



# Bible Basic

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PASTOR

# Lesson 1: How Did We Get The Bible?

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

### Goals

1. For students to understand what we mean when we say "The Bible"
2. For students to be in awe that the Bible has stood the test of time
3. For students to acknowledge the unique qualities of the Bible

### Topics

Guidance, Prophecy, Truth, Word of God

### Scripture Memorization

2 Peter 1:20-21

## GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

Let's start with a quiz! *(You can either photocopy the quiz in the back of your booklet or just give kids paper and read the questions to them out loud. We'll take this quiz at the end of the study too, as a way of showing the students what they've learned.)*

We're going to walk through the Bible together. Our goal is that by the time we are done, you will have a basic knowledge of the Bible, where it came from, who wrote it, when it was written, how it's organized, etc. But I'm curious about how well you already know it. So, let's do that quiz!

Okay times up. I don't know how you think you did, if the quiz was difficult or easy. Chances are, in this room, there are some who did okay, while others struggled. That's okay! We are all starting out in this in different places. *(It's not even important that you grade these. You may want to collect them so you know what you're starting out with, but the students don't need to know how each other did. You may want to save them, however, to compare to the quizzes the students will take at the end of the lesson series.)*

The cool thing is, in 8 weeks or so, after we've studied the Bible start to finish, we're going to take this quiz again, and hopefully you'll feel a lot better about what you know about the Bible. So let's get going! We've got a lot to learn!

## DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

Today what we're going to talk about is the very basics of the Bible in 3 parts:

1. What inspired the Bible
2. How the Bible was written

### 3. How the Bible was gathered

#### **The Bible: God's Words**

Turn in your Bibles to 2 Timothy 3:16. Who can read it for us?

- What do you think that means, God-breathed (NIV)?

*(The Greek word used here only occurs this one time in the scriptures. It is a compound word, God and breath, that means inspired.)*

It's important that we remember, when we're discussing the Bible, that it is God's Words, not the words of man. For example, consider the people who wrote the Gospels—Matthew did not just sit down and write an account of the life and teachings of Jesus on his own. God, through the Holy Spirit, guided the process. That is one of the reasons why, for instance, that even though he probably never even met Luke, their accounts are so similar.

#### **The Bible: Man's Influence**

That's not to say that God just put all the people who contributed to the Scriptures in a trance and made their hands move. One of the unique features of the Bible is that regular people authored it.

Unlike many Holy Books, such as the Muslim's Koran or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints' Book of Mormon, multiple people wrote the Bible; in fact, approximately 40 different people wrote it.

#### **Activity (10 minutes)**

Let's see how many different authors of the Bible we can identify as a group.

*(Feel free to mark them off as your group identifies them. I think you'll be surprised by how many they know. Try to see if everybody can name at least one. The 40ish are listed below. Next to ones which are not self-titled are the books they contributed to. Some, obviously, are disputable, but serve our purposes just fine.)*

Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Job)	Daniel	Malachi
Joshua	Hosea	Matthew
Samuel (Judges, Ruth)	Joel	Mark
Nathan (1st & 2nd Samuels)	Amos	Luke
Jeremiah (1st & 2nd Kings)	Obadiah	John
Ezra	Jonah	Paul
Mordecai (Esther)	Micah	James
Sons of Korah & Others (Psalms)	Nahum	Peter
David (Psalms)	Habakkuk	Jude
Solomon (Proverbs)	Zephaniah	
Isaiah	Haggai	
Ezekiel	Zechariah	

**Study Guide** [Click here](#) (Study guide is also contained in the student workbook)

The Bible is unique because it was written over a span of 1,500-2,000 years. Another unique aspect of the Bible is that nearly 40 people wrote it. Moses likely recorded Genesis around 1400 BC, whereas John may have written the book of Revelation as late as 80-90 AD.

David never met Peter, and Daniel never knew Paul. It's incredible that the words of all these different people were spread out over so much time and still speak of the same God, in the same way, without contradicting one another!

Let me ask you a couple more challenging questions. Turn in your Bibles to the book of Esther. It's a little over halfway through the Old Testament, after Nehemiah and before Job.

## Discussion Questions

1. How do we know who wrote Esther? Does it say anywhere in the book who wrote it? (*The answer, of course, is no.*)
2. How, then, can anyone figure it out? (*Allow them to think, even if they're quiet for a while.*)

The bottom line is, there is a lot of evidence outside of the Bible that helps us understand who wrote what and when. Turn to the book of Mark. The challenge is the same: How do we know that Mark wrote this? Does it say so?

However, in 140 AD, Papias, a very early leader of the church, quotes an even earlier source that states Mark was a close friend of Peter's. Mark gathered evidence from Peter about Jesus' life to write his Gospel account.

We've still got a lot to cover, so I don't want to dwell on this too long. So, let's put it this way: there is ample evidence in the Bible and in other early Christian history writings that both documents and confirms who wrote which books of the Bible.

(The students will probably have questions. Answer them as best you can, and if you don't have an answer, don't be afraid to say, "I'll have to get back to you on that." We're getting pretty deep here, but we're going to back off and get lighter for the next section.)

## The Bible: It's Organization

Alright, I know what you're thinking, what in the world does 52 card pick up have to do with the Bible. But the third thing we need to talk about is how the Bible came to be organized. If David wrote a thousand years before Peter, how did their books get put in the same group? How did they decide to arrange them? Who did the deciding? You probably have a lot of other questions, too. If we don't answer them, feel free to ask.

The best way to get down to it is to answer 3 questions: Who? When? How?

### 1. Who

- Who organized the cards you guys picked up? (*They did.*)

In the same way, the men who gathered the Holy Writings also assembled them in the Bible. First it was Jewish leaders who sought to collect the books of the Old Testament. Later, Christians gathered books of the New Testament. Often, they were already circulating among society. They did not just randomly pick them; they chose them because the Holy stories were already used as teaching tools for believers.

The 66 writings were scattered all over the place, on three continents, over a span of 1,500 years or so.

- Does the fact that men gathered separate books and organized them into our present Bible bother you? Why/why not?

### 2. When

The Old Testament was certainly compiled as such by the second century BC or so. We know that the ancient writings were widely used by Jesus' times because he quotes from the Psalms and other prophetic writings. Jesus reads Isaiah in His hometown synagogue at one point during His ministry. For sure, they were formally accepted by 90 AD during the council of Jamnia, which was essentially a conference in which a bunch of religious leaders gathered and more or less recognized that the books we now have in our Old Testament were the ones used by the early Church—similar to how you realized that hearts go with hearts and spades with spades.

The New Testament, recording events that took place perhaps as late as 80-90 AD, was formed in the same way—over time. The early church began using writings such as the Gospels and letters from Paul as they were written. Some of the writings were meant to be passed around and shared so people could benefit from them.

Around 120-150 AD, and even before then, false teachers starting running around writing stuff that was wrong and putting a fake name on it. You would recognize some of these, like the Gospel of Judas, from the DaVinci Code and all the controversy surrounding it.

Because of the false writings, church leaders became convinced they needed to compile a list of writings that were true and valid and combine them, much like what had happened with the Old Testament.

Many people had ideas of what should be accepted, and many suggested lists that excluded the false teachings. It's hard to nail down, but at the Council of Carthage in Africa in 397 AD, the 27 New Testament books were declared as the only acceptable Scriptures in Christianity.

That's a lot of history and a lot to take in. A simple rhyme can help you remember these dates and facts:

We had the OT by 90 AD and the NT was done by 397 (you have to pronounce 397 as three-nine-ty-sev-UHN to make it rhyme, but hey, close enough.)

Remember that the books were around and used way before that, but only officially entered in the Bible by this time, at the latest.

- Does any of this surprise you? Have you ever thought about the ages of the writings that went into the Bible?

### **3. How**

- How did you arrange the cards when you picked them up? (*By number, by suit*)

In the same way as you arranged your deck of cards, the Bible was arranged. Often, it was by the time it was written. This is particularly true in the Old Testament. Genesis, the first book, happened first, and Malachi, the last book, happened much later. There are some exceptions to this, based on other considerations, but, in general, that's true for the Old Testament.

In the New Testament, more weight was given to the type of writing instead of the date. Just like the cards have different suits, or styles, so do writings. In the New Testament, there are 4 Gospels; those come first. Paul's writings are grouped together in one batch, etc.

Both were considerations for both Testaments, but in general the OT puts more weight on timing and the NT considers style more important. But we had you arrange your cards according to suit and order, which both the OT and NT consider as well.

For example, the first 5 books of the Bible are books of Law, and are listed in the order which they occur. Job, though, occurred probably during the time of Abraham, whose story is told in Genesis. But since Job is a book of poetry, not Law, it's listed with other poetic books (Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon). Make sense?

(At this point, questions could easily be flying all over the place. Again, field them as you're able, and don't be afraid to admit you don't know something. You can always get back to them later, and we'll revisit these organizations in more detail as we go through the study.)

## **MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)**

We've discussed a lot today. And you might have a lot of questions. In a way, we designed it this way on purpose. We want to overwhelm you with the information available about the Bible so that as we go through this study, you know that there are things you should know that you don't yet about the Scriptures.

Again, by the end, when we retake the quiz, you'll know it much better. That's all we're trying to accomplish.

1. Why do you think it's important that we know this stuff?
2. What is one thing you learned today/tonight that you didn't know before?

## **CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)**

# Authors of the Bible

Hidden in this word search are the names of thirty-three different authors, who wrote one or more books of the Bible. Can you find them all?

Names can be in any direction, backwards, forwards, or diagonally.



Moses  
Joshua  
Samuel  
Nathan  
Jeremiah  
Ezra  
Mordecai  
David  
Solomon

Isaiah  
Jeremiah  
Ezekiel  
Daniel  
Hosea  
Joel  
Amos  
Obadiah

Jonah  
Micah  
Nahum  
Habakkuk  
Zephaniah  
Haggai  
Zechariah  
Malachi

Matthew  
Mark  
Luke  
John  
Paul  
James  
Peter  
Jude

# Bible Basics – Lesson 1 Workbook

## How Did We Get The Bible?

### Study Guide

The table below will be a handy reference guide to help familiarize yourself with the Bible -its separate books, authors, theme(s) within each book, and the dates each book was written. You may wish to refer to this study guide as you work your way through the entire lesson series.

Below is a chart listing both the Old and New Testament divisions, books, authors, and major themes. Note: Prophets themes are the same—speaking for God about the coming judgment.

BOOK	AUTHOR	THEME	DATE
<b>OLD TESTAMENT LAW</b>			
Genesis	Moses	Beginnings	1400 BC
Exodus	Moses	Out of Slavery	1400 BC
Leviticus	Moses	Instructions for Priests	1400 BC
Numbers	Moses	Census in the Wilderness	1400 BC
Deuteronomy	Moses	Second Giving of the Law	1400 BC
<b>OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY</b>			
Joshua	Joshua	Conquering the Promised Land	1350 BC
Judges	Samuel?	Israel Gone Wild	1000 BC
Ruth	Samuel?	The Kinsmen Redeemer	1000 BC
1 Samuel	Samuel	The Kingdom Begins	930 BC
2 Samuel	Nathan/Gad	The Kingdom Under David	930 BC
1 Kings	Jeremiah?	The Kingdom Divided	600 BC
2 Kings	Jeremiah?	The Kingdom Judged	600 BC
1 Chronicles	Ezra	The Samuels Retold	450 BC
2 Chronicles	Ezra	The Kings Retold	450 BC
Ezra	Ezra	Temple Rebuilding	450 BC
Nehemiah	Ezra	The Walls Rebuilt	450 BC
Esther	Mordecai	God Will Save	450 BC
<b>OLD TESTAMENT POETRY</b>			
Job	Moses?	Suffering Well	1400 BC
Psalms	David, Moses, Solomon, Asaph, Others	Songs to God	1440-500 BC
Proverbs	Solomon	Wisdom	900 BC
Ecclesiastes	Solomon	Life's Meaning	900 BC
Song of Solomon	Solomon	Love	950 BC
<b>MAJOR PROPHETS</b>			
Isaiah	Isaiah	Coming Judgment/Messiah	700-680 BC

Jeremiah	Jeremiah	Coming Judgment/Messiah	600 BC
Lamentations	Jeremiah	Coming Judgment/Messiah	600 BC
Ezekiel	Ezekiel	Coming Judgment/Messiah	550 BC
Daniel	Daniel	Coming Judgment/Messiah	550 BC
<b>MINOR PROPHETS</b>			
Hosea	Hosea	Coming Judgment/Messiah	750 BC
Joel	Joel	Coming Judgment/Messiah	800 BC
Amos	Amos	Coming Judgment/Messiah	750 BC
Obadiah	Obadiah	Coming Judgment/Messiah	840 BC
Jonah	Jonah	Coming Judgment/Messiah	750 BC
Micah	Micah	Coming Judgment/Messiah	700 BC
Nahum	Nahum	Coming Judgment/Messiah	650 BC
Habakkuk	Habakkuk	Coming Judgment/Messiah	600 BC
Zephaniah	Zephaniah	Coming Judgment/Messiah	650 BC
Haggai	Haggai	Coming Judgment/Messiah	520 BC
Zechariah	Zechariah	Coming Judgment/Messiah	500 BC
Malachi	Malachi	Coming Judgment/Messiah	430 BC
<b>NEW TESTAMENT GOSPELS</b>			
Matthew	Matthew	Jesus to Jews	60 AD
Mark	Mark	Jesus the Servant	55 AD
Luke	Luke	Jesus to Gentiles	60 AD
John	John	Jesus is God	80 AD
<b>NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY</b>			
Acts	Luke	The Early Church	65 AD
<b>PAULINE LETTERS</b>			
Romans	Paul	Theological Manifest	57 AD
1 Corinthians	Paul	Correcting Corruption	55 AD
2 Corinthians	Paul	Correcting Corruption	57 AD
Galatians	Paul	Refuting False Teachers	49 AD
Ephesians	Paul	Unity	60 AD
Philippians	Paul	Joy	61 AD
Colossians	Paul	The Sufficiency of Christ	60 AD
1 Thessalonians	Paul	Encouraging New Church	51 AD
2 Thessalonians	Paul	Encouraging New Church	52 AD
1 Timothy	Paul	Encouraging Young Leadership	64 AD
2 Timothy	Paul	Encouraging Young Leadership	67 AD
Titus	Paul	Godly Leadership, Godly Lifestyles	64 AD
Philemon	Paul	Godly Confrontation	60 AD



<b>GENERAL LETTERS</b>			
Hebrews	Unknown	Jesus is Enough	before 70 AD
James	James	Faith In Action	49 AD
1 Peter	Peter	Faith in Suffering	63 AD
2 Peter	Peter	Faith in Suffering	67 AD
1 John	John	Basics of Faith: Love and Opposing False Teaching	85 AD
2 John	John	Basics of Faith: Love and Opposing False Teaching	85 AD
3 John	John	Encouragement for Gaius	85 AD
Jude	Jude	Oppose False Teaching	65 AD
<b>NT PROPHECY</b>			
Revelation	John	God Reigns, God Wins	90 AD

- There are 66 books in the Bible
- The Bible was written over a span of approximately 1,500-2,000 years
- There are 39 books in the Old Testament
- There are 27 books in the New Testament
- Approximately 40 different people contributed to the Bible
- The Old Testament books came together as a unit by about 90 A.D.
- The New Testament books came together as a unit by about 350-400 A.D.

