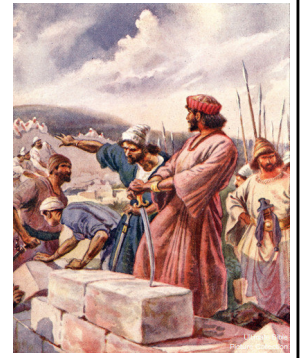


The Sword and The Trowel

They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded (Nehemiah 4:17-18)

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Special Issue: The Importance Of The Bible

Why Read The Bible?

Daniel N. Sanders

Growing up as children into adults we all needed to learn. How do we though? We gain understanding through our reading. I was trained in HVAC in high school. Did I know everything before I started? How did I know how to work on different heating and air conditioning units? Are they all the same? I learned just like everyone else and that was through reading the manuals!

The Bible is the same way! How do we know exactly where we have come from? On the other hand, even what our purpose is? How can we answer these great questions of life? We must turn to the Bible. We know that in the beginning God created all things (*Gen. 1-3*). We know that our duty is to fear God and keep His commandments as our duty in this life (*Eccl. 12:13*).

Consider with me the example of the Ethiopian Eunuch in *Acts 8:26-40*. This man was not a Christian. However, he was doing something that was needed. He was reading from the prophet Isaiah and it was here that Phillip found this man reading. However, while reading it he still needed guidance and this is where Phillip began preaching Jesus to him. This all started with the Ethiopian Eunuch reading. After this point, Phillip had opportunity to preach more concerning the new way of life.

The Ethiopian Eunuch, after reading and Phillip teaching him, had a clear direction on what he needed to do. Can we see there is a need and importance for us to read? How could the Ethiopian Eunuch know about Jesus and how

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Why Believe The Bible?

T. Sean Sullivan

There are a lot of questions raised concerning the Bible. Many have attacked the Bible, falsely accusing it as a book of fairy tales. Our challenge is to determine who has more evidence: the Bible that claims to be the word of God or the enemies of the Bible who claim it is fiction. To be believed, as the actual word of God, the Bible would have to be proven true, never out-of-date, and able to change lives with real instruction in betterment.

Is the Bible Truth?

The Bible itself claims truth. The transmission of God's word is from Father to Son to the Holy Spirit to the writers. Whatever is declared as God's word is truth (*Jn. 17:17*). This means according to the way that the Bible was delivered that the entire Bible is truth. Jesus said His words are truth (*Jn. 8:31-32*). This means according to the way that the Bible was delivered that the entire Bible is truth. The Holy Spirit is described as the "*Spirit of truth*" specifically relating to His deliverance of the word to the writers (*Jn. 16:13-15*). This means according to the way that the Bible was delivered that the entire Bible is truth. Since the Father, through the Son, through the Holy Spirit, delivered all scripture, all scripture is equally truth (*2 Tim. 3:16-17*).

There are also plenty of external evidences to consider in our case. The Bible continues to be proven as true, the more we discover the more we have confirmed about God and His word. Our ability to research our past and our present has led us toward discovering

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Why Study The Bible?

Terry Sanders

The articles preceding this one discuss reading and believing the Bible. Many, many people claim to be receptive to either premise as long as it is convenient. Studying the Bible will be accurately determined to require time and effort to do so. Many are not willing to do this as they consider it a waste of time. This illustrates the enigmatic attitude of so many toward the Bible.

Despite the world's attitude (secular and religious) toward the Bible, it is a book that is ***meant to be studied***. There are multiple reasons for such and our space is limited. Let us consider a few things in regard to study of the Bible.

We ought to study the Bible because it has the words of eternal life. Jesus said, "*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me*" (*Jn. 5:39*). The word "search" here means "to search, examine, or investigate." It is certainly not difficult to ascertain that Jesus was encouraging study. By such study one can find and understand the words that will lead to eternal life.

We ought to study the Bible in order to be approved of God (*2 Tim. 2:15*). Everyone wants to have God's approval. However, few are willing to do what is necessary to receive it. There is a certain conduct expected by God. "*Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ*" (*Phil. 1:27*). If one desires the approval of God, one will study to learn this conduct and how to implement it. Through such study we can "*know the truth*" (*Jn. 8:32*) and "*grow in the grace and knowledge of*

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could Phillip teach and preach Jesus without reading and knowing about Jesus. Think about ourselves. How can we know more about Jesus and what God's will is if we do not read? Is it going to come to us miraculously? Of course not!

