

## Why and How Should We Read The Bible

*How happy is the man who does not follow the advice of the wicked or take the path of sinners or join a group of mockers! <sup>2</sup>Instead, his delight is in the Lord's instruction, and he meditates on it day and night. <sup>3</sup>He is like a tree planted beside streams of water that bears its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.* Psalm 1:1-3 (HCSB)

1. The popularity of the Bible.
  - a. The most hand copied book from the ancient world.
  - b. The first book printed on the printing press (1450 A.D. – the Gutenberg Bible).
  - c. The most published book in history.
  - d. The best-selling book in the world each year.
  
2. The most translated book in history.
  - Four or five languages is a great accomplishment for most books.
    - Homer's works: 40 languages
    - Shakespeare: 68 languages
    - Quran: 168 languages
    - Bible: 2000 languages and counting
  
3. Why is the Bible so powerful, popular & precious?
  - God speaks!
  
4. Two primary ways God speaks:
  - a. General revelation

- i. God speaks through creation.

*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims the work of His hands. <sup>2</sup>Day after day they pour out speech; night after night they communicate knowledge.* Psalms 19: 1-2 (HCSB)

- ii. God speaks through conscience.

*All those who sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all those who sinned under the law will be judged by the law. <sup>13</sup>For the hearers of the law are not righteous before God, but the doers*

of the law will be declared righteous. <sup>14</sup>So, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, instinctively do what the law demands, they are a law to themselves even though they do not have the law. <sup>15</sup>They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts. Their consciences confirm this. Their competing thoughts will either accuse or excuse them <sup>16</sup>on the day when God judges what people have kept secret, according to my gospel through Christ Jesus. Romans 2:12-16 (HCSB)

**b.** Special revelation

**i.** Jesus Christ

Long ago God spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways. <sup>2</sup>In these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son. God has appointed Him heir of all things and made the universe through Him. Hebrews 1:1-2 (HCSB)

**ii.** The word of God!

But He answered, "It is written: Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4 (HCSB)

All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness 2 Timothy 3:16 (HCSB)

- Θεόπνευστος = God breathed

**iii.** Jesus treated the Bible as the word of God.

Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted for them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. Luke 24:27 (HCSB)

**iv.** Peter treated the Bible as the Word of God.

Because no prophecy ever came by the will of man; instead, men spoke from God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:21 (HCSB)

**5.** Other Ways God speaks:

**a.** God speaks relationally.

- The Bible is God's love letter to you.

**b.** God speaks salvation.

- To show us the way of salvation.

and you know that from childhood you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15 (HCSB)

c. God speaks instruction.

All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (HCSB)

- Teaching - We learn God's will and ways from what has been recorded.
- Rebuking - Convicting, the Holy Spirit uses God's word to make correction in our lives.
- Correcting - The Bible is the standard for authentic spiritual truth.
- Training in Righteousness - The word of God instructs us on how to live Godly lives.

6. God speaks through His word.

a. To the non-Christian:

i. Conviction

When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment. John 16:8 (HCSB)

ii. Faith

So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the message about Christ. Romans 10:17 (HCSB)

iii. Salvation

But these are written so that you may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and by believing you may have life in His name. John 20:31 (HCSB)

b. To the Christian:

i. Transformation

We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:18 (HCSB)

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ii. Joy and peace

*Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff—they comfort me. <sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.* Psalm 23:4-5 (HCSB)

iii. Gives guidance

*Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path.* Psalm 119:105 (HCSB)

iv. Offers healing and health

*My son, pay attention to my words; listen closely to my sayings. <sup>21</sup>Don't lose sight of them; keep them within your heart. <sup>22</sup>For they are life to those who find them, and health to one's whole body.* Proverbs 4:20-22 (HCSB)

v. Gives protection from attack

*Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by His vast strength. <sup>11</sup>Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the tactics of the Devil.* Ephesians 6:10-11 (HCSB)

*Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is God's Word.* Ephesians 6:17 (HCSB)

vi. The power of God's word is alive and active

*For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating as far as the separation of soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It is able to judge the ideas and thoughts of the heart.* Hebrews 4:12 (HCSB)

vii. Cleanses us

*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* 1 John 1:9 (HCSB)

viii. We need to respond to God's word.

**Challenge:** We need to build our lives on a firm foundation.

*Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on the rock.* Matthew 7:24 (HCSB)

**7.** How to read the Bible

- a.** Select a specific time.
- b.** Choose a special place.
- c.** Gather the right resources.
- d.** Have the right attitude
- e.** Ask three questions:
  - i.** What does it say?
  - ii.** What does it mean?
  - iii.** How do I apply it to my life?
- f.** Respond by asking God to help put it to work.

## Notes