### Questions about the Bible

1. How was the Bible inspired?

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2. How was the Bible written?

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3. How was the Bible gathered?

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### Homework

- Memorize 2 Peter 1:20-21
- Throughout this lesson series take time each week to memorize the books of the Bible in order. If you already have the books of the Bible memorized, take the time to memorize who wrote each of the books, each book's main theme, and the date it was written.

## Bible Basics

# Lesson 2: How We Can Know the Bible is True?

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

### Goals

1. For students to become convinced that the Bible is true.
2. For students to be overwhelmed by the evidence that proves such.
3. For student to allow that truth to invade their lives.

### Topics

Guidance, Prophecy, Truth, Word of God

### Scripture Memorization

Psalm 119:160

## GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

(To prepare students to think about fact versus fiction, start by having a little fun with this game. It's simple: each statement is either true or false. Have them respond with what they think, and then reveal the answer.)

### FACT OR FICTION?

1. Professional baseball umpires are required to wear black underwear. (*Fact.*)
2. Humans have unique finger prints. Gorillas have unique nose prints. (*Fact.*)
3. The average American eats 46 slices of pizza per year. (*Fact.*)
4. Smoking is the leading cause of house fires in the U.S. (*Fiction, cooking is the leading cause.*)
5. The first music record ever featured a recital of "Mary Had a Little Lamb." (*Fact.*)
6. Velcro was invented in Great Britain. (*Fiction, it was invented in Switzerland.*)
7. The most popular pet name in the U.S. is Smokey. (*Fiction, it is Max.*)
8. The bat is the only mammal that flies. (*Fact.*)
9. Muslim people are asked to tithe 10% of their income. (*Fiction, 2.5% is the suggested tithe.*)
10. It takes 11 feet of wire to make a Slinky. (*Fiction, it is 63 feet of wire.*)

I don't know how well you did, but I've got a few questions for you:

- How could anyone know whether or not what I asked was true or false? How could you even begin to answer?
- How do you know if I'm right about each of those?
- Is there truth available somewhere out there where you could find out for sure, even if you didn't trust

me to tell you the truth?

Well, all of the questions we just went through are relatively unimportant. But today/tonight, we're going to tackle the most important question of all: Is the Bible true?

### Discussion Question:

1. Why does it matter if the Bible is true?

## DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

There is so much information available; we're going to dig right through it. You may be overwhelmed with the sheer amount of evidence we have to support that the Bible is true. Let's get after it.

There are three basic areas of evidence that we are going to explore: Fulfilled Prophecy, Archaeological Support, and Historical Evidence.

### Fulfilled Prophecy

Chances are you are all familiar with horoscopes, a Magic 8 Ball, or other things that attempt to "predict" the future. Of course, they often prove unreliable, vague, or downright wrong!

Not so with Biblical prophecy! There are numerous prophecies recorded in the Old Testament that come true in the New Testament. Unlike modern-day attempts to read palms or a tarot cards, these predictions are specific, not general. Let's explore a few.

### Activity (10 minutes)

(Have students look up the prophetic prediction and have another student look up the New Testament fulfillment. Really dig in and let them discover the truth of this point first-hand. You might not have time to do every single one, but you can at least do some.)

- Micah 5:2 & Luke 2:4-7—Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.
- Isaiah 53:12 & Luke 23:32-33—Jesus would be condemned with criminals.
- Psalm 22:16 & John 19:18—Jesus would have His hands and feet pierced (*predicted before crucifixion was invented*).
- Isaiah 53:9 & Luke 23:50-53—Jesus would be buried by a rich man.

There are other prophecies predicted in the Bible that came true and are confirmed by non-Biblical evidence:

- Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 predict the destruction of Jerusalem. In 70 AD, this happened and is recorded by the Roman historian Josephus.
- Jeremiah predicts the re-instatement of Israel as a nation in Jeremiah 31. This was thought to be a joke of a prediction until 1948, when Israel was a country again, after almost 2,000 years of non-existence.

When it comes down to it, Isaiah 53 predicts 15 different things about the Messiah that came true in the life of Jesus. Fifteen of these prophecies came true from one chapter. The truth is, there are hundreds of prophecies about Jesus, countries, kings, and world events in the Bible—not one of these has been proven false yet!

### Discussion Questions

1. When you hear some of these prophecies, what do you think? How do you feel? What does it do for your faith?
2. How do these predictions help demonstrate that the Bible is true?

### Archeology Support

If the Bible says that Jericho was in a certain place, and archaeology verifies it, that fact does not prove everything in the Bible is true. Archaeology cannot prove Spiritual Truths. It does however mean that the Bible is more trustworthy in general, and for that reason should not be ignored.

Let me say it in the most upfront manner possible: Archaeology has never proven the Bible false. There are some things it hasn't yet supported, but it has never proven it false. Let me mention some things that have been supported. Again, as I roll through it, be in awe of how much evidence there is available.

### **Support #1:**

Luke, the author of the Gospel of Luke and Acts, has been proven accurate by archaeology in regards to 32 references to countries, 54 cities, and 9 islands. That's 95 different references, all of which have been supported by archaeology.

### **Support #2:**

John, the author of the Gospel of John, 1-3 John, and Revelation, mentions in his Gospel that near the Pool of Bethesda there are 5 porches. For years, archaeologists believed John to be wrong. No such place had been discovered. But recently, 40 feet under ground, 5 porches were discovered.

### **Support #3:**

There are 25,000 sites that show connection with the Old Testament that have been located in the lands of the Bible.

### **Support #4:**

The most ancient textual evidence we have is a portion of the Gospel of John, on ancient paper called papyrus, that is dated just after 100 AD. No other ancient document enjoys such compelling manuscript evidence.

- What do some of those facts cause you to think about whether or not the Bible is true?

### **Historical Evidence**

- How many of you like history?
- How many of you can't stand it?

No matter what you think of history, the fact is, there are some facts in history that are indisputable.

- What is an event in history that you know for a fact occurred?  
*(They might mention a world war or the settling of a continent. It's not so much important what they say—you're going to take them a step further.)*
- So if we take a historical event...like the fact that George Washington was the first president of the United States...how can we know that is true for sure? *(Hopefully they'll say something like, "People wrote about it, it's in history books, or similar. Again, give them some freedom in their answers. We're backing into a point about the historical evidence of the Bible.)*
- How much evidence do you think it takes to prove something like that true? Does only one person have to record it, or a few? What does it take to verify something in history as having actually happened?

When it comes to the Bible, we have a lot of historical evidence. And we not only have a lot, but we have it from several different sources. Let's explore what we have. At the end, I'll ask you if you think that is enough to prove that the Bible is historically accurate.

### **Support #1:**

Historically speaking, a piece of writing was passed along on animal skins or papyrus, which was sort of like paper. What exists of those copies is referred to as manuscript evidence. We're just going to call them ancient copies.

### **We have over 24,000 ancient copies of the New Testament alone.**

In case you are wondering, that's a lot, more than any other ancient writing. Consider this:

### **Support #2:**

(Below is a list of secular writers, philosophers, historians, etc. Read a couple as an example, and then draw out the comparison for the students. It might need to be repeated, but it's an important point that they should be able to grasp.)

How many of you have heard of Aristotle? He was a philosopher who lived and wrote around 300 BC. However, we only have 5 copies of anything he wrote. 5! How many do we have of the New Testament alone? *(24,000)*

Tacitus was a Greek Historian, who actually wrote just a little after the Bible was completed. We have a lot from him. Guess how many? (Let them guess, hopefully they'll guess big).

The answer is 20 copies of what he wrote. How many do we have of the New Testament? *(24,000)*

As you can see, the historical evidence is huge. No one doubts Aristotle or Tacitus wrote the copies we possess, and we only have a few from them. Why would anyone doubt the Bible when it has over 1,000 times more ancient copies than anything else?

But there's more!

### Secular Manuscripts

Author	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	Copies (extent)
Herodotus (History)	480 - 425 BC	900 AD	1,300 Years	8
Thucydides (History)	460 - 400 BC	900 AD	1,300 Years	?
Aristotle (Philosopher)	384 - 332 BC	1,100 AD	1,400 Years	5
Caesar (History)	100 - 44 BC	900 AD	1,000 Years	10
Pliny (History)	61 - 113 AD	850 AD	750 Years	7
Suetonius (Roman History)	70 - 140 AD	950 AD	800 Years	?
Tacitus (Greek History)	100 AD	1,100 AD	1,000 Years	20

(Source <http://www.gotquestions.org/>)

### Support #3

#### Activity (10 minutes)

Let's play another game. This one is old school, too. How many of you remember telephone? I'm going to tell \_\_\_\_\_ (pick a person) a phrase. We're going to pass it all the way around the circle, and see what happens. The last person to get the message will tell the class what I said. Ready?

(Say something and let it get passed. Chances are it will get distorted. If you want, trace it back and try to find out where it got distorted. This will help prove the point. If it doesn't, that's okay. Either play again or just roll with it.)

There's a simple truth to that game. The further the words got from the beginning, the easier it was for them to get messed up. That's one argument against the Bible. How can we have what the original writers intended to say? It must have been twisted to what others wanted it to say, etc. Those are fair criticisms.

Just because we have a lot of ancient copies doesn't make them reliable. So, like the game of telephone, we have to figure out how close the ancient copies we have are to the originals. Again, the Bible trumps all other ancient documents.

Refer to chart above - Let's consider Aristotle again. He lived in 300 BC, and the earliest copy we have of anything he wrote is from 1100 AD, some 1,400 years earlier. That's a long time, for sure.

Tacitus is another example. His earliest copy is 1,000 years from when he lived.

In fact, the shortest span of time between the author's life and the earliest copy is 800 years.

The Bible, on the other hand, is much closer. Of the 24,000 copies we have of the New Testament, 230 of them date before 600 AD—a difference of only 550 years or so. And some of the copies date much closer. In the last 20 or so years, a study has been conducted on a portion of Matthew's Gospel that some believe is either an original or copied while Matthew was alive. There is most definitely a piece of a copy of the Gospel of John that dates to 125 AD, perhaps as soon as 35 years from John's life.

With all that evidence, and with the closeness of it to the original, why would anyone doubt the accuracy of the Bible?

Let me ask you again, do you think that is enough to say that the Bible is probably true? (Hopefully they'll say yes, but if they still have reservations, explore those and try to lead them back to the overwhelming evidence of the Scriptures)

On top of that evidence, consider the archaeological evidence and fulfilled prophecy we've already discussed. And there's a lot more we didn't cover! The Bible is a trustworthy document.

## **MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)**

There are many things in our world that claim truth. Budweiser's advertising campaign is based upon that word: True. Kool cigarettes' tag line is "Be True."

Truth matters. If the Bible is not true, we're all wasting our time. Tonight we've explored whether or not the Bible is true. If you want to study more, there's a lot of stuff you can do. I can tell you of a couple of easy-to-understand books that can help you understand even more evidence.

### **Optional Idea:**

(Silicon wristbands can be ordered for less than a dollar a piece depending on the amount needed. Check companies out online.)

To help you remember what's really true, we want to give you a wristband. It's message is simple, but the implications of that message should change the way we live. If the Bible is, in fact, true, then that means that Jesus has advised us how to live, He has forgiven our sins, and we should follow the example He has set.

## **CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)**

Pastor Carlos A. Morales

## Bible Basics

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### Scripture Memorization

Psalm 119:160

## OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

## GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

(To prepare students to think about fact versus fiction, start by having a little fun with this game. It's simple: each statement is either true or false. Have them respond with what they think, and then reveal the answer.)

