



# GRASPING GOD'S WORD





# GRASPING GOD'S WORD

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Session One <b>GETTING THE BIG PICTURE</b>	2
Session Two <b>A WALK THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT</b>	7
Session Three <b>A WALK THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT</b>	28
Session Four <b>HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE</b>	41
Session Five <b>STUDYING, MEMORIZING, DISCIPLING</b>	49

# Let's Get Started

## **Purpose of the study:**

To worship God in a greater way as we strengthen our confidence in the bible as the Word of God and understand how to rightly study and apply the bible in our lives.

## **Goals for the study:**

Understand and be prepared to defend the Bible as the inspired, authoritative, sufficient Word of God.

Understand the general structure and significance of the Old Testament, the key themes, and how the Old Testament points to, prepares the way for, and is fulfilled by Jesus the Messiah.

Understand the general structure and significance of the New Testament, the key themes, and the priority of the person and work of Jesus Christ.

By the grace of God and empowered by the Holy Spirit, grow in the knowledge of God, and your worship of God, as you rightly study His Word and apply it to your daily life.

## **Roles for the study:**

**Our Role:** Pray, prep the study, teach the study in the power of the Spirit as we magnify God and equip you with truth

**Your Role:** Pray as you prepare for the class, be here all five weeks (on time), take notes, do the homework assignments each week

**God's Role:** We recognize that to meet the goals of this study would be impossible apart from the grace of God in the working of the Holy Spirit. He is our teacher, He is our counselor, He will lead us into all truth, He will exalt Jesus Christ, the risen Lord.

# SESSION ONE

## GETTING THE BIG PICTURE

### Intro: 5 Things that will encourage you right now about God's Word

You can understand the Bible  
 The Bible will make you a strong Christian  
 The Bible will give you the right understanding of God  
 The Bible will guide you in decision-making  
 The Bible will give you peace and assurance

### 1. What do I have in my hand?

- The Bible is one \_\_\_\_\_ that consists of \_\_\_\_\_ individual books.
- The Bible's 66 books are divided into \_\_\_\_ Testaments.
- The Old Testament contains \_\_\_\_ books & the New Testament contains \_\_\_\_ books.

## OLD TESTAMENT

### OT Breakdown:

39 books  
 17 Historical  
 5 Poetical  
 17 Prophetical

#### HISTORY

GENESIS	EXODUS	LEVITICUS	NUMBERS	DEUTERONOMY
---------	--------	-----------	---------	-------------

JOSHUA	JUDGES	RUTH
--------	--------	------

1 SAMUEL	2 SAMUEL	1 KINGS	2 KINGS	1 CHRONICLES	2 CHRONICLES
----------	----------	---------	---------	--------------	--------------

EZRA	NEHEMIAH	ESTHER
------	----------	--------

#### POETRY

JOB	PSALMS	PROVERBS	ECCLESIASTES	SONG OF SOLOMON
-----	--------	----------	--------------	-----------------

#### LAW OF MOSES

#### PROPHECY

ISAIAH	JEREMIAH	LAMENTATIONS	EZEKIEL	DANIEL
--------	----------	--------------	---------	--------

#### MAJOR PROPHETS

HOSEA	JOEL	AMOS	OBADIAH	JONAH	MICAH	NAHUM	HABAKKUK	ZEPHANIAH	HAGGAI	ZECHARIAH	MALACHI
-------	------	------	---------	-------	-------	-------	----------	-----------	--------	-----------	---------

#### MINOR PROPHETS

## NEW TESTAMENT

### NT Breakdown:

27 books  
 5 Historical  
 21 Epistles (Letters)  
 1 Prophetical

#### HISTORY

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
---------	------	------	------

ACTS
------

#### THE GOSPELS

#### PAUL'S LETTERS

ROMANS	1 CORINTHIANS	2 CORINTHIANS	GALATIANS	EPHESIANS	PHILIPPIANS	COLOSSIANS	1 THESSALONIANS	2 THESSALONIANS	1 TIMOTHY	2 TIMOTHY	TITUS	PHILEMON
--------	---------------	---------------	-----------	-----------	-------------	------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------	-----------	-------	----------

#### OTHER LETTERS

HEBREWS	JAMES	1 PETER	2 PETER	1 JOHN	2 JOHN	3 JOHN	JUDE
---------	-------	---------	---------	--------	--------	--------	------

#### PROPHECY

REVELATION
------------



d. As defined by Mitch Maher in Clarifying the Bible, "The big picture of the Bible can be understood in terms of five Christ-centered divisions."

Anticipation (Genesis – Malachi)	Someone's coming
Manifestation (Matthew – John)	He's here
Proclamation (Acts)	Let's proclaim Him to the ends of the earth
Explanation (Romans – Jude)	Let's explain Him and how we should live
Consummation (Revelation)	Let's look for Him again

## 2. What's so unique about the Bible?

a. The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_

*2 Timothy 3:16*

*2 Peter 1:20-21*

b. The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_

*Psalms 19:7*

*Proverbs 30:5-6*

*John 10:35*

*Titus 1:2*

c. The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_

*Psalms 40:8*

*Psalms 119:89*

*1 Thessalonians 2:13*

*1 Peter 1:25*

d. The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_

*2 Timothy 3:15-16*

*James 1:21*

e. The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_

*Isaiah 55:11*

f. The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_

g. The Bible is for \_\_\_\_\_

*2 Timothy 3:16*

*Romans 10:17*

*Psalms 119:105*

*Romans 15:4*

## 3. Can I trust the Bible?

a. We have \_\_\_\_\_ evidence.

- b. We have \_\_\_\_\_ evidence.
- c. We have \_\_\_\_\_ evidence.
- d. We have \_\_\_\_\_ evidence.

#### 4. How did we get the Bible?

- a. God has spoken.  
*Matthew 24:35*
- b. All Scripture is "God – Breathed."  
*2 Timothy 3:16*
- c. Man was carried along by the Holy Spirit in the writing process.  
*2 Peter 1:20-21*

#### B.B. Warfield in his book on Inspiration :::::

*"Inspiration puts behind the human, also a divine authorship. It ascribes to the authors such an attending influence of the Spirit in the process of writing that the words they set down become also the words of God; and the resultant writing is made not merely the expression of Paul's or John's or Peter's will for the churches, but the expression of God's will."*

Or another way to say it is:

*"The Bible is the Word of God in such a way that when the Bible speaks, God speaks."*

- d. Canonization is the word that is used to describe how the individual books of Scripture were set apart and recognized as inspired and authoritative  
*Canon = Measuring Rod (These 66 measure up)*
- e. The standards for identifying the canon.
- f. The process of how we got our English Bible.

#### WORD FOR WORD

#### THOUGHT FOR THOUGHT

KJV	NASB	RSV	NRSV	NAB	NIV	NJB	NCV	GNB	THE MESSAGE
ASV	NKJV	HCSB	NET		TNIV	REB	NLT	CEV	
	ESV								



## 5. How should I respond to the Bible?

- a. Hear it.
- b. Study it.
- c. Believe it.

### A.W. Tozer ::::

*"The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into Him, that they may delight in His Presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and center of their hearts."*

- d. Obey it.
- e. Meditate on it.
- f. Memorize it.
- g. Share it.
- h. Fight for it.

## 6. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in study?

- a. The Holy Spirit is the Divine \_\_\_\_\_.  
*2 Timothy 3:16-17*
- b. The Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ us to understand the right meaning and apply it to our lives.  
*John 16:4-15*
- c. Prayer is a \_\_\_\_\_ part of Bible Study.  
*Ephesians 1:17-19*

## 7. What are the benefits of studying the Bible?

It's my revelation of God and how to be saved from my sin.  
*Romans 10:17, 2 Timothy 3:14-15*

**It's my source of happiness.**

*Psalm 19a, Luke 11:28*

**It's my promise of success.**

*Psalm 1, Joshua 1:8*

**It's my victory over Satan and temptation.**

*Ephesians 6:17, Matthew 4:1-11*

**It's my food for spiritual growth.**

*1 Peter 2:2*

**It's my light for guidance.**

*Psalm 119:105*

**It's my warning, my correction, my encouragement, and my equipping.**

*2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12*

**It's my clarity on truth.**

*John 17:17, John 8:31-32*

**It's my protection against sin.**

*Psalm 119:11*

**It's my source of what truly matters.**

*Matthew 6:19-21*

**It's my understanding of God's love for me.**

*John 3:16, Romans 5:6-8*

#### **Source Unknown :::::**

*"There is a way of reading the bible that seems to leave God far away, off in the shadows somewhere. You come up against a difficulty or question, and you go to books, you ask pastors, friends, and strangers on the internet; anyone but Him. Gradually God gets smaller and dimmer."*

### **Session One // Reading Homework:**

**2 Timothy 3:14-17, 2 Peter 1:20-21, Psalm 19, Isaiah 66:1-2**



# SESSION TWO

## A WALK THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT

### 1. Why study the Old Testament (What's the significance for Christians today)?

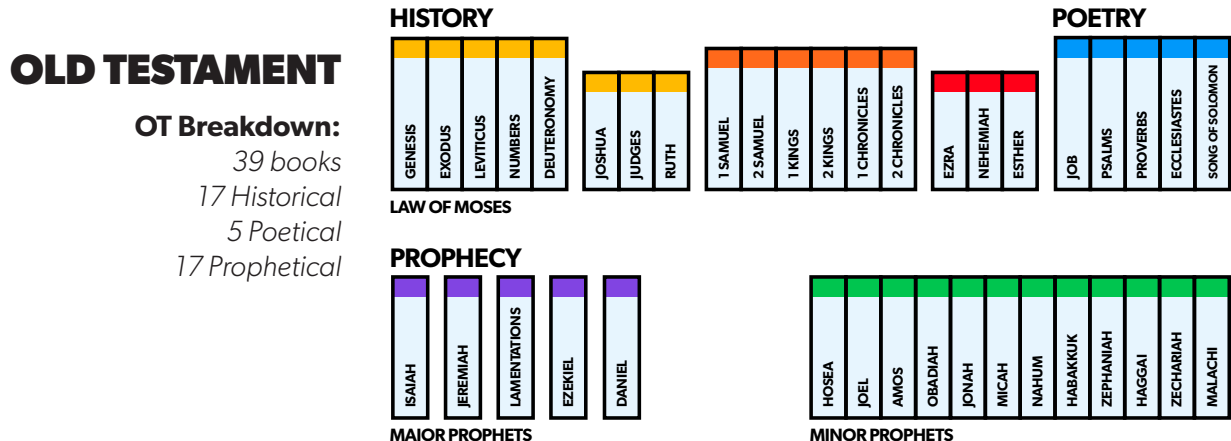
- The OT provides for our instruction, endurance, encouragement, and hope. God wrote a book and all of it is profitable to us.  
*2 Timothy 3:16-17, Romans 15:4*
- The OT lays the foundation for the teachings and events found in the New Testament.
- The OT shows us the power of prophecies concerning the Christ and the mysteries now revealed.
- The OT allows us to learn how to love and serve God, and it reveals more about God's character.

### 2. What did Jesus think of the Old Testament?

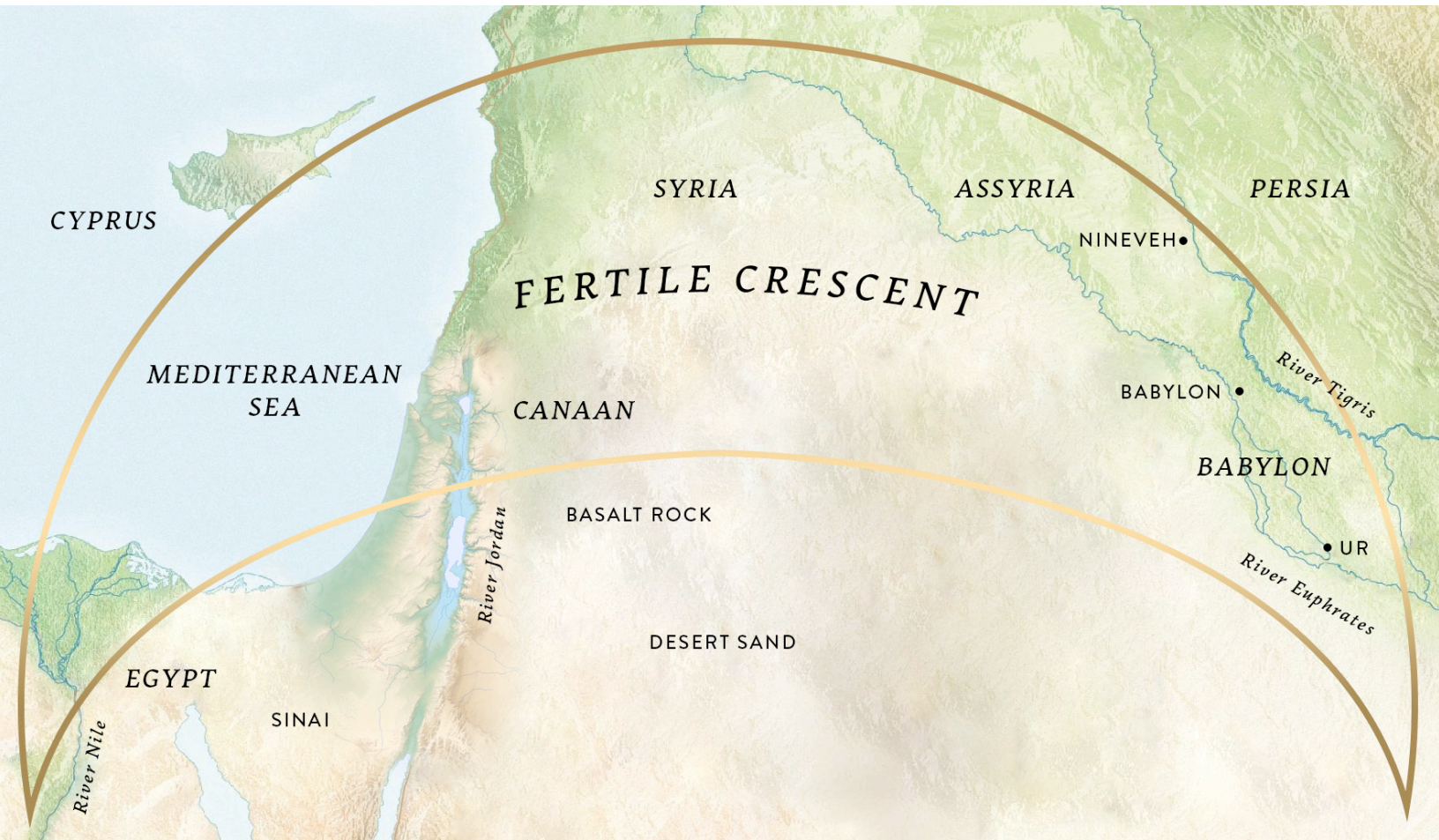
- Scripture cannot be \_\_\_\_\_.  
*John 10:35*
- He would \_\_\_\_\_ it.  
*Matthew 5:17-18, Luke 24:44*
- It bore witness about \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Luke 24:25-27, 47, John 5:39, 46*
- It called for repentance and forgiveness of sins to be proclaimed in His Name to all the \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Luke 24:47*

### 3. A General overview of the Old Testament books

- The Old Testament consists of 39 books written before the birth of Jesus Christ.



