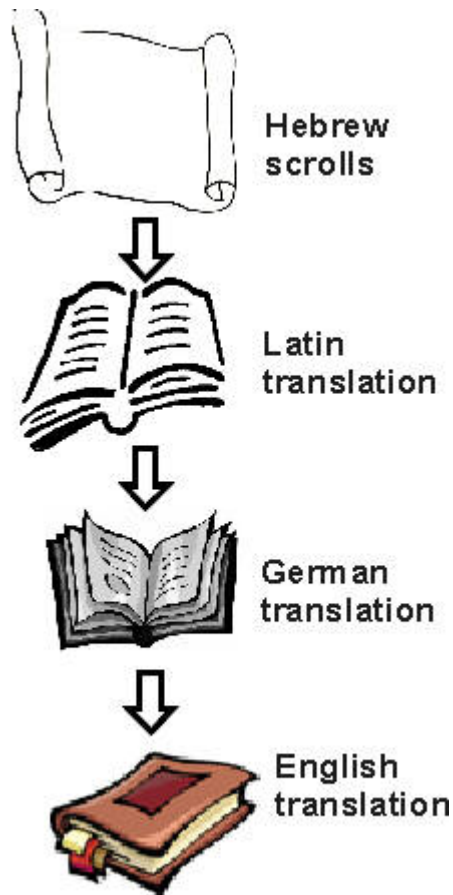
## Evidence for the Reliability of Scripture

by Rev. Ronald Friedrich

One criticism that atheists and agnostics often throw at Christians is this:

"The Bible has been translated so many times,  
there is no way to know if it is accurate."

That popular criticism exposes a basic misunderstanding of how the Bible comes to us in the English language. The criticism assumes that we got our English Bible from an earlier translation, and that translation came from a translation from before that, like this:



Is that how we got the Bible? **No!** The real picture looks more like this:

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The Old Testament texts were originally written in Hebrew, and the New Testament was written in Greek. When scholars translate the Bible into English, they do not translate from another translation. They translate directly from the ancient Greek and Hebrew texts.

So why do many English versions look so different? Greek and Hebrew are not the same as English, just as ASL is not the same as English. Just as five different ASL interpreters may express the same idea in five different ways that all mean the same thing, so also Bible translators must choose the best way to most clearly communicate the meaning of the ancient text in a language people understand today.

Different translators may choose different ways to express the same idea. While Bible translators do not have any of the original documents written by Moses, David, or Paul, we do have available to us thousands of ancient carefully handwritten copies (manuscripts) made in the early years after the composition of the original documents.

**How reliable are those manuscript copies?** We answer that question next...

Another false criticism that atheists and agnostics often throw at Christians is this:

**"The scribes who copied the Bible by hand made mistakes."**

Gutenberg's printing press and Xerox's photocopy machine are wonderful inventions that have changed the world of communication. Both are a blessing... and a curse. They are a curse, because every day those machines reproduce thousands of typographical errors.

Recently I read a book that appears to have bypassed the proofreader. There was a typographical error on nearly every chapter. When I read the first edition of the same book many years ago, it did not have those typos. Even if I didn't have that first edition copy, it was obvious what the

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original author wrote in spite of the typesetter's many mistakes. Furthermore, none of the typographical errors changed the meaning, or even the nuance, of the original text.

This is a similar situation we face when we translate the Bible from ancient Greek and Hebrew manuscripts (handwritten copies). We don't have the benefit of possessing Jeremiah's original scrolls, nor do we have the actual original letters which Paul wrote to the churches in Europe and the Middle East. What we do have are thousands of handwritten copies of copies of copies... And we can see some differences among those copies. Are the differences serious enough to cast doubt on the accuracy of the manuscripts? Let's look at three typical examples.

- (1) Some copyist changed the word order of a sentence. For example, Matthew 1:18 begins, *"The birth of Jesus Christ..."* But many ancient copies say, *"The birth of Christ Jesus..."* And a few less reliable copies say, *"The birth of Jesus..."* or *"The birth of Christ..."* So which is correct? A majority of the most reliable manuscripts say *"Jesus Christ."* But does it really matter? Does changing the Greek word order change the meaning of the sentence? No.
- (2) Some copyist changed the spelling of words. Sometimes this was accidental. Sometimes it was deliberate, as we do in our English translations of the Bible. Americans spell "Savior", but the British spell "Saviour." The Greek copyists did the same, adopting regionally accepted spelling of words, without changing their meaning.
- (3) Some copyists accidentally left words out of a sentence. But any sensible reader can figure out what the missing word is (just as many of our newsletter readers do every month, when they find my many typos). Plus we have the advantage of comparing thousands of ancient manuscripts, which help us fill in an occasional missing word and correct a random misspelling in any particular copy.

Because we have so many ancient manuscripts of the Bible, the task of determining what Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John actually wrote is not very difficult. Furthermore, if you examine even the most questionable variations among the manuscript copies, you will not find one variant that challenges a single Biblical doctrine.

