

# BIBLICAL LITERACY

## WELCOME

In this course you'll have the opportunity to discover more of what the Bible is about, how to approach it with consistent integrity, and develop a life that is shaped and empowered by the amazing story of God. Included in this course are 14 lessons that include a video teaching, opportunities for reflection, practice, and more. Our hope is that this course will enable you to deepen your relationship with our Heavenly Father as you gain tools and resources to further understand His Word and how to apply it to your life.

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## SESSION ONE

### Context is Everything

Understanding the Bible and biblical literacy begins with understanding what the Bible really is. The Bible is a story about God. It's His story.

### Big Picture of this class:

- What is the Bible?
- Why should it be a part of my life?
- Why should I read it?
- How do I know it?

### Four areas of focus throughout this course:

1. The context brings meaning to the single verse.
2. The Bible was written for us, not directly to us.
3. All of scripture points to Jesus.
4. The Bible is a library of books, not a single book.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

*As for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

### The Bible - A Brief History

Our current Bibles are composed of 2 sections divided as The Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament in our English Translation consists of 39 books, while the New Testament contains 27.

The oldest Manuscripts of the New Testament are preserved in Greek - the main language of the 1st Century, while the original works such as Matthew's Gospel is said to have been written in Hebrew.

The Old Testament was completely written in Hebrew and consisted of three divisions:

- The Torah (5 Books of Moses i.e. Genesis to Deuteronomy)
- The Nevi'im (Prophets)
- The Ketuvim (Writings/Psalms/Proverbs etc.)

The Old Testament writings gave wisdom for salvation, but salvation itself came through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Paul notes the importance of the Old Testament, while also emphasizing the saving role of Jesus as the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17-20).

### These are the words of God

- To be taught by it - instruct people to know God better.
- To be rebuked by it - the idea of exposing or pointing out sin.
- To be corrected by it - points out sin and offers a solution to it.
- To be trained by it - training is more focused on practical application.

### It is also designed so that we in turn can accurately

- Teach it
- Rebuke with it
- Correct with it

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## SESSION TWO

### What is the Bible and why is Literacy important?

1. It's a story about who God is.
2. In knowing & understanding the Bible, we can find out for ourselves who God is.
3. It's authoritative, inspired, and profitable.

### When we don't have an understanding of this power:

1. We approach it **without purpose** and not its purpose (to know God)
2. We approach it **to affirm our bias's** (affirm our opinion vs. to be shaped by God)

### We approach the Bible with "Can I's"

- "Can I live with my boyfriend/girlfriend?"
- "What should I do for a living?"
- "What can I do and still be a Christian?"

When we reduce the Bible to a set of truths and propositions, we miss what the Bible is actually trying to do.

In 1551 a Stephanus divided the New Testament up into numbered verses. We need to observe what versification did to how we read the Bible.

- Dividing the Bible up into verses turns the Bible into morsels and leads us to read the Bible as a collection of divine morsels, sanctified morsels of truth.
- We pause for each one to see if we can get something from it.
- Now I want to meddle with this significant problem. For some morsel readers of the Bible, the Bible has become a collection of morsels of blessings, and we can write one out for each day of the week.

### Question:

**What happens when we are "Looking at the Bible as a "Inspirational Poster" or "A phrase to prove your point"?"**

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*"I can do all this through him who gives me strength."*  
Philippians 4:13 NIV

**What would you think if you saw the above verse in isolation, like on Steph Curry's shoe or Instagram?**

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*"For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."*  
Matthew 18:20 NIV

**What conclusion might you come to when reading the above?**

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*"But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people."*  
2 Timothy 3:1-5 NIV

**What conclusion might you come to when reading the above?**

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**There is a great need to have an approach to scripture that is consistent with what Scripture really is.**

1. "I can do all things..."  
A letter to a church, Paul's follow up - Look at bigger context. What is he talking about? - The verses around this tell us it's about contentment, I can live with a lot, I can live with a little, I can do either through Christ.
2. "Where two or more are gathered"  
The verses surrounding this verse are about approaching a brother or sister who is actively sinning. This reference is in a larger section about discipleship and God's care for us. This verse is not talking about Jesus' presence in prayer. Jesus is with us when we are praying by ourselves or with others. This verse is talking about His presence in the attempt to restore a brother or sister.

The original audience would have been reading this passage in the context of Matthew 18 where Jesus is instructing the disciples on how they and all who follow him should handle situations of interpersonal sin and conflict. The themes that are present in this context are forgiveness, restoration, and reconciliation with a brother or sister who has sinned against you or who has gone astray.