Think about what Paul was giving Timothy as instructions, not only as a preacher, but also as a Christian, in *1 Timothy 4:12-16*. Paul was pointing out that reading was important. How could Timothy know more about the doctrine if he did not read? He needed to give attention to reading the scriptures that he had! He needed to focus and give attention and meditation to these things for him to continue being a Christian. If he did give the necessary attention notice *verse 16*, again, he would be able to save those who would hear and believe, but Timothy must first give attention to reading.

Reading is also important to give proof of knowing truth. Think about those of Berea in *Acts 17:10-11*. How would they know whether they had received the truth? How do we know if we have received the truth? We have to search the scriptures and check whether these things are so. It is not going to magically enter our brains and we will know truth. We must apply it to our lives and that comes through reading the scriptures.

There is a need for us to read the Bible. How do we know how to live our life? What does God's word do for us? In *Psalms 119:97-105* God's word is a lamp and light for us. God's word gives more understanding than the wisdom of man. God's word should be our focus and it is the only knowledge and way that we can follow to have eternal life. The question is: are you giving attention to reading? Are taking opportunity to know more about God's will? Do you understand what you are reading? Do you need a helping hand? Brethren are eager to help if you do not know. Are you taking opportunity to follow and read God's Word? Are you making the necessary application? Will you take time for your soul and eternity enough to open and read God's Word?

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that every point of the Bible is truth.

Is the Bible Always Current?

The Bible text has been completed for almost two thousand years. The first writings of Moses are considered to begin between 1450 BC and 1250 BC. This of course means that there are words in the Bible that were delivered more than three thousand years ago. Some believe such an old book cannot relate to our modern world. Solomon through inspiration said, "*There is nothing new under the sun*" (Eccl. 1:9). In reality, man has not changed—we still struggle for the same things (food, shelter, health). Sin has not changed—from the first temptation recorded in Genesis 3, sin has been one of three categories, "*The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life*" (1 Jn. 2:15-17). Man's need for direction has not changed; we still choose sin and become enslaved by it (Rom. 3:23; 6:16). We need the freedom that God's instructions afford (Rom. 6:17-18). The Bible is constant and will suit mankind as long this world continues whether 10 days or 10,000,000, years.

Can the Bible Improve Me?

The Bible can completely revolutionize you, if you will read it and apply it to your life. As the apostle Paul instructed Timothy we need to read and give ourselves entirely to the word to see the results it offers (1 Tim. 4:13, 15-16). It offers completion (2 Tim. 3:16-17). It offers the best quality of life here through honesty and integrity; and the best of Heaven in the life after. Through the study and application of the word we can be true acceptable followers of Christ.

Conclusion

Should I believe the Bible? Yes! The Bible is God's will for man revealed. It is always applicable and will continue to be as long as time continues. The Bible is truth. The Bible is our instruction to attain righteousness. Do not listen to the world; God has spoken and delivered His word to us in the Bible—believe the Bible.

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our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

We ought to study the Bible because it contains the information necessary to be saved. Peter's mission at the house of Cornelius was to "*tell you (Cornelius, tfs) words by which you and your household will be saved*" (Acts 11:14). Paul told timothy that there was doctrine that "*will save both you and those who hear you*" (1 Tim. 4:16). Here, then, is what our mindset should be: If there are words or a doctrine that will save, then I want it! Not only do I want it, but I want to know everything I can about it. That said, let me study and then "*hold fast the words of life*" (Phil. 2:16a).

We ought to study the Bible because it contains the words of Jesus and those words will be the standard of judgment at the last day (Jn. 12:48). This illustrates a need to be well acquainted with the words of Jesus. Hence, we should study to learn of the standard and thereby equip ourselves to successfully meet it. See also Revelation. 20:12.

Clearly we need to study for these reasons as well as others that we could easily include. Man has proven that without divine guidance he will do whatever is right in his own eyes (Jer. 10:23; Prov. 14:12; Jdg. 21:25). God's word is intended as a guide for us. "*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*" (Psa. 119:105). Many believe this to be true although only a few seek that word as a guide. I call to mind those at Berea of whom it is said, "*received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily*" (Acts 17:11). This word "search" means "to investigate like an interrogation at a trial, to scrutinize." Once again this indicates study. Notice also that they did this "daily." The Scriptures that they, or any else, would study are described as "*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 Tim. 3:16-17). May we have the determination to do the same.



Read Your Bible Every Day

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