#### 4. A General Overview of Time and Space for the OT



Abraham and the Ancestors





## 5. Timeline of Old Testament

### In The \_\_\_\_\_ (~ 4000 B.C.)

**Key Themes:** God Created  
Fall of man/sin  
God floods the earth  
The spreading of the nations

**Key People:** God  
Adam & Eve  
Noah

**Jesus is:** Creator and Sustainer *Colossians 1:15-17*  
Redeemer *Colossians 1:19-20*

### The \_\_\_\_\_ (2000 B.C.)

**Key Themes:** God chose one man promising him a nation, many descendants, and a blessing that would ultimately extend to everyone on the earth.

**Key People:** Abraham  
Isaac  
Jacob  
Joseph

**Jesus is:** The Great High Priest *Genesis 14, Hebrews 4 & 7*

### Exodus and \_\_\_\_\_ (1500 B.C.)

**Key Themes:** Through Moses God delivers His people from slavery in Egypt, gives them the Law at Mount Sinai, and then after wanderings in the wilderness, Joshua leads the conquest of the promised land.

**Key People:** God's People  
Moses  
Joshua

**Jesus is:** Our Passover Lamb *John 1:29, 1 Corinthians 5:7*

### The \_\_\_\_\_ (1000 B.C.)

**Key Themes:** Saul, David, and Solomon were the first three kings to rule over a united monarchy. When Solomon dies, the nation divides into a northern kingdom called Israel (10 tribes) and a southern kingdom called Judah (two tribes)

**Key People:** Saul  
David  
Solomon

**Jesus is:** The only perfect, just, and righteous King *Revelation 19:11-16*



## \_\_\_\_\_ and Return (500 B.C.)

**Key Themes:** Because of ongoing sin, Assyria conquers Israel and they scatter.  
Because of ongoing sin, Babylon conquers Judah and takes them captive.  
The king of Persia allows the Israelites living in captivity in Babylon to return to Jerusalem to rebuild it.

**Key People:** Daniel  
Ezra  
Nehemiah  
Esther  
Zerubbabel

**Jesus is:** The One who restores what is broken  
*Revelation 21:1-7*

## The \_\_\_\_\_ Period (400 BC)

**Key Themes:** God is silent but at work as the Jews suffer under religious and political persecution. They continue to hope in the expectation of the Messiah.

**Key People:** Persia, Greece, Egypt  
Roman Empire  
Suffering Jews  
Pharisees and Sadducees

**Jesus is:** The Savior of the World  
*Luke 2:11, John 3:16-17*

	PRE-EXILIC PROPHETS			EXILIC PROPHETS	POST-EXILIC PROPHETS	
	9TH CENTURY	8TH CENTURY	7TH CENTURY	6TH CENTURY	6TH CENTURY	5TH CENTURY
TO THE GENTILE NATIONS	OBADIAH 853 - 841 BC	JONAH 725 BC	NAHUM 663 - 612 BC			
TO THE NORTHERN KINGDOM (ISRAEL) 10 TRIBES		HOSEA 760 - 710 BC AMOS 760 - 750 BC				
TO THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM (JUDAH) 2 TRIBES		MICAH 750 - 686 BC ISAIAH 701 - 681 BC	HABAKKUK 640 - 609 BC ZEPHANIAH 640 - 609 BC JEREMIAH 626 - 586 BC JOEL 600 BC	DANIEL 530 BC EZEKIEL 593 - 571 BC	HAGGAI 520 BC ZECHARIAH 520 - 519 BC	MALACHI 460 BC

## Chart of the Prophets

## 7. Several Old Testament Prophecies fulfilled in Jesus Christ

Subject	Old Testament	New Testament Fulfilled
How Born	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-25
Where Born	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1
Betrayed by friend	Psalms 41:9	Luke 22:21-23
Triumphal Entry	Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:4-5
How Killed	Isaiah 53:5	Matthew 27:26
A New Covenant	Jeremiah 31:31-34	Luke 22:15-20

## 8. God at Work

God did this...

I'm doing this...

# RESOURCES

## TIMELINE OF OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS

BOOK	DATE WRITTEN
Job	Unknown
Genesis	1445-1405 B.C.
Exodus	1445-1405 B.C.
Leviticus	1445-1405 B.C.
Numbers	1445-1405 B.C.
Deuteronomy	1445-1405 B.C.
Psalms	1410-450 B.C.
Joshua	1405-1385 B.C.
Judges	ca. 1043 B.C.
Ruth	ca. 1030-1010 B.C.
Song of Solomon	971-965 B.C.
Proverbs	ca. 971-686 B.C.
Ecclesiastes	940-931 B.C.
1 Samuel	931-722 B.C.
2 Samuel	931-722 B.C.
Obadiah	850-840 B.C.
Joel	835-796 B.C.
Jonah	ca. 775 B.C.
Amos	ca. 750 B.C.
Hosea	750-710 B.C.
Micah	735-710 B.C.
Isaiah	700-681 B.C.
Nahum	ca. 650 B.C.
Zephaniah	635-625 B.C.
Habakkuk	615-605 B.C.
Ezekiel	590-570 B.C.
Lamentations	586 B.C.
Jeremiah	586-570 B.C.
1 Kings	561-538 B.C.
2 Kings	561-538 B.C.
Daniel	536-530 B.C.
Haggai	ca. 520 B.C.
Zechariah	480-470 B.C.
Ezra	457-444 B.C.
1 Chronicles	450-430 B.C.
2 Chronicles	450-430 B.C.
Esther	450-331 B.C.
Malachi	433-424 B.C.
Nehemiah	424-400 B.C.

# RESOURCES

## **Old Testament Books Summary by Mitch Maher, *Clarifying the Bible***

### **GENESIS**

The book of Genesis records the early events of world history and the beginning of God's work of redemption through Abraham and his family. The first twelve chapters record God's work of creation, mankind's fall into sin, the judgment of the flood, and the rebellion at the tower of Babel. The remaining chapters tell of God's dealing with the patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. At the end of Genesis, Jacob's family, his twelve sons, and his sons' families have migrated to Egypt.

### **EXODUS**

The book of Exodus records the deliverance of God's people from Egyptian slavery and their journey to Mount Sinai where they enter into covenant with God. The first part of Exodus records the family's incredible growth in Egypt, hardship under Egypt's new pharaoh, cry to God for help, and deliverance through Moses' leadership. Moses delivered God's people through ten plagues, culminating in the Passover. The book then records the crossing of the Red Sea and the Israelites' journey to Mount Sinai where God entered into the Mosaic Covenant with His people. At Sinai God revealed the Ten Commandments and instructions for constructing the tabernacle. The book closes with the completion of the tabernacle and its filling with the glory of God.

### **LEVITICUS**

Leviticus records God's further instructions for His people that He revealed at Mount Sinai. These instructions concerned how His people should approach and obey Him. They took up matters related to sacrifices; the priesthood; the clean and unclean; the day of atonement; social, civil, and ceremonial law; the heart of the Mosaic Law (the blessings and curses); and vows.

### **NUMBERS**

Numbers records the people's departure from Mount Sinai, wanderings in the wilderness, and arrival at the plains of Moab on the east side of the Jordan River. After numbering their men of war and organizing around the tabernacle, Israel's twelve tribes set out from Sinai headed toward the Promised Land. At Kadesh-Barnea, a city south of the land, they sent twelve spies to survey the land. The spies returned; ten gave a fearful report, and the people believed the fearful spies. Because of this, God judges the people; the nation spent forty years in the wilderness, and everyone over twenty years old died, except Caleb and Joshua. After the old generation dies, the new generation arose and made their way to the east side of the Jordan River, poised to enter the Promised Land.

### **DEUTERONOMY**

Deuteronomy records Moses' final words to the young generation. Having committed a sin that would keep him from the Promised Land (Numbers 20), Moses addressed the new generation that was about to possess it. He pointed them to the past, warning of disobedience. He encouraged them in the present, calling for obedience. He looked ahead, foreseeing Israel's future dispersion to the nations but ultimate return. Moses then died on Mount Nebo.



## **JOSHUA**

The book of Joshua recounts Israel's successful conquest of the Promised Land. Joshua took Moses' place as the new leader of the people. They crossed the Jordan River, toppled Jericho, and defeated Canaanite enemies in central, southern, and northern portions of the land. After completing the initial conquest, the nation divided the land among the twelve tribes, designated cities of refuge, and set apart forty-eight cities for the Levites. Finally, before his death, Joshua addressed the people and encouraged them to fear and serve the Lord.

## **JUDGES**

The book of Judges records Israel's three hundred plus years of disobedience to God and the resulting hardship it brought. Having disobeyed the Lord's commands to utterly destroy the Canaanites, to avoid intermarriage, and to reject idolatry (Deuteronomy 7:1-5), the nation plunged into numerous cycles of sin, servitude, supplication, and salvation, Israel sinned against God. The Lord raised up a foreign nation to which Israel suffered servitude for years. The nation prayed to God for deliverance. (Supplication is a fancy word for prayer.) The Lord called a judge to save His people and bring peace. After that particular judge died, the cycle started all over again – time and time again. This book ends with an intense look at the idolatry and immorality that marked God's people during this age.

## **RUTH**

The book of Ruth records the story of a Moabite woman, Ruth, who married an Israelite man, Boaz, and became a progenitor of David, the eventual king of the nation. The events of this book do not further the storyline of the Old Testament, but rather take place during the time of the judges. In contrast to the darkness of the period, Ruth was a shining light – a Moabite woman who demonstrated the faith, love, and righteousness that were so lacking in Israel.

## **1 SAMUEL**

The book of 1 Samuel records Israel's transition from a loose federation of twelve tribes to the united kingdom of Israel under their first king, Saul. After centuries under judges, Israel cried out for a king. God used Samuel, Israel's last judge, to anoint Israel's first king, Saul in 1051 BC. Though he brought stability to the nation, Saul served without a passion for God. His disobedience was evident, and his insecurity was displayed in his attempts to kill young David, a faithful servant in the king's court. Saul's life ended in shame as he fell upon his own sword in an act of suicide.

## **2 SAMUEL**

Originally one book with 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel records the rise of David to the throne of Israel, along with the painful consequences his sins brought into his life. After Saul's death, David became king in 1011 BC. The initial years of his rule were marked by great triumph as he established his rule over all Israel, founded Jerusalem, and won many victories over Israel's enemies. But his kingship took a troubled turn through his own adultery and murder, his son Amnon's rape of his half-sister, and his son Absalom's estrangement and attempted coup against his father.

## **1 KINGS**

The book of 1 Kings records the reign of Solomon over Israel before recording the division of the kingdom. After David's death, Solomon became king in 971 BC. His reign was marked by remarkable success as he excelled in wisdom, wealth, and accomplishment in the building and dedication of the temple in Jerusalem. But Solomon's multiple marriages to foreign women turned his heart from the Lord. A reign that seemed so strong ended in a whimper. At Solomon's death the kingdom of Israel split into the northern kingdom of Israel (ten tribes) and the southern kingdom of Judah (two tribes) in 931 BC. The histories of the two kingdoms follow and are carried on in the book of 2 Kings.

## **2 KINGS**

The book of 2 Kings begins where 1 Kings left off (originally these were one book), recounting the history of the two kingdoms – Israel, the northern kingdom, and Judah, the southern kingdom. The northern kingdom of Israel's rebellion against God eventually brought judgment when the Assyrians defeated and deported them out of their land. This is recorded in 2 Kings 17 and took place in 722 BC. The southern kingdom survived longer, being represented by some godly leadership, but eventually their sin led to their demise. The Babylonians attacked Judah in 605 BC and 597 BC and finally destroyed the temple in Jerusalem in 586 BC, exporting the people of Judah to Babylon on all three occasions. These events are recorded in 2 Kings 25.

## **1 & 2 CHRONICLES**

Originally one book, 1 and 2 Chronicles do not further the story of the Old Testament, but rather cover much of the same history recorded in 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, and 2 Kings. These books were written after the return of the southern kingdom from Babylonian exile (see Ezra and Nehemiah) when the people were greatly discouraged. They had no king; the rebuilt temple lacked the glory of Solomon's former temple, and they were under the thumb of Persia. These books sought to encourage Judah by pointing to their storied past and God's faithfulness to bring them back to their land. (Remember, Chronicles was written after Judah had returned to the land.)

## **EZRA**

The book of Ezra records the return of Judah to their land, the rebuilding of the temple, and the ministry of Ezra. In fulfillment of His promise through Jeremiah to bring Judah back to their land after seventy years of captivity, God stirred up the heart of King Cyrus of Persia to allow the Jews to return to their land. Under Zerubbabel's leadership fifty thousand Jews returned to the land and laid the foundation of the temple in 516 BC. In 457 BC Ezra led two thousand others back to the land. With the word of God and prayer, Ezra led the people in repentance toward God.

## **NEHEMIAH**

The book of Nehemiah records the return of Nehemiah and his successful effort to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem. Nehemiah served as the cupbearer to the Persian king Artaxerxes. After hearing the walls in Jerusalem remained in ruins, Nehemiah prayed God would give him an opportunity to return and rebuild the walls. After receiving permission from the king, Nehemiah returned, rallied the people, persevered through trials, and led the people to complete the rebuilding project in fifty-two days. The latter chapters record the further ministry of Ezra as well as Nehemiah's own spiritual leadership.

## **ESTHER**

The book of Esther records God's providential care for His people through a young Jewish girl named Esther who became the queen of Persia. Chronologically, the book of Esther fits between Ezra 6 and Ezra 7, the book's events taking place from 483-473 BC. Though the name of God is not mentioned, His hand is evident throughout this book. When a decree was issued for the destruction of all Jews throughout the Persian Empire, a young Jewish girl named Esther was providentially in place to change their fate. Rather than being exterminated, the Jews were able to defend themselves and survive. The events of this story form the background of the feast of Purim, a feast still celebrated by Jews today.

## **JOB**

The book of Job records the suffering and consequent shaping of a man named Job. This man suffered much – the loss of his wealth, his children, and his health. After receiving counsel from his wife and three friends, Job finally heard from God. Rather than giving Job the answers he was looking for, God pelted Job with a long series of questions designed to establish His sovereignty over all of life. Job responded well and submitted to his wise, powerful, and loving God.

## **PSALMS**

The book of Psalms is a collection of poetical songs spanning nearly nine centuries of Israel's history used for both personal and corporate worship. The book is divided into five smaller books, Psalm 1-41, Psalm 42-72, Psalm 73-89, Psalm 90-106, and Psalm 107-150, each of which ends with a doxology. Plunging the depths of human emotion, these Psalms reflect the wide range of experience as one walks with God. Their intention is to capture reader's hearts and lift them to praise and worship of the Lord.

