

Firm Foundations

Lesson 1

The Word of God

Your Authority

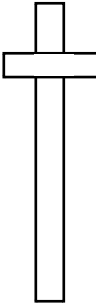
¹⁶ All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
(2Ti 3:16-17 KJV)

The purpose of this lesson is to establish the Bible as the sole authority for faith and practice for the believer. It is to acquaint the believer with the basics of the Bible and how it relates to our everyday life.

Introduction to the Bible

What separates Christianity from any religion in the world is its claim to an absolute written authority from God. Having the Word of God is essential to a Christian's growth in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. The standards by which a Christian is to govern his life in every detail are found in the pages of the Word of God. Here is a summary of the books of the Bible and classifications into which they are commonly categorized:

OLD TESTAMENT (39 Books)		"The New is in the Old concealed. The Old is in the New revealed."		NEW TESTAMENT (27 Books)	
HISTORY 17 Books	POETRY 5 books		HISTORY 5 books	TEACHING 21 books	PROPHECY 1 book
Law	Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon		Gospel	Paul's Letters	Revelation
Genesis Exodus Numbers Deuteronomy Leviticus			Matthew Mark Luke John	Romans 1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians	
HISTORY & GOVERNMENT	PROPHECY 17 books		The early church	1 Thessalonians 2 Thessalonians 1 Timothy 2 Timothy Titus Philemon	
Joshua Judges Ruth 1 Samuel 2 Samuel 1 Kings 2 Kings 1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles Ezra Nehemiah Esther	Major prophets	About 400 years between testaments	Acts		
	Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekial Daniel	The Old Testament looks forward to Christ's sacrifice on the cross.			
	Minor Prophets			General Letters	
	Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi	The New Testament is based on the work Christ finished on the cross.		Hebrews James 1 Peter 2 Peter 1 John 2 John 3 John Jude	
God used forty different men over a period of 1,500 years (about 1400 B.C. to A.D. 90) in writing the Bible.					

II. What Makes The Bible Unique?

- A. It is unique in its _____. The Bible is a book composed of sixty-six books, written by approximately forty authors, over a period of 1500 years, making one complete integrated unit. Who wrote the scriptures and what was their source according to II Peter 1:19-21 and II Timothy 3:16?
- B. Inspiration can be defined as “God Breathed” or “moved along like a ship in the wind.” It is unique in its _____.
- C. It is unique in its _____. Listed below are a few examples:
- Salvation—John 3:3; Acts 4:12
Virgin Birth—Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23
Authority of Scripture—Hebrews 4:12
Faith—Hebrews 11:6
- D. It is unique in its _____. No other book has so profoundly influenced the course of history and the lives of men. How is God's Word described in Hebrews 4:12 and I Peter 1:23-25?
- 1.
 - 2.

III. What is God's Purpose in Giving Us the Scriptures?

The Scriptures are inspired and have been preserved by God so we might have an infallible guide to bring us to salvation and daily sanctification. That in the end, we can fulfill God's objective of glorifying His name by doing His will. Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19-20

- A. Describe what we have been told to do in the passages listed above. (This is called the Great Commission.)

B. We find the teachings of Scripture divided into four major categories. According to 2 Timothy 3:16, those divisions are profitable to us as:

- 1) _____ - what is right.
- 2) _____ - what is not right.
- 3) _____ - how to get right.
- 4) _____ - how to stay right.

“ . . . That the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:17)

IV. Basic Principles of Bible Study

The following is a list of five points that should be a help to you as you study the Bible. These are a few of the practical basics of true Biblical interpretation.

- A. The literal translation must always be examined first: taking the actual meaning of the words at face value, their literal historical meaning, to understand what the passage is saying.
- B. Allow the context of the passage to determine the meaning of the words within the passage. Each verse should be examined in the paragraph, section, chapter, and book in which it is written. In addition, attention must be given to the audience, while considering cultural, geographical, and grammatical context.
- C. The Bible will interpret itself. By that we are saying that scripture will best explain scripture. This can be seen in simply cross referencing one passage with another. This can be referred to as *“rightly dividing the word of truth.”*(II Timothy 2:15)
- D. Scripture will never contradict itself. Therefore, we should never violate a clear passage of Scripture with one that is obscure.

E. Three essential steps for effective Bible Study:

Step 1:

Observation—is the act of seeing, taking notice of things as they really are. Observation requires concentration. When you read the Bible look for key words and phrases. Observation answers the question, “What do I see?”

Step 2:

Interpretation—is the act of determining the authors meaning. Interpretation answers the, “What does it mean?”

Step 3:

Application—is the act of putting God’s Word into practice. It starts with a willingness to accept truth. Application answers the question, “What does it mean to me?”

V. Practical Application

A. What does it mean to make the Bible the sole authority of your life?

B. Relying upon Scripture as our sole authority demands that we be submissive and teachable. This is not always easy. What areas of life could you point to as those you have already submitted to God's Word?

C. Studying God's Word each day is one way to demonstrate that it is our authority. Do you have a regular time set aside each day for reading God's Word? Explain.

Key Memory Verses:
II Timothy 3:16-17

Questions:

Write any questions you may have concerning this lesson or any other questions you may want to discuss with your mentor: