

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, January 14, 2015 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

ALL ABOUT THE BIBLE
A Place to Start - Introduction
Selected Scripture

What are some questions you would like to know about the Bible itself? List them here:

Where did the Bible come from and how did we get it? Who wrote the Bible and why did they write it? Is the Bible reliable... can it be trusted? Why are there so many translations today and which ones can be trusted, which is the best translation, and what is the difference between a translation and a paraphrase? These and many more question swirl around this most mysterious, inspiring and often controversial book that Christian believers cling to and devote themselves to. Many accept the Bible at face value, by faith and never question that it is God's Word and that they are to live by it. Others, read it with more skepticism struggling at times to make sense of what to them are apparent contradiction, outright inaccuracies, and blatant atrocity that God seems to condone and even carry out in the Bible. What do we think about the Bible? How do we really read it for all it's worth? How do we make sense of all these things? And if it is really so important, don't I need to know more about this book

JUST FOR FUN... AN INTERESTING QUESTION

Take the following quiz and see if you can figure out what we're talking about...

"I am a book, a best seller that most people on the planet have at one time read or at least casually glanced at. I have touched countless people with its insights and information. The English-language version of me is now distributed in over seventy countries. I open doorways and tell a lot about people and the world. I am found in pretty well every library on the planet. I am available in thirty-seven foreign-language translations. Sales of me are phenomenal, totaling somewhere up near the 100 million mark world-wide. Who (or what) am I? Your Answer: _____"

If you answered "The Holy Bible" you're wrong! The answer to that long, impressive question is "The Guinness Book of World Records." I know, I know... I tricked you! I had you all set up... the study is about the Bible... the discussion is about the Bible... the name on this page is that it's all about the Bible, not Guinness Book of World Records.

Now, Guinness Book of World Records is a good read and has some pretty impressive sales figures. And it also contains life-changing information, like the fact that in 1998 some guy blasted a strand of spaghetti nineteen centimeters from his nose. On every measurable scale, however, Guinness is really “small beans” when compared to the world’s best-selling book, which is, as you already know... wait for it... trumpet fanfare, please! “The Bible.”

JUST FOR FUN... SOME INTERESTING AND FUN FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE

Let me give you some interesting and fun facts about the Bible just to give you a comparison and get us started with this amazing book... the Bible.

Fun Facts About the Bible:

- 1. The Bible is actually made up of 773,692 words and would take someone 70 hours to read -**
- 2. Approximately 50 Bible are sold every minute somewhere in the world –**
- 3. The Bible is the best-selling book of all time –**
- 4. The Bible is also the world’s most shoplifted book -**
- 5. The Bible has been translated in over 6,000 languages and dialects around the world -**
As a point of comparison, the works of William Shakespeare have been translated into only 50 languages and Guinness Book of World Records in only 37.
- 6. Bible Societies are currently working in over 200 countries producing translations in almost 500 new languages -**
- 7. Bible Societies and Christian organizations distribute over 500 million Bibles and Bible portions annually -**
- 8. In the past twenty years, over 100 million copies of the Good New Bible have been printed, and that is just one translation -** In China alone, almost 2.5 million Bibles are distributed each year.
- 9. Despite its “thees” and “thous” from the seventeenth century, 13 million copies of the King James Bible are sold every year –** That is to say nothing of the others translations that are walking out of bookshops around the globe every second of every day.
- 10. In the past two centuries, an estimated 5 billion - 5,000,000,000 that is 5 with nine 0’s after it Bibles have been printed.**

Those figures are pretty staggering. In fact, they are so big it almost defies comprehension. So think of it like this: for about the past two hundred years, a Bible has been sold every few seconds of every minute of every hour of every day... in the last 200 years. At the same rate, the “Guinness Book of World Records” would have sold out after only a few years.

If you were to stack these Bibles (5 billion) one on top of each other, you would have a tower 48,500 miles tall. It would take the space shuttle traveling at full tilt over two hours to get to the top of the tower, and if the tower ever fell over, the weight of its collapse would cause and seismic shift (earthquake) that would knock the earth out of orbit.

If you were to lay all these Bibles (5 billion of them) end to end in a single line, they would... well, let’s just say they would go lots and lots of times around the world and then make a three-lane bible-paved expressway up to the top of Mount Everest. But the awesomeness of the Bible

goes beyond simple sales figures. It is an awesome book that has had a critical impact on the shape of our world. For almost two thousand years, billions of people have been influenced by it, whether indirectly as the basis of law and morality in their country or directly as their personal guidebook to life, both physical and spiritual.

Half of the people you know were probably named after someone in the Bible – like Matthew, Mark, Luke John, Paul, Daniel, Sarah, Eve, Adam, Mary, Jesus (In South America), Rachel, Elizabeth, Becky (Rebecca), Debbie (Deborah), Mike, Zac, Joe, Josh, and on top of that, who doesn't know at least one Maher-Shala-Hash-Baz... on of my favorite good Bible names.