## **PROVERBS**

The book of Proverbs is a collection of sayings designed to give readers wisdom. They are arranged in poetic paragraphs in chapters 1-9; short, pithy maxims in chapters 10-29; and then paragraphs again in chapters 30-31. These Proverbs address issues related to friendships, work, finances, sexuality, family, laziness, anger, the words one speaks, and so much more. They clearly set forth the consequences of both foolish and wise behavior.

## **ECCLESIASTES**

The book of Ecclesiastes is Solomon's summary thoughts on man's search for meaning in life. Recounting his own personal quest, he said the deepest longings of his soul were not found in life without God – learning without God, money without God, pleasure without God. No, true meaning and lasting joy can only be found by viewing life as a gift from the Creator and living in obedience to Him. Life with God does not mean all of life's mysteries will be understood, but that humble trust and simple submission are the path to a satisfied soul.

## **SONG OF SOLOMON**

The Song of Solomon is a collection of love poems celebrating marital love and romance. In this book, through beautiful, picturesque language, the romantic love between man and woman finds full expression. The various poems celebrate the couple spending lingering time together, praising each other's beauty, expressing their mutual desire, and even consummating their love. The book is a clear reminder that God created romance and wants His children to enjoy it fully in the context of marriage.

## **ISAIAH**

Isaiah prophesied chiefly to the southern kingdom of Judah prior to their exile to Babylon in 586 BC. The first part of this book, chapters 1-39, is filled with messages of judgement against both the nations and Judah. The last part of the book, chapters 40-66, is filled with messages of consolation for Judah as God promised to end their captivity, send their Messiah, and restore their nation to glory.

## **JEREMIAH**

Jeremiah prophesied chiefly to the southern kingdom of Judah prior to their exile to Babylon in 586 BC. Though Jeremiah was faithful to call God's people to repentance and warn them of impending judgment for their refusal to turn back to God, his work was met with resistance and rejection. Eventually his prophecies came true as the Babylonians took Judah captive. Jeremiah, often referred to as the "weeping prophet," watched lamentably the fall of the kingdom and destruction of their temple.

## **LAMENTATIONS**

Lamentations, composed by the prophet Jeremiah, was written just after the destruction of Jerusalem's temple in 586 BC. Five laments spread over the book's five chapters. Each describes the prophet's anguish over the fallen kingdom and their most important symbol of religious life, the temple.

## **EZEKIEL**

Ezekiel was taken to captivity when the Babylonians struck Judah in 597 BC. He began his ministry among the exiles in Babylon, declaring God's judgment would finally crush Judah and the temple. Ezekiel also pronounced God's judgment upon the nations before turning to matters related to the people of God's repentance and eventual restoration.

## **DANIEL**

Daniel was taken to captivity when the Babylonians struck Judah in 605 BC. Because of his faithfulness, Daniel was exalted to positions of great influence within the new world power, Persia. Through the exploits of Daniel and his friends, the way of faith in the midst of persecution was set forth. And through the wisdom and prophecies of Daniel, God's plan for the ultimate triumph of His kingdom became clear.

## **HOSEA**

God's faithful love for His people Israel found clear illustration as God led the prophet Hosea to restore and welcome back his unfaithful wife Gomer. Hosea recounted Israel's sins against the Lord who had been so gracious and good. He also pronounced the coming judgment upon the nation through the one with whom unwise alliance had been made, Assyria. Despite Israel's rebellion and approaching judgment, the book closes with a word of hope that God will one day restore His people.

## **JOEL**

The prophet Joel looked to a recent locust plague as a foretaste of the judgment God would bring upon the southern kingdom of Judah in the Day of the Lord. After calling the people to repentance and warning of impending judgment, Joel prophesied of a future time when a remnant would repent, and God would restore the physical, spiritual, and national glory of the people of God.



## **AMOS**

God called Amos to prophesy against the northern kingdom of Israel prior to their exile to Assyria in 722 BC. After pronouncing judgment on the enemies of Israel, Amos stung the nation with a pronouncement against Israel itself. Because of their sins of dishonesty and oppression against the poor, empty religion, and pompous self-confidence, the nation was doomed to fall to the Assyrians. Like other prophets, though, Amos concluded his work with a word of consolation that God would restore Israel to glory and strength.

## **OBADIAH**

Obadiah brought a word of comfort to the southern kingdom of Judah, declaring that their neighbors to the southeast, the Edomites, would be judged by God for their refusal to help Judah in her day of trouble. Though Edom thought they were secure, the Lord declared, "I will bring you down."

## **JONAH**

God called the prophet Jonah to preach repentance to the wicked Ninevites. But Jonah refused and hopped a boat headed in the opposite direction. Through a tumultuous storm and a very large fish, God captured the prophet's attention and, consequently, Jonah made his way to Nineveh. The people received the message and repented. Only then does the reason why Jonah initially refused come to light – he knew His gracious God would forgive the wicked Ninevites, and he did not want that to happen!

## **MICAH**

While giving some attention to the northern kingdom of Israel, the primary recipient of Micah's ministry was the southern kingdom of Judah. He denounced this kingdom for their rebellion against the Lord, noting their outward formalism did not hide the inward corruption. Through a series of oracles, the prophet focused on the kingdom's sins, their coming judgment, and the Lord's ultimate restoration of those who repent.

## **NAHUM**

Jonah had preached and the Ninevites had repented. But about one hundred years later, the Assyrians (Nineveh was the capital of Assyria) reverted to their old ways of idolatry, vicious violence, and brute arrogance. In 722 BC they had defeated the northern kingdom of Israel, and now they were threatening the southern kingdom of Judah. Nahum offered a prophetic voice of encouragement to Judah, announcing that the Assyrians would soon be destroyed. His prophecy eventually came true when the Babylonians defeated the Assyrians in 612 BC.

## **HABAKKUK**

The righteous prophet Habakkuk called out to the Lord to judge His sinful people, the southern kingdom of Judah, only to learn God would do so through the godless Babylonians. Shaken by this news – that God would use the wicked to judge those more righteous than they – the prophet appealed to God to consider the unrighteousness of the Babylonians. God replied that after using the Babylonians to judge His people, He would faithfully judge the Babylonians as well. The book closes with a strong affirmation of faith in the Lord.

## **ZEPHANIAH**

Zephaniah ministered to the southern kingdom of Judah and focused on the coming Day of the Lord – a day of judgment and wrath against the Lord's sinful people. Yet the prophet proclaimed that a time would come when the fortunes of Judah would be restored through the faithfulness of their God.

## HAGGAI

After God fulfilled His promise to bring the southern kingdom of Judah back from captivity, the people began rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. However, it was not long before their priorities got misplaced, and they quit working on the temple for sixteen years. God raised up Haggai to encourage the people to put His work first by completing the temple. Haggai also denounced the people's sin and lifted their sights to the future Messiah's kingdom.

## ZECHARIAH

A contemporary of Haggai, Zechariah also encouraged the returned remnant to get back to work on the temple. This book is filled with visions, signs, prophecies, celestial visitors, and the voice of God. Yet, it is also very practical, calling God's people to repentance and hope in the future glory of the Messiah's kingdom.

## MALACHI

After the rebuilding of both the temple and the walls in Jerusalem, it did not take long for the people to lapse into their old ways – questioning God's love for them, failing to give Him due honor, intermarrying with foreigners, doubting God's justice, failing to bring their tithes and offerings, and believing that righteous lives were lived in vain. Malachi challenged the people for these sins and ended with a call to obedience and a look forward to when God's messenger would bring repentance.

### List of Kings and Prophets ::: [gotquestions.org](http://gotquestions.org)

#### KINGS OF ISRAEL

Jeroboam I, rebellious	931—910 BC
Nadab, bad	910—909 BC
Baasha, wicked	909—886 BC
Elah, evil	886—885 BC
Zimri, sinful	885 BC
Tibni, iniquitous	885—880 BC
Omri (overlap), extra bad	885—874 BC
Ahab, the worst to that point	874—853 BC
Ahaziah, disobedient	853—852 BC
Joram/Jehoram, mostly rotten	852—841 BC
Jehu, not good but better than the rest	841—814 BC
Jehoahaz, noncompliant	814—798 BC
Joash, wayward	798—782 BC
Jeroboam II (overlap), badly behaved	793—753 BC
Zechariah, abysmal	753 BC
Shallum, full of vice	752 BC
Menahem, horrible	752—742 BC
Pekahiah, idolatrous	742—740 BC
Pekah (overlap), awful	752—732 BC
Hoshea, appalling	732—722 BC

#### KINGS OF JUDAH

Rehoboam, mostly bad	931—913 BC
Abijah, mostly perverted	913—911 BC
Asa, good	911—870 BC
Jehoshaphat (overlap), righteous	873—848 BC
Jehoram/Joram (overlap), terrible	853—841 BC
Ahaziah, bad	841 BC
Athaliah (queen), devilish	841—835 BC
Joash/Jehoash, mostly virtuous	835—796 BC
Amaziah, mostly wholesome	796—767 BC
Uzziah/Azariah (overlap), mostly ok	790—739 BC
Jotham (overlap), worthy	750—731 BC
Ahaz, heinous	735—715 BC
Hezekiah, the best	715—686 BC
Manasseh, depraved until repenting	695—642 BC
Amon, treacherous	642—640 BC
Josiah, great	640—609 BC
Jehoahaz, dreadful	609 BC
Jehoiakim, degenerate	609—597 BC
Jehoiachin, frightful	597 BC
Zedekiah, foolish	597—586 BC

# RESOURCES

## Important Figures in the Old Testament

### NOAH

Noah was a prophet in that God spoke to him about the future and he possibly preached judgment against others. Genesis 7:1–4; 8:16–17, 21–22; and 9:1–16 record times when God spoke to Noah directly. Hebrews 11:7 is sometimes interpreted to mean that God told Noah to preach against the evil people he lived near, but the words “by his faith he condemned the world” can also mean that Noah’s faith was an example of how they should have acted and proof that faith was possible.

### ABRAHAM

God spoke to Abraham several times. Many of their conversations were filled with instruction, but God also gave Abraham glimpses of the future. In fact, in their first meeting, God started by telling Abram to leave his country and travel to a new place (Genesis 12:1) and then went straight into a blessing that doubled as a prophecy of the future (Genesis 12:2–3).

### JACOB

In Genesis 28:10–22, Jacob had his dream of the stairway to heaven and a reiteration of God’s promise to his father Abraham. In Genesis 49, Jacob gave an accurate prophecy of the future of his sons’ descendants.

### JOSEPH

In our first introduction to Joseph, in Genesis 37:3–11, he related two dreams he’d had—prophecies that he would one day rule over his brothers and parents. His dreams incensed his brothers so much they sold him into slavery, which eventually led him to such a high political position they had to beg him for food, thus fulfilling his dream. Before Joseph reached that position, however, he interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh’s cupbearer and baker (Genesis 40) and then Pharaoh’s own dream (Genesis 41:1–40).

### MOSES

Much of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are filled with God’s messages to and through Moses. They begin in Exodus 3 when God called Moses from the burning bush to return to Egypt to speak judgment against the Pharaoh and rescue the Israelites. Moses’ prophecies include both rebuke against the Israelites and predictions of the future. God spoke more to Moses than anyone else in the Bible.

### AARON

When Moses complained that he wasn’t a good public speaker, God made his brother, Aaron, his mouthpiece. In Exodus 7:1–7, Aaron began his career as God’s prophet, rebuking and giving warnings to others.

### MIRIAM

In Exodus 15:20 Moses’ sister, Miriam, is identified as a prophet. We don’t know specifically what message God gave her, apart from the song she sings in verse 21. In Numbers 12, however, we find neither her nor Aaron’s judgment were always informed by God’s guidance.

## **THE SEVENTY ELDERS OF ISRAEL**

Although God had provided the Israelites with manna and water, they demanded meat, as well. God promised to oblige. In preparation, Moses ordered seventy elders to the tent of meeting, and the Holy Spirit temporarily endowed them with the ability to prophesy (Numbers 11:25).

## **ELDAD AND MEDAD**

Eldad and Medad were two of the seventy elders, but for an unknown reason they stayed in the camp and did not go to the tent of meeting. The Holy Spirit found them, anyway, and they prophesied for a short time (Numbers 11:26).

## **BALAAM**

Balaam has the distinction of being a true prophet who was also an evil man. The king of Moab tried to bribe him to curse Israel. Balaam tried, but his fear of God, his integrity as a prophet, and his stubborn donkey overcame his greed (Numbers 22–24). The sin of Balaam is warned against in Jude 1:11.

## **ELIHU**

Job's less-than-supportive three friends are well known, but mid-way through their counsel, Elihu arrived. His long message (Job 32–35) condemned the other three friends, confronted Job about his lack of trust in God, and reminded them all that God is just.

## **JOSHUA**

When Moses died, Joshua took command of the Israelites' campaign into the Promised Land. In Joshua 1:1–9, God gave him encouragement for the hard task ahead and a promise of success. He also gave Joshua a warning to obey the law God had given Moses.

## **DEBORAH**

Deborah is the only recorded female judge of Israel, and Judges 4:4 indicates she was a prophetess, as well. In Judges 4:6–7, Deborah either passed on God's message to the military commander Barak or enforced it; in Judges 4:9, she related a prophecy of future events.

## **GIDEON**

Gideon was one of the Bible's least willing prophets. Throughout Judges 6–8, God led Gideon to take a small army and destroy the oppressive Midianites and Amalekites. It's unclear if Gideon was the prophet who relayed God's promise in Judges 6:8–10.

## **SAMUEL**

Samuel received his first message from God in 1 Samuel 3:4 when he was a small boy. He spent his life as God's messenger; two of his most significant acts were anointing Saul (1 Samuel 9) and David (1 Samuel 16:13) to be king. Samuel's words of God's wisdom to Saul went mostly unheeded, and Samuel even returned from the grave to announce God's punishment for Saul's disobedience (1 Samuel 28:15–19).

## **A PROCESSION OF PROPHETS**

Shortly after Saul's anointing as king, he met with seventy prophets and joined them (1 Samuel 10:10).



## **KING SAUL**

Samuel gave Saul specific instructions right after Samuel anointed him to be king. In the process of heeding Samuel's directions, Saul met with a group of prophets and prophesied with them (1 Samuel 10:10).

## **GAD**

While being chased by Saul, David and a group of followers hid in a stronghold. Gad the prophet sent him a word from God as to what he was to do next (1 Samuel 22:5).

## **NATHAN**

Nathan seems to have been David's primary link to God's words. In 2 Samuel 7:4–17, Nathan told David that Solomon would build the temple. In 2 Samuel 12:1–15, Nathan rebuked David for committing adultery with Bathsheba and killing her husband.

## **DAVID**

In the time of the kings, God tended to speak to the king through prophets, rather than directly as He had with Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, and Gideon. David must have received some kind of message from God, however, as so many of his psalms prophesy the coming of Jesus (Psalm 8; 22; 110).