**By understanding the context, we are able to understand the full meaning of the verses as the original audience did.**

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## SESSION THREE

### Putting it into Practice

*“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.”*

2 Timothy 3:1-5 NIV

**The above verse is part of a letter written from Paul. This letter is believed to be written around A.D. 67. The context of what was happening around the time this was written:**

- Rome burned to the ground in July A.D. 64
- Nero blamed Christians for this catastrophe and Christianity was made an illegal religion
- Peter was martyred in A.D. 64
- Paul is spending his final days in a Roman prison, awaiting trial for his deliverance of the Gospel and role in the seen unrest and rebellion to the Roman way
- Paul has invested in Timothy, and it's believed this is Paul's final letter

We're now going to read the full letter and as it's read, we invite you to answer the questions below.

**What did you hear differently as we read the entire letter vs. the verses above?**

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**How did you hear the voice of Paul?**

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**What do you think Timothy heard?**

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**What’s God’s story in this?**

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**As we discussed in Session 1, the four things we’ll focus on throughout this course:**

- 1. The context brings meaning to the single verse.
- 2. The Bible was written for us, not directly to us.
- 3. All of scripture points to Jesus.
- 4. The Bible is a library of books, not a single book.

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## SESSION FOUR

### What is the Bible for?

1. To know who God is and to know God's Story
2. To tell the real true story of human history from God's perspective
3. To shape us as the people of God so we can live into God's ongoing story

*"Somewhere we've gone astray and we've stopped reading the Bible as story. Our intent, and it is the right one, is to get something out of the Bible for our daily lives. I too want the Bible to be a "light for my path" (Psalm 119: 105) and I'm sure you do as well. But, because reading the Bible as story takes more time, thinking, and discerning, we've developed routines and techniques that get us to our desired goal sooner, and we miss the point of the Bible."*

- Scott McKnight

### 5 Points of Hermeneutics

1. Ask yourself, what am I reading? (Poetry/Narrative/Prophecy/Letter/Wisdom)
2. Why did the author write this? What was his intended meaning?
3. Who was it written to? What would the original audience have heard?  
What would they have understood?
4. What is this saying about God? What is this saying about God's view of humanity?
5. How do I apply this?

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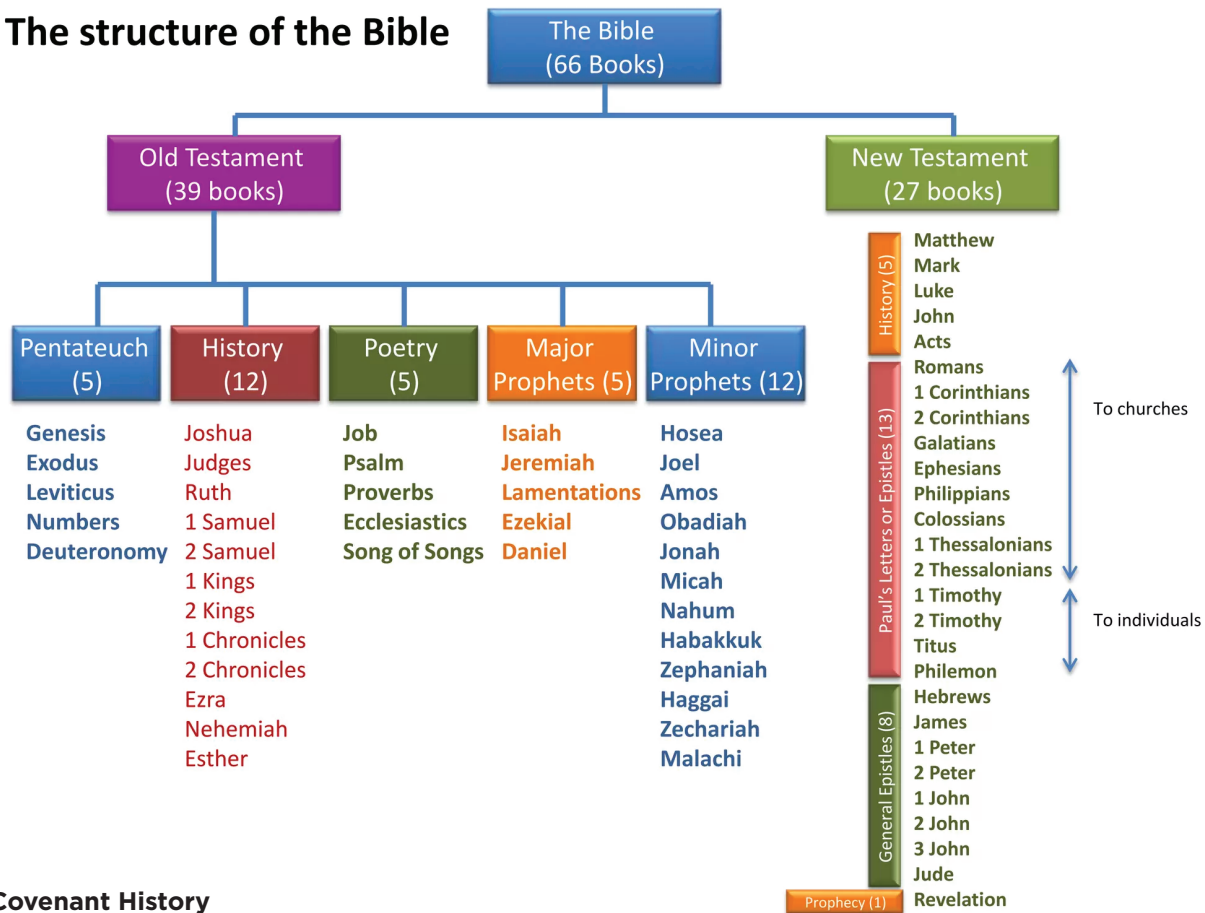
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# SESSION FIVE

