



BIBLE 101

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Session One – What Is the Bible?

“Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light for my journey.” Psalm 119:105

“It is not right human thoughts about God that form the content of the Bible, but right divine thoughts about us. The Bible tells us not how we should talk with God, but what God says to us. Not how we find the way to God, but how God has sought and found the way to us. Not the right relation in which we must place ourselves, but the covenant which God has made with all who are Abraham’s spiritual children and which has been sealed once and for all in Jesus Christ.” Karl Barth

Fill in the Blank

1. In one sentence—What is the Bible?
2. The Bible is a _____ (_____).
3. The Library of Faith that is the Bible has ___ books.
4. The Bible was written by _____ over _____.
5. The first part of Bible is called the ____ _____. It was first written in _____. There are ___ books in this section.
6. The second part of the Bible is called the ____ _____. It was first written in _____. There are ___ books in this section.
7. John Wesley said he was a person of _____.

REVEALS GOD’S WORD **Jesus** is the Word of God. The Bible helps us to see Jesus, to know Jesus.

“The Holy Bible – We believe the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, reveals the Word of God so far as it is necessary for our salvation. It is to be received through the Holy Spirit as the true rule and guide for faith and practice. Whatever is not revealed in or established by the Holy Scriptures is not to be made and article of faith not is it to be taught as essential to salvation.” The United Methodist Church Book of Discipline 2012 Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith.

John 20:30-31 "Not everything that Jesus did is written in this book...."

"The whole purpose of the Bible, it seems to me, is to convince people to set the written word down in order to become living words in the world for God's sake. For me, this willing conversion of ink back to blood is the full substance of faith." Barbara Brown Taylor

"Truth lives on many levels. The truth of literal fact is on a lower level than the truth of idea, even as the truth of idea is on a lower level than the truth of life. ... The Genesis stories will endure longer than our careful sciences of the origin of matter. Truth of idea is stronger than truth of fact. The parables have truth of idea—and more!" George A. Buttrick

"For Bible writers the imagination is the home of faith. For a modern mind the imagination is the home of the fanciful, the untrue, the naively and childishly false. As long as this difference prevails, just believing the Bible, much less appreciating it, will be a critical issue for many people." Fred Craddock

"Fundamentalists have at least one characteristic in common with most scientists. Neither can understand that poetic and religious imagination has a way of arriving at truth by giving a clue to the total meaning of things without being in any sense an analytic description of detailed facts. The fundamentalists insist that religion is science, and thus they prompt those who know that this is not true to declare that all religious truth is contrary to scientific fact. How can an age which is so devoid of poetic imagination as ours be truly religious?" Reinhold Niebuhr *Leaves From a Notebook of a Tamed Cynic*

"Jesus was not a lawyer or a theologian but a storyteller who announced the good news. Storytellers work out of the right brain and speak to the right brain of others with messages of intellectual depth that strongly challenges left brains." Matthew Fox *Celebrate the Coming of the Cosmic Christ*

Tell all the Truth but tell it slant –
Success in Circuit lies
Too bright for our infirm Delight
The Truth's superb surprise

As Lightning to the Children eased
With Explanation kind
The Truth must dazzle gradually
Or every man be blind –
Emily Dickinson

Knowledge of speech, but not of silence;
Knowledge of words, and ignorance of the Word...
Where is the Life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

T. S. Eliot from Part II of "Choruses from 'The Rock'"

"Poetry is not simply the assertion of something being true, but the making of that truth more real for all of us." T.S. Eliot

"I take the Bible too seriously to read it literally." Karl Barth



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Questions for Discussion

What is the last book you read?

What type of book do you like to read?

What is your favorite book?

How do we understand Truth in relation to facts? When we look to the Bible for Truth are we looking for facts or THE Truth?

Can we approach the Bible “literally” (which means “by the words”) only? Are there other approaches that allow Truth? How do we discern the approach?

How do we translate scripture to life and experience? How does the Bible guide you in loving God and neighbor, and in living a life of faith, hope, and love?

Old Testament

Song of Songs
Ecclesiastes
Proverbs
Psalms
Job

Poetry & Wisdom

Esther
Nehemiah
Ezra
1 Chronicles
2 Chronicles
2 Kings
1 Kings
2 Samuel
1 Samuel
Ruth
Judges
Joshua

History

Deuteronomy
Numbers
Leviticus
Exodus
Genesis

The Law

Malachi
Zachariah
Haggai
Zephaniah
Habakkuk
Nahum
Micah
Jonah
Obadiah
Amos
Joel
Hosea

Minor Prophets

Daniel
Ezekiel
Lamentations
Jeremiah
Isaiah

Major Prophets

Revelation

Prophecy

Jude
3 John
2 John
1 John
2 Peter
1 Peter
James
Hebrews

General Letters

Philemon
Titus
2 Timothy
1 Timothy
2 Thessalonians
1 Thessalonians
Colossians
Philippians
Ephesians
Galatians
2 Corinthians
1 Corinthians
Romans

Paul's Letters

Acts

History

John
Luke
Mark
Matthew

Gospels
Good News

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

OLD TESTAMENT

GENESIS

EXODUS

LEVITICUS

NUMBERS

DEUTERONOMY

JOSHUA

JUDGES

RUTH

1 SAMUEL

2 SAMUEL

1 KINGS

2 KINGS

1 CHRONICLES

2 CHRONICLES

EZRA

NEHEMIAH

ESTHER

JOB

PSALMS

PROVERBS

ECCLESIASTES

SONG OF SOLOMON

ISAIAH

JEREMIAH

LAMENTATIONS

EZEKIEL

DANIEL

HOSEA

JOEL

AMOS

OBADIAH

JONAH

MICAH

NAHUM

HABAKKUK

ZEPHANIAH

HAGGAI

ZECHARIAH

MALACHI

NEW TESTAMENT

MATTHEW

MARK

LUKE

JOHN

ACTS

ROMANS

1 CORINTHIANS

2 CORINTHIANS

GALATIANS

EPHESIANS

PHILIPPIANS

COLOSSIANS

1 THESSALONIANS

2 THESSALONIANS

1 TIMOTHY

2 TIMOTHY

TITUS

PHILEMON

HEBREWS

JAMES

1 PETER

2 PETER

1 JOHN

2 JOHN

3 JOHN

JUDE

REVELATION

LAW • HISTORY • POETRY & WISDOM • MAJOR PROPHETS
MINOR PROPHETS • GOSPELS • HISTORY • LETTERS OF PAUL
GENERAL LETTERS • PROPHECY