## **ASAPH**

Asaph was one of the worship leaders appointed by King David. He was a Levite and a prolific writer—many of the psalms were written either by him or by the guild he inspired. His songs were sung along with David's at the time of Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 29:30).

## **TABERNACLE MUSICIANS**

First Chronicles 25:1–7 lists the musicians whom David commissioned to perform before the tabernacle and identifies them as prophets. They include Heman, the grandson of Samuel; Jeduthun; and Asaph, as well as their sons.

## **WRITERS OF THE PSALMS**

Many of the psalms besides those directly identified as having been written by David refer to the coming Christ, including Psalms 2, 18, 89 (by Ethan the Ezrahite), 132, and many others.

## **KING SOLOMON**

In 1 Kings 3, God asked Solomon in a dream if there was anything Solomon would like from Him. Solomon chose wisdom.

## **AGUR**

Agur, the son of Jekeh, is cited as the author of Proverbs 30. Nothing else is known about him.

## **AHIJAH**

Unfortunately, Solomon didn't always use his wisdom. He married too many women and was drawn into worshiping their gods. In 1 Kings 11:29–39, Ahijah told Jeroboam that he would take command of ten of the tribes of Israel after Solomon died. Several years later, Ahijah told Jeroboam's wife that, because of Jeroboam's sin against God, not only would their son die, but Jeroboam's entire line would be cut off (1 Kings 14:1–18).

## **IDDO**

Iddo the prophet is mentioned several times, and at least one passage suggests he at one point had his own book, but not much is recorded in the Bible about him. Iddo predicted the rise of Jeroboam (2 Chronicles 9:29) and wrote a record of Rehoboam (2 Chronicles 12:15) and Abijah (2 Chronicles 13:27).

## **SHEMAIAH**

After the ten northern tribes followed Jeroboam, Solomon's son Rehoboam prepared the southern tribes for battle. God sent Shemaiah to tell them to return home (1 Kings 12:22).

## **AZARIAH**

Several Azariahs are mentioned in the Bible, including a long-lived king of Judah (2 Kings 15), but only one is specifically called a prophet. He gave God's warning to King Asa, encouraging him to rid the nation of Judah of idols (2 Chronicles 15:1–7).

## **HANANI**

Although King Asa trusted God, he also bribed the king of Syria to break his pact with King Baasha of Israel. Hanani told Asa that God would have destroyed Syria's king for him if he'd followed the Lord. Asa responded by putting Hanani in stocks in prison and taking out his anger on some of his people (2 Chronicles 16:7–10).

## **JEHU**

The prophet Jehu lived in the time of King Baasha and was Hanani's son. Jehu announced God's judgment against Baasha, saying that, because of his sin, the dogs and birds would eat his family's bodies (1 Kings 16:1–7).

## **ELIJAH**

Elijah was probably the most significant prophet who didn't write his own book. He proclaimed God's word in the northern kingdom of Israel at the time of the evil King Ahab. It was he who ensured a widow was always supplied with oil and flour (1 Kings 17:8–16), who had a showdown with the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:17–40), and who was strengthened by God's still voice in his fatigue and depression (2 Kings 2:1–11). At the end of his life, a chariot of fire took him to heaven, and his mantle fell to Elisha as his successor (2 Kings 2:1–12).

## **UNNAMED PROPHET**

When the northern kingdom of Israel was threatened by Syria, this prophet assured King Ahab that Israel would triumph with God's help. Ahab did triumph—twice. But he let Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, live. Another, or perhaps the same, prophet disguised himself as a wounded soldier and prophesied against Ahab for not killing Ben-hadad (1 Kings 20).

## **MICAHIAH**

For some reason, the good king of Judah, Jehoshaphat, got along fairly well with the evil king of Israel, Ahab. Ahab invited Jehoshaphat to battle with him against Ramoth-Gilead, and Jehoshaphat agreed—but not before finding a prophet to ask God's guidance. Ahab had four hundred false prophets who told them God was with them, but Jehoshaphat insisted on a prophet who actually heard from God. Ahab knew of one, but was reluctant to call him, since he never had anything good to say. Micaiah revealed that God had sent a lying spirit to the four hundred prophets in order to lure Ahab to his death. Ahab went to battle anyway and was struck and killed by a random arrow (1 Kings 22:13–28).

## **JAHAZIEL**

When threatened by the Moabites and Ammonites, King Jehoshaphat took the unusual step of fasting and calling all Judah to seek help from God. God answered through Jahaziel who prophesied that Judah would destroy its enemies and even gave counsel on how to accomplish the rout (2 Chronicles 20:1–23).

## **ELIEZER**

The usually wise Jehoshaphat joined the evil King Ahaziah of Israel to build some ships. Eliezer confronted Jehoshaphat, saying that, because he had joined with Ahaziah, God would destroy what he had made. The ships were wrecked before they could reach their destination (2 Chronicles 20:35–37).

## **UNKNOWN PROPHETS**

Various prophets lived during the time of Elijah and Elisha, belonging to the school of prophets. Nothing is known about these prophets except some lived in Bethel (2 Kings 2:3) and some in Jericho (2 Kings 2:5), and they all annoyed Elisha by reminding him that Elijah's departure was imminent.

## **ELISHA**

Elisha was Elijah's successor and the second-most important prophet without a book. He spent seven or eight years as Elijah's apprentice before Elijah was taken to heaven. He then helped wipe out organized Baal worship (2 Kings 10:28), brought a widow's son back to life (2 Kings 4:18–37), and cured Naaman's leprosy (2 Kings 5). His power and authority through God was so great that, when a dead man was thrown into Elisha's grave, the man sprang back to life (2 Kings 13:2–21).

## **ZECHARIAH THE PRIEST**

When King Joash was a baby, he was hidden from his patricidal grandmother, Athaliah, and raised by the priest Jehoiada until the priests could arrange for the queen's death. Joash began as a very good king but like many others grew to rely on himself too much. Upon Jehoiada's death, Joash was quickly led to idol worship. When Jehoiada's son Zechariah confronted Joash and the people, the king ordered him to be stoned (2 Chronicles 24:20–22).

## **JONAH**

Jonah is best known for the book that bears his name and his great reluctance to go to Nineveh. But he also served as a prophet in Israel in the time of Jeroboam II. Although the king was as evil as any other, God did not yet want Israel to be destroyed. He sent Jonah to Jeroboam and led him to restore a border against their enemies (2 Kings 14:23–27).

## **JOEL**

After Judah's crops were obliterated by a swarm of locusts, Joel compared the devastation to what God would do if the people didn't return to Him. Joel also predicted the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Joel 2:28; cf. Acts 2:16–21).

## **AMOS**

Amos was a Judean shepherd who was tasked with prophesying against Israel. His warnings were ignored, and Israel was taken into captivity by Assyria some time later.



## **HOSEA**

God often asked a great deal of His prophets, and Hosea was a prime example. In order to illustrate the unfaithfulness of the northern kingdom of Israel, God had Hosea marry a prostitute who remained unfaithful after they married. To show how God longed to forgive His people, He told Hosea to take Gomer back. In addition to the message to Israel of God's faithfulness, Hosea includes a prophecy that Gentiles would one day follow God (Hosea 2:23).

## **ISAIAH**

Isaiah holds the record for being the prophet who is most quoted in the New Testament. He was an advisor to King Hezekiah of Judah but also had to walk barefoot and naked for three years as a portent against Egypt and Cush. His book contains prophecies of Jesus and John the Baptist, and Jesus used Isaiah 61:1–2 to begin His ministry in Nazareth.

## **MICAH**

Micah served as a prophet during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah of Judah. His message mixed condemnation of sin with the promise of the coming Messiah. His book contains the only mention of Bethlehem as the place of the Messiah's birth.

## **ODED**

Although the kings of Judah were generally better than the kings of Israel, there were still some who worshiped idols and even sacrificed their children. When Ahaz did so, God brought the Syrians to punish them. The Syrians killed at least 120,000 and took 200,000 captive. The prophet Oded, on God's orders, stopped them, telling the invaders they had gone far enough and they should set the captives free and return the spoils, which they did (2 Chronicles 28:1–15).

## **ZEPHANIAH**

Zephaniah was yet another prophet who warned Judah about their impending doom. He condemned their idolatry in their actions and in their hearts. But he also relayed God's promise that a remnant would return.

## **NAHUM**

One hundred and fifty years after Jonah, Nineveh was out of second chances. Nahum promised that Assyria's days were numbered and that Judah would be delivered from their threat.

## **HULDAH**

Huldah was one of a handful of women identified as a prophetess in the Bible. When the priest Hilkiah found the Book of the Law in the temple and took it to King Josiah, the king turned to Huldah to find out what they should do. She affirmed that Judah's rejection of God meant the nation would be destroyed, but because of Josiah's penitence it would not be in his time (2 Kings 22:8–20).

## **JEREMIAH**

Jeremiah was one of the last prophets of the Kingdom of Judah and watched helplessly as it was picked apart by the Babylonians. Known as "the weeping prophet" because of how his words from God affected him, Jeremiah also gave the people a word of hope that they would return from captivity in 70 years. His counsel to submit to God's judgment was ignored, and he was eventually taken to Egypt with the remnant of the royal family (2 Kings 25:26). Jeremiah also wrote the book of Lamentations, a lament for the fall of Jerusalem.

## **URIAH**

Jeremiah was not completely alone in his thankless job. Uriah also prophesied against the evil in Judah. He was hunted down and killed by King Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 26:20–23).

## **HABAKKUK**

Habakkuk covered a lot of ground in such a short book. He prophesied Assyria's fall, the Babylonian exile, and the future victory of the Persians. His prophecies were revealed in the context of a conversation with God, wherein Habakkuk asked God questions, and God responded.

## **OBADIAH**

Like Jonah, the prophet Obadiah had a message for a nation other than Israel or Judah. He prophesied against Edom, the descendants of Jacob's brother, Esau. Edom effectively disappeared after their removal from Petra in the fifth century BC.

## **DANIEL**

Daniel was one of the first Jews to be taken into exile in Babylon. As part of the royal household, Daniel was trained to be an official in Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar got more than he bargained for, however, when he discovered Daniel was not only intelligent, but he could also interpret dreams. Daniel served several generations of leaders including Belshazzar, who saw the writing on the wall, and Darius, who was horrified to discover he'd been tricked into sending Daniel to the lions' den. In the visions and angelic encounters of Daniel 7–12, Daniel revealed more about the end times than any other book besides Revelation.

## **EZEKIEL**

Ezekiel's book of prophecy appears somewhat psychedelic, with its strange visions. Ezekiel was a priest exiled to Babylon in the second wave of deportations and relayed God's judgment to the rebellious people. He also made several prophecies about the future, including the coming of Jesus, the New Jerusalem (Ezekiel 48:30–35), and the millennial kingdom (Ezekiel 44). Ezekiel was one of the few prophets who eagerly spread God's message no matter what the resistance he encountered—although that may have been because God told him if he didn't prophesy he would be held accountable for the souls of those he didn't warn (Ezekiel 33).

## **HAGGAI**

Haggai worked with Zechariah and Zerubbabel to get the Jews who had returned from exile back on track. Specifically, he called the people to seriously consider their priorities and get the temple rebuilt.

## **ZECHARIAH THE PROPHET**

The son of Berechiah, along with the prophet Haggai, encouraged the Jews to finish the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem after the Babylonian Captivity. In a series of eight related visions, Zechariah received a broad-ranging message of God's plan for the Israelites. Along the way, he spoke quite a bit about the Messiah and the fact that people from all over the world would follow Him.

## **MALACHI**

He was the last prophet to prophecy in Israel until an angel visited Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist. As such, Malachi's message was a call to obedience and a promise of the coming Messiah. Following Malachi's oracle were 400 years of divine silence.

# SESSION THREE

## A WALK THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT

### 1. Connecting the Old Testament and the New Testament

The Bible is a unified book, but the OT and NT have differences:

#### OLD TESTAMENT

Foundational  
Many Prophecies  
The Jewish people  
Prediction of a Messiah  
God gives Law to Moses  
Old Covenant

#### NEW TESTAMENT

Further Revelation from God  
Fulfillment of the Prophecies  
The Church  
Jesus the Messiah is revealed  
Jesus fulfills the Law  
New Covenant

*"The Old Testament lays the foundation for the coming of the Messiah who would sacrifice Himself for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2). The New Testament records the ministry of Jesus Christ and then looks back on what He did and how we are to respond. Both Testaments reveal the same holy, merciful, and righteous God who condemns sin but desires to save sinners through an atoning sacrifice. In both Testaments, God reveals Himself to us and shows us how we are to come to Him through faith."*

### 2. A General overview of the New Testament books

a. The New Testament consists of \_\_\_\_ books written by the early followers of Jesus Christ.

#### NEW TESTAMENT

##### NT Breakdown:

27 books  
5 Historical  
21 Epistles (Letters)  
1 Prophetical

#### HISTORY

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
---------	------	------	------

#### THE GOSPELS

HEBREWS	JAMES	1 PETER	2 PETER	1 JOHN	2 JOHN	3 JOHN	JUDE
---------	-------	---------	---------	--------	--------	--------	------

ACTS
------

#### PAUL'S LETTERS

ROMANS	1 CORINTHIANS	2 CORINTHIANS	GALATIANS	EPHESIANS	PHILIPPIANS	COLOSSIANS	1 THESSALONIANS	2 THESSALONIANS	1 TIMOTHY	2 TIMOTHY	TITUS	PHILEMON
--------	---------------	---------------	-----------	-----------	-------------	------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------	-----------	-------	----------

#### PROPHECY

REVELATION
------------

## b. Chart of New Testament Books

### Historical

Gospels (4)

Acts (1)

### Epistles (Letters)

Paul's Letters (13)

Other Letters (8)

### Prophetical

Revelation (1)

## 3. Timeline of New Testament

### Jesus is the Eternal, Creator \_\_\_\_\_ (Eternal)

Key Themes: Lamb slain before the foundation of the world  
Unity of Triune God *John 17:5*

Key People: The Trinity

Jesus is: The I AM *John 8:58-59*  
  
Alpha and Omega *Revelation 1:8, 22:13*

### Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ (6BC – 4BC)

Key Themes: Prophecy  
Birth  
Early Life

Key People: John the Baptist  
Mary and Joseph  
Jesus Christ

Jesus is: The Christ (Messiah) *1 John 2:22*  
The Savior of the world *Luke 2:11*



**Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ ( ~AD 30)**

**Key Themes:**           The baptism of Jesus  
                              The teaching of Jesus  
                              The disciples of Jesus  
                              The rejection, death, and resurrection of Jesus

**Key People:**           Jesus Christ  
                              Disciples  
                              Pharisees  
                              Romans

**Jesus is:**               The Resurrection and the Life *John 11:25*  
                              The Way, Truth, and Life *John 14:6*  
                              The firstborn from the dead *Revelation 1:5*

**Who:**

**What:**

**When:**

**Where:**

**Why:**



Israel in the time of Jesus



**Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ (30AD – still going)**

**Key Themes:** The Message of the Gospel is spread among the nations with much persecution and suffering and joy.

**Key People:** The Holy Spirit (Pentecost)  
The Apostles  
The Church

**Jesus is:** The Head of the Church *Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 1:22*  
Chief Cornerstone *Ephesians 2:20*



Paul's Missionary Journeys

Jesus is coming \_\_\_\_\_ (Be ready)

Key Themes: Jesus will come again, judge righteously, set up His eternal Kingdom, and we will dwell forever with our awesome God.