## Table of Contents

The Bible is 66 books. The Old Testament in our English Translation consists of 39 books, while the New Testament contains 27.

## The structure of the Bible



### Covenant History

Genesis	Joshua
Exodus	Judges
Leviticus	Ruth
Numbers	Samuel
Deuteronomy	Kings

### Prophets

Jonah	Zephaniah
Obadiah	Jeremiah
Joel	Daniel
Amos	Ezekiel
Hosea	Obadiah
Isaiah	Joel
Micah	Haggai
Nahum	Zechariah
Habakkuk	Malachi

United Kingdom				
Years (BC)	King	Start / End	Prophet	Scripture
1050 - 1010	Saul	Good / Evil	Samuel	1 Sa 8-31 1 Ch 9-10
1010 - 970	David (Captain)	Good / Good	Samuel  Nathan	1 Sa 16-31 2 Sa 1-24 1 Ki 1-2 1 Ch 11-29
970 - 930	Solomon (Son)	Good / Evil	Nathan	1 Ki 1-11 2 Ch 1-9

Divided Kingdom									
Judah					Israel				
Years	King	Start / End	Prophet	Scripture	Years	King	Start / End	Prophet	Scripture
931 - 913	Rehoboam (Son)	Evil / Evil		1 Ki 12, 14 2 Ch 10-12	931 - 910	Jeroboam I (servant)	Evil / Evil	Ahijah	1 Ki 12-14 2 Ch 10
913 - 911	Ahijah (Son)	Evil / Evil	Shemaiah	1 Ki 15 2 Ch 13					
911 - 870	Asa (Son)	Good/Good	Hanani	1 Ki 15 2 Ch 14-16	910 - 909	Nadab (son)	Evil / Evil		1 Ki 15
					909 - 886	Baasha	Evil / Evil	Jehu	1 Ki 16
					886 - 885	Elah (Son)	Evil / Evil		1 Ki 16
					885	Zimri (Captain)	Evil / Evil	Micaliah	1 Ki 16
					885 - 874	Omri (Captain)	Evil / Evil	Elijah 1 Ki 17-19 1 Ki 21	1 Ki 16
					874 - 853	Ahab (Son)	Evil / Evil		1 Ki 17 2 Ch 18
870 - 848	Jehoshaphat (Son)	Good/Good		1 Ki 22 2 Ch 17-20	853 - 852	Ahaziah (Son)	Evil / Evil		1 Ki 22 2 Ki 1
848 - 841	Jehoram (Son)	Evil / Evil	Obediah(?)	2 Ki 8 2 Ch 21	852 - 841	Joram (Son of Ahab)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 8
841	Ahaziah (Son)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 8-9 2 Ch 22				Elisha 1 Ki 19 2 Ki 2-9 2 Ki 13	2 Ki 8
841 - 835	Athaliah (mother)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 11 2 Ch 22-23	841 - 814	Jehu (Captain)	Good / Evil		2 Ki 9-10
835 - 796	Joash (son of Ahaziah)	Good / Evil	Joel	2 Ki 11-12 2 Ch 23-24	814 - 798	Jehoahaz (Son)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 13
796 - 767	Amaziah (son)	Good / Evil		2 Ki 14 2 Ch 25	798 - 782	Jehoash (Son)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 13-14
					782 - 753	Jeroboam II (Son)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 14
767 - 740	Uzziah aka Azariah (Son)	Good/Evil		2 Ki 15 2 Ch 26	753 - 752	Zechariah (Son)	Evil / Evil	Amos Hosea	2 Ki 15
					752	Shallum	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 15
					752 - 742	Menahem	Evil / Evil	Jonah (2 Kings 14:25, Jonah 1:1)	2 Ki 15
748 - 732	Jotham (Son)	Good/Good	Isaiah Micah	2 Ki 15 2 Ch 27	742 - 740	Pekahiah (Son)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 15
732 - 716	Ahaz (Son)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 16 2 Ch 28 Is 7	752 - 740 (trial) 733 - 722 (sole)	Pekah (Captain)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 15
716 - 687	Hezekiah (Son)	Good/Good		2 Ki 18-20 2 Ch 29-32 Is 36-39	732 - 722	Hoshea	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 17
687 - 642	Manasseh (Son)	Evil / Good		2 Ki 21 2 Ch 33	Israel into Assyrian captivity - 722 BC				
642 - 640	Amon (Son)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 21 2 Ch 33				Nahum	
640 - 608	Josiah (Son)	Good/Good		2 Ki 22-23 2 Ch 34-35					