### **FACT OR FICTION?**

1. Professional baseball umpires are required to wear black underwear. (*Fact.*)
2. Humans have unique finger prints. Gorillas have unique nose prints. (*Fact.*)
3. The average American eats 46 slices of pizza per year. (*Fact.*)
4. Smoking is the leading cause of house fires in the U.S. (*Fiction, cooking is the leading cause.*)
5. The first music record ever featured a recital of "Mary Had a Little Lamb." (*Fact.*)
6. Velcro was invented in Great Britain. (*Fiction, it was invented in Switzerland.*)
7. The most popular pet name in the U.S. is Smokey. (*Fiction, it is Max.*)
8. The bat is the only mammal that flies. (*Fact.*)
9. Muslim people are asked to tithe 10% of their income. (*Fiction, 2.5% is the suggested tithe.*)
10. It takes 11 feet of wire to make a Slinky. (*Fiction, it is 63 feet of wire.*)

I don't know how well you did, but I've got a few questions for you:

- How could anyone know whether or not what I asked was true or false? How could you even begin to answer?
- How do you know if I'm right about each of those?
- Is there truth available somewhere out there where you could find out for sure, even if you didn't trust

me to tell you the truth?

Well, all of the questions we just went through are relatively unimportant. But today/tonight, we're going to tackle the most important question of all: Is the Bible true?

### Discussion Question:

1. Why does it matter if the Bible is true?

## DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

There is so much information available; we're going to dig right through it. You may be overwhelmed with the sheer amount of evidence we have to support that the Bible is true. Let's get after it.

There are three basic areas of evidence that we are going to explore: Fulfilled Prophecy, Archaeological Support, and Historical Evidence.

### Fulfilled Prophecy

Chances are you are all familiar with horoscopes, a Magic 8 Ball, or other things that attempt to "predict" the future. Of course, they often prove unreliable, vague, or downright wrong!

Not so with Biblical prophecy! There are numerous prophecies recorded in the Old Testament that come true in the New Testament. Unlike modern-day attempts to read palms or a tarot cards, these predictions are specific, not general. Let's explore a few.

### Activity (10 minutes)

(Have students look up the prophetic prediction and have another student look up the New Testament fulfillment. Really dig in and let them discover the truth of this point first-hand. You might not have time to do every single one, but you can at least do some.)

- Micah 5:2 & Luke 2:4-7—Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.
- Isaiah 53:12 & Luke 23:32-33—Jesus would be condemned with criminals.
- Psalm 22:16 & John 19:18—Jesus would have His hands and feet pierced (*predicted before crucifixion was invented*).
- Isaiah 53:9 & Luke 23:50-53—Jesus would be buried by a rich man.

There are other prophecies predicted in the Bible that came true and are confirmed by non-Biblical evidence:

- Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 predict the destruction of Jerusalem. In 70 AD, this happened and is recorded by the Roman historian Josephus.
- Jeremiah predicts the re-instatement of Israel as a nation in Jeremiah 31. This was thought to be a joke of a prediction until 1948, when Israel was a country again, after almost 2,000 years of non-existence.

When it comes down to it, Isaiah 53 predicts 15 different things about the Messiah that came true in the life of Jesus. Fifteen of these prophecies came true from one chapter. The truth is, there are hundreds of prophecies about Jesus, countries, kings, and world events in the Bible—not one of these has been proven false yet!

### Discussion Questions

1. When you hear some of these prophecies, what do you think? How do you feel? What does it do for your faith?
2. How do these predictions help demonstrate that the Bible is true?

### Archeology Support

If the Bible says that Jericho was in a certain place, and archaeology verifies it, that fact does not prove everything in the Bible is true. Archaeology cannot prove Spiritual Truths. It does however mean that the Bible is more trustworthy in general, and for that reason should not be ignored.

Let me say it in the most upfront manner possible: Archaeology has never proven the Bible false. There are some things it hasn't yet supported, but it has never proven it false. Let me mention some things that have been supported. Again, as I roll through it, be in awe of how much evidence there is available.



### **Support #1:**

Luke, the author of the Gospel of Luke and Acts, has been proven accurate by archaeology in regards to 32 references to countries, 54 cities, and 9 islands. That's 95 different references, all of which have been supported by archaeology.

### **Support #2:**

John, the author of the Gospel of John, 1-3 John, and Revelation, mentions in his Gospel that near the Pool of Bethesda there are 5 porches. For years, archaeologists believed John to be wrong. No such place had been discovered. But recently, 40 feet under ground, 5 porches were discovered.

### **Support #3:**

There are 25,000 sites that show connection with the Old Testament that have been located in the lands of the Bible.

### **Support #4:**

The most ancient textual evidence we have is a portion of the Gospel of John, on ancient paper called papyrus, that is dated just after 100 AD. No other ancient document enjoys such compelling manuscript evidence.

- What do some of those facts cause you to think about whether or not the Bible is true?

### **Historical Evidence**

- How many of you like history?
- How many of you can't stand it?

No matter what you think of history, the fact is, there are some facts in history that are indisputable.

- What is an event in history that you know for a fact occurred?  
*(They might mention a world war or the settling of a continent. It's not so much important what they say—you're going to take them a step further.)*
- So if we take a historical event...like the fact that George Washington was the first president of the United States...how can we know that is true for sure? *(Hopefully they'll say something like, "People wrote about it, it's in history books, or similar. Again, give them some freedom in their answers. We're backing into a point about the historical evidence of the Bible.)*
- How much evidence do you think it takes to prove something like that true? Does only one person have to record it, or a few? What does it take to verify something in history as having actually happened?

When it comes to the Bible, we have a lot of historical evidence. And we not only have a lot, but we have it from several different sources. Let's explore what we have. At the end, I'll ask you if you think that is enough to prove that the Bible is historically accurate.

### **Support #1:**

Historically speaking, a piece of writing was passed along on animal skins or papyrus, which was sort of like paper. What exists of those copies is referred to as manuscript evidence. We're just going to call them ancient copies.

### **We have over 24,000 ancient copies of the New Testament alone.**

In case you are wondering, that's a lot, more than any other ancient writing. Consider this:

### **Support #2:**

(Below is a list of secular writers, philosophers, historians, etc. Read a couple as an example, and then draw out the comparison for the students. It might need to be repeated, but it's an important point that they should be able to grasp.)

How many of you have heard of Aristotle? He was a philosopher who lived and wrote around 300 BC. However, we only have 5 copies of anything he wrote. 5! How many do we have of the New Testament alone? *(24,000)*

Tacitus was a Greek Historian, who actually wrote just a little after the Bible was completed. We have a lot from him. Guess how many? (Let them guess, hopefully they'll guess big).

The answer is 20 copies of what he wrote. How many do we have of the New Testament? *(24,000)*

As you can see, the historical evidence is huge. No one doubts Aristotle or Tacitus wrote the copies we possess, and we only have a few from them. Why would anyone doubt the Bible when it has over 1,000 times more ancient copies than anything else?

But there's more!

### Secular Manuscripts

Author	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	Copies (extent)
Herodotus (History)	480 - 425 BC	900 AD	1,300 Years	8
Thucydides (History)	460 - 400 BC	900 AD	1,300 Years	?
Aristotle (Philosopher)	384 - 332 BC	1,100 AD	1,400 Years	5
Caesar (History)	100 - 44 BC	900 AD	1,000 Years	10
Pliny (History)	61 - 113 AD	850 AD	750 Years	7
Suetonius (Roman History)	70 - 140 AD	950 AD	800 Years	?
Tacitus (Greek History)	100 AD	1,100 AD	1,000 Years	20

(Source <http://www.gotquestions.org/>)

### Support #3

#### Activity (10 minutes)

Let's play another game. This one is old school, too. How many of you remember telephone? I'm going to tell \_\_\_\_\_ (pick a person) a phrase. We're going to pass it all the way around the circle, and see what happens. The last person to get the message will tell the class what I said. Ready?

(Say something and let it get passed. Chances are it will get distorted. If you want, trace it back and try to find out where it got distorted. This will help prove the point. If it doesn't, that's okay. Either play again or just roll with it.)

There's a simple truth to that game. The further the words got from the beginning, the easier it was for them to get messed up. That's one argument against the Bible. How can we have what the original writers intended to say? It must have been twisted to what others wanted it to say, etc. Those are fair criticisms.

Just because we have a lot of ancient copies doesn't make them reliable. So, like the game of telephone, we have to figure out how close the ancient copies we have are to the originals. Again, the Bible trumps all other ancient documents.

Refer to chart above - Let's consider Aristotle again. He lived in 300 BC, and the earliest copy we have of anything he wrote is from 1100 AD, some 1,400 years earlier. That's a long time, for sure.

Tacitus is another example. His earliest copy is 1,000 years from when he lived.

In fact, the shortest span of time between the author's life and the earliest copy is 800 years.

The Bible, on the other hand, is much closer. Of the 24,000 copies we have of the New Testament, 230 of them date before 600 AD—a difference of only 550 years or so. And some of the copies date much closer. In the last 20 or so years, a study has been conducted on a portion of Matthew's Gospel that some believe is either an original or copied while Matthew was alive. There is most definitely a piece of a copy of the Gospel of John that dates to 125 AD, perhaps as soon as 35 years from John's life.

With all that evidence, and with the closeness of it to the original, why would anyone doubt the accuracy of the Bible?

Let me ask you again, do you think that is enough to say that the Bible is probably true? (Hopefully they'll say yes, but if they still have reservations, explore those and try to lead them back to the overwhelming evidence of the Scriptures)

On top of that evidence, consider the archaeological evidence and fulfilled prophecy we've already discussed. And there's a lot more we didn't cover! The Bible is a trustworthy document.

## **MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)**

There are many things in our world that claim truth. Budweiser's advertising campaign is based upon that word: True. Kool cigarettes' tag line is "Be True."

Truth matters. If the Bible is not true, we're all wasting our time. Tonight we've explored whether or not the Bible is true. If you want to study more, there's a lot of stuff you can do. I can tell you of a couple of easy-to-understand books that can help you understand even more evidence.

### **Optional Idea:**

(Silicon wristbands can be ordered for less than a dollar a piece depending on the amount needed. Check companies out online.)

To help you remember what's really true, we want to give you a wristband. It's message is simple, but the implications of that message should change the way we live. If the Bible is, in fact, true, then that means that Jesus has advised us how to live, He has forgiven our sins, and we should follow the example He has set.

## **CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)**

Pastor Carlos A. Morales

# Bible Basics – Lesson 2 Workbook

## How Can We Know the Bible is True?

### Fact or Fiction?

1. Why does it matter if the Bible is true?

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### Fulfilled Prophecy

1. What do you think about fulfilled Bible prophecies? What does it do for your faith?

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2. How do these predictions help demonstrate that the Bible is true?

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### Archeology Support

1. What type of archeological evidence supports the Bible?

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### Historical Evidence

1. What type of historical evidence is there to support the Bible?

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### Homework

- Memorize Psalm 119:160
- Obtain and read a copy of "Evidence That Demands a Verdict" by Josh McDowell and/or "The Case for Christ" by Lee Strobel.
- Continue to memorize the books of the Bible in order. If you already have the books of the Bible memorized take the time to memorize who wrote each of the books, each book's main theme, and the date it was written.

## Bible Basics

# Lesson 3: The Anatomy of the Bible

[Lesson Index](#)

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

### Goals

1. For students to learn the basic organization of the Bible
2. For students to love the way the Bible has been preserved for them
3. For students to commit to learning more basic facts about the Bible

### Topics

Guidance, Prophecy, Truth, Word of God

### Scripture Memorization

2 Timothy 3:16-17

## GROUP BUILDING (10 minutes)

Who thinks they know a lot about music?

I want to see who out of our group knows the most about songs from the last couple of years. I'm going to start a song lyric, and I want you to raise your hand when you think you know what it is. **Don't finish it.** Just raise your hand, and when we find out who knows it, we'll finish the lyric together.

*(Select 5 or more current songs that the kids may know, making sure the lyrics are acceptable.)*

Who knew all the songs? Who was lost the whole time?

There are some things you guys know a lot better than others. Some of you could play that game all night and rarely ever miss one because you know music. Some of you can list off athletes' names without missing a beat. Maybe even some of you can recite movie lines from all your favorite movies.

## GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

Now let me ask you 5 more questions. Again, raise your hand when you know the answer. Don't answer it, just raise your hand if you know it.

1. What book comes right after Obadiah? (*Jonah*)
2. How many books of the Bible did John write? (*5—the Gospel, 1-3 John, and Revelation*)
3. How many Minor Prophets are there? (*12*)
4. How much time went by between the Old and New Testaments? (*about 400 years*)
5. What genre of literature is the book of Job? (*Poetry*)

- Now, how many of you got all 5 of those right? How many were lost?

Today/Tonight we're going to start ripping the Bible apart so we can understand it better. We'll talk about how the Bible is structured as a whole. Over the next 4 weeks, we're going to break up the Old and New Testaments into even smaller parts. Starting next week, we're going to do a quiz to start out each week's lesson to see how well everything is sticking. If we see that it's not, we'll slow down and go over stuff again.

The goal, of course, is to learn about the Bible. We can rattle off song lyrics and movie lines, but how much do you know about the Bible? Obviously, we can always learn more. So let's do it!

## DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

I'm going to ask a lot of questions tonight. If you know the answer, that's cool. If you don't, don't feel bad. We're beginning at a lot of different levels, and that's okay. The goal is to be all on the same page when we get done.