Key People: Jesus Christ  
Jewish People  
All Believers

Jesus is: King of kings, Lord of lords *Revelation 19:16*  
Living One *Revelation 1:18*

NEW TESTAMENT

NT Breakdown:  
27 books  
5 Historical  
21 Epistles (Letters)  
1 Prophetical

HISTORY

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
---------	------	------	------

ACTS
------

THE GOSPELS

OTHER LETTERS

HEBREWS	JAMES	1 PETER	2 PETER	1 JOHN	2 JOHN	3 JOHN	JUDE
---------	-------	---------	---------	--------	--------	--------	------

PAUL'S LETTERS

ROMANS	1 CORINTHIANS	2 CORINTHIANS	GALATIANS	EPHESIANS	PHILIPPIANS	COLOSSIANS	1 THESSALONIANS	2 THESSALONIANS	1 TIMOTHY	2 TIMOTHY	TITUS	PHILEMON
--------	---------------	---------------	-----------	-----------	-------------	------------	-----------------	-----------------	-----------	-----------	-------	----------

PROPHECY

REVELATION
------------

4. God at Work

God did this...

I'm doing this...

# RESOURCES

## TIMELINE OF NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

BOOK	DATE WRITTEN
James	A.D. 44-49
Galatians	A.D. 49-50
Matthew	A.D. 50-60
Mark	A.D. 50-60
1 Thessalonians	A.D. 51
2 Thessalonians	A.D. 51-52
1 Corinthians	A.D. 55
2 Corinthians	A.D. 55-56
Romans	A.D. 56
Luke	A.D. 60-61
Ephesians	A.D. 60-62
Philippians	A.D. 60-62
Philemon	A.D. 60-62
Colossians	A.D. 60-62
Acts	A.D. 62
1 Timothy	A.D. 62-64
Titus	A.D. 62-64
1 Peter	A.D. 64-65
2 Timothy	A.D. 66-67
2 Peter	A.D. 67-68
Hebrews	A.D. 67-69
Jude	A.D. 68-70
John	A.D. 80-90
1 John	A.D. 90-95
2 John	A.D. 90-95
3 John	A.D. 90-95
Revelation	A.D. 94-96



# RESOURCES

## Christ's Passion Week Timeline

<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>Morning</b> Triumphal Entry
<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>Morning</b> Cursing of the Fig Tree Request of some Greeks
<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>Morning</b> The Withered Fig Tree  <b>Afternoon</b> Official Challenge of Christ's Authority  <b>Evening</b> The Olivet Disclosure
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>Afternoon</b> Arrangements for Betrayal
<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>Evening</b> Last Supper The Upper Room Discourse
<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>Morning</b> Betrayal and Arrest Trial  <b>Afternoon</b> Crucifixion  <b>Evening</b> Burial
<b>SATURDAY</b>	
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>Afternoon</b> Post-resurrection Appearances

# RESOURCES

## The Chronology of Christ's Crucifixion

<b>9 a.m.</b>	Luke 23:26 Luke 23:33	Jesus is lead to Calvary Jesus is crucified
<b>10 a.m.</b>	Luke 23:34a Luke 23:34b Matt. 27:39-43 Luke 23:35 Luke 23:39	Jesus prays, "Father, forgive them." The soldiers divide up Jesus' clothes. People hurl "abuse at him, wagging their heads." The chief priests and rulers mock, "He saved others..." One criminal mocks, "Save yourself and us!"
<b>11 a.m.</b>	Luke 23:40, 42 Luke 23:43  John 19:26-27	The other criminal pleads, "Jesus, remember me..." Jesus assures the criminal, "Today you will be with me in Paradise." Jesus says, "Woman, behold your son!"
<b>Noon</b>	Luke 23:44	Darkness covers the whole land for three hours.
<b>1 p.m.</b>	Matt. 27:46  John 19:28	Jesus cries out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Jesus says, "I thirst."
<b>2 p.m.</b>	John 19:30 Luke 23:46	Jesus declares, "It is finished." Jesus prays, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!"
<b>3 p.m.</b>	Matt. 27:51 Matt. 27:52 Matt. 27:54 Luke 23:48 John 19:31-32 John 19:34 Matt. 27:57-60	An earthquake hits, and the temple curtain is torn in two. Tombs break open. A centurion exclaims, "Truly this was the Son of God." A crowd witnesses Jesus' suffering and beats their breasts. The soldiers break the two criminals' legs. A soldier pierces Jesus' side with a spear. Jesus is buried.
<b>6 p.m.</b>		The Sabbath begins.

# RESOURCES

## **New Testament Books Summary by Mitch Maher, *Clarifying the Bible***

### **MATTHEW**

Matthew wrote his Gospel primarily to a Jewish audience. He traced the genealogy of Jesus Christ back to Abraham and David and demonstrated through multiple Old Testament quotes how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament promises. Matthew sought to persuade his audience that Jesus was the Messiah and to describe the nature of His kingdom in light of the vast Jewish rejection of Christ.

### **MARK**

Mark wrote his Gospel primarily to a Roman audience. This Gospel focuses more on the actions of Jesus than on His teaching, because Mark desired to present Jesus as the servant who came to suffer and give His life for others. Mark also sought to teach that those who follow Jesus must be willing to suffer the same fate.

### **LUKE**

Luke wrote his Gospel primarily to a Greek audience. Wrought through painstaking research, this Gospel records the story of Jesus in great detail and chronological accuracy. Luke presented Jesus as the Savior for all, demonstrating Jesus' desire to seek and save those from all social classes. He healed the sick and preached the gospel to the poor and needy. He reached out to sinful women, to despised tax collectors, and to the down and out.

### **JOHN**

John wrote his Gospel primarily to the world. This Gospel is the most theological of the four, demonstrating that Jesus is in fact the Son of God. Seven "I am" statements reveal His Person – He is the "bread of life," "the light of the world," "the door," "the good shepherd," "the resurrection and the life," "the way, the truth, and the life," and "the true vine." Seven signs reveal His power and validate His claims – He changed water into wine, healed the official's son, healed the invalid at Bethesda, fed the five thousand, walked on water, healed the man born blind, and raised Lazarus from the dead. John declared his purpose in writing. "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." (John 20:30-31)

### **ACTS**

Written by Luke, the book of Acts records the spread of the gospel throughout the Mediterranean world. In obedience to Jesus' instructions, after being filled with the Holy Spirit, the early believers proclaimed the gospel to the city of Jerusalem, the surrounding regions of Judea and Samaria, and the remotest parts of the earth through the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul. The story is one of strong faith, earnest prayer, and great courage.

## **ROMANS**

Paul was anxious to preach Christ in Rome and possibly establish this city as a headquarters for future missionary activity. From Corinth, just before going to Jerusalem with the monetary gift for the suffering saints, Paul wrote Romans in preparation for his coming. In his most systematic letter, Paul set forth his theology as he established the condemnation of all because of sin, the justification of believers through the gospel, the sanctification of believers by means of union with Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit, the vindication of God related to Israel's present rejection and future repentance, and the application of the gospel to everyday life.

## **1 CORINTHIANS**

It appears 1 Corinthians was preceded by a "previous letter" of which we have no record (1 Corinthians 5:9-11). Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to correct these erring believers in matters related to factions within the church, unchallenged immorality in their midst (the message of his "previous letter" in 5:9-11), unjustified lawsuits among believers, and sexual immorality. He then responded to a number of questions the church had related to marriage and divorce, meat sacrificed to idols, the Lord's Supper, spiritual gifts, and the resurrection of Jesus.

## **2 CORINTHIANS**

It appears 2 Corinthians was preceded by a "painful visit" unrecorded in Acts (2 Corinthians 2:1) and a "severe letter" of which we also have no record (2 Corinthians 2:4). Having left Ephesus to rendezvous with Titus and hear how the Corinthians had responded to his "severe letter," in Macedonia Paul received word that they had responded well. He then wrote 2 Corinthians to express his joy at their repentance, encourage them to give financially to the burdened believers in Jerusalem, and still defend himself against some within Corinth who challenged his apostolic authority.

## **GALATIANS**

After preaching Christ and planting churches in the southern region of Galatia, Paul received word that false teachers had moved in and were destroying his work. They were questioning Paul's authority as an apostle and teaching a false gospel. Paul wrote Galatians to defend his apostleship and his gospel of God's grace, as well as to encourage his readers to live the Christian life in the power of the Holy Spirit.

## **EPHESIANS**

In the book of Ephesians, Paul spent the first three chapters focused on the believers' great calling before spending the last three focused on their conduct. In the first portion of the letter, Paul set forth God's work of salvation that was accomplished for believers' eternal good and the demonstration of God's glorious grace. In the latter portion of the letter, Paul called his readers to a faithful Christian "walk" – a "walk" in unity, holiness, love, light, and wisdom. Finally, he called them to "stand firm."

## **PHILIPPIANS**

Still in prison, Paul was consumed with the joy of the Lord. He wrote Philippians to commend and thank the church for their financial support of his ministry. He also urged these believers to pursue Christian harmony as relationships within the church were suffering. They were to exercise the kind of humility toward others as exemplified by Jesus Christ who left heaven's glory, became a man, and died for others. Paul also provided a great example of contentment as he learned the secret, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

## **COLOSSIANS**

In the book of Colossians, Paul again spent the first half focused on Christian doctrine before spending the second half on Christian duty. After commending the believers for their faith and love, Paul exalted the supremacy of Jesus Christ in both His person and His work. He also called believers to practice true spirituality, that which is focused on Jesus and not legalistic rules. He spent the last two chapters on practical Christian living.

## **1 THESSALONIANS**

After ministering in Thessalonica and moving on to Athens, Paul sent Timothy to Thessalonica to check in with the believers, and then Paul moved on to Corinth. Upon Timothy's return and report, Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians to commend the faith, love and hope of believers, defend his ministry against false accusations, and call his readers to greater excellence in Christian living.

## **2 THESSALONIANS**

While still in Corinth, some time after writing 1 Thessalonians, Paul received another report from the church. This time they had questions concerning the day of the Lord and the antichrist. Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians to answer their questions and call them to hope in the future triumph of Jesus despite their difficult circumstances.

## **1 TIMOTHY**

After leaving Timothy as leader of the church in Ephesus, Paul wrote to instruct his young protégé, who faced the daunting task of leading the church. Paul urged Timothy to meet head on issues related to false teachers, disorder in worship, qualified leadership, pastoral responsibility, widows in the church, materialism, and more.

## **2 TIMOTHY**

Paul was taken back into prison for the last time. He was cold, somewhat lonely, and the stench of death hung in the air. Paul wrote Timothy as a father to a son, a mentor to a protégé, urging him to courageously fulfill his ministry even in the face of hardship, knowing Christ will reward His faithful servants. In this small but motivating book, Paul charged Timothy to kindle afresh the gift within him, suffer hardship for the gospel, continue in the truth, proclaim the word, fight the good fight, finish the course, and keep the faith.

## **TITUS**

Like Timothy in Ephesus, Paul left Titus on the island of Crete to lead the cause of Christ. Paul wrote to instruct Titus concerning the appointment of qualified elders in each local church as well as the need to instruct God's people to live influential lives inspired by God's grace and humbled by God's kindness, love, and mercy.

## **PHILEMON**

Onesimus was a runaway slave that Paul converted to Christianity while in Rome. Now, in faithfulness to Christ, Onesimus felt compelled to return to his master, Philemon. Paul penned this letter urging Philemon to accept Onesimus, whom Paul had grown to love as a useful servant in the gospel, no longer as a slave, but as a beloved brother. Paul pledged that he would repay anything that Onesimus owed to Philemon.

## **HEBREWS**

The unknown author wrote this letter to a mainly Jewish audience to encourage them to remain faithful to Jesus Christ in the face of persecution. Many were tempted to abandon their Christian commitment and go back to their old ways under Judaism. In an effort to encourage faithfulness to the Lord, the author established the supremacy of Jesus Christ and warned against rejecting Him.



## **JAMES**

James, the Lord's brother, wrote to call his readers to put their faith into practice. Unlike Paul's letters which often focus on doctrine before turning to practice, James jumped right into practical matters as he addressed topics like trials, temptation, faith and works, the tongue, worldliness, planning, riches, and prayer.

### **1 PETER**

Peter's readers were suffering both the mysterious trials of life and the sneers and ostracism of persecution. He wrote to remind his readers of the glorious salvation, the purpose of their trials, and their calling to holiness and love. And he encouraged them to live with excellence as citizens, employees, spouses, and persecuted Christians, so that their behavior would be distinct and influential in the culture.

### **2 PETER**

In this letter Peter called his readers away from a stagnant faith to one of continual growth that proves one useful in the cause of Christ. He warned of false prophets, taught of the false teachers' sure destruction, and challenged his readers to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ so they might be on guard against erroneous teaching.

### **1 JOHN**

John wanted to reassure his readers that they indeed possessed eternal life. To do so, John weaved through this letter three tests by which this could be determined – love for other believers, obedience to God, and belief in Jesus Christ. In matter-of-fact, black-and-white fashion, John asserted that salvation is evidenced by love for others in the family of God, obedience to the will of God (not perfection, but direction), and proper belief in Jesus. If a person possesses these things, then that person shows evidence of belonging to God. If a person does not possess these things, then that person shows evidence of not belonging to God.

### **2 JOHN**

John addressed this letter to a local church (the chosen lady) and its members (her children), encouraging them to continue strong in the truth about Jesus Christ. John warned of false teachers who sought to infiltrate the church and called the believers to stand strong against their error.

### **3 JOHN**

In this letter John commended the recipient, Gaius, for his commitment to the truth and his love for the church. He encouraged him to continue supporting faithful missionaries, and then addressed issues related to two men – Diotrephes, the unfaithful, and Demetrius, the faithful.

## **JUDE**

Jude wrote to charge his readers to "contend" for the faith in the face of false teaching. After demonstrating the sure destruction of false teachers, Jude encouraged the believers to a life of truth, prayer, hope, and ministry.

## **REVELATION**

To inspire both holiness and hope in his readers, the Apostle John penned this book to believers located in seven cities in Asia Minor. At the instruction of the Lord, John recorded "the things which he had seen" (the vision of the exalted Lord Jesus), "the things which are" (Jesus' letters of commendation and confrontation to the seven churches), and "the things which must take place after these things" (the tribulation, rise of antichrist, second coming of Jesus, establishment of the kingdom, final rebellion of Satan, great white throne judgment, and eternal state).

