

Bible Correspondence Course

Lesson 1 | Where Do We Find Truth?

Lesson 2 | Is The Bible The Word Of God?

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Lesson 1 | Where Do We Find Truth?

Where do you turn to be sure of the truth? Is there such a thing as truth? Some think not. In fact the only thing many are sure of, is that they cannot be sure of anything! Some dismiss the Bible as only a good book, but not absolute truth.

The Bible claims to be absolute truth. We invite you to *check it out* for yourself. We owe it to ourselves to at least take the time to test the Bible, just in case it is really true.

So, how can we arrive at truth? Men have developed many answers to this question. But the Bible tells us of the fallacy of each of them:

Some people believe in following their *CONSCIENCE* .

"Let your conscience be your guide, they say!"

This sounds good, but. . . .

... according to **Titus 1:15** the conscience may be D _____

... according to **I Timothy 4:2** the conscience can be S _____

... according to **I Corinthians 8:7** the conscience can be W _____

Is the conscience of man really that good of a guide? We do not have to go very far in experience to find that what is acceptable to one is unacceptable to another. This is the reason we have had to build prisons and court systems in our day. Different people have different points of view on what is permissible and what is not.

Other people accept the *CHURCH* or man-made *CREEDS* as their authority.

Churches and creeds are man made, and therefore filled with man's ideas.

Such standards are unreliable because of this very fact.

Colossians 2:8 warns us against vain P_____ and T _____ of men. (Similar thoughts are found in *Matthew 15:3,6,9*).

Because there are so many various churches, various Bibles, various teachers, and various thoughts, it is no wonder that we feel confused at times.

What is needed is a *standard* - a measurement that can be used by *everyone* when we talk about the things of God. And there is such a standard!! *THE BIBLE*.

This lesson will show you some of the reasons why you can place all of your trust in the Bible - a book that is better than *all* consciences, churches and creeds. As we approach the Bible, we must realize that it is different from any other book. The Bible is the most objective and factual account of history to be found on the face of the earth. In the Bible, man can find the answers to life's most perplexing questions.

In this lesson we will go beyond just making statements - but will *show you* why they are true! If we are to take the Bible as THE WORD OF ALMIGHTY GOD, then surely there must be some proof to back up such a strong thought.

Firstly | What Is The Bible?

The Bible is a collection of 66 books, divided into two major sections known as the Old and New Testaments. The index of your Bible lists all of these books. The Books of the Bible are not arranged chronologically, but rather "*topically*." Both the Testaments have their books set in Groups, as shown below.

The Law - *Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.*

These books were given from God to Moses, to give to the Jewish people.

The History Books - *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings, 1&2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.*

These books record of the rise and history of the Jewish nation, Israel.

The Poetical Books - *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song Of Solomon.*

These books express the joys and sorrows of life.

The Prophets - *Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.*

These books record the prophecies about, and to, the nation of Israel. It is here that we will find many of the prophecies that were fulfilled many years later!! This will help us to see that the Bible is not like any other book produced by man. In fact it is a book inspired by God!

The Gospels - *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.*

These books record the life of Jesus Christ. Each one is a view of Christ from a different perspective. The major portion of the books relate the last 3^{1/2} years of His life, His death and His resurrection from the dead.

The History Book - Acts

A book recording the early growth of the church that Jesus started during His earthly ministry, almost 2000 years ago. Here we see that first church starting other churches, and making progress in spreading the gospel to all of the world.

The Epistles - *Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1&2 Peter, 1,2&3 John, Jude.*

These books known as epistles, are letters written to churches and individuals. From them we learn much about how churches are to operate, and how Christians are to live.

The Prophecy Book - Revelation

This book is often called a mystery. But nothing could be further from the truth. It tells us what is going to happen in the future!!

Secondly | How Did We Receive The Bible?

The Bible is not just *a* book, it is *THE BOOK* - different from any other book that has or will be written. The Bible is a *SUPERNATURAL* book, because of the way in which God gave it to mankind. It is wrong to say that men wrote what *they thought* God wanted us to know. Instead, the Bible claims that God wrote through these men *exactly* what He wanted to be recorded.

II Peter 1:21.

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the _____ of man: but _____ men of God spake as they were _____ by the Holy Ghost."

This verse teaches us three vital facts concerning how we received the Bible.

It wasn't made up by men. ... *came not by the will of man...*

Men of God wrote the Bible. ... *holy men of God spake ...*

God Authored the Bible. ... *as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

It is a known fact that God used about 40 different men from many walks of life to write the Bible. This was accomplished over a period of some 1,600 years. Since these men did not live at the same time and had not met each other in many cases, we must stand in amazement at the unity of this Bible. With no contradictions, and a common theme of Jesus Christ the Messiah, the Bible is more than a human book!

In fact, the Bible is *God's Book*. A good way to illustrate this miracle is to consider how you would write things down on paper. If you took three different pens and wrote your name with each pen, you would notice little variations like color and ink width. It is the *pen* which actually does the writing - but it is *you* that makes the pen move. This makes you the author of the writing. So too God used men to write down His Words. The Bible has been authored by God.

II Timothy 3:16

"All scripture is given by _____ of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

The way in which God gave us the Bible is called *INSPIRATION*. *Inspired* literally means *God breathed*. When you and I speak, we breath. So it is with the way in which the Bible was written. It claims to be the breath of God—*THE VERY WORDS OF ALMIGHTY GOD!!*

In addition to this, by inspiration we mean that the Holy Spirit moved the human writers of the Bible in such a way that they recorded the *very words of God*. Not just God's thoughts or ideas, but each and every word.

If the Bible is the *INSPIRED* Word of God, then we can take it as *THE AUTHORITY* for all we believe and do.

Surely, if the Bible is the Word of God, there will be some proofs of this.

