



*Global Good*

*News Literature*

# Basic Christianity



## Part I

**GLOBAL GOOD NEWS LITERATURE**

**“All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”** 2 Timothy 3:16-17



**“The entrance of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”** Psalm 119:130

**\*Note: All Scriptures in this study are either from NIV or NKJV**

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## **Lesson Two**

### **The Holy BIBLE**

### **(The Word of God)**

#### **I. What kind of Book is the Holy BIBLE?**

The Bible is a Holy Book that contains 66 books in it. It is divided into two main categories, the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament, tells us about creation, how man fell into sin, and how God started preparing the way man can be redeemed from his sin and its consequences. Specifically, the Old Testament tells us how God chose Abraham and his descendants (the Israelites) to be the lineage through which the Messiah (Jesus Christ) would come. It tells us in great details God's dealings with Israel and how Israel, as a nation, failed to fulfill God's purpose.

The New Testament proclaims that the long awaited Messiah, Jesus Christ, has come and has fulfilled God's eternal redemption plan by being God's sacrificial lamb as John the Baptist testified. "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"(John 1:29). The New Testament is God's Covenant, with all who believe in His Son, sealed with the blood of Jesus Christ himself, while the Old Testament is the God's Covenant starting with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and generally with the children of Israel. Unlike the New Testament, the covenant of the Old Testament was sealed by the blood of animals.

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### **The Books of ‘The Holy Bible’**

<b>The Old Testament – 39 Books</b>	
<b>Historical Books (17)</b>	The Books of Moses (also called 'The Law') – Genesis to Deuteronomy (5) Joshua to Esther – (12)
<b>Poetic Books – (5)</b>	Job (1) Psalms (1) The books of Solomon (3) – Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon
<b>Prophetic Books – (17)</b>	Major Prophets – (5) Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel Minor Prophets – (12) – From Hosea to Malachi

<b>The New Testament – 27 Books</b>	
<b>Historical Books (5)</b>	The Four Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, John (4) Acts – (1)
<b>Epistles– Letters to Churches, individuals and groups of people (21)</b>	Paul's letters (14) - Romans to Hebrews – (The author of Hebrews is not clearly known but is mostly attributed to Paul.) Peter's letters – (2) 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Peter John's letters – (3) 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> John James's letter – (1) Jude's letter – (1)
<b>Prophetic Book (1)</b>	Revelation

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## **The central message of the Holy Bible is John 3:16**

**"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."**

## **II. What are the characteristics of the Word of God?**

Proverbs 22:20-21

**20 Have I not written to you, excellent things  
Of counsels and knowledge,  
21 That I may make you know the certainty of the words of truth,  
That you may answer words of truth  
To those who send to you?**

The above verses tell us that the word of God is:

1. Excellent
2. Filled with counsels and knowledge
3. Word of certainty
4. Word of truth
5. An answer to our many questions

In addition, the Word of God is:

6. Word of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:19)
7. Word of Wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:7)
8. Word of Life (Acts 5:20)
9. Word of Hope (Hebrews 10:23)
10. Word of Grace (Acts 20:32)
11. Word of Faith (Romans 10:8, 17)
12. A judge of our thoughts and intents (Hebrews 4:12)

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Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

13. Eternal (1 Peter 1:24-25, Isaiah 40:6-8)

(Please read each verse above – in parenthesis)

The Word of God is symbolized in many ways:

1. Sharper than any Two-Edged Sword (Hebrews 4:12)
2. Fire and Hammer (Jeremiah 23:29)
3. Rain (Isaiah 55:10-11)
4. Light (Psalms 119:105)
5. Mirror (James 1:23-25)
6. Milk (1 Peter 2:1-3)

*"Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire **the pure milk of the word**, that you may grow thereby; if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (NKJV)*

7. Sweeter than Honey (Psalms 119:103)

*"How sweet are your words to my taste,  
Sweeter than honey to my mouth!"*

### **III. Who wrote the Holy Bible?**

The Holy Bible contains the revelation God's eternal plan for the redemption of mankind and creation and was written by about 40 authors who were inspired by the Holy Spirit.