### General Questions

1. How many books are in the Bible? (66)

• Can any of you recite them in order? *(If they can, let them. Tell them good job when they're done, and let the group know by the end of this study, they should be able to do the same.)*

2. How many testaments, or main parts, are in the Bible? (2) What do we call those testaments? *(Old and New.)*

Okay, we've covered some good stuff already, stuff you should know. The Bible is made up of 66 different books. These come in various forms, which we'll talk about in a minute. The 66 books are organized in 2 testaments, the Old and New Testament. Why don't you open up your Bibles to the table of contents.

3. Who knows how many books are in the Old Testament? (39) How many does that leave in the New Testament? (27)

That's right. Check that out in your table of contents. The Old Testament books, 39 of them, are Genesis through Malachi. The New Testament books, 27 of those, are Matthew through Revelation.

4. A couple weeks ago we talked about it. How many people wrote the Bible? (40)

5. Over how much time was the Bible written? *(1,500-2,000-ish years.)*

6. And what did we say was the basic difference between the Old and New Testaments? *(The OT is before Jesus, the NT is during and after Jesus.)*

So we have 66 books in 2 testaments, 39 OT books and 27 NT books. Probably not very many of you know a whole lot beyond that. Today we're going to explore a few more things. Go ahead and turn to the first book of the Bible. As we walk through different things tonight, feel free to thumb through the pages of your Bible.

### The Old Testament

The first book of the Bible is the book of Genesis. What testament is this in? *(OT)*

Good. Genesis is in the Old Testament. The OT is broken down more, though, in a way that is easy to understand. Everyone repeat after me: "Five, twelve, five, five, twelve...five, twelve, five, five, twelve."

The Old Testament is divided into 5 parts:

1. 5 books of law
2. 12 books of history
3. 5 books of poetry
4. 5 books of major prophets
5. 12 books of minor prophets

The first five books of the Bible are books of law. Flip through them in your Bible. They are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Next week, we'll break down these books more, but let's talk about them for just a second.

1. Why do you think they are classified as law? *(Because they contain the laws of God to His people, including the 10 Commandments, priestly codes, etc.)*

These books talk about creation, the flood, Abraham, Moses, the exodus, etc.

The next 12 books are books of history. Flip through those now. They are Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther.

2. Why do you think these are categorized as history? *(They tell the history of Israel from the settling of the Promised Land to the return after being in slavery to Jerusalem.)*

These books cover the lives of Joshua and Caleb; all the judges such as Sampson, Saul, and David; and the Jewish leaders after they returned from slavery.

The next five books are a bit of a different category: poetry. Turn through those in your Bibles. They are Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

3. Why do you think these are classified as poetry? (*Because they are written largely in verse, or poetry.*)

One unique thing about these books is the placement of Job within them. Much of Job is written in poetry, which is why it is placed here, but it is widely believed that Job lived at the same time as Abraham, which would mean that even though it's placed almost halfway through the Old Testament, the events it describes occurred in the time of Genesis.

The next 17 books are all prophets, but they come in two categories, 5 major prophets and 12 minor prophets. Flip through them as I read them off. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

4. Why are they called prophetic books? (*Because they are filled with prophecy, not only about Christ, but about events in the life of Israel, etc.*)

5. What do you think is the difference between major and minor prophets? (*Largely it is the length of the books although Daniel, a major prophet, is slightly shorter than Hosea, a minor prophet.*)

These books include the old childhood stories of Jonah; Daniel and the lions' den; and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

So, in the Old Testament, you can remember the categories, or genres, with the saying, "5-12-5-5-12."—5 books of law, 12 books of history, 5 books of poetry, 5 major prophets, and 12 minor prophets. Sound good? Let's move onto the New Testament. Turn in your Bibles to the book of Matthew.

## **The New Testament**

Before we move on to the NT, I want you to know a little bit about the time that passed between the Old and New Testaments. There were about 400 years that went by for which the Bible is silent. There are writings from that period, but they have never been included in our Scriptures.

The Catholic Church includes these books, called the Apocrypha. They are reliable history, and interesting to read, but they are not considered either OT or NT books.

Then, after about 400 years, the events of the New Testament started to unfold, beginning of course with the birth of Jesus.

There's no rhythmic memory tool for the New Testament like 5-12-5-5-12, but the New Testament books are pretty easy to recall. There are 4 gospels, 1 book of history, 13 letters from Paul, 8 letters from others, and 1 book of prophecy.

The first 4 books in the New Testament are all considered gospels.

- Who knows the 4 gospels? (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.*)

1. What is the meaning of the word "gospel"? (*Good news, truth.*)

The gospels are four accounts of the same thing: Jesus' life, teaching, death, and resurrection. Two of the gospels have accounts of Jesus' birth. Go ahead and flip through the 4 Gospels.

- Which two include that event? (*Matthew and Luke*)

There's much more we could say about the Gospels, and we'll do so when we talk about the New Testament books.

The next book stands alone as a New Testament history book. It is the book of Acts, and it traces the history of the church from the ascension of Christ to the arrival of the apostle Paul in Rome. Flip through Acts.

- Do you know who wrote the book of Acts? (*Luke*)

Combining the book of Acts with Luke's Gospel, it seems as though Luke wrote over half of the New Testament.

- Can you name any of the events recorded in the book of Acts? (*The Day of Pentecost, the call of Saul/Paul, Ananias and Sapphira, the Philippian jailer is converted, etc.*)

The next 13 books are letters that Paul wrote. For that reason, they are called Pauline Epistles, or Pauline Letters. Pauline wasn't Paul's sister, that's just how you say it to show that they belonged to Paul. And "epistle" is another word for "letter." He wrote to churches and individuals, instructing them on how they might live out their faith more completely. Those letters are Romans; 1 and 2 Corinthians; Galatians; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians; 1 and 2 Thessalonians; 1 and 2 Timothy; Titus; and Philemon. Flip through them and find each one.

The following 8 books are letters from people other than Paul. The authors are James, John, Jude, Peter, and one unknown. The letters are Hebrews; James; 1 and 2 Peter; 1, 2, and 3 John; and Jude. Turn the pages through these books.

- Which letter does not claim a known author? (*Hebrews.*)

These letters are written with the same motivation as the Pauline letters, but they were not written by Paul. For that reason, they are often called General Epistles.

The last book of the Bible, at which you have most likely arrived, is the book of Revelation. It is the only book of prophecy in the New Testament.

2. What does the book of Revelation talk about? (*The events leading up to the end of the age, and the promise of eternal life, etc.*)

- Who wrote Revelation? (*John, as told to by Jesus*)

That's a fast trip through the NT, but remember, there are 4 Gospels, 1 history, 21 letters, and 1 prophecy. We'll break that down more as we go through the study, but that's a good summary.

### **General Information**

There are a couple of things I want to point out—things you may not know about the structures of the Bible. You already know that it's divided into testaments, and then books, but there are even smaller division than that—chapters and verses.

1. Do any of you know when those were put in the Bible?

The truth is, the chapter divisions were first invented in 1205 by a guy named Stephen Langton. The verse divisions were adopted by the 1500s. That's relatively new, even though you've never known a Bible without them.

*(You might take time here to cover any questions any of them have about what you've talked about. Don't be afraid to admit not knowing an answer. I wouldn't be surprised if they have some really good questions.)*

### **MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)**

Okay, so let's wrap it all up.

- How many books are in the Bible?
- How many testaments?
- How many books in the OT?
- How many in the NT?
- What are the divisions in the OT?
- What about the NT?

We're going to take a quiz first thing next week, and I want you to try and remember what we've talked about tonight. This is just the beginning! There's a lot more to learn about God's Word, and we're going to learn it together.

### **CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)**

(Ask a student to close out the lesson in prayer by asking the following:)

Who will pray for us that God will continue to teach us, and that we will be willing to learn?



# Bible Basics – Lesson 3 Workbook

## The Anatomy of the Bible

### DIGGING IN

1. How many books are in the Bible?

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2. How many testaments are there in the Bible and what do you call these testaments?

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3. How many books are in the Old Testament? How many does that leave for the New Testament?

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4. How many people wrote the Bible?

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5. Over what time span was the Bible written?

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6. What is the basic difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament?

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### THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Old Testament is broken down into five parts, list them below.

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1. Why do you think the first five books are classified as law?

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2. Why do you think the next 12 books are categorized as history?

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3. Why do you think the next 12 books are classified as poetry?

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4. Why are the next 17 books called prophetic?

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5. What do you think is the difference between major and minor prophets?

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### **THE NEW TESTAMENT**

The New Testament is broken down into five parts, list them below.

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1. What is the meaning of the word Gospel?

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2. What does the book of Revelation talk about?

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### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. When was the idea of adding chapters and verse to the Bible introduced and by whom?

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### **Homework**

- Memorize 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- There will be a quiz next week, so try to remember what was covered in class and review your notes above.
- Continue to memorize the books of the Bible in order. If you already have the books of the Bible memorized, take the time to memorize who wrote each of the books, each book's main theme, and the date it was written.

## Bible Basics

# Lesson 4: Old Testament Organization (Part 1)

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

#### Goals

1. For students to understand the organization and content of the books of the Old Testament and its divisions of Law, History, and Poetry
2. To enable students to recite the books in order
3. For students to have fun learning the veracity of the Bible

#### Topics

Bible, Word Of God

#### Scripture Memorization

The books of the Old Testament in order from Genesis to Song of Solomon

### OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

### GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

(To begin today's study, have the students take the short pop quiz found in their workbooks. The questions and answers are repeated below. Encourage everyone to try the best they can to complete the quiz from memory and to avoid using their Bibles, or looking beyond the quiz in their workbooks.)

#### Workbook Activity

##### Pop Quiz

1. How many books are in the Bible? (66)
2. How many testaments? (2)
3. How many books in the OT? (39)
4. How many in the NT? (27)
5. What are the divisions in the OT? (5 law, 12 history, 5 poetry, 5 major, 12 minor)
6. What about the NT? (4 gospels, 1 history, 21 letters, 1 prophecy)

(Again, be sure everyone has a Bible. Even if they've missed a couple weeks, they can jump on board.)

Well let's dig in and learn more about the Bible. Today, we start breaking down each book. The goal is to get from Genesis to the Song of Solomon, know who wrote each book, and know the main point of each book. That means 22 books in all, so we can only spend about 90 seconds on each.

Ready? Get out your Bibles and let's flip through together.



## DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

### THE 5 BOOKS OF LAW:

#### Genesis

- What's the first book of the Bible? (*Genesis.*)
- And what category does it fall into, law, history, or poetry? (*Law.*)

Genesis is the first book of the Bible, and it's considered a book of law. The author of Genesis was Moses, but he was probably more of an editor than a writer. He wrote down the oral traditions, copying other documents that were perhaps older than he was. He did this around 1400 BC.

The theme of Genesis is "beginnings." That is what the word "genesis" means. It records the beginning of the world (Genesis 1) and the beginning of God's covenant people, Israel (Genesis 12), with the story of Abraham.

#### Exodus

Now find Exodus. It is the second book of the Bible, and coincidentally, it is also a book of Law and written by Moses, at approximately the same time as Genesis.

The theme of the book of Exodus is, as its name implies, the exit of a large group of people. In this case, it is the mass exit of Israelites from Egyptian slavery.

- Under whose leadership did the Israelites make the trek across the desert to the Promised Land? (*Besides God, Moses is the answer.*)
- What chapter records the 10 Commandments? (*Exodus 20*)

#### Leviticus

- What is the third book of the Bible? (*Leviticus*)

While the themes of Genesis and Exodus were embedded in their title, this book of law's theme is not as easy to discern. Exodus, and later Deuteronomy, give laws to the people of Israel in general; whereas, Leviticus instructs priests specifically.

The Levites were the priestly tribe of Israel who served the community. Leviticus outlines the guidelines by which the priests were supposed to serve in a holy way.

Leviticus was written by Moses at about the same time as Genesis and Exodus.

#### Numbers

The next book of law is Numbers. While it doesn't contain a lot of laws, it is grouped with the others because it was also written by Moses during about the same period.

- Who wants to guess at the theme of Numbers? (*It's numbers!*)

It's about a census, actually 2 of them, taken by Moses as Israel prepares to enter the Promised Land. Because it's about Numbers, people think it's pretty boring. But in it we have a rebellious group of people getting swallowed up by the earth (Numbers 16), a talking donkey (Numbers 22), and a war (Numbers 31).

#### Deuteronomy

- What's the next book of the Bible? (*Deuteronomy*)

Deuteronomy is the final book of the law. Its name literally means second law, and that's the major theme of the book: second law. It was written by Moses (except for the last few verses which record Moses' death), a little later than the other four, towards the end of the first decade of 1400 BC (1407 or 1406).

*(Pause here and, despite how 1st grade it might seem, recite with them the first five books of the OT together a couple of times. You will do this with the history books and poetry books as well, and then do all 22 books at the end.)*

### THE 12 BOOKS OF HISTORY

#### Joshua

The first book of history in the Old Testament is Joshua. Turn there.

- Guess who wrote it? (*Joshua.*)
- Who likes war movies? What's your favorite war movie?



Well the book of Joshua would make a great war movie. The main theme of this book is the conquest of the Promised Land by the Israelites. Joshua probably wrote it in approximately 1350 BC. Again, the last few verses tell of Joshua's death, and would have been written by someone else.

