

# The Bible: God's Word

## Unit 1, Lesson 1

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### Memory Work:

Begin memorizing the books of the Bible.

If you already know the books, memorize 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

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The lessons in Unit 1 will aid you in becoming familiar with the Bible - its meaning, its origins, its format, and its contents. If you are doing these lessons as part of a study group, complete the reading and learning activities before the group meets. Don't wait until the night before Bible study to work through the learning activities. God's word needs time to work within you. You are encouraged not to skip any of the learning activities.

Write your thoughts and questions as you work through the lessons. Plan to share these at the Bible study. Also be sure to share how you are growing through this study as an encouragement to the group leader and fellow group members.

Each lesson begins with suggested memory work. Make a commitment to make God's word a part of yourself through this process of learning a new passage each lesson.

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Word of God refers to the communication, record, instruction, and revelation of God. The phrase "**word of God**" can refer to four means by which God accomplishes this communication. Read the following verses to determine how the "word of God" is delivered in each:

1. Exodus 20:1-3, 18-19
2. Deuteronomy 18:18-20; Jeremiah 1:7, 9
3. John 1:1, 14 (John 12:49-50)
4. Acts 17:11, 13; 18:11

**The Bible** is also known as Scriptures, indicating it is a collection of sacred and inspired writings. The Old Testament (the Hebrew Bible) is the written "oracles of God" (Romans 3:2).

God reveals Himself and His will through what He has preserved in the writings of Scripture.

*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness. (2 Timothy 3:16, NASB)*

Explain what it means that Scripture is "God-breathed."

"Bible" is from the Greek *biblios* meaning "a little book". *Biblia* is plural, meaning "books." *Biblios* is from the word *biblos*, which means the bark of the papyrus plant, used to make a type of paper on which to write.<sup>1</sup>

The Bible (and parts of it) is known by several names:

- Word (of God)
- Scripture(s)
- Law
- Commands
- Word of Truth
- Gospel
- and more

"Scripture" is from the Latin *scriptura* meaning the act or product of writing. The New Testament Greek word *graphé* (writing) refers to the holy and sacred inspired Old Testament writings.

"Inspire" is from the Greek *theopneustas*, literally God (*theos*) breathed (*pneuma*)

- to affect, guide; to stimulate to creativity or action; to be the cause or source of
- related to respire: to breathe life into
- NIV: "All Scripture is God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16a)

Reproof:

- to find fault

What does this indicate about the accuracy, authority, power, and trustworthiness of the Bible?

Give some details about how Scripture can be used in the four ways mentioned in this verse. Consider what, how, who.

According to **2 Timothy 3:17**, what is the benefit of using God's word in our lives?

Equip:

- to supply with necessary tools
- to furnish the qualities necessary for performance

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Read **Hebrews 4:12**. What symbol is used for God's word? How is this an appropriate symbol? What characteristics of God's word does this verse highlight?

How can words on a page be living and active?

What does God's word do?

How does the word do this (also consider 2 Timothy 3:16)?

What does this mean to you?

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According to **Psalm 119:11**, what benefit is there in knowing God's word?

Psalm 119 is the longest chapter of the Bible and is all about the word of God.

How can one "treasure" God's word? (also see this verse in NASB & ESV translations)

The NIV Bible translates Psalm 119:11 as "*I have hidden your word in my heart.*" How would one hide the word in the heart?

What additional purposes of the Scriptures are given in **Romans 15:4**?

What do you hope to learn or gain from this study of the Bible?

See also **I Corinthians 10:11** and describe what you can gain from the Scriptures.

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What is another purpose of God's word found in **Psalm 119:105**?

How does God's word light one's path?

Is God's word the lamp and light in your life? If not, what steps can you take to change that? If so, what benefits have you reaped from following the way lighted by God?

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What is God's word or Scripture called in **2 Timothy 2:15**?

Diligence (NKJV):

- characterized by persistent and painstaking effort

What is the goal set before us?

How does an accurate understanding and use of God's word reflect on us?