608	Jehoahaz (Son)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 23 2 Ch 36					
608 - 597	Jehoiakim (son of Josiah)	Evil / Evil	Hobakkuk Zephaniah Jeremiah Ezekiel (Lamentations)	2 Ki 23-24 2 Ch 36				Daniel	
597	Jehoiachin (Son)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 24-25 2 Ch 36					
597 - 586	Zedekiah (son of Josiah)	Evil / Evil		2 Ki 24-25 2 Ch 36					
Judah into Babylonian captivity - 586 BC									
586-450			Jeremiah Haggai Zechariah Malachi						

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## SESSION SIX

The Bible is a collection of 66 books written by approximately 40 authors over about 1,500 years. Each author, inspired by God, was writing for a specific purpose.

### **Recommended New Testament Reading:**

Luke & Acts

By reading as one story, a story about going to Jerusalem and out of Jerusalem, it can help you get a greater understanding of the story of Jesus and what happened after.

Letters of Paul (as one story)

In your table of contents, the letters are listed in order of longest to shortest, not in order of the time they were written. If the letters were ordered based on when they were written, it would be as follows.

1 Thessalonians	Ephesians
2 Thessalonians	Philemon
1 Corinthians	Philippians
2 Corinthians	1 Timothy
Galatians	Titus
Romans	2 Timothy
Colossians	

### **Another way to read the remainder of the New Testament is to read the books according to the audience they were written to. For example:**

Jewish audience: Matthew | Hebrews | James

Gentile audience: Mark | 1 Peter | 2 Peter

Jewish and Gentile Christians: Jude | John | 1 John | 2 John | 3 John | Revelation

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## SESSION SEVEN

### Digging In

*"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."*

1 Timothy 2:15

*"All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

1 Timothy 3:16-17

### As you read scripture, here are the order of questions to consider.

1. What am I reading? (Poetry/Narrative/Prophecy/Letter/Wisdom)
2. Why did the author write this? What was his intended meaning?
3. Who was it written to? What would the original audience have heard?  
What would they have understood?
4. What is this saying about God? What is this saying about God's view of humanity?
5. How do I apply this?

### Working definition of the Bible:

"the Bible is a library of books, divine and human, that tells one unified story that leads us to Jesus."

Timothy Keller writes in Counterfeit gods:

*"The reason for our confusion (over the Bible) is that we usually read the Bible as a series of disconnected stories, each with a 'moral' for how we should live our lives. It is not. Rather, it comprises a single story, telling us how the human race got into its present condition, and how God through Jesus Christ has come and will come to put things right"*

### Key ideas

- There's an idea of observing God's word before you interpret God's word. Our aim is to listen to God through His word because God is communicating.
- When we do the work to get meaning from the Bible, we have to pay attention to where we are in the story.
- Biblical interpretation is a skill you can develop but it takes practice over time. Meant to be done in community, not in isolation.