## Judges

- Who knows the next book of Old Testament History? (*Judges*)
- Does anyone know how many judges Israel had? (*12*)

You might not know who many of the judges were, but you'll recognize the names of Deborah, Gideon, and Samson. Judges is filled with stories about how these people rescued the nation of Israel, after falling captive to foreigners because of their own sin. The key message of Judges is found repeated throughout the book: "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes." (*Judges 21:25*).

The author of Judges is a little more unclear, but a pretty good guess is that Samuel wrote it around 1000 BC.

## Ruth

Ruth is next. It is possible that Samuel wrote Ruth as well, though some doubt that. It was certainly written about the same time, though: 1000ish BC.

- Can anyone sum up the story of Ruth?

### Summary of Ruth

- Ruth is a Moabite
- Ruth's husband dies but she sticks with her mother-in-law, whose husband had also died
- Even though they lived in Moab, they moved to Bethlehem together
- Ruth met a guy named Boaz, the kinsman redeemer, and they eventually marry
- Ruth becomes the great-grandmother of King David and is in Christ's lineage

One of the life-lessons in Ruth is that no matter how important you think you are, if you are faithful, God can use you. Never forget that.

## 1 & 2 Samuel

Originally one book, 1 and 2 Samuel was probably authored by a few people, most notably Samuel, the prophet Nathan, and Gad. It was likely completed just after David's reign as king, around 930 BC.

1 Samuel covers the events of Saul's reign as a king and 2 Samuel covers the events of David's reign as king. These two books are packed with stories you probably know, like David & Goliath (1 Samuel 17), David ripping off a piece of Saul's cloak while he's using the bathroom (1 Samuel 24), Saul talking to a fortune teller (1 Samuel 28), David dancing uncontrollably in the streets (2 Samuel 6), and David's sin with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11).

## 1 & 2 Kings

Also originally one book, 1 and 2 Kings takes over where the Samuels leave off. 1 Kings goes from Solomon's reign to the division of the kingdom into two parts. 2 Kings goes from that point to the deportation of Judah into captivity.

- Who can name some people mentioned in these books? (*Solomon, Hezekiah, Elijah, Elisha, etc.*)

After the kingdom divided into Israel and Judah, each nation had kings of their own.

Israel had 20 kings, and all of them were evil. Israel went into captivity in 722 B.C.

Judah had 20 kings as well, and some of them were God-fearing. Judah went into captivity in 586 B.C.

The other interesting thing about 1 and 2 Kings is the intersection that occurs in these books with Old Testament history and the prophets. Not only do we read about some prophets, like Elijah, but when we study the prophets in more detail next week, we can know the events recorded here are exactly what the prophets are speaking about.

For example, Jonah is alive around the same time as Uzziah, a king in Judah. In the year king Uzziah dies, Isaiah becomes a prophet. Hosea prophesizes in Israel when Israel is taken captive by the Assyrians. This overlap is not obvious with the way our Bibles are structured because the Old Testament isn't completely chronological.



Because of this intersection, it is believed that possibly Jeremiah or a group of prophets wrote 1 and 2 Kings.

### **1 & 2 Chronicles**

- Where have you heard the word "chronicle" before? (*The Chronicles of Narnia, as a newspaper title, etc.*)
- What do you think the word "chronicle" means? (*A record of events.*)

1 and 2 Chronicles are just that, a record of events. And, in many ways, they are repetitive. 1 Chronicles covers the same events as 1 & 2 Samuel, and 2 Chronicles covers the same events as 1 & 2 Kings.

It is widely believed that Ezra wrote 1 and 2 Chronicles around 450 BC after his return from Babylonian captivity.

### **Ezra & Nehemiah**

Speaking of Ezra, he also authored the next two books of Old Testament history, Ezra, and Nehemiah. They were written about the same time as 1 & 2 Chronicles.

In the Hebrew Bible, Ezra and Nehemiah were one book. This is true because:

1. Combined with Esther they make up the post-exilic, or post-slavery, books of history;
  2. They were both written by Ezra; and
  3. Their theme, rebuilding, is common.
- In Ezra, what is being rebuilt? (*The Temple.*)
  - In Nehemiah, what is being rebuilt? (*The walls of Jerusalem.*)

One key to remembering the difference is in the name Nehemiah. Knee-High-Miah, can refer to the height of the wall as it grew.

### **Esther**

Turn to the last book of Old Testament history, Esther. This is the second book we've listed named after a woman.

- Do you remember the first? (*Ruth.*)

Even though it falls in the Bible after Ezra and Nehemiah (it may have been written after them), the events it speaks of are actually a quarter-century before Nehemiah.

The basic story of Esther is how she uses her beauty and influence for the good of God's people instead of for selfish gain. Uniquely, there is no mention of God's name in the book, although His presence is obvious.

Esther was written sometime around 430 BC by Ezra, Nehemiah, or Mordecai, Esther's older cousin.

Now, before we continue, let's recite the twelve books of history in order a couple of times together. (*Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.*)

## **The 5 BOOKS OF POETRY**

### **Job**

Turn to the book of Job. This is the first of the five books of poetry.

- How many of you like poetry?

Whether or not you think you do, chances are you do. Modern day poetry is most often formed around music. This was also true in ancient Israel. They communicated in verse, both with and without music. While Job is odd in that it was written well before the rest of the books of poetry, and in that Job lived during the time of Abraham, not David, much of the book is written in Hebrew verse. Because of the timing of the book, many believe Moses wrote Job, although it is not certain. Job was written around 1400 BC.

- Can anyone tell us the story of Job? (*A man loses everything, suffers immensely, trusts God throughout, gets back more than he had before, etc.*)

### **Psalms**

The book of Psalms is probably the most popular of the poetry books. A lot of our worship songs are born out of the Psalms. In fact, the word "psalm" actually means sacred song or poem used in worship. Written between 1440-500 BC.

- The Psalms have many different authors. How many can you name?



Author	How many they wrote
David	73
Asaph	12
The Sons of Korah	9
Solomon	2
Herman	1
Ethan	1
Moses	1
Anonymous	51

- Who can find the longest Psalm? (*Psalms 119*)

Turn to Psalm 119. Notice that each stanza begins with a Hebrew letter of the alphabet. In fact, you might have a heading above each section in your Bible. Two psalms earlier is Psalm 117, the shortest psalm

Unlike the other books of the Bible, we should not refer to each Psalm as a chapter. Many complete Psalms were put together into one book, so it is not Psalms chapter 117, it's the 117th Psalm, or Psalm 117.

### Proverbs

- What's the next book of poetry? (*Proverbs*)
- Who wrote Proverbs? (*Solomon*)

This book of wise sayings was written around 900 BC.

### Ecclesiastes

The next book of poetry is Ecclesiastes, also written by Solomon, also around 900 BC, near the end of his life. The theme of Ecclesiastes is the meaning of life. The answer is found at the end of the book, after exploring all manner of philosophy and morality.

- Someone find and read Ecclesiastes 12:13-14.

Even though Solomon's original audience was the people of Israel, that's wisdom we can all live by.

### Song of Songs/Song of Solomon

The last book of poetry, and the last book for today, is Song of Solomon. Some people call it Song of Songs. The first title includes a reference to the author of the book, Solomon.

The theme of this book is a love relationship between Solomon and his wife. It is also viewed as a metaphor for God and his people, Israelites. The use of the husband-wife metaphor is not unique to Song of Solomon. As we'll see next week, it's also used by the minor prophet Hosea.

Song of Solomon was likely written early in Solomon's reign, around 950 BC.

Now, let's recite the five books of poetry in order a couple of times together. (*Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.*)

## MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)

Good job! Let's review quickly: (*Call on one person to answer the following questions.*)

- How many books of law are there? (5)
- What are they? (*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.*)
- How many books of history? (12)
- What are they? (*Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther.*)
- And how many books of poetry? (5)
- What are they? (*Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.*)

Good job! Let's say them all in order together. Don't forget, we'll have another quiz next week!

(Recite the names of the books together—Genesis through Song of Solomon.)

That takes us over halfway through the Old Testament. It's a lot, but you did a good job digging through it. Try to learn all those in order by next week. All we have left for the OT is the prophets, which are a little less familiar to most of us.

Again, good job! We're going to learn this stuff together! Let's pray, and then relax our brains!



# CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Pastor Carlos A. Morales





# Bible Basics – Lesson 4 Workbook

## Old Testament Organization (Part 1)

### Workbook Activity

#### Pop Quiz

1. How many books are in the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many testaments? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How many books in the OT? \_\_\_\_\_

4. How many in the NT? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What are the divisions of the OT? (Bonus - How many books in each?)

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )

6. What are the divisions of the NT? (Bonus - How many books in each?)

\_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ( )

\_\_\_\_\_ ( )

(Workbook continued on next page.)

(Use the space provided to record any comments, facts, or popular passages about each book.)

**BOOKS OF LAW**  
**Genesis**

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**Exodus**

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**Leviticus**

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**Numbers**

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**Deuteronomy**

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**BOOKS OF HISTORY**  
**Joshua**

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**Judges**

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**Ruth**

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**1st and 2nd Samuel**

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**1st and 2nd Kings**

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**1st and 2nd Chronicles**

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**Ezra**

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**Nehemiah**

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**Esther**

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**BOOKS OF POETRY**  
**Job**

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**Psalms**

<b>Author</b>	<b>How many they wrote</b>
David	73
Asaph	12
The Sons of Korah	9
Solomon	2
Herman	1
Ethan	1
Moses	1
Anonymous	51

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**Proverbs**

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**Ecclesiastes**

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**Song of Solomon (Song of Songs)**

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**Homework**

- Memorize the Old Testament books up to and including Song of Solomon in order.
- Review the comments and facts about each book, and choose one to begin reading this week.
- Commit to making Bible study part of your regular routine and quiet time.

## Bible Basics

# Lesson 5: Old Testament Organization (Part 2)

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

#### Goals

1. For students to comprehend the organization and content of the Old Testament Major and Minor Prophets
2. For students to be able to recite those books in the order in which they appear
3. For students to enjoy learning the Truth about the Bible

#### Topics

Word of God

#### Scripture Memorization

The books of the Old Testament in order from Isaiah through Malachi.

### OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

### GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

(To begin today's study, have the students take the short pop quiz found in their workbooks. The questions and answers are repeated below. Encourage everyone to try the best they can to complete the quiz from memory and to avoid using their Bibles, or looking beyond the quiz in their workbooks.)

#### Workbook Activity

##### Pop Quiz

1. How many books of the law are there? (5)
2. What are they? Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, & Deuteronomy)
3. How many books of history are there (12)
4. What are they? (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1& 2 Kings, 1& 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, & Esther)
5. How many books of poetry are there? (5)
6. What are they? (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon)

How'd you do? Good job. That covers over half the Old Testament. Today, we finish up the Old Testament by talking about the prophets.

- How many books are in the Old Testament, total? (39)
- And if we covered 22 books last week, how many books are prophets? (17—5 major and 12 minor)

(Again, be sure everyone has a Bible, and encourage them to flip through the books together with you.)

## DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

• When we talk about prophets, what exactly are we talking about? (Help them understand that prophetic books are not just about the telling of the future. The prophets were those who spoke for God—whether the events of which they spoke were future or present.)

### THE MAJOR PROPHETS

#### Isaiah

Turn to the book of Isaiah. Look it up in the table of contents if you have to.

The first prophet is the first of the five Major Prophets, Isaiah. Isaiah is considered the greatest writing prophet. His book has 66 chapters. These chapters are divided into two main sections.

The first section, chapters 1-39, deals with the coming judgment. Most prophets, as we will see, spoke to a specific group of people. This may be Judah, Israel, or foreign nations. Isaiah actually spoke to all three. Chapters 40-66 deal with the theme of redemption through the Messiah. It is in this section, particularly Isaiah 53, that we have Messianic prophecies about the Christ, which come true in the person of Jesus.

Most of the prophets we'll cover today have both judgment and redemption themes, like Isaiah.

We don't know a ton about the man Isaiah, but we do know that he wrote the first half of this book around 700 BC. The latter half might have been written toward the end of his ministry some 20 years later, or around 680 BC.

Isaiah was married and had at least 2 sons.

Have someone turn read the following key verse: **Isaiah 53:5**

#### Jeremiah

Jeremiah is known as the "weeping prophet." In fact, we'll cover another book by him next, and the title of it is "Lamentations." To lament something means to mourn over it, and Jeremiah was a sad character.

He prophesied and wrote between 627 and 586 BC directly to the people of Judah, urging them to turn from sin and embrace the Lord. Jeremiah is the longest of all the Major Prophets. In fact, it's the longest book in the entire Bible.

Despite his weariness and sadness from prophesying to a stubborn group of people, Jeremiah could not keep quiet about the Lord and His Words.

#### Read **Jeremiah 20:9**

#### Discussion Questions:

1. How hard do you think it would've been for Jeremiah to keep preaching to people who weren't listening to him?
2. Do you think it's hard to tell people about God today? For the same reason or different ones?

#### Lamentations

Again, this next book was also written by the depressed Jeremiah. He had prophesied for years about the coming destruction, and this work was composed after Jerusalem was ransacked and defeated. The Jews were being carried off into Babylonian captivity, and this book tells the story of Jeremiah's weeping.

Even though it is only 5 chapters long (the shortest of the major prophets), it is placed amongst the Major Prophets because of its author, Jeremiah.

Have someone turn to and read the following key verse: **Lamentations 2:11**

#### Ezekiel

Find Ezekiel, the fourth of the Major Prophets. While Isaiah and Jeremiah wrote preceding captivity, Ezekiel writes during captivity. His message is to those who are displaced in exile in Babylon. He himself was captive, taken from his homeland in about 597 BC. He writes this around 571 BC after 20 plus years in slavery.

