

"Know Your Bible"

Have you wondered why I spend so much time talking about the Bible? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." And today we're examining the Bible and giving reasons to know God's Word.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. We love the Bible, because we know it is God's Word. It's proven itself to be true time and again. It is the only book, ancient or modern that contains precise, detailed predictions of the future given centuries before they happened. You can trust your Bible to give you the spiritual teaching that you need to have eternal life. It can teach you right from wrong and train you to become the person God made you to be. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and we want to be a part of your life each week.

Some think of the Bible as an ancient and outdated book of myths and legends. But nothing could be farther from the truth. The Bible tells the history of the world from God's perspective. The Bible contains what God wants us to know about Him and about ourselves. Humans are exceptionally complicated beings physically and mentally. And it's absurd to imagine that they evolved from non-life or even from lower forms of life.

Genesis 1 reveals humans were created in the image of God, Acts 17 reveals that we're the offspring of God, and Hebrews 12 and verse 9 reveals that God is the father of spirits. Rocks and minerals can't make spirits and they can't make you form with that complicated body, physical body that you have. It just makes sense to listen to the One who created you and loves you. To listen to the bible. It makes sense to heed His warnings, to follow His instructions, and to learn all you can about Him. The God who created you wants you to love and live with Him forever in heaven. 1 Timothy 2 verses 3 to 4 says, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Now we offer this study on knowing the Bible free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have many free programs and materials on our website, www.searchtv.org. You can also see us on YouTube.

And now we'll now worship in song. We'll read from 2 Timothy 3:14 to 17, and we'll get to know the Bible.

2 Timothy chapter 3 verses 14 to 17 will be our reading today. And there it talks about how wonderful and how great the value of the word of God truly is. Verse 14.

You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood (speaking of Timothy) you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Oh what a wonderful book the bible is. What it can do for us. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that through Your love, Your grace and mercy You have caused this book to be written down so that we might know Your will, Your ways, Your love and Your promises for us. Father help us to take everything You say seriously and to do Your will. And in Jesus name, Amen.

Let's take a look at this book. The Bible is actually a library of 66 books, written over a period of 1500 years by about 40 authors. In the days when Jesus walked on the earth, the Hebrew Bible consisted of twenty-two books. Now these twenty books contained all 39 books found in our English Old Testaments. The New Testament contains 27 books. The Old Testament reveals to us the history and the covenant God made with His chosen people Israel. The New Testament reveals the new covenant God made with all nations, all people who believe in Jesus. This New Testament is now God's covenant in force with all who believe, Jew and Gentile.

The new covenant was prophesied in Jeremiah 31:31 to 34 which says, "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, (no) My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Hebrews 8:8 to 12 quotes this passage in Jeremiah. In verse 13 the Hebrew writer concludes, "When He said, 'A new covenant,' He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear." Later in Hebrews 10:8 to 10, this writer says: After saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin you have not desired, nor have you taken pleasure in them" which are offered according to the law, (that is the law of Moses) then he said, "Behold, I have come to do your will." (that's Jesus speaking and) He takes away the first in order to establish the second. (And it's) By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." So, Christians obey the new covenant or New Testament.

Under the old covenant, people were born Israelites and had to be taught as they grew up to know the Lord; but under the new covenant, people become Christians because they have already been taught, they've heard the gospel of Jesus Christ and they choose to follow Him. In the New Testament, those who were baptized into Christ were penitent believers, not infants. Acts 8 and verse 12 says, "But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike." Now these folks were not infants who were being baptised.

The Bible contains a variety of types of literature. Much of the Bible is in narrative form, where stories that is histories, about God and man are recorded as actual events, which they are. Many books contain poetry and the words of song that reveals the emotional responses to the great acts of God and the desire for salvation and justice. Other books contain the wisdom of God about everyday life. Several books of the Old Testament contain prophetic materials about the coming Messiah and about the future of certain nations. The books of the Old Testament are valuable for us to study. We cannot know many of things about God and about ourselves, unless we study the Old Testament.

Now the four gospel accounts in the New Testament, that is, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, reveal what God wanted us to know about Jesus Christ from His birth, life, death, and resurrection. And if we're to follow the example of Jesus, we must study these precious accounts. Matthew and John were apostles who knew and walked with Jesus from the beginning. Mark and Luke were prophets

who were close to the apostles and eyewitnesses from whom they learned the truth. Now we can't find any ancient books with more credibility than the four gospel accounts. They are not only historically accurate; they are inspired of the Holy Spirit and provide the gospel of our salvation.

The book of Acts reveals the history of the church from its beginning, at Pentecost, to its spreading in the known world. We learn how the church began on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Some have called this the hub of the Bible because it builds on the prophecies of the Old Testament about the Messiah and reveals how God raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him on the throne in the heavenly places. Acts 2 and verse 36 reveals that Jesus is both Lord and Christ. Now the word Christ means the Messiah.

Now the rest of the book of Acts reveals how people repented and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38). It reveals the efforts of the apostles and how the church overcame obstacles and persecution. It tells how Stephen and James suffered for their faith in Jesus Christ. Acts also tells us of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, who became the apostle Paul. Much of Acts gives us the details of his three missionary journeys of this amazing apostle.