# SESSION FOUR

## HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

### This is my Bible...

I am who it says I am	Matthew 5:16
I can do what it says I can do	Philippians 4:13
I am going where it says I will go	John 14:3

God's Word is milk for my soul	1 Peter 2:2
God's Word is seed for my faith	Luke 8:11
God's Word is light for my path	Psalms 119:105
God's Word is power for my victory	Hebrews 4:12
God's Word is freedom for my life	John 8:32

### When I...

Read God's Word, it brings me joy	Jeremiah 15:16
Study God's Word, it keeps me from shame	2 Timothy 2:15
Memorize God's Word, it purifies my heart	Psalms 119:11
Abide in God's Word, it gives me confidence	John 15:7

### 1. Five reasons people don't study the Word of God

- a. I don't know how/it doesn't make sense.
- b. I don't need to - I'm not a Pastor.
- c. I don't have time.
- d. I'm too sinful.
- e. It doesn't apply to me/my life.

### 2. Before you study your Bible, begin with prayer

- a. Pray for \_\_\_\_\_. James 1:5

*Who is the source of this wisdom?*

*What is God's attitude toward your request?*

b. Pray for \_\_\_\_\_. John 8:32

*What does truth do?*

c. Pray for \_\_\_\_\_. 1 Corinthians 2:10-12

*(Insight is the ability to get under the surface to your own heart)*

*Who is able to help you do that?*

*What does He do?*

d. Pray for \_\_\_\_\_. James 1:22-25

*The Bible is compared to what common object in the home?*

*What is God asking us to stare at, remember, and act on?*

### 3. Three \_\_\_\_\_ of Bible Study

#### A. BASIC: ASK 3 QUESTIONS:

Pick a passage, read several times, ask 3 questions

##### 1. What do I learn about God?

Who He is; how He acts; character

##### 2. What do I learn about me?

Commands to keep, sin to confess, promises to trust

##### 3. What is my response?

Worship: give praise, ask forgiveness; action/decision/change

Table Talk: Work through passage in groups of 4-6 people

#### B. SPIRITUAL JOURNAL: READ, REFLECT, RECORD

Passage:

Date:

What did I learn about God:

What did I learn about me:

What is my response:

Additional Notes:

## C. INTERMEDIATE: "OIA"

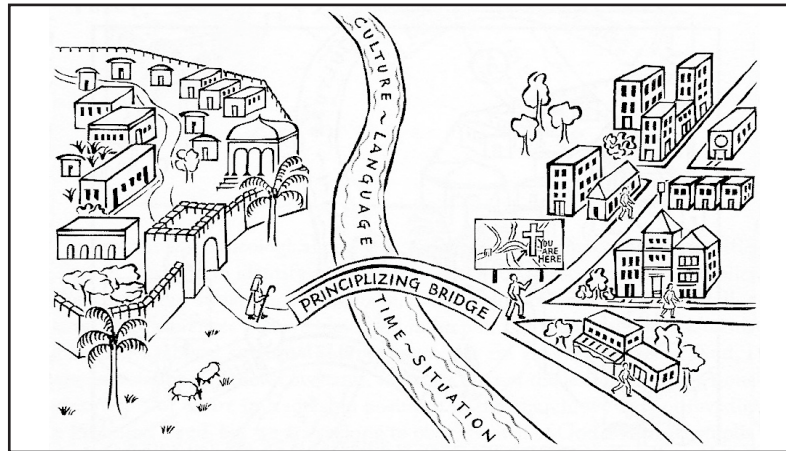
### 1. Observation:

- a. Pray
- b. Pick one passage, bold to bold
- c. What type of literature is this?
- d. Read several times
- e. Rephrase each word or phrase; detailed
- f. Find the subject and the verbs
- g. Look for any figures of speech, lists, repetition of words
- h. Find power words
- i. Look at context (chapter, book, etc...)
- j. Summarize your findings and list questions

Table Talk: Work through observation of passage in groups of 4-6 people

### 2. Interpretation:

- a. Based on your observations....What did the text mean to the biblical audience?
- b. What are the differences between the biblical audience and us?  
(River width)



- c. What is the eternal principle or "truth" we are supposed to get from the passage? (discover meaning, don't create it)
- d. How should Christians today live out this truth?

Table Talk: Work through interpretation of passage in groups of 4-6 people

### 3. Application:

- a. Give one or two practical examples of how I can apply this truth this week.
- b. Live it and share it.

Table Talk: Work through application of passage as a class

# RESOURCES

## SPIRITUAL JOURNAL

**Passage:**

**Date:**

- What did I learn about God?
- What did I learn about me?
- What is my response?

Additional Notes:



# RESOURCES

## LITERARY GENRES OF THE BIBLE

GENRE	CHARACTERISTICS	BIBLICAL BOOKS AND/OR EXAMPLES	
APOCALYPTIC	Dramatic, highly symbolic material; vivid imagery; stark contrasts; events take place on a global scale; frequently narrated in the first person as an eyewitness account; portrays a cosmic struggle between good and evil.	Revelation	
BIOGRAPHY	Close-up view of an individual's life; the subject is often portrayed in contrast to someone else; selected events reveal character development, either positively (comedy) or negatively (tragedy).	Abraham Isaac Jacob Joseph	Moses Saul David Elijah Jesus
EXPOSITION	Carefully reasoned argument or explanation; well-organized; logical flow; terms are crucial; builds to a logical, compelling climax; the aim is agreement and action.	Paul's letters Hebrews James 1 & 2 Peter 1, 2, & 3 John Jude	
NARRATIVE	A broad category in which story is prominent; includes historical accounts; structure is conveyed through plot; characters undergo psychological and spiritual development; selected events used to convey meaning; events juxtaposed for contrast and comparison.	Genesis-Ezra The Gospels Acts	
ORATORY	Stylized oral presentation of an argument; uses formal conventions of rhetoric and oratory; frequently quotes from authorities well-known to listeners; usually intended to exhort and persuade.	John 13-17 Acts 7 Acts 17:22-31 Acts 22:1-21 Acts 24:10-21 Acts 26:1-23	
PARABLE	Brief oral story illustrating a moral; truth frequently relies on stock characters and stereotypes; presents scenes and activities common to everyday life; encourages reflection and self-evaluation.	2 Samuel 12:1-6 Ecclesiastes 9:14-16 Matthew 13:1-53 Mark 4:1-34 Luke 15-16	

GENRE	CHARACTERISTICS	BIBLICAL BOOKS AND/OR EXAMPLES
PASTORAL	Literature dealing with rural, rustic themes, especially shepherds; heavy on description, lean on action; often meditative and quiet; emphasis on the bond between a shepherd and his sheep; idealized presentation of life away from urban evils.	Psalms 23 Isaiah 40:11 John 10:1-18
POETRY	Verse intended to be spoken or sung rather than read; emphasis on cadence and the sounds of words; vivid images and symbols; appeals to the emotions; may employ features of encomium, pastoral, and other literary styles; in the Old Testament, heavy use of parallelism.	Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Solomon
PROPHECY	Strident, authoritative presentation of God's will and words; frequently intended as a corrective; intended to motivate change through warnings; foretells God's plans in response to human choices.	Isaiah-Malachi
PROVERBS	Short, pithy statement of a moral truth; reduces life to black-and-white categories; often addressed to youth; frequently employs parallelism; points readers toward the right and away from evil; heavy use of metaphors and similes.	Proverbs
SATIRE	Exposes and ridicules human vice and foolishness; is employed by various literary styles, especially narrative, biography, and proverb; warns readers through a negative example.	Proverbs 24:30-34 Ezekiel 34 Luke 18:1-8 2 Corinthians 11:1-12:1
TRAGEDY	Relates the downfall of a person; uses selected events to show the path toward ruin; problems usually revolve around a critical flaw in the person's character and moral choices; warns readers through a negative example.	Lot Samson King Saul Acts 5:1-11
WISDOM LITERATURE	A broad category in which an older, seasoned person relates wisdom to a younger; may use parable; gives observations on fundamental areas of life - birth, death, work, money, power, time, the earth, and so on; appeals on the basis of human experience.	Job Proverbs Psalms 37 Psalms 90 Ecclesiastes

*From "Literary Genres of the Bible," in Living by the Book, copyright © 1991, 2007 by Howard G. Hendricks and William D. Hendricks, pages 224-26, published by Moody Publishers, Chicago, Illinois. Used by permission of the publisher.*

# RESOURCES

## ITEMS FOR OBSERVATION

### **Repetition of words**

Look for words and phrases that repeat.

### **Contrasts**

Look for ideas, individuals, and/or items that are contrasted with each other. Look for differences.

*Proverbs 15:1: A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*

### **Comparisons**

Look for ideas, individuals, and/or items that are compared with each other. Look also for similarities.

*Proverbs 25:26: Like a muddied spring or a polluted fountain is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked.*

### **Lists**

Anytime the text mentions more than two items, identify them as a list.

### **Cause and effect**

Look for cause-and-effect relationships.

### **Figures of speech**

Identify expressions that convey an image, using words in a sense other than the normal literal sense.

*Matthew 5:13: "You are the salt of the earth..."*

### **Conjunctions**

Notice terms that join units, like "and," "but," "for." Note what they are connecting.

### **Verbs**

Note whether a verb is past, present, or future; active or passive; and the like.

### **Pronouns**

Identify the antecedent for each pronoun.

### **Questions and answers**

Note if the text is built on a question-and-answer format.

*Romans 6:1-2: What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?*

### **Dialogue**

Note if the text includes dialogue. Identify who is speaking and to whom.

**Means**

Note if a sentence indicates that something was done by means of someone/something (answers "how?"). Usually you can insert the phrase "by means of" into the sentence.

**Purpose/result statements**

These are a more specific type of "means," often telling why. Purpose and result are similar and sometimes indistinguishable. In a purpose statement, you usually can insert the phrase "in order that." In a result clause, you usually can insert the phrase "so that."

*Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*

**General to specific and specific to general**

Find the general statements that are followed by specific examples or applications of the general. Also find specific statements that are summarized by a general one.

**Conditional clauses**

A clause can present the condition by which some action or consequence will result. Often such statements use an "if...then" framework (although in English the "then" is often left out).

*2 Corinthians 5:17: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

**Actions/roles of God**

Identify actions or roles that the text ascribes to God.

**Actions/roles of people**

Identify actions or roles that the text ascribes to people or encourages people to do/be.

**Emotional terms**

Does the passage use terms that have emotional energy, like kinship words ("father," "son") or words like "pleading"?

**Tone of the passage**

What is the overall tone of the passage: happy, sad, encouraging, and so on?

*From Grasping God's Word by J. Scott Duvall & J. Daniel Hays.*

# SESSION FIVE

## STUDYING, MEMORIZING, DISCIPLING

### 1. White Hot - Steps to Studying the Bible

#### a. Select a Pericope

1. Find a collection of sentences/verses that have a common topic.
2. Use what is already given in your Bible.
  - a. *Headings*
  - b. *Paragraphs*
3. Pray for God to use this Scripture to change you and make you more like Him.

#### b. Observation (kindling)

1. What is the heading of this pericope in your Bible?
2. Rephrase each phrase/sentence
  - a. *Main subject*
  - b. *Main verb*
  - c. *Don't worry about the whole sentence*
3. What are the "Big Six"?
  - a. *Who?*
  - b. *What?*
  - c. *When?*
  - d. *Where?*
  - e. *Why?*
  - f. *How?*
4. Are there any repeated words?
5. What are the verbs?
6. Are there purpose statements & what are the results?
  - a. *Therefore*
  - b. *Because*
  - c. *So that*
7. Are there any "power words"?
8. What is the context? Is there any reference to what was said before?
  - a. *If you have a commentary or a Study Bible, read notes for additional insight.*



c. Principles (spark)

1. Find the timeless truths

- a. *How does God work in this passage?*
- b. *What did people learn?*

2. Collect thoughts into 2-4 main points

3. Title thoughts with an action statement

4. Summarize the thoughts into one "Big Idea" sentence

5. Re-title the pericope

- a. *Change the original heading to a command*
- b. *Make it "homiletical" (a "do" statement)*

d. Application (wood)

1. How is the principle(s) put into action for ALL Christ-followers? (Macro)

2. How is the principle(s) put into action specifically for me? (Micro)

- a. *Who?*
- b. *What?*
- c. *When?*
- d. *How?*

e. Focus (fan the flame)

1. What fires me up about this passage?

2. If I'm not fired up:

- a. *Why not?*
- b. *Pray for God's help to see what He wants you to see*
- c. *Go back and find the "WOW!"*

## 2. Bible Reference Tools

a. A good \_\_\_\_\_ Bible

b. Bible concordance

c. Bible \_\_\_\_\_

d. Bible Commentaries

e. Online \_\_\_\_\_ (Free)

[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)  
[www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)  
[www.bible.crosswalk.com](http://www.bible.crosswalk.com)

f. Logos Bible Software

g. Systematic \_\_\_\_\_ Book

### **3. Memorizing Scripture**

a. Write out verses on \_\_\_\_\_

b. Arrange by topic

c. Learn the \_\_\_\_\_

d. Memorize one verse a week

e. Read out loud 7 \_\_\_\_\_ a day for 7 days

f. Review daily for 7 weeks

### **4. Discipling Others**

a. Be involved in community / Impact Group

b. We all need a Paul, Timothy, and Barnabas in our life

c. Select a time to meet

d. Pray

e. Walk through spiritual journal / daily verses in our bulletin

f. Walk through prayer life, sin struggles, witnessing, family time, etc...

g. Talk through Application (assignments) for next meeting

h. Pray together and ask God to work \_\_\_\_\_ for His glory

### **5. Feedback form - Please fill out in class**

### **6. Q and A with panel of leaders**

# RESOURCES

## Theology Scripture Chart

### SCRIPTURES ON THE WORD OF GOD

2 Timothy 3:16  
2 Peter 1:20-21  
Matthew 4:4  
Psalm 1:1-2

### SCRIPTURES ON GOD

Exodus 34:6-7  
Romans 1:18-20  
Psalm 102:25-27  
Romans 8:28

### SCRIPTURES ON JESUS CHRIST

Philippians 2:5-11  
John 1:14  
Romans 3:23-26  
1 Corinthians 15:20-23

### SCRIPTURES ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

Romans 8:12-15  
John 14:25-26  
John 16:7-14  
Ephesians 4:30

### SCRIPTURES ON THE CHURCH

Matthew 16:18  
Ephesians 1:22-23  
Acts 2:42-47  
1 Corinthians 12:12-13

## Bible Reading Plans

<https://www.ligonier.org/blog/bible-reading-plans/>

[http://www.moodychurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/newtestament\\_yearly.pdf](http://www.moodychurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/newtestament_yearly.pdf)

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-reading-plan/>

# RESOURCES

## Scripture Memorization Chart

### A. The following verses are the minimum that every Christian should know.

The Word: Commanded to Learn	<i>Josh 1:8</i>	<i>Matt 4:4</i>	<i>Col 3:7</i>
Assurance of Salvation	<i>1 John 5:11-12</i>	<i>John 5:24</i>	<i>Rom 8:1</i>
Obedience: The Key to Happiness	<i>John 13:17</i>	<i>Luke 11:28</i>	<i>Psa 119:1-2</i>
The New Life in Christ	<i>2 Cor 5:17</i>	<i>John 10:10b</i>	<i>Col 2:6</i>
Witnessing: Commanded	<i>Acts 1:8</i>	<i>1 Pet 3:15</i>	<i>2 Tim 4:2</i>
Daily Prayer is Essential	<i>John 15:7</i>	<i>John 16:24</i>	<i>1 Thes 5:17</i>