His message is pretty simple: God will restore His people. He will save them from captivity. In fact, He will return them to their homeland.

Have someone find and read the following key verse: **Ezekiel 36:24-26**

## Daniel

The fifth and last of the Major Prophets is Daniel. This is one of the more familiar prophets.

- Who knows a story from Daniel? (*Daniel in the Lions' Den; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; etc.*)

Daniel was in captivity just like Ezekiel, but wrote a little later, around 535 BC according to events that took place between 605 and 535 BC, which would have been just after the Jews were allowed to return to their homeland, as Ezekiel had prophesied.

Though Daniel speaks on various topics, it is unique that he writes about those who were faithful in captivity and did not forsake the Lord.

Have someone read the following key verse: **Daniel 2:22**

That's the Major Prophets. Let's recite them together in order. (*Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*)

## THE MINOR PROPHETS

### Hosea

Hosea is the first of 12 Minor Prophets. Though considered "minor," this book is longer than both Daniel and Lamentations.

Prophesying from about 753 to 729 BC, Hosea was one of the earliest of the prophets. He prophesied to the people of the northern Kingdom of Israel, which was filled with corruption at every level. His message is plain, and it's wrapped in a true-to-life metaphor.

You see, Hosea was called by God to marry a woman named Gomer, a prostitute. He was to do this because Israel, like Gomer, had been unfaithful, and Hosea needed to understand how God felt to be able to preach effectively. So time after time, Gomer left Hosea and returned to prostitution, despite the love he showed her.

Have someone read: **Hosea 3:1**

### Joel

Next is Joel. Joel is the second of the Minor Prophets. The theme of the book of Joel is "The Day of the Lord." This is a phrase used frequently in Scripture. It is a reference to any time of judgment that foreshadows the final judgment of God. In Joel's case, it is in reference to a locust plague that would come over the people of Judah, his audience.

The events of Joel occurred between 835 and 796 BC, making him also one of the earliest prophetic writers, less than 20 years after the prophet Elijah ministered.

Read **Joel 2:12-13**

### Amos

Next is Amos. Amos was a man of low position, a shepherd, but he began to prophesy in Israel around the same time as Hosea—750 BC.

His focus, and the theme of his writing, is social justice. He talks a lot about the poor being oppressed. He is concerned with fairness for all people, as God is.

- Do you think people are still treated unfairly because of their position? Are poor people oppressed? Do rich people have advantages that they take for granted? (*Just trying to get them involved here, but they could potentially come up with some great insights.*)

Well Amos speaks for God on that very issue, the way people were treated. In fact, the key verse sums it up like this. Have someone turn to and read **Amos 5:24**

### Obadiah

- What's the next Minor Prophet in line? (*Obadiah*)

Obadiah is the shortest by far of the prophets. There's only one chapter, consisting of only 21 verses. It's an ominous book though, foretelling the doom of an enemy of Judah's, Edom. Edom was a foreign nation that took advantage of Judah's misfortune, which made God angry. Their pride would lead to their downfall.

- Does anyone know where Edom is now? (*This is a trick question. In fact, Edom never recovered from the judgment it faced, as Obadiah prophesied see verses 19-21 "Edom will vanish." The last great Edomite we know of was Herod.*)

The dates of Obadiah's prophecies are debatable, but it's likely he prophesied early, around 848-841 BC. The other possibility is as a peer of Jeremiah, around the 580 BC.

## **Jonah**

Jonah is the next Minor Prophet, and probably the most popular.

- Who can tell us the story of Jonah?

Jonah is mentioned in 2 Kings 14:25, telling us he ministered around 790-750 BC. His audience was the Assyrians, a rebellious people who he feared wouldn't listen, and might kill him, so he ran away. That's when the whole belly of the whale thing happened.

The astounding thing is that Jonah recorded these events when they put him in such a poor light. The book ends with him pouting that a nation had repented and turned to God, which really speaks to the theme of the book—God is willing to forgive anybody.

Read the following key verse: **Jonah 4:11**

## **Micah**

- What's the next minor prophet we come to? (*Micah*)

Micah probably became a prophet just a couple of years before Isaiah. He also would have been a contemporary of Hosea. He was from Moresheth, about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem. He was a small-town boy. He prophesied to both Israel and Judah around the 740 and 730 BC.

One interesting and important prophecy that Micah makes is in the fifth chapter. Have someone read **Micah 5:2**.

- Who do you think that prophesy is about. (*Jesus*)

Also read the following key verse: **Micah 6:8**

## **Nahum**

The next prophet we come to is Nahum. Nahum prophesied to the people of Nineveh.

- Which other prophet did that? (*Jonah*)

Nahum is God's voice to the Assyrians, announcing their destruction. Incidentally, Judah is also part of his audience. They are comforted by this fact.

This all takes place about 100 years after the ministry of Jonah. At the end of the book of Jonah, Nineveh is repentant of their sin, but it must not have lasted long. Nahum condemns them and tells them their judgment is certain.

Key Verse: **Nahum 1:7-9**

## **Habakkuk:**

- Who is the next prophet? Who thinks they can pronounce it? (*Ha-back-uck.*)

Habakkuk, in addition to having one of the weirdest names, is one of the most impassioned of the prophets. His opening cry is "How long, O Lord!" He prophesied to Judah just before it was taken into captivity by Babylon. He became a prophet just 7 years before Daniel was carried into exile.

Read the following key verse: **Habakkuk 2:4**

Paul quotes this verse in Romans. It becomes the thesis for Martin Luther's theology and the springboard of the Reformation movement.



## **Zephaniah**

The next prophet is Zephaniah. A prophet during the time of King Josiah (*see 2 Kings 22:1-23:25*), Zephaniah's message is to the southern Kingdom of Judah. It may have spurred one of the reforms by King Josiah. As the great-grandson of a king (King Hezekiah), Zephaniah was King Josiah's cousin. In that way, Zephaniah is a unique and rather high-profile prophet.

Key Verse: **Zephaniah 2:3**

## **Haggai:**

The next prophet in the Old Testament is Haggai. He is what we call a post-exilic prophet, or after the exile. This means that he prophesied to the people living in Jerusalem when they returned from captivity.

This puts his prophetic ministry at about 520 BC. His message is simple and to the point; they need to finish building the temple of God. The tendency for those returning was to build up fine houses for themselves, while the temple was in ruins. This key verse of Haggai stands in contradiction to that practice.

Turn to and read **Haggai 1:4**

## **Zechariah**

- Who is the next minor prophet? (*Zechariah.*)

Zechariah prophesied from about 520 to 480 BC. It seems like his book is split into two sections, with the first half being written in about 518 and the second half being written around 480. Zechariah is unique in that much of his writing, especially chapters 9 through 14 are apocalyptic in nature.

- Do any of you know what I mean by apocalyptic? (*Using symbolic language to describe ultimate destruction.*)

He refers to the coming Messiah often, inspiring hope amongst the people.

Read **Zechariah 9:9-10**

- Do you know anyone in the New Testament who fits that description? (*Jesus*)

## **Malachi:**

Malachi is the last of our prophets, and the last book in the Old Testament. He wrote very late, around 430 BC to the people in Jerusalem. His purpose was to confront their sin and inspire them in their faith in God.

He was the last of the prophets until the time of Christ.

Key Verse: **Malachi 4:1-2**

We made it. Let's recite the Minor Prophets in order together. (*Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*)

## **MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)**

Okay, let's try getting all 17 prophets in order. To make it easier, we'll recite the 5 major prophets. Then we'll recite the 12 minor prophets in groups of four.

Major: (*Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel*)

Minor: (*Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah*)

(*Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk*)

(*Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*)

(repeat a couple times)

Good job, guys! You're going to get it. Next week we'll take a quiz, and all I want you to know is how many major prophets there are and how many minor prophets there are. Tell me who they are in order. Just be happy I'm not making you spell them correctly!

## CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

Pastor Carlos A. Morales

# Bible Basics – Lesson 5 Workbook

## Old Testament Organization (Part 2)

### Workbook Activity

#### Pop Quiz

1. How many books of the law are there? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are they?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How many books of history are there? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What are they?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How many books of poetry are there? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What are they?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Workbook continued on next page.)

(Use the space provided to record any comments, facts, or popular passages about each book.)

**THE MINOR PROPHETS**

**Isaiah**

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**Jeremiah**

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**Jeremiah 20:9**

1. How hard do you think it would've been for Jeremiah to keep preaching to people who weren't listening to him?

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2. Do you think it's hard to tell people about God today? For the same reason or different ones?

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**Lamentations**

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**Ezekiel**

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**Daniel**

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**THE MINOR PROPHETS**

**Hosea**

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**Joel**

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**Amos**

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**Obadiah**

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**Jonah**

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**Micah**

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**Nahum**

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**Habakkuk**

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**Zephaniah**

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**Haggai**

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**Zechariah**

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**Malachi**

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**Homework**

- Memorize the books of Prophecy in the Old Testament.
- Continue to practice saying all the books of the Old Testament in order.
- Commit to making Bible study part of your regular routine and quiet time.

## Bible Basics

# Lesson 6: New Testament Organization (Part 1)

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

### Goals

1. For students to comprehend the organization and content of the New Testament books up to and including Colossians
2. For students to recite those books in the order in which they appear
3. For student to enjoy learning the Truth about the Bible

### Topics

Word of God

### Scripture Memorization

The books of the New Testament in order from Matthew up to and including Colossians

## OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

## GROUP BUILDING (5 minutes)

Have the students pair off, and practice reciting the books of the Old Testament together starting with Genesis. To form pairs, count the total number of students, and divide by two. (For example if you have 18 students, the number is 9.) Have everyone count to that number, and then start over and count to that number again. Remind everyone to remember their number. Everyone should find the other person with the same number to pair up with.

## GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

(To begin today's study, have the students take the short pop quiz found in their workbooks. The questions and answers are repeated below. Encourage everyone to try their best to complete the quiz from memory and not by using their Bible, or looking beyond the quiz in their workbooks.)

### Workbook Activity

#### Pop Quiz

1. How many Major Prophets are there? (5)
2. Who are they? (*Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, & Daniel*)
3. How many Minor Prophets are there? (12)
4. Who are they? (*Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, & Malachi*)

Last week we talked about prophets, and we often mentioned that they spoke of the Messiah who was to come. This week, we'll dig into the New Testament to learn about our Messiah, Jesus.

- Who remembers the basic difference between the Old and New Testament? (*The Old Testament talks about things before Christ, the New Testament talks about things during and after Christ.*)

## DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

The New Testament is organized pretty simply. Today we're going to try and get through a little over half of the New Testament. This will take us through four Gospels, one book of history, and seven of Paul's letters. Next week, we'll cover the rest. In your workbooks, you will find space to record facts and comments about each of the books we will cover today. Let's get started learning about Jesus! Turn to the New Testament.

### GOSPELS

#### Matthew

- Whose Gospel comes first? (*Matthew's.*)
- Does anyone know why Matthew's Gospel comes first? (*Because of the way his Gospel links the Old and New Testaments.*)

The truth is, Matthew writes to a Jewish audience. Each of the Gospels was written with a different audience in mind. Another way of putting that is that each of the Gospels' authors had a different purpose in writing what he did. Sometimes, that resulted in recording the same events in exactly the same way. Other times, they gave more or less detail, depending on who they were trying to reach.

The Jewish community was Matthew's audience. He himself was Jewish, The way he wrote his Gospel was unique in that his main purpose was to prove to Jews that Jesus was the Messiah who had been promised in the Old Testament.

#### Unique Facts about Matthew

- He quotes the Old Testament 53 times
- He references the Old Testament an additional 76 times
- He uses Old Testament language, such as "Son of David"
- He includes a family tree of Jesus, something the Jewish community would have valued
- He uses Jewish lingo
- He wrote his Gospel about 30-35 years after Jesus was resurrected, around 65 AD. By this time, he was a leader in the early church. In fact, he is the only Gospel writer to mention the church by name

(If time permits, share some popular passages that everyone should recognize. For example: The Christmas Story *Matthew 1:1-25*, The Beatitudes *Matthew 5:3-10*, or The Great Commission *Matthew 28:16-20*)

#### Mark

- Whose Gospel comes next? (*Mark.*)

One of the things we can't help but notice about Mark is how busy Jesus seems. In the Greek, the word used over and over is "euthus," which means "immediately." Mark leaves out a birth narrative, launching directly into the work of Christ.

- Why do you think Mark did that? (*Just a question to get them thinking, no real right or wrong answers here*)

(If time permits, read a few popular passages, such as: The Paralytic is Healed, *Mark 2:1-12.*)

#### Unique Facts about Mark

- It is the shortest Gospel, at only 16 chapters.
- Like *Luke*, it is a Gospel written by a non-disciple
- It is written with a Gentile (or non-Jewish), audience in mind
- He emphasizes what Jesus did, not what He taught
- It is probably the earliest Gospel written, approximately 55AD. In fact some people speculate that Matthew and Luke used the Gospel according to Mark as one of their sources during their research



## Luke

The next gospel is Luke. Luke is the only Gentile author of a book of the Bible. That means that he was not Jewish. But he came to faith in Christ, and we know that he traveled with the Apostle Paul.

Luke was a physician, a Greek, and a devout historian. He researched and considered his writing before doing so. His style is extremely reliable. This is important, as he wrote over half the New Testament with his Gospel and the book of Acts, as we'll learn later.