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## SESSION EIGHT

### The Inductive Method

**The inductive method of Bible study offers a practical process for accurate interpretation.**

The inductive method is in contrast with topical study (deductive—looking for answers to a particular doctrinal question—and with devotional study—looking at scripture for truth that speaks to current needs or interests).

**A simple way to use the inductive method is by following three steps:**

#### Observation

What does this text say?

#### Interpretation

What does this text mean?

#### Application

What is this text saying to me and what is my response?

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## SESSION NINE

### Observation

What Does the Text Say?

- This phase isn't about interpretation, don't interpret what it's saying.
- It's about observing exactly what the text is saying.

### Exercise

Pretend you're an investigator in 50 AD and you're just gathering facts. You come across a document and you're intrigued. Or you receive a message as a text from an unknown number. It doesn't seem to be written to you, but it intrigues you. What do you see?

- Don't create a story. Don't Interpret. Observe exactly what the text says.
- Ask yourself five W's and H: There may not be answers to all of them.

Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

- Answer the question "What did it say? Not "what did it mean?"

Observe what's there, and document in the notes section below.

*Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God in Corinth, together with all his holy people throughout Achaia. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.*

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### KEY

Pull your observations together, don't isolate them. When we isolate and elevate an observation, it can result in incomplete understanding.

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## SESSION TEN

### Interpretation

What Does the Text Mean?

Goal of Interpretation: understanding the author's intended meaning or "the meaning of the text as intended by the author/sender"

We do not create meaning out of the text; we seek to find the meaning that the text already has. (i.e., the author's intended message/meaning, not what we want to hear in the text). Your job at the interpretation stage is to discover what the author is trying to communicate. Am I interpreting what the author is actually saying or what I want to read?

### The KEY for Accurate interpretation

- Receiver needs to care what the Sender is communicating.
- In scripture God is the Sender.

*"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."*

Timothy 2:15

*"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

Timothy 3:16-17

### Key Conclusions

- Goal of communication is a successful transaction.
- Goal of interpretation is to discover the sender's intended meaning.
- The sender is the initiator not the receiver. It is not up to the receiver to determine what the sender intended to mean.

Personalizing the message can only happen once you discover the Sender's Intended Meaning. To do this, you need to look at the context.

### A few questions you can ask

- What is the cultural and/or historical context of this passage?
- What else do I know about the book, author, and broader context of the passage?
- What other Scripture passages might help me better interpret this one?
- What is the clearest meaning of this text?

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## SESSION ELEVEN

### Guidelines for Study

**There are a few essential rules to remember when attempting to interpret a passage:**

- Don't "twist" Scripture—meaning, don't manipulate the text to get it to say something you'd like for it to say. This is a dishonest way to interpret the text.
- Look for the plainest interpretation first.
- Believe the text means what it says.
- Sometimes there will be figurative language and confusing imagery, but don't start by looking for hidden meaning. Start with the obvious.
- Scripture interprets Scripture.
- Allow the Bible to help you understand other passages of the Bible. Where similar words are used, explore the context of each of those instances.
- Avoid basing important doctrines on obscure passages.
- Connect each passage back to the gospel and the broader message of the Bible.

### Exercise

#### Read the below passage

*Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God in Corinth, together with all his holy people throughout Achaia. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.*

#### Write some interpretations

- What did Paul mean?
- What is God saying through Paul?

#### Summary of Interpretation

Make sure you spend time with this phrase. Ask yourself all the important questions above and answer them as honestly as you're able. Once you think you've done all you can here, it's time to move on to the final phase.

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## SESSION TWELVE

### Application Part 1

One of the questions I encourage you to ask as you read scripture, "Where am I in the story?".

### 6 Acts of Scripture

**CREATION:** God's Intention (Genesis 1-2)

- God creates something out of nothing
- God creates and it's good
- His intention is for his kingdom here on earth

**FALL:** Exile (Genesis 3-11)

- A choice to go a different direction than God's
- Begins with the sin of Adam and Eve
- Can the curse on creation be overcome and the relationship between God and humanity be restored? Can heaven and earth be reunited? Did God's enemy effectively end the plan and subvert the story?

