

The Word of God

We learned many things about God and we learned about the enemies of the Christian and how to have victory over them.

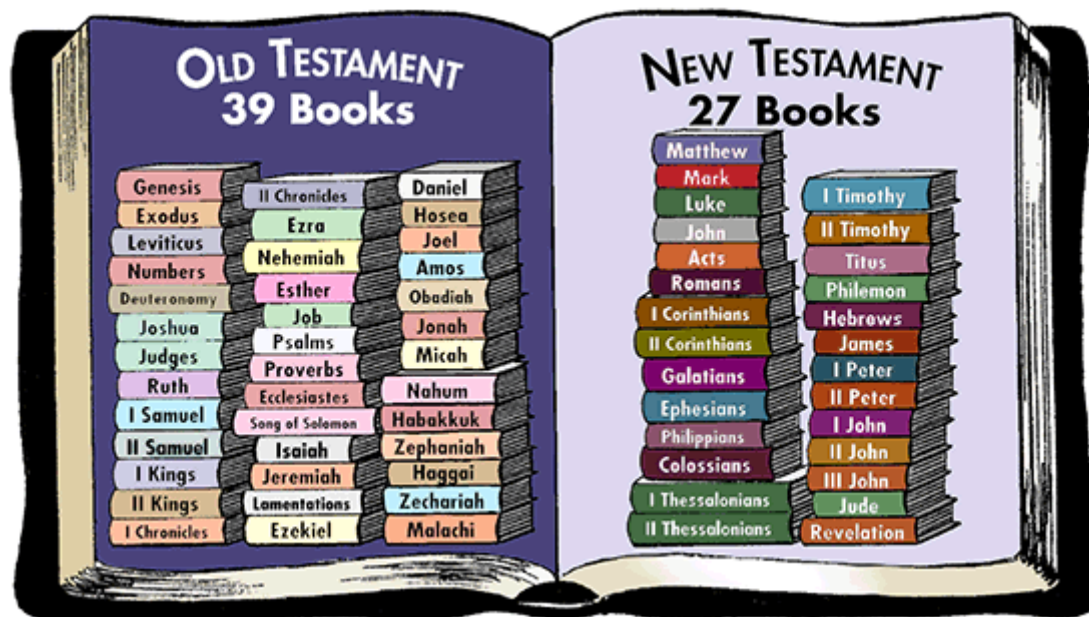
How did we learn these things? We learned them from God's book—the **Bible**.

In this lesson we will find the answers to some very important questions about the Bible: What is the Bible? How did we get the Bible? What is the Bible about? How can I understand the Bible?

What is the Bible?

The Bible is God's holy Word. It is the most important book in all the world because it is God's written message to us. There are two main parts of the Bible. The first part is called the Old Testament, and it was written before Christ came to the earth. The second part of the Bible is called the New Testament and it was written after Christ came to earth and went back to Heaven.

The Bible has 66 books—thirty-nine in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament.



How did we get the Bible?

Perhaps you are wondering, "Who wrote the Bible and how did we get it?" God Himself is the true Author of the Bible, though He used many men to write it. God told these men what to write, and even the words to use. The Bible says, "...holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21).

Long, long ago, God told a man named Jeremiah to write a part of the Bible. God said to Jeremiah, *"Write all the words that I have spoken to you in a book"* (Jeremiah 30:2).

Jeremiah obeyed God and wrote the Book of Jeremiah. God's Holy Spirit told Jeremiah exactly what to write, and he wrote the words down. This is what we mean when we say that the Bible is *"inspired of God."* Every book in the Bible was written in this way. The Bible says, *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God..."* (2 Timothy 3:16).

This is how the Bible was written, and it has been passed down to us from one generation to another. *"Was any other book written in this way?"* No, the Bible is the only book which is inspired by God. When the last book in the Bible, the book of Revelation, was written, the Bible was complete. The Bible warns against adding to it or taking away from it. (See *Revelation 22:18,19.*)

What is the Bible about?

The Bible tells us how man sinned and turned away from God and how God gave His Son to die for our sins. It tells us that God loves us and that He wants us to become His children by taking Jesus Christ as our Savior.

The Bible is the most important book in the world because it tells us how to be saved. The Apostle Paul wrote to young Timothy, *"... from a child you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation..."* (2 Timothy 3:15).

God gave us this wonderful book that we might know the truth about ourselves, about sin, about Satan, about salvation, and about God.

How can we understand the Bible?

There are many things in the Bible that are hard for us to understand. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had a teacher who knew all about God and His Word?

Well, there is someone like that! He is the Holy Spirit. God has given the Holy Spirit to us to teach us the Bible. The moment we take Christ as our Savior, the Holy Spirit comes to live in us. He lives in every believer. The Holy Spirit teaches us the things of God. The Lord Jesus said, *"... the Comforter [the Holy Spirit]...whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things..."* (John 14:26).

Without the Holy Spirit, we could not understand God's Word. How thankful we should be that God has given the Holy Spirit to us! Each time we read the Bible, we should depend on the Holy Spirit to teach us. This is

what David meant when he prayed, *"Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your law"* (Psalm 119:18).

What does God want us to do with the Bible?

Here are four things God wants us to do:

- (1) **Read** the Bible each day,
- (2) **Believe** the Bible,
- (3) **Memorize** verses from the Bible, and
- (4) **Obey** the Bible.

Let us think about each of these.

