

The Journey
Series 01: Creation
Week 01: The Bible is God's Message to All People

We are indebted to Ethmos360 for providing the basis of these lessons

BIG Idea (Teacher Only)

Establishing that God's Word (the Bible) can be trusted, is incapable of being wrong, and successful in accomplishing what it says

Lesson Purposes (Teacher Only)

- Understand how the Bible got into our hands
- Acknowledge that the Bible can be trusted as accurate and reliable
- Reverence and respect the Bible as God's written word

Perspective (Teacher Only)

Family structure, law, morality, society, and cultural foundations have been *deeply* shaped by the Bible, whether people realize it or not.

What we know about the Bible...

- Many have heard of it (even may own one)
- Many don't know what it says (haven't taken time to read/study)
- Many associate a good/bad religious experience with their view of the Bible/God
- Many consider it to be out of date and not *up to speed* on culture (pick and choose)
- It's likely that people even recognize it as special or worthy of respect

The Bible needs to become something we see as...

- Trustworthy
- Incapable of being wrong
- Always accomplishing what it says

Information (What We Need to Know)

Our purpose in meeting for the next year on The Journey is to study the Bible.

It's a BIG book. It's easy to get lost.

Why is it important to overcome these obstacles?

The Bible is God's message to ALL people.

The Journey is the way we'll be getting to know and understand God.

- 48 Teaching Lessons
- 5 Stops (Creation, Corruption, Covenant, Christ, Cross)
- 1 Focus

God is the focus of our study.

- Presents Himself as the central character of the Bible
- Invites us to know Him (who He is, what He does, what He's like)

Characteristics about the Bible is...

It's About God (not just a *collection of teachings* but a *BIG Story*)

- **Chronological Study** (in the order it took place)
Stretching out the Biblical timeline and placing key events
- **Historical Study** (recounting events God revealed to mankind)
*Focus on **key** events, not **every** event*
- **Foundational Study** (foundations are laid first, which is why every lesson is important)
Early events help us make sense of future events (foundations then structure)

It's Inspired by God (God gave men His words to write down for ALL people)

- **Content**
 - ✓ Man's Additions (Table of Contents; Chapters added AD 1227 and Verse Numbers added AD 1555; Footnotes, Cross References, Maps)
 - ✓ God's Content (Old Testament - 39 Books; New Testament - 27 Books)
- **Process**
 - ✓ Words breathed out (inspired) by God
2 Timothy 3:16 (ESV) All Scripture is breathed out by God...
 - ✓ Men (prophets) wrote words, visions, messages, dreams God gave to them
2 Peter 1:21 (ESV) For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.



Prophet writing on a scroll, words given to him by God

- ✓ The Bible was written over 1,500 years (1,400 BC – AD 90) using over 40 men
- ✓ The words and message are unified because there is one Author – God!

■ Intent

- ✓ God's message was given to the world through His people, the Jews

Isaiah 45:22 (ESV) “Turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.”



- ✓ God's message must continue to be passed on by us to others

It's Preserved by God (God promised that the Bible would be kept and preserved for all generations)

- Original words written on scrolls or papyrus
- Scrolls wore out (from use and age)
- Scribes copied to preserve writings

“They used every imaginable safeguard to ensure the accurate transmission of the text. The number of letters in a book was counted and its middle letter was given. Similarly with the words, and again the middle word of the book was noted....” - *Illustrated Bible Dictionary*

Though hand copied, there are more manuscripts of the Bible than of any ancient document. All manuscripts that have been found are extremely close in content, differing only in minute details that don't affect meaning. – Firm Foundations

Dead Sea Scrolls

In 1947, 15 miles from Jerusalem, a shepherd boy threw a rock into a cave, hoping to scare out one of his animals that had strayed into the cave. He heard pottery break and went inside the cave to investigate. To his amazement, he beheld pottery urns holding ancient scrolls. When scholars investigated, they found hundreds of scrolls. These “Dead Sea Scrolls” had been hidden in area caves by a religious sect sometime during the first century before Christ.

At the time of this discovery, translators were using manuscripts which had been copied in about 900 A.D. When scholars compared the Dead Sea Scrolls with the manuscripts which they had been using, there were no significant differences in text! Though separated by 1,000 years, these ancient manuscripts said the same thing. God preserves His Word. – Firm Foundations

How did the Bible get to us?

- Originally written in mostly **Hebrew** and some **Aramaic** (Old Testament) and **Greek** (New Testament)
- Copies were kept in the temple (New Testament) and letters written to churches circulated among them
- Throughout history, the Bible has been translated by men into new languages (more than any other book)
- The Bible's arrival to us, and a reflection on archaeology and history, confirms its accuracy and trustworthiness

Over the years, thousands upon thousands of archeological and historical evidences relating to the Bible have been uncovered, and ALL of these support the accuracy of the Bible.

By contrast, books written by men, such as school textbooks, reference books, and scientific texts, all must be drastically changed every few years as more is learned and old theories are replaced. - Firm Foundations

The Bible has not and will not change because God is its author.

Application (What We Need to Do)

The Bible is God's message to all people. It's not just another religious book.

Hebrews 4:12 (ESV) For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. **13** And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

We need to believe that in the Bible, God...

- Reveals Himself to us (His words speaking to us)
- Reveals Us to Ourselves (His words uncovering our true selves)
- Reveals how we can live in relationship with Him (restoration)

"The heart cannot love what the mind does not know. If we want to feel deeply about God, we must learn to think deeply about God. We must make a study of our God: what He loves, what He hates, how He speaks and acts. We cannot imitate a God whose features and habits we have never learned. We must make a study of Him if we want to become like Him." — Jen Wilkin