**COVENANT:** Calling Israel to a Mission (Genesis 12 - rest of Old Testament)

- God's promise to Abraham and to a nation
- Abraham Covenant
- Mount Sinai Covenant
- Davidic Covenant - seed from this king will lead the nation back to its destiny
- First Testament ends with people in Exile because of their sin, but it keeps pointing to Jesus

**JESUS:** The Victory of Jesus (Matthew - Mark - Luke - John)

- Fully Human, fully God - completes reunification plan
- He announced the end of the exile and the forgiveness of sins
- Opposed by religious leaders, killed by Roman execution
- Raised from the dead to conquer all of the effects of sin

**CHURCH:** The Renewed people of God (Acts - Epistles)

- New Covenant (Life with God in us)
- The early church
- People back in the new covenant - forgiven and spirit-filled

**RESTORATION:** God comes home (Revelation 21)

*"And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.""*

Revelation 21:3-5 NIV

- The intention of Creation restored
- The day is coming when Jesus will return to earth and the reign of God will become the uncontested reality throughout the world
- The creation will experience its own Exodus, finding freedom from its bondage to decay



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## SESSION THIRTEEN

### Application Part 2

1. **OBSERVATION:** What do I see? Look at it as if you knew nothing else about the Bible or what this is. Make as many observations as you can and begin to connect those to begin understanding what the scripture is saying.

2. **INTERPRETATION:** In light of where I am in the story, what could it mean?  
Where else have I read this?

3. **APPLICATION:** What does this text mean for me? What is it asking me to do?

Once you've observed and interpreted what the passage has to say, it's time to talk about what it means for us. How do we apply what we just learned to everyday life?

We don't study the Bible to simply gain knowledge. We study to gain knowledge so that we know how to live our lives in light of what we've learned, ultimately so we love God more and love others better.

*"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us."*

1 John 1:1-10 NIV

### What do you observe? (3 minutes)

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**Make some interpretations. (3 minutes)**

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**Make some applications. (3 minutes)** *If this is true, what does it mean for me?*

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**Write some I will statements. (3 minutes)** *Because of what I've seen, because of what it means, this is what I'm going to do.*

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## SESSION FOURTEEN

### Bonus Content - Teaching & Preaching

#### How does a sermon come together?

When I approach scripture for a teaching, I recognize I am placing myself within the communication between God and people.

- Handle the Truth accurately (2 Tim 2:15)
- You will be judged James 3:1 - **you are the conduit; so do it with the Holy Spirit**

#### Hints to Teach: (How I prepare)

##### 1. Read (the whole)

Read the whole letter. Read the whole story, read the whole book. Then, reread the section of the text you are teaching.

##### 2. Make observations

###### A. Write down (details) of the text

- If this is the only scripture you have, what would you know? What is it saying?
- How would have the original audience understood this? Try to make at least 25-30 observations.

###### B. Then, connect it to other Scripture

If it's a New Testament letter for example:

- How does this letter connect with other Letters of Paul, what he knew about Jesus and what the OT refers to?
- Where is this in the 6 movements of scripture? How does what has happened affect it? Is it giving hints of what is coming?
- Also refer to book of Acts which often reveals the narrative of the relationship. (This may show us the writer's intent)
- Original language for specific words.
- Where does it fit in regard to the layout of scripture as we talked about in week 2?

##### 3. Truths

From your **observations** and themes, write down as many **themes, points, or truths** as you can.

Think of "Biblical tweets", short statements of truths. This becomes the beginning of your outline.

##### 4. Create initial outline or a flow to the talk

Look at all the mini themes, do they create one that covers the whole section?

#### SOME THOUGHTS

My belief: Where I am landing the sermon should be the first absolute. (What is the destination?)

**After the scripture work is done...**

**Read**

- A. Bible Dictionary for terms or places I want to know
- B. Concordance
- C. Commentaries on the scripture passages or specific word studies
- D. Read blogs, journals, articles, books on themes or points to develop support, analogies, stories, and other ways of saying the same thing

**Go back to clarify, correct or codify**

**REMEMBER, I am placing myself within the communication between God and people**

As you develop the message, it helps to:

- Be thinking: what do I want people to know, feel and do throughout.
- Who am I talking to? (Who is my audience?)
- How can I teach, encourage and stretch them?

**Two keys for confidence and clarity**

1. Know how you are taking off (the beginning)
2. Know how you are landing (the ending)

**NOTES**

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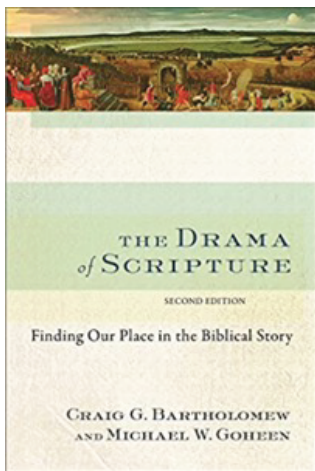
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## RESOURCES

This course is meant to serve as an introduction for how to read the Bible. To grow in your understanding, it's helpful and necessary to incorporate multiple tools and resources in your study. Below are just a few of the resources we've found helpful and encourage you to explore.

