

## Study#2: Where Do I Fit In God's Plan

In our previous study we examined a little bit about man's origin, God's character, and our purpose here on earth. So here we are, alive, breathing, and living out our lives here on earth, but where do I fit in God's plan?

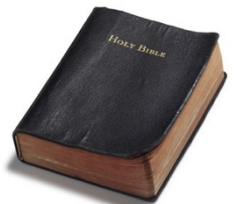
### God Has Spoken

God has not left us to wander aimlessly through life, but *"has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds"* (Heb. 1:2). There was a time when...

- God spoke directly to man (**The Patriarchal Dispensation**)
- God spoke to man through the prophets (**The Mosaical Dispensation**)
- Today God speaks to man by His Son (**The Gospel Dispensation**) (Heb. 1:1-2).

Peter penned, *"as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue"* (2 Pet. 1:3). God is aware of all our needs and has communicated His will to us to meet our every need!

John penned, *"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son"* (2 Jn. 9). We are commanded today to abide in or obey the doctrine (teachings) of Christ. Where do we find those teachings? We read about the doctrine of Christ in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul penned, *"If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that **the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord**"* (1 Cor. 14:37).



God the Father said of Jesus, the Son, *"...This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"* (Matt. 17:5). The command to *hear* necessarily infers there is a message to be heard. God speaks to us today through the Bible, the written revealed word. God does not speak directly to us, nor does He speak through dreams, but through the written revealed word!

# The Bible

The English word "Bible" comes from the Greek word *Biblios* meaning "a book." The "Bible" as we know it is a collection or library of 66 books. The Bible is "the book" of all books.

- 39 books in the Old Testament (Genesis through Malachi).
- 27 books in the New Testament (Matthew through Revelation).
- Written by about 40 different writers over a period of about 1500 years.
- The writers were Divinely inspired, guided by the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- The overall theme of the Bible is the "Scheme of Redemption" - salvation from sin. When man sinned in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3), the narrative of the Bible became a thread of redemption.

## The Bible is of Divine origin or God breathed.

- Paul penned, *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God..."* (2 Tim. 3:16a).
- Peter penned, *"for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit"* (2 Pet. 1:21).
- Paul penned, *"But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God"* (1 Cor. 2:10-11).
- Paul reminded those of Galatia, *"But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ"* (Gal. 1:11-12).

# The Bible And Me

Paul penned, *"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men"* (Titus 2:11). **The "all men" includes you!** A reading of John 3:16 reveals, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."* **The "world" includes you.** Jesus us informed, *"for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost"* (Lk. 19:10). **The "lost" includes you.**

## I Can Understand God's Word

It is illogical to think that God expects us to read His word, believe it, and obey it and then has made it too hard to understand. The Bible is God communicating to me (humanity) and He has revealed Himself and His will in a manner that it can be read, understood, believed, and obeyed!

- Paul penned, *"how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 **by which, when you read, you may understand** my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets"* (Eph. 3:3-5).
- God has commanded us to understand His will, *"Therefore do not be unwise, but **understand what the will of the Lord is**"* (Eph. 5:17).

## The Bible Is My Standard Of Authority

Paul, with the pen of inspiration, wrote, *"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him"* (Col. 3:17). This means that we must act with the Lord's approval. Much of the religious confusion that exist today is due in large part to a lack of respect for Bible authority.

Jesus announced, *"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth"* (Matt. 28:18). Take note of some important lessons from the Lord's declaration.

- #1: Jesus has "all" authority. That Jesus has "all" authority leaves none for anyone one else. All that remains is for all men to submit to the authoritative voice of Jesus.
- #2: Jesus has all authority "in heaven and on earth." No man on earth possesses any authority religiously. Why? Because Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth.

Some **false standards** of authority religiously would be...

- **The Majority** - the majority of people can be wrong. Just because everyone else is doing it does not make it right (see the story of Noah, the ark, and the world wide flood in Genesis 6:1 - 9:28; 2 Pet. 2:5).

- **The Law of Moses** - the Old Law, the Law of Moses, the Ten Commandments and ordinances contained there-in have since served their purpose and have been nailed to the cross and have been taken out of the way (Col. 2:14).
- **My Conscience** - our conscience is a product of what we have been taught. The danger there-in is whether I have been taught or if I have been taught error. Paul acknowledged, *"Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth"* (Acts 26:9). Before becoming a Christian Paul was guided by His conscience.
- **Man's Way** - The prophet Jeremiah was right when he said, *"O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps"* (Jer. 10:23). Paul sought to please God and not man (Gal. 1:10).
- **Tradition** - some are like Saul (Paul) who was *"...more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers"* (Gal. 1:14). It is common for people to believe and practice things religiously because of tradition or family.

Where do I fit in God's plan? Right in the midst of it! God has spoken! God's revealed word is the means through which God is communicating to man (me) today. I can understand God's will for my life, and it is now my duty and responsibility to submit to God's authoritative voice.

## For Discussion Questions

For Discussion #1: How does God speak to man today?

For Discussion #2: What does it mean to "abide in the doctrine of Christ"?

For Discussion #3: Where did the Bible originate from?

For Discussion #4: How do we know that we can understand God's word?

For Discussion #5: Who as "all" authority in heaven and on earth?