I have friends who say that they lack confidence in the Bible's authority because they believe that the copies from which the Bible is translated are inaccurate and unreliable. However, they are unable to identify ONE manuscript variant which casts a shadow on the Bible's accuracy. The truth is, those who "doubt" simply don't like what the Bible says, so they grab any excuse they can for a reason to justify unbelief.

*[Continued on the next page...]*

<b>Testing the reliability and accuracy of ancient documents.</b>
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**Plato** -- the Greek philosopher.

**Homer** -- the Greek poet.

**Julius Caesar** -- the Roman emperor.

**Tacitus** -- the Roman historian.

Every student of ancient European history recognizes these names. When I studied Classical Greek and Latin in college, my fellow students and I had to translate portions of literature which these people had written. Handwritten manuscript copies of their work, copied and recopied generation after generation, still exist today, preserved in museum vaults.

In all my studies of these ancient authors, I never saw any critique which suggested that any of those documents are corrupted and unreliable. Scholars assume that the works of Plato, Homer, Caesar, and Tacitus which have been handed down to us accurately represent what their original authors wrote. Yet many of these same scholars claim that manuscript copies which form our New Testament of the Bible are corrupted and unreliable. In the face of such criticism, let us make a comparison, applying the same tests to the New Testament as we do other ancient documents.

Since we do not possess the original letters by Paul, or Plato's original manuscript, we must apply two basic tests to judge the accuracy of existing copies of an ancient document. Those two tests are:

- (1) How many ancient copies of the document still exist?** If the number of existing copies is few, that is bad. If the number of existing copies is many, that is good. If we have many copies of a document, it is a simple task to compare those copies to determine what the original manuscript said.
- (2) How long is the time span between the original composition of the document and the earliest existing copies?** A short time span is good. A long gap in time is bad. During a long span of time there is the chance that with each generation the text will become further corrupted.

How do the existing manuscripts of our ancient authors compare when we measure them with those two basic tests?

**Plato** wrote his *Philosophy* about 400 BC. Only seven ancient copies exist today. The time span between Plato and the earliest existing copy is about 1,300 years.

**Homer** wrote the *Iliad* about 800 BC. There are 642 ancient copies still in existence. The time span between Homer and the earliest existing copy is about 400 years.

**Julius Caesar** wrote his account of the *Gallic Wars* between 100 BC and 44 BC. Ten ancient copies still exist. The earliest of those copies was written 1,000 years after Caesar wrote original manuscript.

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**Tacitus** wrote his *Annals* around AD 100. Twenty ancient copies exist, the earliest of which dates about 1,000 years after Tacitus.

In this list thus far, Homer gets the high score. He has the highest number of ancient manuscripts in the shortest time span. The others offer very few copies, with time spans of 1,000 years or more. Yet, historians have regarded the documents as accurate.

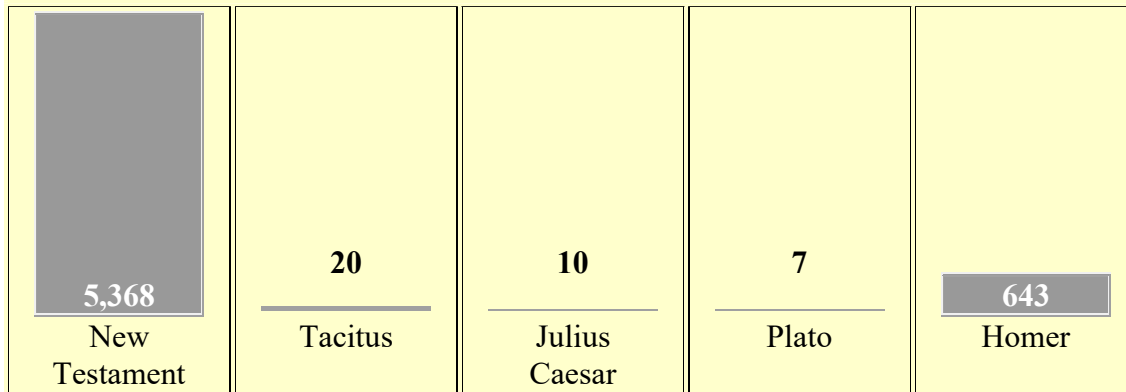
**How do the Bible's New Testament manuscripts compare?** There exists today 5,366 ancient copies of portions of the New Testament. The time span between the original composition of the New Testament documents and existing copies is about 50 years for copy fragments, 100 years for whole books of the New Testament, 150 years for nearly complete NTs, and 225 years for complete New Testaments. The New Testament offers an objective standard for reliability which far exceeds every other ancient document of western civilization.

**New Testament Manuscript Evidence**  
compared with other classical ancient literature

**Time gap between original composition and earliest existing manuscripts**



**Number of existing early manuscript copies**



Source: *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, by Josh McDowell,  
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