After studying this lesson, explain how the history of mankind recorded in the Bible is the word of God.

Is this goal important to you? Why or why not? If not, spend time in prayer asking God to change your heart regarding His word. If it is, what steps do you need to take to begin working toward this goal? Be sure to also consider the attitude described in the first part of this verse.

**PROPHECY: Read 2 Peter 1:20, 21**

How does this passage explain the source of prophecy found in the Scriptures?

What does it say about understanding prophecy?

How is true prophecy identified?

Prophecy:

- a message foretelling events as revealed by God
- the revealed will or message of God
- may be written or oral

<sup>1</sup> Guthrie, Donald. "Bible." *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, edited by Merrill Tenney, vol. 1, 1975, 1976, pp. 554-566.

# The Bible: God's Word

## Unit 1, Lesson 1 Answer Key

### Memory Work:

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Word of God refers to the communication, record, instruction, and revelation of God. The phrase "word of God" can refer to four means by which God accomplishes this communication. Read the following verses to determine how the "word of God" is delivered in each:

5. Exodus 20:1-3, 18-19

**God speaks directly to a person without an intermediary.**

6. Deuteronomy 18:18-20; Jeremiah 1:7, 9

**God speaks through an intermediary known as a prophet.**

7. John 1:1, 14 (John 12:49-50; Hebrews 1:1-3)

**God's word is manifest in the person of Jesus so that not only Jesus' words speak God's message, but his whole being (personality, actions, etc.) are also a communication from God.**

8. Acts 17:11-13; 18:11

**The word of God is the Scripture which is also taught and proclaimed.**

The Bible is also known as Scripture, indicating it is a collection of sacred and inspired writings. The Old Testament (the Hebrew Bible) is the written "oracles of God" (Romans 3:2).

God reveals Himself and His will through what He has preserved in the writings of Scripture.

*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness. (2 Timothy 3:16, NASB)*

Explain what it means that Scripture is "God-breathed."

**Answers will vary. As breathing is necessary for speaking, this idea of God breathing out the Scripture affirms it is His word and that He is instrumental in what has been recorded and preserved. Thus, God**

"Bible" is from the Greek *biblios* meaning "a little book". *Biblia* is plural, meaning "books." *Biblios* is from the word *biblos*, which means the bark of the papyrus plant, used to make a type of paper on which to write.<sup>1</sup>

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Inspire is from the Greek *theopneustas*, literally God (*theos*) breathed (*pneuma*)

- > to affect, guide; to stimulate to creativity or action; to be the cause or source of
- > related to respiration: to breathe life into
- > NIV: "All Scripture is God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16a)

Reproof:

- > to find fault

**stimulated or urged the men who wrote to record certain messages and events and God gave them the ability to carry out this task.**

What does this indicate about the accuracy, authority, power, and trustworthiness of the Bible?

**With God's initiative and oversight, accuracy can be trusted as what God wants revealed to mankind. Scripture's authority comes from being sourced in God. The Bible is as trustworthy and authoritative as God is**

Give some details about how Scripture can be used in the four ways mentioned in this verse. Consider what, how, who.

**As Creator of all mankind, God's communication is applicable to all people. As such, we all, including unbelievers, can be taught, rebuked, corrected, and trained from the Scripture to reach toward righteousness. Anyone who knows what the messages of the Bible are can share them with others. Children and new believers can be instructed to think like God and act righteously. Those who do not know God and His Christ can be taught about God's plan for mankind. Believers can use the standards of Scripture to challenge their own spiritual development and correct themselves.**

According to 2 Timothy 3:17, what is the benefit of using God's word in our lives?

**We become prepared and ready, lacking nothing, suitable for carrying out good work, as determined by God, on His behalf.**

Equip:

- to supply with necessary tools
- to furnish the qualities necessary for performance

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Read **Hebrews 4:12**. What symbol is used for God's word? How is this an appropriate symbol? What characteristics of God's word does this verse highlight?