**2 Peter 1:21** "for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit."

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**Galatians 1:11-12** "I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ."

**Jeremiah 36:2,** "Take a scroll and write on it all the words I have spoken to you concerning Israel, Judah and all the other nations from the time I began speaking to you in the reign of Josiah till now."

**Ezekiel 1:3** "the word of the LORD came to Ezekiel..."

As mentioned above, the Holy Bible was written by about 40 men. These Holy men were of various professions and social status. We will mention a few of them in the following chart.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Profession</b>	<b>Books</b>
<b>Moses</b>	Shepherd/National Leader	Genesis to Deuteronomy
<b>Joshua</b>	Military leader	Joshua
<b>David</b>	Shepherd/King	Psalms
<b>Solomon</b>	King	Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon
<b>Nehemiah</b>	King's wine bearer	Nehemiah
<b>Daniel</b>	Prime Minister	Daniel, Lamentations
<b>Matthew</b>	Tax Collector	Gospel of Matthew
<b>Luke</b>	Doctor	Gospel of Luke
<b>Paul</b>	Pharisee/Intellectual	Paul's letters
<b>Peter</b>	Fisherman	Peter's letters
<b>John</b>	Fisherman	John's letters and Revelation

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## **IV. When was the Bible written?**

The Old Testament was written from 1400 B.C. to 400 B.C., while the New Testament was written between 45 A.D. to 100 A.D.\*

\* Explore The Book, J. Sidlow Baxter

## **V. Why was the Bible written?**

1. To Teach us God's ways. (Romans 15:4)

"For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."

2. As a "warning". (1 Corinthians 10:11)

"These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come."

3. So that we may know how to get Eternal Life. (1 John 5:13)

"I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

4. To know how to conduct ourselves in the house of God. (1 Timothy 3:15)

"But if I am delayed, *I write* so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

## **VI. The role of the Word of God in our lives.**



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1. We were **born again** by the Word of God. (1 Peter 1:23)

"For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God."

2. We **grow spiritually** by the Word of God. (1 Peter 2:2)

"As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby."

3. We **become a disciple** by the Word of God. (John 8:31)

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed'."

### **VII. What is the purpose of studying God's Word?**

1. To know our Lord Jesus Christ more.

The central theme of our study of the Word of God should be "To Know Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior". If we study the Bible just to get head knowledge, we are short changing ourselves and missing the main target.

To the Jews who were searching the scriptures but did not believe in him, Jesus said; "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me." (John 5:39)

2. To be sanctified (set apart) to God. (John 17:17)

"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

3. To have the Lord's guidance. (Psalms 119:105)

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"Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light for my path."

### 4. To get wisdom and understanding. (Psalms 119:98-100)

"98 Your commands make me wiser than my enemies,  
for they are ever with me.

99 I have more insight than all my teachers,  
for I meditate on your statutes.

100 I have more understanding than the elders,  
for I obey your precepts."

In the above verses, the word of God is depicted as "your commands",  
your statutes" and your precepts."

### 5. To have a clean and clear way for our path. (Psalms 119:9)

"How can a young man keep his way pure?  
By living according to your word."

### 6. To keep ourselves from sinning against the Lord. (Psalms 119:11)

"I have hidden your word in my heart  
that I might not sin against you."

### 7. To be successful and prosperous. Not necessarily money-wise, but primarily spiritual prosperity. (Joshua 1:7-8)

"Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. 8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."

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### **8. To be equipped and ready for all good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)**

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

### **9. To be free from bondage (James 1:25)**

"But the man who looks intently into the perfect law (*God's Word*) that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does."

### **10. To be the Lord's disciple and know the truth (John 8:31-32)**

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

### **11. To inherit God's promises (Acts 20:32)**

"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

### **12. To fight the good fight of faith (Ephesians 6:13-17)**

"<sup>13</sup>Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup> and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; <sup>16</sup> above all, taking the shield of faith with which, you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. <sup>17</sup> And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

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The words "truth", "gospel of peace" and "word of God" in the above verses, all point to the "word of God"

### **VIII. How shall I study the Word of God?**

The Bible is a divinely inspired book that every believer should read every day for guidance and spiritual nourishment. As such, all Bible study tools should be readily available to the believer if he/she wants to get the true meaning and intention of what the Word says. To get the true meaning of what we read from the Bible, we can follow three approaches. These approaches are: Bible Survey, Meditation, and Bible Study.

