

Chapter 1

Bible Concept: Not Just Any Book

The Bible is the Living Word of God. It is entirely inspired by the Holy Spirit and also written and translated by men and women. It contains history, poetry, faith-filled stories, incredible concepts and miracles. It speaks truths about our God and is completely relevant to our lives.

Yet, to think about opening its pages can be a scary thought because the Bible is filled with images and language we do not always understand. This is why when we read the Bible, we need to study it. We study so the stories begin to make sense. We study so we get a fuller idea of what God is trying to say to us.

The central theme of the Bible is God's love for us. We find God's love from the first pages of creation in Genesis, through God's loving relationship with the people of Israel, through the Gospel stories of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and finally through the New Testament Letters which help us to understand how to live as Christians. The Gospel of Mark is one of four accounts of Jesus' life. While all four Gospels differ in the way they tell us about Jesus, three are fairly similar in the way they tell the story. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called Synoptic Gospels, because they tell the story roughly the same. Synoptic is a Greek word meaning, "one view."

That all four Gospels tell us the story differently does not take away from the power of the truth, rather it adds to our understanding of a God who loves us so very deeply that he sent his only Son that we could have eternal life through God's forgiveness. As you study the Bible an important question to ask yourself is this: How does this story help me to better understand God's love for me?

Memory
Verse

Chapter 1, Verse 1 reads:

Here begins the Good News about Jesus
Christ the Messiah, the Son of God.
New Living Translation (NLT)

The beginning of the good news of Jesus
Christ, the Son of God.
New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

Reflect on that statement for a moment.

What do you expect this book to tell you?

Definition

The word Gospel means "Good News." Gospel is an old English word.

Good News is something we cannot help but share. It is something which makes a great impact in our life. In particular, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is something which brings freedom for us as it tells us that we have been forgiven by God because Jesus died for all!

Focus Story: The Baptism of Jesus, 1:2-11

How is John described?

Why is John baptizing people?

Only one line records what anyone says at Jesus' baptism. Who speaks?

What does this voice say?

Why do you think God would say, at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, that he is "fully pleased" (NLT) with Jesus?

Baptism identifies us with God and with God's mission in this world. Why do you think it is important that Jesus is baptized?

Talk with your parents about your baptism. Ask if they remember what was said by the pastor. Ask about what day it was, who was with you, what kind of party they had for you. If there are any pictures from that day, ask your parents to bring them out to look at.

Is there anything you do special in your life because you are baptized, that if you were not baptized, you would not do?

God spoke at your Baptism too, and God said, "You are my beloved Child, and I am fully pleased with you." How do you feel knowing God is fully pleased with you?

*praying
together*



Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Praying together as a family is a special time. Sit around your kitchen table or in your living room. Light a candle to remember that God is present in your midst as you pray.

Pray together:

O Gracious God, we give you thanks for you have claimed us in Baptism as your precious children. Teach us always to live as you wish. Remind us each day that we have your forgiveness to share. Amen

Share with your family one thing you are thankful for today. Give thanks to God for each member of the family, and for the many things you are thankful for.

Conclude your time by saying the Lord's Prayer.