### B. This next set of verses will help you to intelligently share your faith.

God Loves All Men	<i>John 3:16</i>	<i>1 John 3:16</i>	<i>Rom 5:8</i>
All Men Are Sinful	<i>Rom 3:23</i>	<i>John 3:19</i>	<i>Rom 3:12</i>
The Results of Sin	<i>Rom 6:23</i>	<i>Heb 9:27</i>	<i>Rom 5:12</i>
Christ Paid for Man's Sin	<i>1 Cor 15:3-4</i>	<i>1 Pet 3:18</i>	<i>Gal 3:13</i>
Salvation Is a Free Gift	<i>Eph 2:8-9</i>	<i>Rom 3:24</i>	<i>Titus 3:5</i>
Christ Is the Only Way of Salvation	<i>John 14:6</i>	<i>John 10:9</i>	<i>Isa 53:6</i>
Man Must Receive Christ Personally	<i>John 1:12</i>	<i>Rev 3:20</i>	<i>John 5:24</i>

### C. This section shows the results of becoming a Christian.

Pardon from Sin	<i>1 John 1:9</i>	<i>Eph 1:7</i>	<i>1 John 2:1-2</i>
Peace with God	<i>John 14:27</i>	<i>John 16:33</i>	<i>Isa 26:3</i>
A New Nature	<i>1 Pet 1:23</i>	<i>Eph 4:24</i>	<i>2 Pet 1:4</i>
New Power Within	<i>Col 1:11</i>	<i>Eph 3:20</i>	<i>Zech 4:6</i>
Victory over Sin	<i>1 Cor 10:13</i>	<i>1 John 5:4-5</i>	<i>2 Cor 2:4</i>
Victory over Worry	<i>Phil 4:6-7</i>	<i>2 Tim 1:7</i>	<i>1 Pet 5:7</i>
Victory over Anger	<i>Eph 4:30-32</i>	<i>Psa 37:8</i>	<i>Ecc 7:9</i>
Victory over Depression	<i>1 Thes 5:18</i>	<i>Col 1:12</i>	<i>Psa 100:4</i>
The Holy Spirit	<i>Rom 8:14</i>	<i>John 14:26</i>	<i>1 Cor 2:12</i>

**D. This group shows the new challenges that face you as a Christian.**

To Separate from the World	<i>1 John 2:15-16</i>	<i>2 Cor 6:17-18</i>	<i>Rom 12:2</i>
To Follow Christ	<i>Luke 9:23</i>	<i>1 John 2:6</i>	<i>1 Pet 2:21</i>
To Go and Witness	<i>Matt 28:19-20</i>	<i>Acts 1:8</i>	<i>1 Pet 3:15</i>
To Grow in Faith	<i>Heb 11:6</i>	<i>Rom 4:20-21</i>	<i>Acts 27:25</i>
To Walk in the Spirit	<i>Gal 5:16</i>	<i>Eph 5:18</i>	<i>Col 3:16-17</i>
To Be Generous	<i>Luke 6:38</i>	<i>2 Cor 9:7</i>	<i>1 Cor 16:2</i>
To Yield Yourself to God	<i>Rom 12:1-2</i>	<i>Rom 6:13</i>	<i>Rom 6:16</i>

**E. These verses show what new characteristics you can expect to find in your life.**

Love	<i>John 15:12</i>	<i>John 13:35</i>	<i>1 Thes 3:12</i>
Joy	<i>Jer 15:16</i>	<i>John 15:11</i>	<i>1 Pet 1:18</i>
Faith	<i>Eph 6:16</i>	<i>Jas 1:6</i>	<i>Rom 5:1</i>
Humility	<i>Rom 12:3</i>	<i>1 Pet 5:5</i>	<i>Jas 4:10</i>
Patience	<i>Heb 10:26</i>	<i>Rom 12:12</i>	<i>Jas 1:4</i>
Wisdom	<i>Matt 7:24</i>	<i>2 Thes 3:15</i>	<i>Jas 3:17</i>
Grace	<i>1 Cor 1:4</i>	<i>1 Pet 4:10</i>	<i>1 Cor 15:10</i>
Comfort	<i>2 Cor 1:3-4</i>	<i>John 14:18</i>	<i>John 14:1</i>
Forgiveness	<i>Matt 6:14</i>	<i>Mark 11:25</i>	<i>Luke 17:4</i>

**F. These verses include essential teachings you should know about certain subjects.**

God	<i>Psa 14:1</i>	<i>Prov 1:7</i>	<i>Rom 1:20</i>
Jesus Christ	<i>Phil 2:9-10</i>	<i>Col 1:15-16</i>	<i>Heb 1:1-3</i>
Christ's Resurrection	<i>1 Thes 4:14</i>	<i>1 Pet 1:3</i>	<i>Eph 1:20</i>
The Word of God	<i>2 Tim 3:16-17</i>	<i>Heb 4:12</i>	<i>2 Pet 1:21</i>
The Second Coming	<i>John 14:2-3</i>	<i>1 Thes 4:16-17</i>	<i>Titus 2:12-13</i>
God Rewards Faithful Service	<i>2 Cor 5:10</i>	<i>1 Cor 3:13</i>	<i>Rom 4:10</i>
The Will of God	<i>Matt 12:50</i>	<i>John 7:17</i>	<i>Eph 6:6</i>
Good Works	<i>Eph 2:10</i>	<i>Heb 10:24</i>	<i>Titus 2:7</i>

*How to Study the Bible for Yourself by Tim LaHaye*

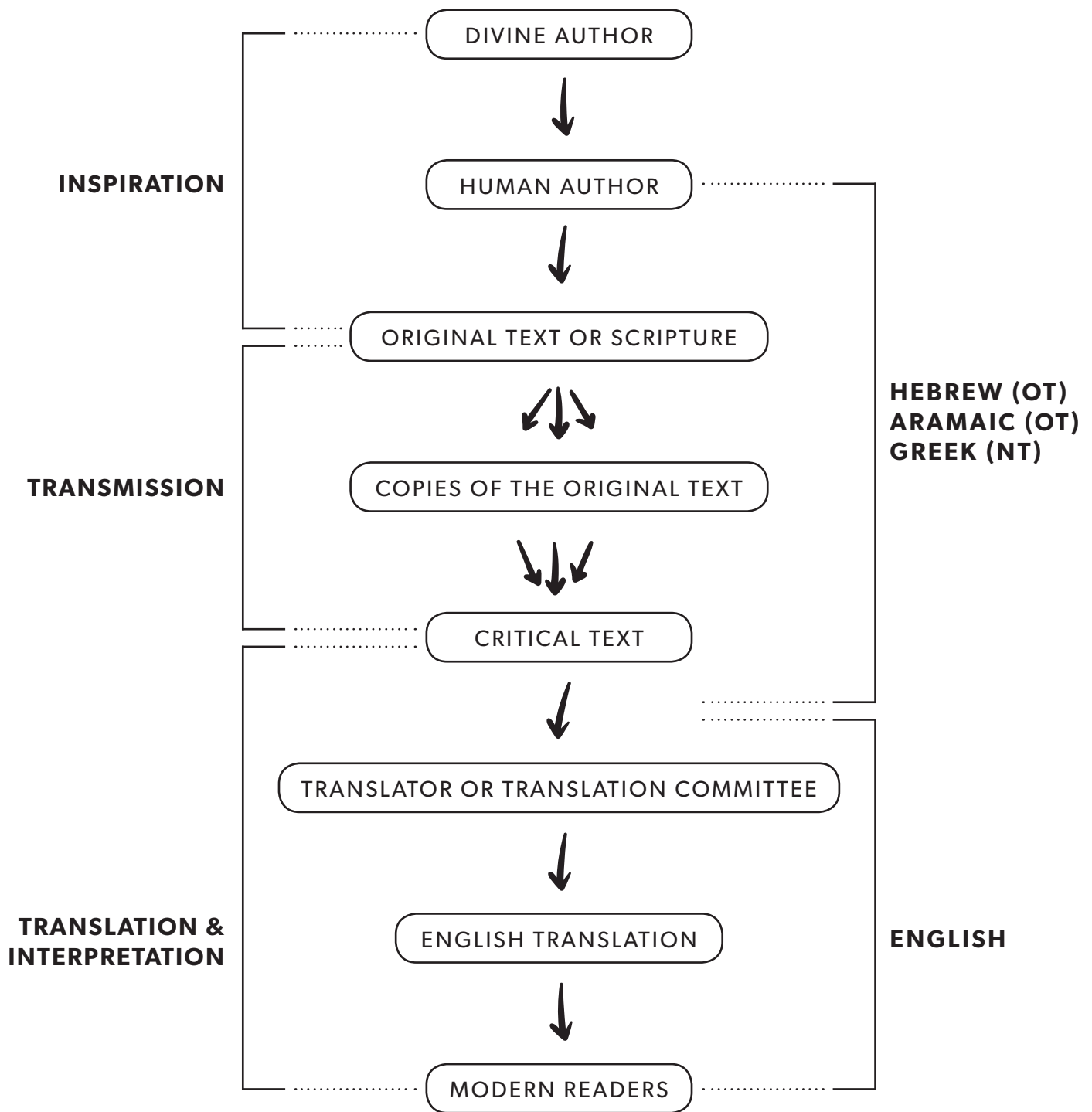
# GRASPING GOD'S WORD

---

RESOURCES - SESSION 1







## **Romans 12:1**

### **English Standard Version (ESV)**

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

### **New International Version (NIV)**

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

### **New Living Translation (NLT)**

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

# GRASPING GOD'S WORD

---

RESOURCES - SESSION 2



# (OT) TIMELINE SUMMARY BC

2000		1500		1000		500		400	
IN THE BEGINNING		PATRIARCHS		EXODUS & CONQUEST		KINGDOM		EXILE & RETURN	
GOD		ABRAHAM		MOSES		SAUL		DANIEL	
ADAM		ISAAC		JOSHUA		DAVID		EZRA	
EVE		JACOB		THE JUDGES		SOLOMON		NEHEMIAH	
NOAH		JOSEPH		EXODUS		OTHER KINGS		ZERUBBABEL	
CREATION									
FALL		GENESIS 12-50		LEVITICUS		KINGDOM SPLITS		EZRA	
FLOOD		JOB		NUMBERS		NORTH - ISRAEL		1, 2 CHRONICLES	
TOWER OF BABEL				DEUTERONOMY		SOUTH - JUDAH		ESTHER	
				JOSHUA		ELIJAH - ISRAEL		MALACHI	
GENESIS 1-11				JUDGES		ELISHA - ISRAEL		NEHEMIAH	
				RUTH		PSALMS		BUDDHA	
						SONG OF SOLOMON		CONFUCIOUS	
						PROVERBS		ALEXANDER	
						ECCLESIASTES		THE GREAT	
						1, 2 SAMUEL		JULIUS	
						OBADIAH		CAESAR	
						JOEL			
						JONAH		PERSIA	
						AMOS		GREECE	
						HOSEA		EGYPT	
						MICAH		ROME	
						ISAIAH			
						NAHUM			
						HABAKKUK			
						ZEPHANIAH			
						ZECHARIAH			
						EZEKIEL			
						LAMENTATIONS			
						JEREMIAH			
						1, 2 KINGS			
						DANIEL			
		</							

## KEY

HISTORY

POETRY

MAJOR PROPHET

MINOR PROPHET

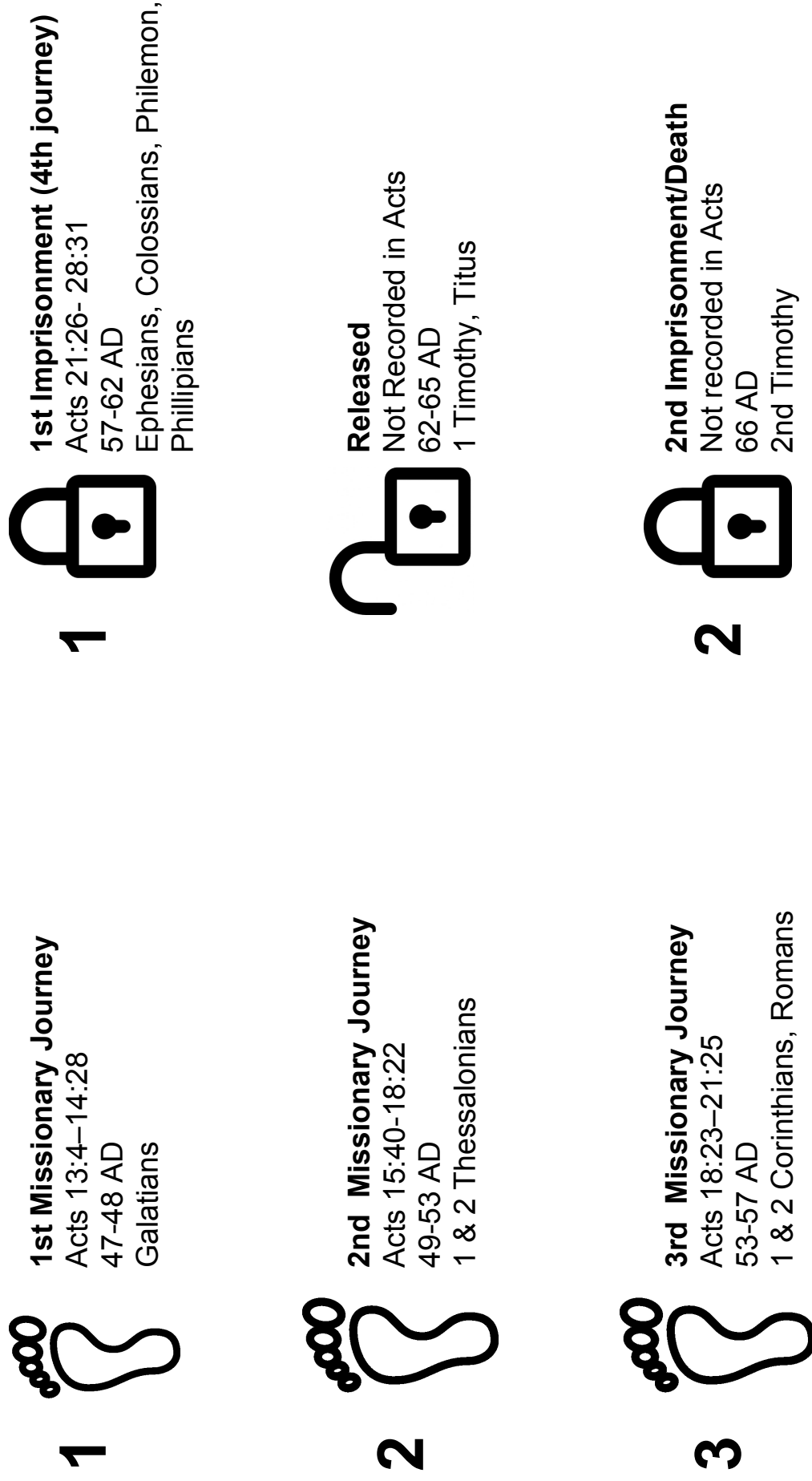
# GRASPING GOD'S WORD

---

RESOURCES - SESSION 3



# The Missionary Journeys of the Apostle Paul





# GRASPING GOD'S WORD

---

RESOURCES - SESSION 4





## **Psalm 1**

<sup>1</sup>Blessed is the man

who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;

<sup>2</sup>but his delight is in the law of the Lord,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.