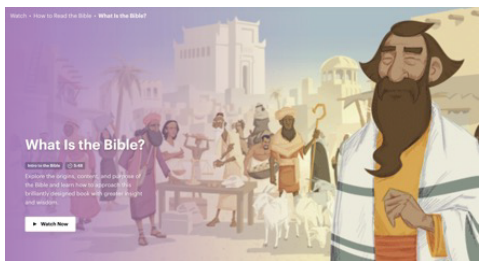
### Overviews



**Resource Type & Title:** Book, **The Drama of Scripture**

**Author:** Craig Bartholomew and Michael Goheen

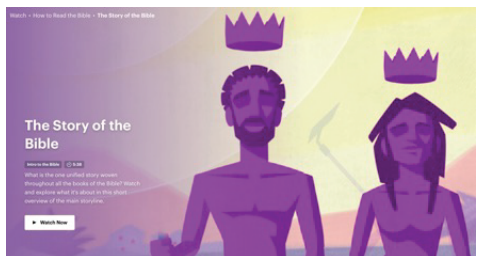
**Link:** [www.a.co/d/97VjCWe](http://www.a.co/d/97VjCWe)



**Resource Type & Title:** Video, **What is the Bible?**

**Author:** The Bible Project

**Link:** [www.bibleproject.com/explore/video/what-is-bible/](http://www.bibleproject.com/explore/video/what-is-bible/)



**Resource Type & Title:** Video, **The Story of the Bible**

**Author:** The Bible Project

**Link:** [www.bibleproject.com/explore/video/the-story-of-the-bible/](http://www.bibleproject.com/explore/video/the-story-of-the-bible/)

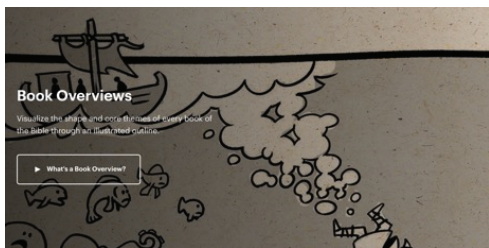




**Resource Type & Title:** Video, **How to Read the Bible**

**Author:** The Bible Project

**Link:** [www.bibleproject.com/explore/how-to-read-the-bible/](http://www.bibleproject.com/explore/how-to-read-the-bible/)



**Resource Type & Title:** Video, **Book Overviews**

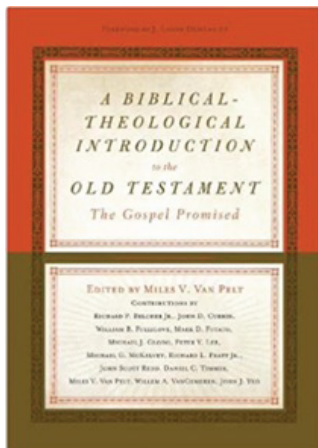
**Author:** The Bible Project

**Link:** [www.bibleproject.com/explore/book-overviews/?type=old](http://www.bibleproject.com/explore/book-overviews/?type=old)





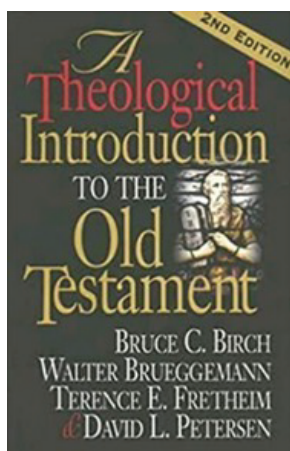
## Commentaries



**Resource Type & Title:** Book, **A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised**

**Author:** Miles V. Van Pelt

**Link:** [www.a.co/d/cRL2iOA](http://www.a.co/d/cRL2iOA)



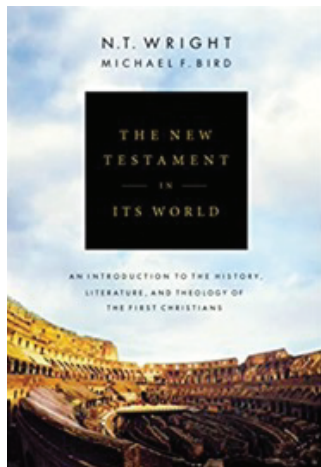
**Resource Type & Title:** Book, , **A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: 2nd Edition**

