

# **THE BIBLE**

## **I. THE CONTENT OF THE BIBLE**

The name *Bible* comes from the Greek word *biblos*, meaning *book*. Actually, the Bible contains 66 separate books, divided in two sections--the Old and New Testaments. These books progress generally in order from creation in Genesis to the eternal state in Revelation.

### **A. THE OLD TESTAMENT**

The Old Testament contains 39 books, arranged in four major sections: (1) HISTORY: 17 books from Genesis through Esther; (2) POETRY: 5 books from Job through the Song of Solomon; (3) THE MAJOR PROPHETS: 5 books from Isaiah through Daniel; and (4) THE MINOR PROPHETS: 12 books from Hosea through Malachi.

### **B. THE NEW TESTAMENT**

The New Testament contains 27 books, arranged in four major sections: (1) HISTORY: the four Gospels and Acts; (2) PAUL'S EPISTLES: 13 books from Romans through Philemon; (3) GENERAL EPISTLES: 8 books from Hebrews through Jude; and (4) REVELATION: the book of prophecy.

### **C. THE THEME**

The 66 books of the Bible were written by about 40 men over approximately 1500 years. They wrote about one central theme --Jesus Christ. The Old Testament portrays Jesus Christ as the coming Savior. The New Testament reveals Him as the risen Savior. The Book of Revelation presents Him as the returning King.

## **II. THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE**

The Bible teaches the inspiration, the inerrancy, and the authority of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

## **A. THE BIBLE IS VERBALLY INSPIRED BY GOD**

The inspiration of Scripture is stated in 2 Tim. 3:16: *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.* The Greek word for *inspired*, *theopneustos*, means *God breathed out*. God *breathed out* every word of the Bible. Peter explains this: *For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.* (2 Pet. 1:21) The Scriptures are *verbally* inspired, because the Holy Spirit selected every word to be written by these men.

## **B. THE BIBLE IS INERRANT IN ITS ORIGINAL WRITINGS**

Jesus stated that all Scriptures are inerrant, free from error, completely true. In referring to the accuracy of the entire Old Testament, Jesus said, *These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.* (Luke 24:44)

## **C. THE BIBLE IS THE SUPREME, FINAL, AND ADEQUATE AUTHORITY IN FAITH AND LIFE**

The Bible is authoritative; we are to believe and practice what it teaches. Jesus said, *The Scripture cannot be broken.* (John 10:35); the Scriptures possess an authority so great, they cannot be annulled. The authority of God's Word is also seen in that it is eternal. Peter said, *The Word of the Lord endures forever.* (1 Pet. 1:25) (See also Matthew 5:18)

## **III. THE PURPOSE OF THE BIBLE**

Among many others, here are two primary purposes of the Bible.

## **A. TO REVEAL GOD**

The Bible reveals the Person and work of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The major theme throughout Scriptures is revealing Jesus Christ as God, as Man, as Christ. (Jn 1:1; 20:31; Rom 9:5)

## **B. TO TEACH US HOW TO LIVE**

The Bible is an instruction manual in how to be saved, and how to live for God. Paul writes: *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.* (2 Timothy 3:16,17)

## **IV. THE VALUE OF THE BIBLE**

Making the Bible your guide for living will bring you much value.

### **A. IT OFFERS ETERNAL LIFE**

Paul said that the gospel of Christ, *is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes.* (Romans 1:16)

### **B. IT PROMOTES SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

Peter said, *As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.* (1 Peter 2:2)

### **C. IT GIVES GUIDANCE**

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The Psalmist declared, *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.* (Psalm 119:105)

### **D. IT PRODUCES FAITH**

Paul revealed, *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* (Romans 10:17)

### **E. IT REVEALS SIN**

Hebrews states, *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* (Hebrews 4:12)

## **F. IT PREVENTS SIN**

The Psalmist wisely observes, *Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.* (Psalm 119:11)

## **G. IT DEFEATS SATAN**

Paul said, *Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.* (Ephesians 6:17) (Also Matt 4:4,7,10)

## **V. YOUR USE OF THE BIBLE**

### **A. READ THE WORD**

Read the Bible daily, perhaps reading through it in a year.

### **B. MEDITATE ON THE WORD**

The righteous man's *delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.* (Psalm 1:2)

### **C. MEMORIZE THE WORD**

As noted above, the Psalmist confidently declared, *Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.* (Ps. 119:11)

### **D. OBEY THE WORD**

James exhorts believers to, *be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.* (James 1:22)

### **E. SHARE THE WORD**

Jesus said, *Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.* (Mark 16:15)

God said: *This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.* (Joshua 1:8)