**God's word is symbolized by a double-edged sword that demonstrates the insight and penetration of its message. This verse highlights the life of the Scriptures - they are responsive and applicable, actively addressing issues of life and spirituality.**

What does God's word do?

**It pierces, divides, and judges. It reaches beyond the physical (which is all a sword can do) to the spiritual level of a man, addressing the deep motivations and thoughts of man. It can pierce through defenses and ignorance. It divides what is godly from the worldly and profane. It judges whether man is thinking and motivated according to godliness.**

How does the word do this (also consider 2 Timothy 3:16)?

**It provides God's standard against which we test our thoughts, actions, motives, and beliefs. It challenges our usual ways and points out where we fall short. It explains how to please God with holy living.**

What does this mean to you?

**Answers will vary.**

How can words on a page be living and active?

**Its living character is seen through its message that is for and applicable to all people, including those of different ages, cultures, and conditions. It actively relates to issues common to all mankind and holds principles that guide the heart, thoughts, and enterprises of man.**

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According to **Psalm 119:11**, what benefit is there in knowing God's word?

**It aids us in not sinning against God.**

How can one "treasure" God's word? (also see this verse in NASB & ESV translations)

**Think on or ponder it, guard it and not let it leave our thought and life, respect and obey it, always be learning more of it, memorize it and act on it, make it a priority**

The NIV Bible translates Psalm 119:11 as "*I have hidden your word in my heart.*" How would one hide the word in the heart?

**Memorize it, hold it as precious, keep it safe and protected**

What additional purposes of the Scriptures are given in Romans 15:4?

**The Scriptures instruct, encourage, and give us hope, aiding us in persevering in our walk of faith.**

See also I Corinthians 10:11 and describe what you can gain from the Scriptures.

**We can be instructed in how to act, what to avoid, how to think about life and faith by the examples of the people recorded in the Bible.**

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What is another purpose of God's word found in Psalm 119:105?

**It can provide guidance and direction.**

How does God's word light one's path?

**It helps us know what pleases God, gives purpose to life; in some cases it clearly indicates what decisions to make.**

Is God's word the lamp and light in your life? If not, what steps can you take to change that? If so, what benefits have you reaped from following the way lighted by God?

**Answers will vary.**

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What is God's word or Scripture called in **2 Timothy 2:15**?

**Word of truth (NASB). Answers may vary slightly based on translation being used.**

What is the goal set before us?

**To be a workman who accurately handles the Scriptures**

Psalm 119 is the longest chapter of the Bible and is all about the word of God.

What do you hope to learn or gain from this study of the Bible? **Answers will vary.**

Diligence (NKJV):

- characterized by persistent and painstaking effort

How does an accurate understanding and use of God's word reflect on us?

**Answers will vary. It demonstrates that we hold God's message in high esteem and that we believe it is valid for life today and hope of the future Kingdom.**

Is this goal important to you? Why or why not? If not, spend time in prayer asking God to change your heart regarding His word. If it is, what steps do you need to take to begin working toward this goal? Be sure to also consider the attitude described in the first part of this verse.

**Answers will vary.**

**PROPHECY: Read 2 Peter 1:20, 21**

How does this passage explain the source of prophecy found in the Scriptures?

**God urged and stimulated men by His spirit to record His message.**

What does it say about understanding prophecy?

**It is a message from God. As such, understanding prophecy should be guided by God. It should not be by our own interpretation.**

How is true prophecy identified?

**True prophecy is marked by its origin in God.**

After studying this lesson, explain how the history of mankind recorded in the Bible is the word of God.

**God knows what is needful for people to live in honor and love of Him as well as respecting His creation, especially other people. He has preserved a record through time to communicate what He determined is necessary for us to know to live for Him and His coming Kingdom. We can often learn and remember better from real life examples, which the historical accounts provide for us.**

Prophecy:

- a message foretelling events as revealed by God
- the revealed will or message of God
- may be written or oral

<sup>1</sup> Guthrie, Donald. "Bible." *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, edited by Merrill Tenney, vol. 1, 1975, 1976, pp. 554-566.