1 Read the Bible each day!

Why should we read the Bible daily? We should read the Bible each day because this is the way God speaks to us and tells us what He wants us to know and what He wants us to do. Reading the Bible is as important to our spiritual life as eating food is to our physical life. The most important reason for studying the Bible is to get to know the Lord Jesus Christ better and to become more like Him.

2 Believe the Bible!

We cannot please God unless we have faith. The Bible says, *"Without faith it is impossible to please Him..."* (Hebrews 11:6).

What is faith?

Faith is taking God at His Word. Faith is believing the Bible. Others may doubt the Bible, but settle it in your mind that the Bible is God's holy Word. The Bible says, *"For ever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven"* (Psalm 119:89).

Once a great preacher named D.L. Moody wanted to have more faith. He prayed and prayed for God to give him great faith, but he did not seem to have more faith. Then one day, he read this verse in his Bible: *"... faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God"* (Romans 10:17).

Mr. Moody saw the truth! He saw that faith comes from careful attention to God's exact statements of fact in His Word. As Moody studied and believed God's exact statements in the Bible, his faith grew and grew.

Would you like to have more faith? Then read God's Word carefully, believe it, and act on it.

3 Memorize verses from the Bible!

The Bible is "*the sword of the Spirit.*" This means that it is our weapon to use against Satan. When the Lord Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, Jesus used the Word of God. Jesus knew the scriptures, and He used them to defeat Satan. Each time Satan tempted Him, Jesus said, "*It is written,*" and He quoted a scripture verse. Satan was defeated!

If we want to have victory over Satan's temptations, we must memorize God's Word. This is "*hiding God's Word in our heart.*" The Bible says, "*Your Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against You*" (Psalm 119:11).

Memorizing God's Word will also help you to be a good witness for Christ. If you use your own words in talking to others, they may say, "*That's just your opinion,*" or "*Who are you to tell me what I ought to do?*" But, if you quote the Bible, your words will have power because they are God's words.

4 Obey the Bible!

The Bible contains **facts** to be believed, **promises** to be claimed, and **commands** to be obeyed. The Lord wants us to obey Him. Jesus said,

"Not every one that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

When God tells you in His Word that you should do something, then do it. God blesses those who obey His Word. The Lord Jesus said, "*Blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it [obey it]*" (Luke 11:28).

Begin Now!

Begin now to read God's Word each day. Get a Bible with good print — one that you can read easily. Set a time each day to read your Bible and pray. Most Christians find that the best time to do this is the first thing in the morning.

Begin with the Gospel of John.

As you read it, watch for the words "*believe*" and "*believes*," and underline them in your Bible. The Gospel of John was written to help us believe on Jesus Christ as the Son of God and as our Lord and Savior. John wrote, "*These are written, that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life through His name*" (John 20:31).

After you have read the Gospel of John several times, you will want to read the entire New Testament and then the whole Bible.

When you come across a verse you especially like, memorize it. God promises special blessings to those who love His Word and think about it day and night. When you learn a wonderful truth from God's Word, share it with a friend. Remember, the most important reason for studying the Bible is to get to know the Lord Jesus Christ better and to become more like Him.

You can know that you are saved.

Before we close this lesson, let us look at three wonderful verses from God's Word. Here are the first two:

"This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life" (1 John 5:11, 12).

What do these verses tell us? They tell us that the Bible is "*the record*" of what God has said. In the Bible, God tells us that He has given us eternal life and that this life is in His Son. If you have Christ as your Savior, you have eternal life; if you do not have Him, you do not have eternal life.

Our third verse tells us something God wants believers to know. Here is the verse:

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that you may know that you have eternal life..." (1 John 5:13).

What does God want you to know?

He wants you to know that you have eternal life. A true believer does not have to say, "*I hope I am saved,*" or "*I think I am saved.*" He can say, "*I KNOW that I am saved because God says so in His Word.*" How thankful we should be for the Word of God!

Helpful Hints

BIBLE READING: Fellowship with God

Here are some ideas that will help you to have fellowship with God as you read His Word.

Why read the Bible?

We read the Bible first of all in order to have **fellowship with God**. The Bible is God's Word to us. He does not speak out loud to us but He speaks to us in our hearts by His written Word. If we want to hear what God has to say to our hearts, we must read the Bible.

The most important reason for reading and studying the Bible is to get to know the Lord Jesus better and to become more like Him

How to read the Bible

Read it aloud. It will help to keep your mind on what you are reading.

Think! Don't be in a hurry. Take time to think about what you are reading.

Talk to God. Talk to Him about what you are reading. If you don't understand something, tell Him so. Ask Him to help you understand. When you read something helpful, tell Him so and thank Him for it. When you read something wonderful about God, tell Him right then how wonderful you think He is.

Wait on God. This means to be quiet before God with your mind on Him and His Word that you have just read. Ask Him to make it real in your life.

What to do about it

When God speaks something special to you, underline those words in your Bible. That is God's word to you personally. A colored pencil is best for this. (Do not use a ballpoint or ink pen. These will "*bleed*" through the paper of most Bibles.) You may want to keep a notebook of the special things God shows to you.

Do what God tells you to do. Sometimes He shows us a sin that we need to confess to Him. Sometimes He shows us something that needs to be made right with another person. Be quick to obey.

Share with others the blessings that God gives you as you read His Word. It will help others and it will help you, too

Remember it. All through the day, let your mind go back to the word that God spoke to you. Talk to Him about it in your heart. This is fellowship with God.