Now thirteen epistles, found in the New Testament, come from Paul. And they reveal the commandments and instructions that he received from the Lord (1 Corinthians 14 verse 37). It reveals how he dealt with social, moral, and doctrinal problems with these newly organized churches. It also gives valuable advice to the ministers he trained, Timothy and Titus. These epistles reveal the heart of Paul as he deals with false teaching, with opposition, and with these young converts. Through it all, Paul remained devoted to the will of God, to the necessity of holy living, to the truth, and to God's grace.

The book of Hebrews comes to us from an unknown author. We're not sure who wrote the book, but this first century book reveals for us the necessity of paying attention to the teaching of the Lord and His apostles. He wrote in a time when many had become dull of hearing and drifting away from the truth of the gospel of Jesus. And so this book of exhortation hoped to bring these wandering Christians back to Christ, who is our Savior and our hope.

The general epistles of Peter, James, Jude, and John were written to encourage brethren to remain faithful to their calling in tough times, to love one another, and to stay faithful to the truth. Peter and John remind them that the earth and its works will be destroyed in 2 Peter 2 and in 1 John 2. James encourages them to rejoice in their trials to keep their faith active, to recognize their lives are like a vapor and not to boast about tomorrow, and to refrain from judging brothers. Jude 3 urges us "to contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints."

The book of Revelation was written in the first century to the seven churches of Asia. Now though John wrote the book, it is the "revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must shortly take place" (Revelation 1 verse 1). The book ends with a prophecy describing the end time with a judgment scene and a description of heaven. From Revelation 20 and verse 12 we learn that we will be judged by the things that are written in the books according to our deeds. Now how we live and whether we believe in Jesus and what is written in the books matter. Those whose names are in the book of life will enter into the eternal city, while those whose names are not in the book of life are to be lost eternally.

We must take the Scriptures seriously, not just one verse or two. We must take all God says seriously. John said in Revelation 22 verses 18 to 19, "I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away

his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.” I tell ya, we must take every word, every sentence, every verse, every chapter, and every book seriously.

Now it’s easy to rely on what we’ve learned in the past and then drift away from it. We must never, never stop studying the word of God. And what was true in the first century and what was true in the twentieth century is still true today. God hasn’t changed His mind about right and wrong. He hasn’t changed a bit. And cultural cannot overrule God. People can’t tell God, God tells people. And people who oppose God, you know what, they don’t last, they don’t last. God will always be. Hebrews chapter 2 verses 1- to says, “For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, (that is from the word of God) so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?” How?

The Bible is indeed inspired of God. And the word “inspired” means it was breathed out by God (2 Timothy 3 verse 16; it came from Him. And one can say of any Scripture that God is the source of it. 2 Peter 1:20 to 21 says, “But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, (that is ones own making up) for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” God through the Spirit was behind every book of the Bible, moving the apostles and prophets to write.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2 verses 12 to 13, “Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.” You see, God uses words to teach us things that we must know to have eternal life. Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, “And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, (that) you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.” Friends, we must receive and accept this book, this written word from God, for what it really is, the word of God! Now whether spoken by the apostle in the first century and those prophets or written down by those men, God’s word is holy. It’s divine and it’s authoritative.

Yes the Bible is authoritative and it’ll judge us on the last day. You remember the Lord Jesus said in John 12:48 that, “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.” Oh we’re not gonna be judged by opinion polls, by human traditions, by votes, by human creeds, or by cultural opinions. We will have to face Jesus and His words that were written down. 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 10 says that, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” Now you might escape any consequences for your sins in this life, but you cannot escape facing the Lord one day.

Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 11 verse 9, “Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things.” We must all consider how our hearts and how our lives affect our souls. Are you right with God?

Let’s pray. Heavenly Father help us to take Your words seriously, to study it, to memorize it, to love it and to share it with others. And help us to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.

The Bible will profit you when you read and study it. You need God’s Word for guidance, for God’s promises, and for God’s ways. Don’t assume that you know the truth about God, if you have never studied the Word of God to see how He speaks about Himself. Many people follow a corrupted view of

God that looks only at parts of Scripture instead of studying the whole Bible. The person who never studies the Bible is no better off than the person who has no Bible.

The gospel is the good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures contain this gospel of grace and hope that we all need to be freed from sin and enjoy an inheritance in heaven. If you miss studying the Scriptures, you're missing the only hope you have of obtaining eternal life. John 20:30 to 31 says, "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

To obey the gospel, a person must first put his faith and trust in the Lord Jesus and what is taught in the gospel. He must out of love repent of his sins, turning from evil to the ways of the Lord Jesus. Repentance takes place when we deny ourselves and take up our crosses daily to follow the Lord. The Lord must be first in our lives, and we aren't afraid to confess our faith in Him before others. Upon confessing Jesus Christ, we must be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of our sins, just as they did on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38 to 41). And so I hope you will obey the gospel?

We hope today's study about getting to know your Bible has helped you see its value. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this lesson, send your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there's a schedule of our programs and a map of churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. And you can watch SEARCH on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry", that's one word, and like the programs. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

Do show God your love by worshiping at church. You need a church family. And if you can attend, we hope that you will find a church of Christ and worship with them. Now if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll gladly help you find one. Well we'll be back next week. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.