His Gospel is written to gentiles in general. It is directly addressed to "Theophilus," which means "love of God." This could be an individual or a general term describing a group of people.

Because we know he wrote Acts, and because we know he wrote his Gospel before he wrote Acts, we can date his Gospel writing to approximately 60 AD.

One of the themes Luke dwells on is the influence of the Holy Spirit. This is prominent in both his Gospel (note Luke's birth, baptism, ministry, and resurrection accounts) and the book of Acts (the Day of Pentecost, the death of Ananias and Sapphira, others). Also unique in Luke is that he pays more attention to Jesus' early life. This is as close to a complete biography of Jesus as we get in the Gospels.

(As time permits, cover a few popular passages: The Good Samaritan *Luke 10:25-37*, The Lost Sheep, Coin, & Son, *Luke 15* or The Story of Zacchaeus, *Luke 19:1-10*.)

## John

- What is the last of the four Gospels? (*John*)
- What strikes you as different about the John's Gospel?

Whereas Matthew, Mark, and Luke have a lot in common, John departs a bit from the norm. The first three are called the synoptic Gospels, meaning they see things the same way. John is non-synoptic, meaning he comes at the story of Jesus from a slightly different angle. This purpose of John's Gospel is less historic, and more evangelistic.

### Unique Facts about John

- If it weren't for John, we wouldn't know that Jesus' ministry lasted 3 years
- John spends almost half of his Gospel talking about the last week of Jesus' life
- John was probably the last of the Gospels to be written, perhaps as late as 85 AD
- John was a disciple, but also part of the inner circle and gives us otherwise unknown information
- John contains words from Christ on the cross, as he was the only disciple present at the crucifixion
- Of the 8 miracles he records, 6 are not found in any other Gospel
- The conversation of Jesus with the disciples in the Upper Room before He dies is unique to John
- 90% of John is unique to him and not duplicated by any other author
- John does not record the genealogy, birth, childhood, temptation, transfiguration, parables, ascension, or the Great Commission of Jesus.

(As time permits, cover a few popular passages: For God So Loved, *John 3:16*, The Woman at the Well, *John 4*, The Feeding of the 5,000, *John 6*, The Vine and Branches, *John 15*.)

Before moving on, let's recite the names of the four Gospels together. *Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*.

## HISTORY

### Acts

After the four Gospel accounts, the New Testament has one book of history.

- What book is that? (*Acts*)
- And does anyone remember from our discussion earlier who wrote Acts? (*Luke, the author of the Gospel by the same name.*)

Luke wrote Acts, and as a traveler with Paul on his missionary journeys, he records the early history of the church after the resurrection of Jesus.

Acts was written by Luke somewhere between 60 and 70 AD. Though it's often called the Acts of the Apostles, it really only focuses on Peter for a few of the first chapters before settling on the life of Paul. For this reason, some have proposed it being known as the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

Some popular passages are: The Day of Pentecost, *chapter 2*; Ananias and Sapphira, *chapter 5*; The Philippian Jailer Converted, *chapter 16*.

Acts is the only book of New Testament history. With the exception of the book of Revelation, the rest of the books we will cover, both this week and next, fit into the time frame that is recorded in the book of Acts, a span of only about 35-40 years.

The next 13 books we'll cover are all letters from Paul. We'll cover 7 of the 13 tonight. In general, the title given to a book is who it was written to. Most of the names are cities. Some are people. It's usually pretty easy to tell which is which. The first letter from Paul is to the Romans.

## **LETTERS**

### **Romans**

Romans is considered one of the most theologically intense books of the Bible. Paul writes it to the church in Rome to set some things straight as well as to announce that he would be visiting. Like many of his letters, though, it may have ended up being passed around, so it has meaning for all of us.

Paul probably wrote Romans in about 57 AD.

(If time permits, review some popular verses in Romans: *Romans 1:16, Romans 3:23, Romans 8:28*.)

### **1 & 2 Corinthians**

The next two books of the New Testament go together.

- Does anyone know what they are? (*1 and 2 Corinthians*.)

Again, Paul wrote these two letters to the church at Corinth. His purpose is to help identify some of the problems in the Corinthian church and counsel them towards solutions, and then congratulate them on their progress.

Paul founded the church on an earlier missionary journey; however, he writes to the church on his third journey in 55 AD (1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians).

(If time permits, review some popular passages: The Love Chapter, *1 Corinthians 13*.)

### **Galatians**

- What's the next book of the New Testament? (*Galatians*.)

That author of Galatians is again, Paul. By the way, as we walk through these books, you should know that there is no credible evidence that anyone except Paul wrote these letters. This should help you as you formulate beliefs about how true the Bible is.

Galatians was one of the earliest of Paul's letters, written in about 49 AD. When he says Galatians, he is dealing with a group of churches, not one in particular. Where Rome was a city (like New York), Galatia was a region (like the Northeast). So Paul is not writing to any single church, but a group.

The theme is the free gift of salvation through Jesus. Jews who were becoming Christians were claiming that Gentiles had to become Jews before they could become Christians, a claim Paul (a Jew himself) refutes in this letter.

(If time permits, cover at least one popular passage, for example The Fruit of the Spirit, *Galatians 5:22-23*.)

### **Ephesians**

The next letter is the letter to the Ephesians.

- Who do you think wrote Ephesians? (*If they don't get this, they're probably not paying attention. It's Paul.*)

Ephesians was written in about 60 AD to the Ephesians, but may have been meant to be a circular letter. The theme is unity in the body of Christ.

(Popular Passage: The Armor of God, *Ephesians 6:10-20*.)

## **Philippians**

- What's the next book of the New Testament? (*Philippians*)
- Who wrote it? (*Paul*)

Unlike some of the other letters Paul wrote to correct churches, the letter to the Philippians is meant to encourage them and thank them. He wrote it from jail in Rome in about 61 AD, just one year after he wrote to the Ephesians. His theme is joy (*see Philippians 4:4*), which is ironic considering his imprisoned state.

The church in Philippi was the first established in Asia (*see Acts 16*), and held a dear place in Paul's heart.

(Popular verse: "I Can Do All Things..." *Philippians 4:13*)

## **Colossians**

The last letter we'll cover this week is Paul's letter to the church in Colossae, or the letter to the Colossians. It was written in about 60 AD. The purpose was to correct errors in the theology held by some in that city.

(If time permits, cover a popular passage such as, *Colossians 1:15-20*)

Now, let's recite the names of the first seven letters (*Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians*)

## **MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)**

Good job! Believe it or not, we're a little over halfway through the books of the New Testament. Next week, we'll cover the second half, from 1 and 2 Thessalonians to Revelation.

Let's try to recite Matthew through Colossians again without making a mistake. (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.*)

Next week's quiz will cover these books.

## **CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)**

Pastor Carlos A. Morales

# Bible Basics – Lesson 6 Workbook

## New Testament Organization (Part 1)

### Workbook Activity

#### Pop Quiz

1. How many Major Prophets are there? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are they?

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

3. How many Minor Prophets are there? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What are they?

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

(Workbook continued on next page.)

(Use the space provided to record any comments, facts and popular passages about each book)

**GOSPELS**  
**Matthew**

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**Mark**

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**Luke**

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**John**

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**HISTORY**  
**Acts**

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**LETTERS**  
**Romans**

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**1st and 2nd Corinthians**

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**Galatians**

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**Ephesians**

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**Philippians**

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**Colossians**

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**Homework**

- Continue to Memorize the Old Testament and New Testament books of the Bible in order to Colossians.
- Choose one chapter in one of Paul's letters, and read it several times. Be ready to share its message next week.
- Commit to making Bible study part of your regular routine and quiet time.

## Bible Basics

# Lesson 7: New Testament Organization (Part 2)

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

### Goals

1. For students to comprehend the organization and content of the New Testament books, from 1 Thessalonians to Revelation.
2. For students to recite the assigned books in the order in which they appear in the Bible
3. For students to enjoy learning the Truth about the Bible.

### Topics

Word of God

### Scripture Memorization

The New Testament books from 1 Thessalonians through Revelation.

## OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

## GROUP BUILDING (5 minutes)

Have the class take a few minutes while each student greets at least three other students in the room. Tell them to share with one another which of Paul's letters each of them chose to read during the past week as homework. Have them explore the insights they gained while reading.

## GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

To begin today's study, have the students take the short pop quiz found in their workbooks. The questions and answers are repeated below. Encourage everyone to try his or her best to complete the quiz from memory without using the Bible, or looking ahead in the workbook.

### Workbook Activity

#### Pop Quiz

1. How many Gospels are there? (4)
2. What are they called/who wrote them? (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*)
3. What is the one book of New Testament history? *Who wrote it?* (*Acts/Luke*)
4. What are the first 7 letters we studied? Who wrote all of them?  
(*Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, all written by Paul*)

Today we're going to launch into the second half of the New Testament. We're almost done! Next week, we'll do our quiz again and see how much you learned, as well as talk about where to go from here, studying the Bible, etc.

So let's dig in and finish up our trip through the Bible.

## DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

Last week we stopped at Colossians, in the middle of Paul's letters. Today we'll cover the rest of his letters, the General Epistles, or letters written by others, and the final book of the Bible, Revelation. Turn to the first book we'll study today, 1 Thessalonians.

In your workbooks, you will find space to record facts and comments about each of the books we will cover today.

### LETTERS (Continued)

#### 1 & 2 Thessalonians

These two letters were written by Paul. Obviously, 1 Thessalonians was written first, but probably only by a few months before 2 Thessalonians. The purpose was specifically to encourage the church to continue in their new faith.

Paul founded the Thessalonian Church on a previous missionary journey. Both of these letters contain an undercurrent of concern with the return of Christ (see popular passages).

One popular passage is 1 Thessalonians 5:2 (*If time permits, have someone read this verse for the class.*)

#### 1 & 2 Timothy

1 and 2 Timothy, along with Titus, are called the Pastoral Epistles, or the Pastoral Letters. This is because of how they are written. The content of these two, the Timothies, and Titus is geared towards instruction about how the church should care for people. They even get into how the church should function organizationally.

As for 1 & 2 Timothy, the audience is Timothy, a young helper of Paul who Paul calls "a son in the faith." Because of his youth, Timothy is up against some challenges in the church where he serves, which is in Ephesus.

Both 1 and 2 Timothy read pretty much like an instruction manual. 1 Timothy was written around 64 AD, with 2 Timothy coming a couple of years later, in 66 or 67 AD.

Some popular passages are: 1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 4:6-8

#### Read 1 Timothy 4:12

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Paul said that to Timothy?
2. Do any of you feel like that's still true today?

#### Titus

- The next book is Titus. Who do you think wrote it? (*Paul.*)

Again, this is also a Pastoral Letter. In it, Paul gives Titus instructions on how to manage the church. Titus' location is Crete, an island in the Mediterranean Sea. It was written about the same time as the Timothies, or 64 AD.

One well known passage is Titus 1:15. (*If time permits, have someone read this verse for the class.*)

#### Philemon

The next book of the New Testament is Philemon. Turn there.

Philemon is the last book of the New Testament that we are certain Paul wrote. He wrote it to a man named Philemon, who was a member of the Colossian church, in about 60 AD.

The purpose of Philemon is simple: Paul is encouraging Philemon to forgive his runaway slave, Onesimus, and not to mistreat him. Philemon is not widely read but it gives us a look inside how Paul related to individuals and was a pastor to many, all over the known world at that time.

That concludes the letters written by Paul. Let's review all of them together, including those from last week, starting with Romans. Let's recite them together. (*Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.*)



## Hebrews

- What's the next book we find? (*Hebrews.*)

This is the first book of what we call the general epistles, or general letters. All that really means is that they were written by someone other than Paul. There are 8 of these letters, and the first is Hebrews.

There is some debate over who wrote the letter to the Hebrews. Some suggest that Paul wrote it, in fact. But we cannot be certain. Other possibilities include Luke, Barnabas, or even a student of Paul's. The bottom line is, we cannot be sure.

There is also uncertainty over the date that it was written. We know it was before 70 AD, but other than that there is no real way to firm it up.

One thing that is not a mystery in Hebrews is the message. The theme of Hebrews is sufficiency of Christ. The author writes to Jewish Christians to explain that Jesus is enough, and the old traditions are unnecessary.

- Anyone know any popular passages in Hebrews?

Some popular passages include: The Hall of Faith, *Hebrews 11* and The Cloud of Witnesses, *Hebrews 12: 1-3*. (*Have someone read these passages if time allows*)

## James

- What's the next book? (*James*)
- Who was James the brother of? (*Jesus*)

As Jesus' brother, James did not believe in Him until after His resurrection. At that point he became a leader in the early church, and writes this letter to expose hypocrisy amongst Jewish Christians of his day.

He wrote the letter pretty early, about 49 or 50 AD. It reads similar to Old Testament wisdom literature, and has been called the Proverbs of the New Testament. Of the General Epistles, it is probably the most popular.

Some popular passages in James are: *James 1:2; 2:18; 3:10; 4:7; 5:16*. (*If time permits have someone read a few of them.*)

## 1 & 2 Peter:

The next two letters are 1 and 2 Peter.

- Who do you think wrote these? (*Peter.*)

Who wrote these two letters is easy. What you might not know is the back story of why he wrote them. There was a great persecution going on in the Roman Empire against Christians. It is during this persecution that Peter was eventually killed. As he writes 1 Peter in 62-64 AD and 2 Peter in approximately 67 AD, Christians empire-wide are being tortured and are suffering for their faith. That sets the backdrop for his letters, which are themed around encouragement for the suffering.