**Author:** Bruce C. Birch, Walter Brueggemann, Terence E. Fretheim, David L. Petersen

**Link:** [www.a.co/d/2iy5HeZ](http://www.a.co/d/2iy5HeZ)



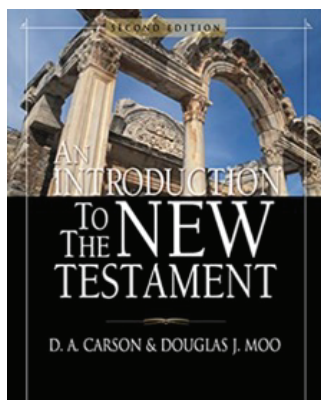
## New Testament Introductions



**Resource Type & Title:** Book, **The New Testament in Its World: An Introduction to the History, Literature, and Theology of the First Christians**

**Author:** N. T. Wright, Michael F. Bird

**Link:** [www.a.co/d/8fHWYrj](http://www.a.co/d/8fHWYrj)



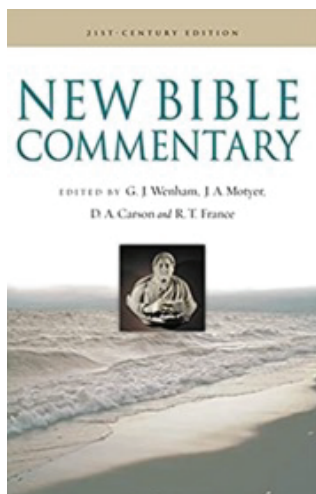
**Resource Type & Title:** Book, **An Introduction to the New Testament**

**Author:** D. A. Carson, Douglas J. Moo

**Link:** [www.a.co/d/adWeFMO](http://www.a.co/d/adWeFMO)



## Full Bible Commentary



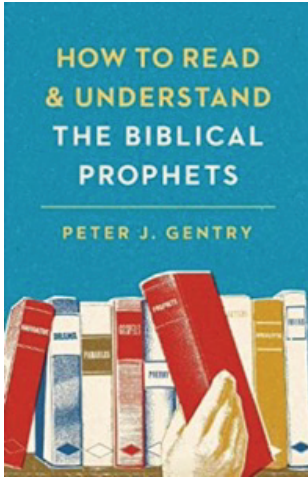
**Resource Type & Title:** Book, **New Bible Commentary (The New Bible Set, 2)**

**Author:** Gordon J. Wenham, J. Alec Motyer, D.A. Carson, R. T. France

**Link:** [www.a.co/d/3huUuCy](http://www.a.co/d/3huUuCy)



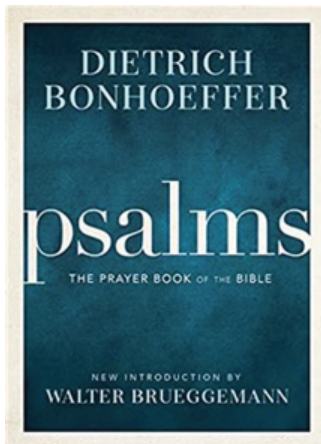
## Additional Resources



**Resource Type & Title:** Book, **How to Read and Understand the Biblical Prophets: How to Read and Understand the Biblical Prophets**

**Author:** Peter J. Gentry

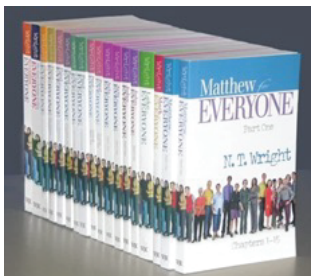
**Link:** [www.a.co/d/3Wd3GJz](http://www.a.co/d/3Wd3GJz)



**Resource Type & Title:** Book, **Psalms: The Prayer Book of the Bible**

**Author:** Dietrich Bonhoeffer

**Link:** [www.a.co/d/86BHqVc](http://www.a.co/d/86BHqVc)



**Resource Type & Title:** Book, **New Testament for Everyone: Complete Eighteen-Volume Set (The New Testament for Everyone, 19)**

*Note: The books in this series are excellent and available to purchase as individual books rather than a set.*

**Author:** N.T. Wright

**Link:** [www.a.co/d/116IJfF](http://www.a.co/d/116IJfF)



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

**Observation:**

What do I see?

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**Interpretation:**

In light of where I am in the story, what could it mean? Where else have I read this?

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**Application:**

What does this text mean for me?

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