<sup>3</sup>He is like a tree

planted by streams of water  
that yields its fruit in its season,  
and its leaf does not wither.

In all that he does, he prospers.

<sup>4</sup>The wicked are not so,

but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

<sup>5</sup>Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;

<sup>6</sup>for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.

### **Hebrews 12:1-4**

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

<sup>3</sup>Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. <sup>4</sup> In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

# GRASPING GOD'S WORD

---

RESOURCES - SESSION 5





## **Mark 4:35-41**

<sup>35</sup> On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." <sup>36</sup> And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. <sup>37</sup> And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. <sup>38</sup> But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" <sup>39</sup> And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. <sup>40</sup> He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?" <sup>41</sup> And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

## **New Bible Dictionary Excerpt**

### **James, Son of Zebedee.**

One of the twelve apostles, and brother of John the apostle. He was a fisherman, and was called to the apostleship while mending his nets. He at once forsook all and followed the Lord. Matt. 4: 21; Matt. 10: 2; Mark 1: 19, 29; Luke 5: 10; Luke 6: 14; Acts 1: 13. James and his brother were named by the Lord BOANERGES, 'sons of thunder.' He with John asked if they should call down fire from heaven on the Samaritans. Luke 9: 54.

Peter, James, and John were privileged by the Lord to attend Him on several occasions, as on the mount of transfiguration. Matt. 17: 1; Mark 5: 37; Mark 9: 2; Mark 13: 3; Mark 14: 33; Luke 8: 51; Luke 9: 28. The mother of James and John requested that her two sons might sit, the one on the right hand and the other on the left of the Lord in His kingdom. This raised the indignation of the other disciples; but the Lord taught them all a lesson of humility: He Himself had come to minister and to give His life a ransom for many. Matt. 20: 20. James was killed by Herod Agrippa I. about A.D. 43. Acts 12: 2. The 'James' referred to in 1 Cor. 15: 7 may be this apostle.

### **James, Son of Alphaeus.**

One of the twelve apostles. Matt. 10: 3; Mark 3: 18; Luke 6: 15; Acts 1: 13. These are the only passages where with *certainly* this apostle is spoken of; but we find in the Acts of the Apostles a James

at Jerusalem after the son of Zebedee had been killed, and holding a sort of first place there. He spoke with a measure of authority at the conference respecting the law not being enforced on the Gentiles, saying, 'My sentence is,' etc. This suggests that he was an apostle, and the son of Alphaeus. Acts 12: 17; Acts 15: 13; Acts 21: 18; Gal. 2: 9, 12. He was most probably the writer of the Epistle of James, and the brother of Jude, or Judas, who was also an apostle. Luke 6: 16; James 1: 1; Jude 1.

### **James, the Lord's Brother.**

Though the word ἀδελφός is used in the LXX in a wider sense than 'brother,' it has been judged that its use in the N.T. is restricted to those born of the same mother; and therefore the Lord's brother could not have been the same person as the son of Alphaeus. Nor is it probable that he was one of the twelve apostles, for we read that "neither did his brethren believe in him." John 7: 5. The first mention of the Lord's brethren being with the apostles is in Acts 1: 14, and there they are referred to as *distinct* from them. James the Lord's brother was seen at Jerusalem by Paul. Gal. 1: 19. The being thus designated distinguishes him from the apostle who is simply called James in Gal. 2: 9, 12. Learned authorities state that in Gal. 1: 19 the construction of the passage in the Greek does not necessarily imply that James the Lord's brother was an apostle. He is mentioned also in Matt. 13: 55; Mark 6: 3

### **James the Less.**

This occurs in Mark 15: 40, and the same person is called simply James in Matt. 27: 56; Mark 16: 1; Luke 24: 10. He is only mentioned to point out *his mother*, whose name was Mary. James and Joses were common names and are found also among the brethren of the Lord. But James the Less may be, as some think, the same person as James the son of Alphaeus.

may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all <sup>u</sup>spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup>so as <sup>v</sup>to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, <sup>w</sup>fully pleasing to him, <sup>x</sup>bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. <sup>11</sup>May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for <sup>y</sup>all endurance and patience <sup>a</sup>with joy, <sup>12</sup>giving thanks <sup>1</sup>to the Father, who has qualified you <sup>2</sup>to share in <sup>c</sup>the inheritance of the saints in light. <sup>13</sup>He <sup>d</sup>has delivered us from <sup>e</sup>the domain of darkness and transferred us to <sup>f</sup>the kingdom of <sup>g</sup>his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup>in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

#### *The Preeminence of Christ*

<sup>15</sup>He is the image of <sup>h</sup>the invisible God, <sup>k</sup>the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup>For by <sup>3</sup>him all things were created, <sup>i</sup>in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether <sup>m</sup>thrones or <sup>n</sup>dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created <sup>o</sup>through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>And <sup>p</sup>he is before all things, and in him all things <sup>q</sup>hold together. <sup>18</sup>And <sup>r</sup>he is the head of the body, the church. He is <sup>s</sup>the beginning, <sup>t</sup>the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. <sup>19</sup>For <sup>u</sup>in him all the <sup>v</sup>fullness of God was pleased to dwell, <sup>20</sup>and

<sup>1</sup>Or *patience, with joy giving thanks* <sup>2</sup>Some manuscripts *us* <sup>3</sup>That is, by means of; or *in*

<sup>19</sup>ch. 2:9 <sup>20</sup>See John 1:16

<sup>9</sup>ch. 4:5; Eph. 1:8; [1 Cor. 12:8]  
<sup>10</sup>[Ps. 1:1, 3]. See Eph. 4:1 <sup>11</sup>[2 Cor. 5:9; Eph. 5:10; 1 Thess. 4:1] <sup>12</sup>ver. 6  
<sup>13</sup>See Eph. 3:16 <sup>14</sup>Eph. 4:2 <sup>15</sup>See Matt. 5:12  
<sup>16</sup>ch. 3:15; Eph. 5:20 <sup>17</sup>See Acts 26:18  
<sup>18</sup>1 Thess. 1:10 <sup>19</sup>Luke 22:53; Eph. 6:12 <sup>20</sup>Pet. 1:11 <sup>21</sup>Eph. 1:6]  
<sup>22</sup>See Eph. 1:7  
<sup>23</sup>See 2 Cor. 4:4 <sup>24</sup>See 1 Tim. 1:17 <sup>25</sup>[Ps. 89:27]; See Rom. 8:29  
<sup>26</sup>Eph. 1:10 <sup>27</sup>[Ezek. 10:1] <sup>28</sup>Eph. 1:21 <sup>29</sup>Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6  
<sup>30</sup>[John 8:58]; See John 1:1 <sup>31</sup>[Heb. 1:3]  
<sup>32</sup>See Eph. 1:22, 23  
<sup>33</sup>Rev. 3:14 <sup>34</sup>Acts 26:23; 1 Cor. 15:20; Rev. 1:5

**1:10 so as.** The “wisdom and understanding” (v. 9) would then lead to changed lives, for it would enable these Christians **to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord**. “To walk” is a Jewish metaphor for conducting or behaving oneself. It corresponds to the Hebrew term *halak*. The rabbis had an entire oral tradition, later written down (especially in the Mishnah and the Talmuds), called *Halakah*, that guided them in their behavior. As a former rabbi, Paul calls believers “to walk” not according to the oral traditions of Judaism but in a way that is **fully pleasing to the Lord Jesus Christ**. Although Christians are completely justified from the moment of initial saving faith, they are not fully sanctified, and they can do things that either please or displease God each day. **Every good work** is here viewed as the fruit of salvation in the life of a Christian, not as the prerequisite for entering a relationship with Christ. Paul’s reference to **bearing fruit . . . and increasing** brings to mind the parable of the sower (Mark 4:1–9, 13–20). The seed sown on the good soil bore fruit thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold.

**1:11 be strengthened with all power.** Spiritual power was a key issue in the Greco-Roman world. People sought power through connection with various gods and pagan rituals in order to protect them from evil spirits and to help them acquire wealth or influence. Paul wants the Colossians to know that he prays regularly that God would impart his power to them, not for selfish aims but so that they can live for God in a worthy manner. **for all endurance and patience with joy.** The purpose (as indicated by the word “for”) of this God-given power is to provide the divine strength needed for the believer to attain Christian virtues, to persevere in the faith, to resist temptation and deceitful teachers, and so to know the joy of the Lord.

**1:12 who has qualified you to share in the inheritance.** Paul has taken language normally reserved for the Jewish people under the old covenant (see Gen. 13:14–17; Num. 26:52–56; Josh. 19:9) and applied it to Gentiles under the new covenant. Gentiles now have equal access to the Father and are heirs to the inheritance he has promised his people. This is based on the fact that God has made Gentiles **saints** (“holy ones” or “consecrated people”) through the redemption he has procured through his Son.

**1:13 He has delivered us.** Just as God rescued his people from slavery in Egypt under the old covenant (Ex. 6:6; 14:30), he has delivered them now **from the domain of darkness**, that is, from the realm of Satan and the powers of evil (see Acts 26:18). **the kingdom of his beloved Son.** This kingdom is the same as the “kingdom of God” (or “kingdom of heaven”) that Jesus spoke of (e.g., Matt. 3:2; Mark 1:15; etc.), which was central to Jesus’ teaching throughout the four Gospels. Jesus is the agent of God who will presently reign (1 Cor. 15:24) until he hands his kingdom over to the Father, when the kingdom of God comes into its full manifestation at the end of the present age. The emphasis here is on the present lordship of Christ.

**1:14 Redemption** means deliverance or liberation, emphasizing here that believers have been delivered and have received **forgiveness of their sins**.

**1:15–20 Praise to Christ.** In a strongly moving and poetic way, which some scholars think is a quotation from an early Christian hymn,

Paul praises the lordship of Christ in relation to both creation and redemption.

**1:15–17 Christ Is Lord of Creation.** Jesus is the Lord, the maker and upholder of all things in the universe.

**1:15 the image of the invisible God.** Paul depicts Christ in terms similar to the presentation of “wisdom” in Proverbs 8 (“When he established the heavens, I [wisdom] was there . . . I was beside him, like a master workman” [Prov. 8:27, 30]). In later Jewish wisdom literature, personified divine wisdom is described as the image of God. **firstborn of all creation.** It would be wrong to think in physical terms here, as if Paul were asserting that the Son had a physical origin or was somehow created (the classic Arian heresy) rather than existing eternally as the Son, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, in the Godhead. (See the article on The Trinity, p. 2513.) What Paul had in mind was the rights and privileges of a firstborn son, especially the son of a monarch who would inherit ruling sovereignty. This is how the expression is used of David: “I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth” (Ps. 89:27).

**1:16 by him all things were created.** Jesus did not come into existence when he was born of the virgin Mary. He was the agent of creation through whom God made heaven and earth (John 1:3 and note; 1 Cor. 8:6). Jesus cannot be the first thing created (as the ancient Arian heresy claimed) since “all things” without exception were created by him. **thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.** Paul is using the current Jewish terms for various rankings of angels (although he doesn’t explain their relative ranks). His emphasis here may be on the evil angels, since they play a significant part in this letter (Col. 2:8, 10, 15, 20). This would not mean, however, that Jesus created evil angels; all spiritual powers were **created** by Jesus, but some later chose to rebel against God and so to become evil. Jesus is not only the agent of creation but is also the *goal* of creation, for everything was created by him and **for him**, that is, for his honor and praise. Since Jesus is in this sense the goal of creation, he must be fully God (see notes on John 1:1; 8:58).

**1:17 in him all things hold together.** Christ continually sustains his creation, preventing it from falling into chaos or disintegrating (cf. Heb. 1:3).

**1:18–20 Christ Is Lord of Redemption.** Christ is Head of the church and has accomplished reconciliation at the cross.

**1:18 he is the head of the body.** Paul spoke elsewhere of the church as the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27), but he takes the image a step further here and envisions Christ as the head of the body (see also Eph. 1:22–23; 5:25). This metaphor conveys Christ’s leadership over the body and may also suggest his role in providing sustenance for it (see notes on 1 Cor. 11:3; Col. 2:10; 2:19).

**1:19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.** The “fullness” language here and throughout the letter is reminiscent of its use in the OT, where it was said that God “filled” the temple with his presence. For instance, the prophet Ezekiel exclaims, “I looked, and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple” (Ezek. 44:4). Jesus not only bears God’s glory, but all that God is also dwells in him. He possesses the wisdom, power, Spirit, and

# GRASPING GOD'S WORD

EVALUATION FORM

*Please help us plan for future studies by sharing your thoughts about your experience.*

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Was this your first time participating in a study? If no, what others have you taken?

---

---

---

2. What motivated you to attend the *Grasping God's Word* study?

---

---

---

3. How many sessions were you able to attend?

---

---

---

4. How has God worked in your life through this study?

---

---

---

5. What was the most enjoyable part of the study for you?

---

---

---

6. Which session was your favorite? (circle one)

Session 1

Session 2

Session 3

Session 4

Session 5

7. Which session was your least favorite? (circle one)

Session 1

Session 2

Session 3

Session 4

Session 5

8. What would you change about the study? How can we improve the study?

---

---

---

9. What helpful feedback would you give to the studies pastor?

---

---

---

10. Would you recommend this study to others? Why or why not?

---

---

---

11. Was the study what you expected? Yes No

12. Was the study promoted well? Yes No

13. Was the sign-up and registration easy? Yes No

14. Did you get to meet new people? Yes No

Please provide suggestions or topics for future Summit Point studies.

---

---

---

Please provide any additional feedback that will further enhance future studies.

---

---

---

## **Grasping God's Word**

### Book Resources

- Grasping God's Word, J. Scott Duvall & J. Daniel Hays  
Zondervan
- Evidence That Demands a Verdict, Josh McDowell & Sean McDowell, PhD  
Thomas Nelson, Inc. – HarperCollins Christian Publishing, Inc.
- 30 Days to Understanding the Bible, Max Anders  
Thomas Nelson, Inc.
- Living by the Book, Howard G. Hendricks & William D. Hendricks  
Moody Publishers
- Clarifying the Bible, Mitch Maher
- How to Study the Bible, John MacArthur  
Moody Publishers