#### **1. Bible Survey**

Since each book of the Bible has its own purpose, message and reason for being written, we should read each book in a focused manner. When we read a book of the Bible, we should read it within a short period of time, if possible at one sitting, and try to get the central message of the book.

For example, when we read the Gospel of Matthew in a Bible Survey manner, the basic things we would understand are:

- About Jesus Christ's birth and family – Chapters 1 & 2
- His preparation for ministry (Baptism and 40 days temptation) – Chapter 3 – Chapter 4:11)
- The calling of His disciples and His Ministry. (Chapter 4:12 – Chapter 25:46)
- His being betrayed by Judas and His arrest. Chapter 26 – Chapter 27:31)
- His death and resurrection (Chapter 27:32 – Chapter 28:20)

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Doing a Bible Survey of each book of the Bible is an important goal for every believer. It helps us get the basic message and purpose of each book. Since every verse and every chapter should be seen from its context, Bible survey keeps us from getting a misconstrued interpretation of the book or portions of the book.

### **2. Meditating on the Word of God**

After taking an overall survey of a book of the Bible, it is always good to meditate on a verse, few verses, or a chapter at a time. Meditating on the Word of God is not just thinking about it with our mere intellect, but also allowing the Holy Spirit who is the ultimate author of the Word of God to illuminate the Word to us. This should be done in a spirit of prayer.

The Word of God encourages us to "Meditate upon the Word of God" day and night.

Joshua 1:7-8 **"Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but **you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.**"**

Psalms 1:1-3

**1** Blessed *is* the man

Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,

Nor stands in the path of sinners,

Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

**2**But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD,

**And in His law he meditates day and night.**

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3 He shall be like a tree

Planted by the rivers of water,  
That brings forth its fruit in its season,  
Whose leaf also shall not wither;  
And whatever he does shall prosper.

## **3. Bible Study**

Even though Bible study includes the above two approaches, it goes deeper into the Word of God. Even though the Word of God is like a gold mine where we cannot fully mine all the gold nuggets found in it, we should try to get all that we can get out of it at our level of spiritual maturity.

Bible study can be: Personal Bible study, Group Bible study and a Bible study being taught by a Bible teacher. All three methods are necessary. However, in this lesson, we are focusing on "Personal Bible study".

### **Personal Bible Study**

Bible Study is not a sprint race. It requires time, discipline, and planning. Let us see what make a personal Bible study fruitful.

#### **A. Good preparation**

##### **i. Preparing our heart and mind**

Bible study requires patience, willingness, teachable spirit and humble heart. We find the people of Berea in Acts 17:10-12 to be good examples.

"Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that **they**

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**received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore, many of them believed."**

Sometimes, when we read a passage that we have read before, or heard someone teach from it, we can develop "I already know it" mentality, and tend to close our minds from learning further from it. Our attitude should be that of a teachable spirit ready to receive what the Holy Spirit might teach us a totally new nugget of truth from the same passage. We should also be open to the Holy Spirit to straighten out our prior erroneous understanding we had of that passage. We can get the most out of the Word of God if we always come to it with a humble teachable attitude.

### **ii. Having a Bible and a notebook.**

The central focus for a Bible study is the "Bible" itself. However, writing down the key messages we get while studying a passage and applying it to our lives, would make our Bible study more fruitful.

### **iii. Prayerful approach to learn from the Holy Spirit**

We cannot fully comprehend the true meaning of the Bible through our intellect only. We have to depend on the Holy Spirit who is given to us to reveal God's word to our heart and mind. Since the Word of God was written by holy men moved by the Holy Spirit, we can only understand the true meaning through the Holy Spirit.

