

“Reading the Bible”

Discipleship 201—Session 4

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:1-4

Introduction: God’s plan for us is that we enter into a loving relationship with Him. This privilege is made available to us because of what Christ, the Word of God, has done. God continues to speak His Word to us in the Holy Scriptures, and this Word is powerful enough to transform our beliefs and actions and relationships.

What is the Bible? It is the **WORD** of God

1. In **creation**, God did not pull out an erector set.

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. Genesis 1:1-3

2. The Word from God is not only the power of God, it is **GOD**.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. John 1:1-4.

3. The Bible is one of the ways **SPEAKS** to us. (II Timothy 3:16, 17) The other ways include:

- **Jesus** (Hebrews 1:2)
- the **Sacraments** (Matthew 26: 26, 27)
- **creation** (Romans 1:19, 20)

Why is it that even Christians read their horoscopes, seek their future from fortune tellers, and turn to the occult?
We have a direct and un-convoluted Word from God!

Who wrote the Bible?

- A. The Bible is **100%** the work of humans

- It is the proclamation of the **church** about God
- It was written by many authors, compiled by multiple editors and revised by many redactors
- It took a **millennia** for it to be in its current form

- B. The Bible is **100%** inspired by God

- The Bible is the meeting of the human & **DIVINE**
- To be inspired means to be God **BREATHED**

All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. (II Timothy 3:16, 17)

Are there errors in the Bible?

- A. Many passages are contested and hard to **UNDERSTAND** (II Peter 3:16)
- B. In some passages, the **HUMAN** contribution predominates
- C. There are mistakes in **TRANSMISSION**, **TRANSLATION**, and **INTERPRETATION**; yet, the message of God is proclaimed in, with and through the Bible

The Bible is Normative for the Christian life.

- A. Therefore, the Bible NEVER becomes **OUTMODED**.
 - We cannot change the Bible to accommodate our **CULTURE**
 - We should change our culture to accommodate the Bible.
- B. Living according to the Bible does not take away our **FREEDOM**, but actually increases our joy, and prevents us from being hurt.
- C. Our **TRADITIONS** always take a back seat to the Bible.

The Bible is a LOVE letter from God for us.

- A. It shows us how we can gain access to a loving **RELATIONSHIP** with Jesus Christ.

- 1. It brings us to **FAITH**

So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ. Romans 10:17

- 2. It has power to **CHANGE** us

Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Hebrews 4:12

- 3. It speaks words of...

PEACE, JOY, GUIDANCE, HEALING

- 4. It is a protection against spiritual **ATTACK** (Ephesians 6:11-18)

How do we read the scriptures?

- A. Plan for it to be a daily part of your schedule.
 - 1. Find a **QUIET** time and place.
 - 2. Be **CONSISTENT**
 - 3. Develop a reading **PLAN**
Read from both the **OLD** and New Testaments
 - 4. Don't be overly **AMBITIOUS**
Start with **5** minutes

B. When you read...

1. Start with **PRAYER**, asking God to guide and speak to you.
2. Ask the following questions...
 - **WHO** wrote the passage you read?
 - To **WHOM** was it written?
 - What is the **CONTEXT**?
 - What is God saying to **ME**?

Remember: the Bible is written **FOR** us, but not **TO** us. Before we can know what it means, we need to know what it **MEANT**.

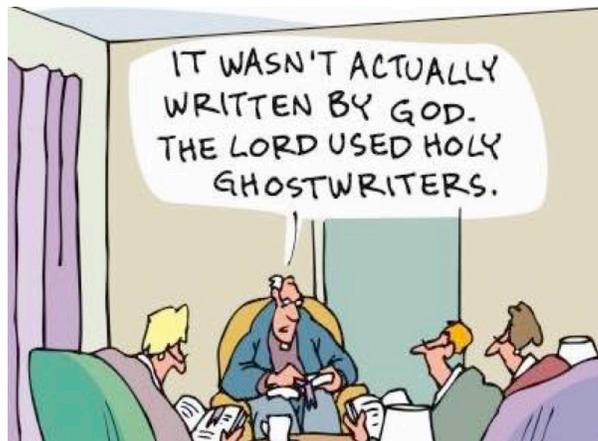
What will happen to us if we read the Scriptures?

A. We will produce **FRUIT**

B. We will have **STRENGTH** to persevere

C. We will **PROSPER**

...Not necessarily physically and materially, but in our **RELATIONSHIP** with God: we will not become spiritually **DRY**



Bible Study 101