Some popular passages are: *1 Peter 1:15; 2:9; and 2 Peter 3:8*.

## 1, 2, & 3 John

- The next three books bare the same name, what are they? (*1, 2, and 3 John*)
- Who wrote these books? (*John*)

What makes the three epistles of John unique is that they don't seem to be addressed to any church in particular. 1 John is addressed to no one. 2 John is addressed to a "chosen lady," and 3 John to Gaius. 2 and 3 John are really short, too, adding to their uniqueness.

However, John's letters have much to say. Speaking on themes of love, truth, and laced with warnings not to be swept away by false teachings, these letters offer valuable guidance even today.

Some popular passages are: *1 John 1:9; 3:1; 2 John verse 5; and 3 John verse 11*.

## Jude

The last of the general letters is Jude, whose author bore the same name. Jude was also a brother of Jesus and, like James, did not believe in His brother from the beginning. He wrote in about 65 AD. Similar to 2 and 3 John, Jude has only one chapter. The theme is to avoid evil-doers and do good.

One popular passages is: *Jude verses 22-23*.

That concludes the letters not written by Paul. Let's review all of them, and recite them together. (*Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, and Jude.*)

## **PROPHECY**

### **Revelation**

- Alright, what's the last book of the New Testament? (*Revelation, not Revelations*)

Revelation is the only New Testament book of prophecy. It has been studied for centuries as a book that offers us clues to the end of the age, and indeed it does. But it is also a book that had a first-century purpose, and its themes are much simpler than have been sensationalized by our modern times.

The true theme of Revelation is hope for believers. As Christians endured suffering and persecution for their faith, the book of Revelation offers a glimpse at the end result, something anyone who is struggling needs. What was revealed was a glorious hope in Christ, an eternal hope in Heaven, and a reason to worship presently.

The apostle John recorded the words of Revelation as they were spoken to him by Jesus when he was in captivity on an Island called Patmos.

There are many interesting passages in Revelation, here are some popular ones: *Revelation 1:3; 3:16;* and The New Jerusalem *Revelation 21*. (If time permits, have someone read these passages.)

## **MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)**

That's it! Let's recite all the books we covered today, starting with 1 Thessalonians all the way through Revelation. Now let's do Matthew through Revelation. (*Say these together with the students*)

Next week we're going to have a little quiz on all the books of the Bible. It will be a lot like the first one we took at the beginning of our study. Also next week, we'll talk about how to best study the Bible so that we can get the most out of it. So study hard! It's gonna be fun.

## **CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)**

Pastor Carlos A. Morales

## Bible Basics

# Lesson 7: New Testament Organization (Part 2)

**Lessons in this series:** [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#) [5](#) [6](#) **7** [8](#) [Overview](#)

[Lesson Index](#)

**Lesson Workbook (PDF)** [Click here](#)

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As Jesus' brother, James did not believe in Him until after His resurrection. At that point he became a leader in the early church, and writes this letter to expose hypocrisy amongst Jewish Christians of his day.

He wrote the letter pretty early, about 49 or 50 AD. It reads similar to Old Testament wisdom literature, and has been called the Proverbs of the New Testament. Of the General Epistles, it is probably the most popular.

Some popular passages in James are: *James 1:2; 2:18; 3:10; 4:7; 5:16*. (*If time permits have someone read a few of them.*)

## 1 & 2 Peter:

The next two letters are 1 and 2 Peter.

- Who do you think wrote these? (*Peter.*)

Who wrote these two letters is easy. What you might not know is the back story of why he wrote them. There was a great persecution going on in the Roman Empire against Christians. It is during this persecution that Peter was eventually killed. As he writes 1 Peter in 62-64 AD and 2 Peter in approximately 67 AD, Christians empire-wide are being tortured and are suffering for their faith. That sets the backdrop for his letters, which are themed around encouragement for the suffering.

Some popular passages are: *1 Peter 1:15; 2:9; and 2 Peter 3:8*.

## 1, 2, & 3 John

- The next three books bare the same name, what are they? (*1, 2, and 3 John*)
- Who wrote these books? (*John*)

What makes the three epistles of John unique is that they don't seem to be addressed to any church in particular. 1 John is addressed to no one. 2 John is addressed to a "chosen lady," and 3 John to Gaius. 2 and 3 John are really short, too, adding to their uniqueness.

However, John's letters have much to say. Speaking on themes of love, truth, and laced with warnings not to be swept away by false teachings, these letters offer valuable guidance even today.

Some popular passages are: *1 John 1:9; 3:1; 2 John verse 5; and 3 John verse 11*.

## Jude

The last of the general letters is Jude, whose author bore the same name. Jude was also a brother of Jesus and, like James, did not believe in His brother from the beginning. He wrote in about 65 AD. Similar to 2 and 3 John, Jude has only one chapter. The theme is to avoid evil-doers and do good.

One popular passages is: *Jude verses 22-23*.

That concludes the letters not written by Paul. Let's review all of them, and recite them together. (*Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, and Jude.*)

## **PROPHECY**

### **Revelation**

- Alright, what's the last book of the New Testament? (*Revelation, not Revelations*)

Revelation is the only New Testament book of prophecy. It has been studied for centuries as a book that offers us clues to the end of the age, and indeed it does. But it is also a book that had a first-century purpose, and its themes are much simpler than have been sensationalized by our modern times.

The true theme of Revelation is hope for believers. As Christians endured suffering and persecution for their faith, the book of Revelation offers a glimpse at the end result, something anyone who is struggling needs. What was revealed was a glorious hope in Christ, an eternal hope in Heaven, and a reason to worship presently.

The apostle John recorded the words of Revelation as they were spoken to him by Jesus when he was in captivity on an Island called Patmos.

There are many interesting passages in Revelation, here are some popular ones: *Revelation 1:3; 3:16;* and *The New Jerusalem Revelation 21*. (If time permits, have someone read these passages.)

## **MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)**

That's it! Let's recite all the books we covered today, starting with 1 Thessalonians all the way through Revelation. Now let's do Matthew through Revelation. (*Say these together with the students*)

Next week we're going to have a little quiz on all the books of the Bible. It will be a lot like the first one we took at the beginning of our study. Also next week, we'll talk about how to best study the Bible so that we can get the most out of it. So study hard! It's gonna be fun.

## **CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)**

## Bible Basics

# Lesson 8: How to Study the Bible

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

### Goals

1. For students to understand how they can effectively study the Bible
2. To give ample opportunity to practice proper study methods
3. For students to develop the habit of regular Bible study

### Topics

Habits, Quiet Time, Word of God

### Scripture Memorization

Students should now be familiar with all of the books of the Bible. Additionally, they have been given an opportunity to memorize them in order. Continue to practice and make an extra big deal out of being able to recite them correctly. Have simple prizes ready for everyone. Encourage and congratulate them for their hard work.

### OPENING PRAYER (5 to 10 minutes)

### GROUP BUILDING (5 minutes)

Take a few minutes and greet at least three other persons in the room. Share with them your favorite Old and New Testament books of the Bible. Explain why those are your favorite. Take special note of anyone with the same favorites.

### GETTING STARTED (10 minutes)

To begin today's study, have the students take the same quiz as the beginning of the lesson series.

- Who did better this time than the first time? (*Congratulate them on their hard work and progress.*)

After our marathon trip through the Bible, we want to do one last lesson focusing on how to study the Bible. Once you know the basics of the Scriptures, it's important to keep going, keep learning, and keep discovering things about Jesus you didn't know before.

- What are some ways we can study the Bible? (*Let the students share different ideas to start them thinking.*)

### DIGGING IN (30 minutes)

Today, we are going to cover three major actions to include when studying the Bible. Then, we're going to practice them together. The three actions are Pray, Read, and Ask.

## Action 1: Pray

### Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think it's important that we pray before we read the Bible? (*Studying the Bible is more like us and God on either end of a walkie-talkie than it is God on a mega phone. Before we even turn a single page of the Scriptures, we should pray to God.*)

2. For what sorts of things should we pray? (*For wisdom to see what He wants us to see, thank Him that we have His words in the first place, etc.*)

Make prayer a part of your habit when it comes to Bible reading. There might be times when you really need guidance. Pray that God will provide it through His Word. You might be really busy, and you just need refreshment and quiet time. In this case, pray that you find it. Alternatively, just thank God that you have His Word available to read in the first place. All of this is appropriate.

## Action 2: Read

### Discussion Questions:

1. What do you think is the best way to read the Bible? (*Allow for answers.*)

2. Have any of you read the entire Bible yet? (*Have a show of hands.*)

When we read the Bible, we need to read it for all it's worth. Some people think that reading a verse or two is enough, or that just opening the Bible and starting to read is a good way to study. It may be better than nothing, but it's not the best way to study. Let's test that theory.

Open your Bibles to **Matthew 18:20**. Whoever gets there first read the verse.

3. What does that verse mean? (*Allow for answers.*)

4. How do you know it means that? (*Again, allow for answers.*)

Most people quote that text as meaning that if Christians are together, then God is there with them. While that's true, that's not what this verse is talking about.

Instead, this text is talking about confronting people who sin. The essence of what Jesus is saying is, if a few of you gather to confront someone, and you are doing it in the way I've told you, you are doing it with my authority too. I'm there with you.

So you see, taking one verse and picking it out of the ones around it can distort the meaning of the text. This is called reading a verse out of context. An easier way of putting that is by saying we need to be able to understand where the author is coming from to get the full meaning of each verse.

## Optional Activity (5 minutes)

### What Does it Make? (Object Talk)

Bring one piece from a jigsaw puzzle with you to class. Hold it up and ask everyone what picture it makes. Pass it around. Let everyone guess, but don't reveal the answer at first. If you have a very large class, bring more than one piece. Make sure the piece will not give away the total picture. Allow for guesses. Chances are no one will be able to guess the completed picture.

You will compare this to reading only one verse or chapter of the Bible, which may not provide the full context.

When you read scripture you need to read it with the big picture in mind. It's not always possible to pick out just one chapter or just one verse and think you can understand what it means any more than you can tell what a puzzle is supposed to be by only looking at one piece.

I encourage you to read what you read a few times. Sometimes when we read something we don't quite understand it the first time. There are some complicated things in Scripture that deserve a closer look. I encourage you to read things at least two to three times. If you are going to read a chapter, read it twice before moving on. Especially pay attention to things that don't quite make sense, and then go back and read those again.

## Action 3: Ask



When reading the Bible, you need to ask some questions of yourself. Here are two you should always ask as you're reading:

- What does this passage mean? Always keep in mind the context of the passage.
- What does this passage mean to me? (*Life Application*)

Chances are, there are going to be things you don't understand. The Bible is filled with difficult and baffling questions.

#### **Examples of Bible-baffling Questions:**

- Who did Cain marry?
- How did dinosaurs fit on the ark?
- Why are there different lists of people visiting the tomb on Resurrection morning?
- If the Bible says "thou shalt not kill," why does God command His army to go into villages and kill every man, woman, and child?

When you discover things about the Bible that you don't understand, it's important that you seek the answers.

#### **Discussion Questions**

1. How can you go about getting answers to baffling questions or help with understanding the meaning of difficult passages? (*Ask a youth pastor or another person you can trust to help you understand, discuss with small groups, read other books or study notes.*)

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Above all, ask God to give you the wisdom to understand His Word.

### **MAKING IT REAL (10 minutes)**

Everyone turn to the book of James. Remember where that is? We're going to try this study method together. First, let's pray and ask God to help us hear His voice. (Have someone pray for your group.)

Alright, let's read together James 2:1-4. (Pick someone to read.)

- What should we do now? (*Hopefully they'll say, "read it again." Go ahead and do so.*)

We've prayed, we've read, now let's ask some questions.

- What doesn't make sense to you? Anything you don't understand? (Talk through any issues they might have.)
- What would this passage have meant to its original reader, the reader to whom James wrote?
- How does this passage apply to your life?

Good job. You've just studied the Bible! Was that easy or hard?

(If you have time, repeat this exercise with some other passages. Try Matthew 5:1-12, Genesis 3, or any other passage.)

The Bible is not just words, but God's words at your fingertips. The basic things that we've talked about the past few weeks will enable you to hear from the God of the universe, the very One who created us and died for our sins. Not to study it more deeply means not knowing who that God is. I want us all to commit to studying the Bible regularly. Hopefully, you've enjoyed our trip through the Bible.

### **CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)**

Pastor Carlos A. Morales

# Bible Basics – Lesson 8 Workbook

## How to Study the Bible

### Action 1: Pray

1. Why do you think it's important that we pray before we read the Bible?

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2. For what sorts of things should we pray?

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### Action 2: Read

1. What do you think is the best way to read the Bible?

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2. Have any of you read the entire Bible yet? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

### Matthew 18:20

3. What does that verse mean?

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4. How do you know it means that?

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5. Do you see how taking one verse and picking it out of the ones around it can distort the meaning of the text?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**Action 3: Ask**

**Two questions you should always ask as you're reading.**

- What does this passage mean? Always keep in mind the context of the passage.
- What does this passage mean to me? (Life Application)

1. How can you go about getting answers to baffling questions or help with understanding the meaning of difficult passages?

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**Homework:**

- Continue to Memorize the books of the Old and New Testaments in the order they appear in the Bible. After you can do this, try to do it in less time. Saying them all in less than 30 seconds can be a real challenge.
- Choose a book of the Bible, and use the methods presented in this lesson to study it and meditate on it.
- Commit to making Bible study part of your regular routine and quiet time.