**2 Peter 1:20-21** **"<sup>20</sup> knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, <sup>21</sup> for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."**

**1 Cor. 2:12-13** **"<sup>12</sup>We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given**

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us. <sup>13</sup>This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. <sup>14</sup>The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Jesus also testified that the role of the Holy Spirit is to teach us and to lead us into all truth.

**John 14:26** "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

**John 16:12-13** "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup>But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come."

We have to read the Word of God prayerfully so that the eyes of our understanding would be opened to see the true meaning of the Word of God. (Ephesians 1:18, Psalms 119:18, Luke 24:45)

### **B. Deciding what part of the Bible and How to study.**

When we do Bible Study, where to start and how to proceed are the main questions we have to answer. We can use one of the following options.

1. Choosing one of the books of the Bible (Genesis, John, Acts etc...)
2. Choosing a Topic - Topical Bible Study (Faith, Love, etc.
3. Choosing a Biblical character (Abraham, David, Paul, etc....)



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- **Choosing one book from the Bible.**

For example, we can choose Paul letter to the Philippians and ask the following questions while we read it.

- Who wrote the book?
- Who was it written to?
- In what circumstances was it written
- What are the main points of the book?
- etc.

It does not mean the answers to the questions above are always easy to find. For example, no one is sure who the author of Hebrews is. These are some suggested questions you should ask.

After reading the book with the above questions in mind, getting the main message or messages in each section and applying them to our own life is vitally important.

For those who are new to the Bible, we recommend starting from the Gospel of John, as it is the Gospel that clearly shows the deity of Jesus Christ and would help the new Christian know Jesus more. After the Gospel of John, it is a good idea to continue forward with Acts, Romans and so on as the books are found in the New Testament.

- **Taking a passage from a Book**

Sometimes we can take a passage from a book in the Bible. For example, we can take the passage that talks about David and Goliath. Or the Nativity story in Luke chapter 1, or the passage in 1 Cor. 13 that talks about “Love”.

Since most Bibles have sectioned each significant story or message with a title or sub-title, you can choose one of these sections to study about it in depth.

You can ask:

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- What is the main message of this passage?
- If the passage is long, you can see how the story develops and flows throughout.
- What makes this passage significant?
- What can I learn and apply it to myself?

### ● **Choosing a Topic:**

For Example, if we want to study about Faith, we can find passages and scriptures that talk about Faith and study them including their context. To find passages that talk about Faith, you can use a concordance. Then give your study some kind of an outline, like:

What is Faith?

How can one get faith?

How does faith grow?

The importance of faith

How is faith expressed?

Etc....

### ● **Choosing a Biblical character**

For example, we can decide to study the life of David.

- Locate the books and chapters that talk about David and come up with some kind of an outline that would help you get the most from the passages you studied.

- Who is David?
- Who are his parents/family?
- What were some of the significant things he accomplished?
- What can I learn from his life that would be beneficial to me at this point in my life?
- Etc....

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What does the Bible command us regarding the Word of GOD?

1. **“Like new born babies, crave pure spiritual milk.”** (1 Peter 2:2-3)
2. **“Let the Word of God dwell in you richly”** (Colossians 3:16)
3. **“Keep my Word.” “Let My Words Abide in you”.** (John 14:23, 15:7)

Even though we are saved by grace there is no shortcut to the victorious Christian life that Jesus shed his blood for; we have to live according to the Word of God.

**May the Word of God dwell in us richly!**

### **Lesson 2 – The Bible - Quiz**

(Please give your answers on a separate piece of paper)

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Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

1. In how many major parts is the Bible divided? What are those divisions? What are the main messages of these divisions?
2. What are some of the things the Word of God is seen as? What do these things show about the Word of God?
3. Write three reasons why the Word of God is written for us.
4. What do we mean when we say the Bible is the Word of God?
5. Describe one incident where you used the Word of God in your daily life.
6. How are you currently studying the Bible in your personal devotion? If you are not following one of the methods mentioned in this lesson, which method do you plan to use?
7. Describe one lesson that the Holy Spirit taught you during your personal Bible study recently. (This is not what you learned from somebody else but directly from your own personal devotion time)