

Lesson One: The Bible

1. The Bible is described as the greatest book in the world
 - a. It is the greatest in **subject matter**
 - b. It is the greatest in **influence on lives and nations**
 - c. It answers mans' greatest need: **salvation**
2. Eight themes to describe the Bible
 - a. Revelation refers to **the act of God** which gave people knowledge about Himself and His creation, including knowledge they could not have otherwise known.
 - i. Revelation is an **act of God.**
 - ii. God gives revelation about **himself to people.**
 - iii. Revelation involves communicating truth we could **not otherwise know** apart from God.
 - iv. Revelation is both **partial** and **complete.**
 - v. God reveals Himself in different ways
 1. God reveals Himself through **history** (1 Cor 10:1-6), **conscience** (Rom 2:14-16), and **nature** (Ps 19:1-6, Rom 1:18-21)
 2. God reveals Himself in the **Bible** (Deut, 29:29, 2 Peter 1:20-21).
 3. God reveals Himself in the **person, life** and **ministry** of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. (John 1:14,18)
 - vi. God reveals His Word **for a purpose:** That we might know Him, Worship him and **serve Him.**
 - b. Inspiration means that the Holy Spirit guided human authors so that what they wrote in Scripture is accurate and **without error.**
 - i. **Inspiration** is based on the Greek word *theopneustos* which communicates the idea of God **breathing out** His Word (2 Tim 3:16).
 - ii. Because God is the ultimate author of all Scripture, all Scripture is accurate and reliable.
 - iii. Every word of the **original autographs** of Scripture is the very word God chose to use.
 - c. When used to describe the Bible, **inerrancy** implies that what God inspired is also **authoritative and reliable.**

- i. Jesus believed in inerrancy to the point of the smallest letter and even a part of a letter.
 - ii. Jesus taught that the verb tense was reliable, "I AM the God of Isaac and Jacob etc. (Matt 22:31).
- d. **Preservation** refers to God's work of insuring that the Scriptures are **preserved** for future generations. (Psalm 119:89),
- e. **Canonicity** describes those books that are included in the Bible because they measure up to the **standard of Scripture**.
 - i. The word, canon originally meant a **measuring rod** or a **standard of measure**
 - ii. The early church used four criteria to determine canonicity.
 - 1. Books written **by and Apostle** or one closely associated to an apostle.
 - 2. Contents of these books were **revelatory** in nature.
 - 3. Books were **universally recognized** by the church.
 - 4. Books were considered inspired because they **bore marks of inspiration**.
 - iii. Why there will be no **additions to the Scriptures**.
 - 1. Scripture forbids adding or removing anything from itself (Rev 22:18-19)
 - 2. The task of writing revelation is completed (Jude 3).
 - 3. The prophetic and apostolic offices of the early church no longer exist (Eph 2:20)
 - 4. The widespread acceptance of the Bible as the only authoritative Scripture.
- f. **Illumination** describes the work of the Holy Spirit which enables us to **understand** and **apply** the spiritual messages of the Scriptures.
 - i. Illumination is a ministry of the Holy Spirit who is given, "**that we might know**", (1 Cor 2:12; Rom 8:16).
 - ii. The Holy Spirit opens our **spiritual eyes** so that we may know the Scriptures.
 - iii. We need to pray, "Open Thou my eyes," (Ps 119:18)
 - iv. When the Holy Spirit illuminates the Scriptures:
 - 1. Unsaved people are convicted of sin (John 16:8).
 - 2. Christians gain a greater understanding of the Scriptures (1 Jn 2:20,27)

- g. **Interpretation** is the test of determining the **meaning of the message** of the Scriptures.
- i. Evangelicals believe in the **historical grammatical** interpretation of the Bible using the normal rules of grammar.
 1. Learn the social and historical context.
 2. Examine the grammatical context.
 3. Ask, "What is the literal meaning of this passage"?
 4. Consider idioms and figurative expressions
 - ii. Do not spent time looking for some **hidden meaning.**
- h. Application is **living out** the principles taught in God's Word.
- i. Watch out for abuses.
 - ii. Application must be based on proper **interpretation**
 - iii. Don't let misapplication hinder you.

So there are 8 great themes regarding the right approach to understanding and applying God's Word

- Revelation
- Inspiration
- Inerrancy
- Preservation
- Canonicity
- Illumination
- Interpretation
- Application