

● Lesson 1

THE BIBLE IS TRUE!

Did you know . . .

- The Bible was written by about 40 men over a period of about 1,600 years.
- It was written in three languages: Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic.
- The first English translation was initiated by John Wycliffe and completed by John Purvey in 1380 A.D.
- There are 66 books in the Bible, 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.
- Many scholars believe Job is the oldest book of the Bible, possibly written around 1500 B.C. Revelation was the last book to be written, authored around 90 to 110 A.D.
- Psalm 119 is the longest chapter with 176 verses.
- Psalm 117 is the shortest chapter with two verses.
- The entire Bible can be read aloud at a moderate pace in about 70 hours.
- The Bible is the bestselling book of all time. It is also the most shoplifted book.
- There are more than 168,000 Bibles either sold or given away per day in the United States.
- The first words in the Bible are “In the beginning,” and the last word in the Bible is “Amen.”

Memory Verse

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

II Timothy 3:16-17



How can we know the Bible is true?

1. Second Timothy 3:16 states that _____
Scripture, the whole and every part, is inspired; it is “God-breathed.”

God **inspired** the writers of Scripture; He breathed into them His very word, and they wrote down or spoke out as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Since Scripture is “God-breathed” (inspired), it cannot contain errors. It is **inerrant** without error or mistakes. What the Bible says is what God says!

The word “inerrancy” means “exemption from error.” When applied to Scripture, it means that the Word of God is completely true and without error. Now that’s awesome!

2. Read II Peter 1:19-21. God’s Word is sure and true, like a _____ shining in the darkness.

When a lamp shines in the darkness, you notice it. When God’s Word shines in the darkness of our sinful lives, we need to pay attention. Because prophecy came from God, not from man’s own thoughts, it demands our attention. It was the human prophet’s voice or hand, but each one spoke or wrote only what God directed him to speak or write as he was “moved by the Holy Spirit” (v.21).

Not only has God given us His written Word, but God has also sent His Word in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. As the Word that “became flesh” (John 1:14), Jesus is also called “the Light” (John 1:4). He came into a dark world to bring the light of God’s truth and salvation to a people trapped in the deep darkness of sin and blinded by Satan’s lies. Jesus called Himself “the Light of the world” and said that those who follow Him “will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life” (John 8:12).

ANCIENT AND RELIABLE

Did you know that the New Testament is far and beyond the most trustworthy ancient literature that exists? No ancient work has a preserved **autograph** (original **manuscript** penned by the author), so people who work with the manuscript copies use two main criteria to determine the reliability of ancient texts: the number of manuscripts and proximity to the date they were originally written.

You may have heard of Homer’s *Iliad*. This ancient work has the largest number of manuscripts when compared to other famous works. Over 1,750 manuscripts of the *Iliad* have been discovered in many different languages, including more than 640 in the original Greek. There are only 210 manuscripts of the Greek philosopher Plato’s writings. In contrast, the New Testament has nearly 5,800 Greek manuscripts. When you add the early translations of the New Testament into other languages, that number climbs to more than 25,000.

The earliest manuscripts that have been found of the *Iliad* are copies from about 700 years after Homer wrote it. The earliest copies of Plato’s writings are even further from the original—about 1,300 years. In contrast, the New Testament has manuscripts dated as close as 40 to 70 years from the original writing.

Many other ancient texts are accepted sources of history but have even fewer manuscripts. Scholars do not question the reliability of those texts, but many still want to ignore the mountain of evidence that supports the reliability and accuracy of the New Testament we have today.

The statistics concerning ancient manuscripts change often as more manuscript copies are found and analyzed. Yet evidence continues to show that Scripture is by far the most reliable ancient document we have.

3. “All Scripture is inspired by God.” Explain what this phrase means. _____

4. What word means “to be without error”?

5. By whose power were men enabled to write the Scriptures?

6. Since the Bible is “God-breathed,” it does not contain _____.

7. Why do some people not trust the Bible as God’s Word? _____

6. What difference does it make whether or not the Bible is true? _____

Fast Fact: Canon of Scripture

- The authoritative list of writings accepted by the Christian Church as genuine and inspired by God (Old and New Testament Scripture).
- “Canon” comes from a Greek word (*kanon*) meaning “reed” or “cane,” or something used for measurement.
- The 39 books of the Old Testament were divided into three sections: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The Law was recognized about 444 B.C., the Prophets about 200 B.C., and the Writings about 100 B.C., all before the time of Christ.
- The 27 books of the New Testament were used in the early first century church and recognized as complete at the Council of Carthage in 397 A.D.

516 B.C.

450 B.C.

250 B.C.

.....Second Temple completed

.....Book of Malachi written

.....Greek translation of the Old Testament (Septuagint) begun



Catechism Corner

1. Who wrote the Bible? (Q. 3)
The holy prophets, evangelists, and apostles wrote the Bible.
2. But how can their word be the Word of God? (Q. 4)
The Spirit of God revealed to them what to speak and write.
3. Read Titus 1:2.
 - a. What does this verse tell us about the very nature and character of God? _____

 - b. Would you want to have a god whom you could not trust to be truthful? Why or why not? _____

 - c. Why is it important for you who trust in Him to have a God who promises you forgiveness, life and salvation?

Word Works

This match-up game demonstrates the powerful truth that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Match the appropriate Scripture text with each statement, and write the correct number in the blank.

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| _____ Moses spoke and wrote what God told him. | 1. Revelation 1:1-2 |
| _____ The Spirit of the Lord spoke through David. | 2. I Corinthians 2:11-13 and 14:37 |
| _____ The Prophets spoke and wrote what the Lord told them. | 3. John 14:25-26 |
| _____ Jesus promised to speak to the disciples by His Spirit. | 4. Isaiah 7:7, Jeremiah 1:9 and 2:1 |
| _____ Paul wrote and spoke as the Spirit directed him. | 5. Exodus 19:3 |
| _____ John wrote and spoke what God showed him and said to him. | 6. II Samuel 23:2 |

167 B.C.

Temple desecrated

37 B.C.

Herod the Great appointed ruler of Judea

2 B.C.

Birth of Jesus