And there *ARE* ... We will look at these in our next study.

... end of lesson 1 ...

Lesson 2 | Is The Bible The Word Of God?

The world is full of religious books. Even different religious groups have different books. And that leads to a few simple questions:

Aren't all these books on the same level?

Don't they all have the same writings?

Why should the Bible be considered as the most important?

To help you answer these questions, look at the following verse to see how the Bible actually *claims* to be the only Word of God.

Hebrews 1:1-2

"_ _ _ , who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto _ _ by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;"

This says that although God has spoken through the prophets, and that God spoke to us especially through His Son Jesus Christ. The books of the old Testament record the sayings of these prophets. The books of the New Testament actually record the life, sayings and legacy of Jesus Christ.

Many religious books may contain profound human insights, shrewd observations of the nature of things, subtle philosophical reasonings or noble ethical principles. But according to the Bible they are useless to do the single most important thing human beings need - *TO HEAR GOD SPEAK TO THEM.*

Firstly | The Bible Is True & Reliable

The Bible, unlike many religious leaders and religious books of our day and days gone by, actually demonstrates that it is completely true and trustworthy.

Here is a verse that teaches us that if anyone claimed to say something on behalf of God (a prophet), what they said would *actually come to pass* if he was really speaking for God. If it did not happen, they were a liar.

Deuteronomy 18:21-22

"And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the _____ which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow _____, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt _____ be afraid of him."

A telling about something that was going to happen in the future was called a *prophecy*. And the above verse says that if a prophecy is from God, the LORD, then it will come true. If not, it was a lie to start with. If we are to determine if the Bible is true and reliable, we should look at the prophecies found in it. If those prophecies are true, then they are from God. If they are not true, then we should not pay attention to anything else the Bible says.

Secondly | A Look At Some Prophecies

Below, let us look at just a few prophecies to see if the Bible is actually reliable.

A Prophecy About Jerusalem:

Matthew 24:1-2

"And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here _____ stone upon _____, that shall not be thrown _____."

These sad words were uttered by no less than Jesus Himself. He predicted here that Jerusalem would be destroyed, her citizens would be slaughtered, and that her temple would be completely wrecked, with not one stone left upon another.

The literally happened less than 40 years later. Any reliable history book will teach you that in February of 70 AD, the Roman general Titus, surrounded Jerusalem with 80,000 men to crush a revolt against Rome by the Jews. Finally, in September of the same year, the walls were battered down and the slaughter began. When the smoke had cleared, over a half-million Jews lay dead. Eventually the Jewish Temple was leveled to the ground and each stone was pulled apart for the gold that was in between them and the ground under it plowed up, just as our Lord had predicted! You can read many of these things in most encyclopedias.

THE BIBLE SHOWS THAT IT IS RELIABLE!

A Prophecy About John The Baptist:

Isaiah, who lived 700 years before John The Baptist, correctly describes John's work, 700 years in advance.

Isaiah 40:3-5

*"The voice of him that crieth in the _____, _____ ye the ____ of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and rough places plain:
And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."*

Now, 700 years after Isaiah wrote the above, read yourself when this literally came true in John The Baptist's day:

Matthew 3:1-3

*"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the _____ of Judea,
And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, _____ ye the ____ of the Lord, make his paths straight."*

Even scholars who do not believe the Bible know that Isaiah lived 700 years before John The Baptist, and that both men were real people, not fictitious.

THE BIBLE SHOWS IT IS RELIABLE!

A Prophecy About The Lord Jesus Christ

In the book of Micah in the Old Testament, is a most amazing prophesy.

Micah 5:2

*But thou, _____ Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah,
yet ____ of thee shall ____ come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

This prophesy speaks about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, to be born in a town called Bethlehem. Every Christmas, the world celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ at Bethlehem. It is actually a recorded fact in world history that Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem. The Roman government kept records of its citizens. But what is amazing is the fact that Micah wrote this prophesy 700 years before Jesus Christ was born.

How could any man have known to write about the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem 700 years before it happened? It is not humanly possible to see into the future with such accuracy. The answer to this, of course, is that God had told Micah that this Birth in Bethlehem would happen.

In the Book of Luke, you are able to read the account of the Birth of Jesus Christ. This is the fulfillment of the things that Micah spoke about. That is to say, Micah's prophecy was 100% true and accurate.

Luke 2:4-7

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called _____ ; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were _____ , the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn _____ , and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid _____ in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

THE BIBLE SHOWS IT IS RELIABLE!

Thirdly | How Does A True & Reliable Bible Affect You?

This is an important question to consider. Because the Bible is accurate in it's prophecies - we would be wise to pay attention to what it says about us, our souls, eternity and a relationship with God.

It is already established that the Bible is true. So, if it does say anything about us, it *must be true*.

Until the next lesson, here is an example of how the Bible speaks about us:

Romans 14:11-12

"For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, _____ knee shall bow to me, and _____ tongue shall confess to _____. So then every one of us shall give _____ of himself to God.

How God views your life *will* matter in eternity. Every man will one day stand before God in judgment. God has told us that His judgment of us will be *according to truth*. This judgment will not be like some court proceedings of our day.

There will be no need for lawyers, no misunderstandings, no favoritism and no wrong decisions. When God judges mankind, He will do it with a full understanding of everything.

Romans 2:2

"But we are sure that the _____ of God is according to _____ against them which commit such things."

Now, if we can find out what God will use as His measurement to judge us, we can be prepared for the day of our judgement. And we can do just that - FOR GOD HAS RECORDED HIS VIEW OF TRUTH IN THE BIBLE!!

John 17:17

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy _____ is truth."

Simply, God's Word, the Bible, is true and reliable. You can trust what it teaches you and what it says about you.

... end of lesson 2 ...