- No other book even comes close to it.
- No other book is held in such high regard.
- No other book has been smuggled in so many car trunks across dangerous borders.
- No other book has appeared so often in the top drawer of hotel bedside tables.
- No other book has been so widely studied (except maybe *Pride and Prejudice*).
- No other book has caused so much debate and controversy.
- No other book has been “sworn” over so much in courtrooms.
- No other book is so misunderstood by people who've never read it.
- No other book has had so many people living their life by it.
- No other book has had so many people who died for it.

Which leave us with only one question: Why? Why is the Bible so popular, so translated, so widely read and so massively published? It is because the Bible tells us about God. If you were to put the Bible into a nutshell and bring it down to a single, simple definition, it would be: The Bible shows us how to be in relationship with God... which is the biggest and most exciting topic of all time.

➡ This study will attempt to explore many of our questions surrounding the Bible. No study, in and of itself, on this most important and monumental work of all time, the Bible, could possibly exhaust the subject matter of the Bible, and this one can't either. But, perhaps, it can begin to help us garner a greater appreciation and love for God's Word, a deeper and more devoted approach to the Bible, and at the same time lead us to really beginning to see, know and hear more from God than we ever have from the Bible.

In the way of introduction and to get us started, it is important for us to see what the Bible says about itself. This will not only lay the ground work for our study, but will also introduce us to some key passages of Scripture that will be the foundation for this study about the Bible

JUST FOR STARTS... WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT ITSELF?

Again, in studying God Word, the Bible, the subject itself can be overwhelming. So many questions surround the Bible as already mentioned... Is it reliable and trustworthy? Does it contradict itself? How did we get it? Where did the Bible come from?

Well to start with we need to know what does the Bible itself say about itself. What kind of claims does the Bible make about itself? Let's begin there and then see if what we know and have discovered about the Bible matches up to its claim. As we examine the Bible's claim

about itself, these verses and passages will become the key and foundational passages for our study.

3 Questions We May Ask of the Bible that the Bible Explicitly Answers:

1. Where did God's Word, the Bible, come from and why? – 2 Timothy 3:16-17 *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (II Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV)*

Questions:

- (1) **According to this passage where did God's Word come from?** – God, but inspiration of God. The Bible is "God-breathed."
 - (2) **According to this passage what does this passage tell us are the reasons why we have it, the Bible?**
 - **It's profitable for doctrine** – Show us the truth about, God, life and all things pertaining
 - **It's profitable for reproof** – Show us our error and the danger of our way
 - **It's profitable for correction** – Show us the right or correct way
 - **It's profitable for instruction in righteousness** – Show us how to be rightly related to God
 - (3) **According to the passage do for us?** – That the man or woman of God... the child of God, believers, Christian, will be whole, complete and have all they need to live and operate in relationship with God, himself or herself, and other (the world around them)
- 2. How did God give us His Word, the Bible? – 2 Peter 1:19-21** *"And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:19-21 NKJV)*

Questions:

- (1) **According to this passage how did God give us His Word, the Bible?** – God gave us the Bible through "Holy" men of God, moved by the Holy Spirit of God... this is how God breathed out His Word to us.
- (2) **Does this passage give us any warnings concerning what can happen with the Bible (Scripture)? If show, what warning and does this happened today... maybe give some examples?** – Yes, there is a warning in this passage of Scripture that indicates that God's Word the Bible can be misinterpreted by some who choose to give it their own "private" interpretation... in other words their own personal spin. Of example of this might be "the health, wealth and prosperity gospel," or "the name it claim it faith," "the freedom in Christ movement," perhaps even the "emergent church movement"
- (3) **What, in your opinion, does this teach us about how God's Word, the Bible should be interpreted?** - I believe that this passage teaches that the Bible should, and can only be rightly interpreted through/with the Holy Spirit. That is the chief means of interpretation. There are other things that can help us (context, languages, historical setting, etc.), but even those things will fail to bring us to the truth of Scripture without the Holy Spirit.

3. **What does the Word of God, the Bible, do? – Hebrews 4:12** *"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* (Hebrews 4:12 NKJV) There are many passages that tell us what the Bible does, this is just one. 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us some of what the Bible does. It give us doctrinal truth, it shows us our error and sin, it corrects us, and teaches us and shows us how to live. But Hebrews 4:12 show us a very powerful side to the Bible that enable it to do these things.

Question:

- (1) According to this verse what does the Bible do?
- (2) What does this do for us?

A CLOSING WORD... A FEW REMARKABLE THINGS THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT ITSELF

As if those things were now pretty extreme statements to make about itself, the Bible has other remarkable statements that it seems to make about itself. These statements actually are reason for great praise for God's Word and reason for our undivided attention to it. As we close out this introduction to our study "All About the Bible" let these things soak in.

3 Remarkable Statements the Bible Makes About Itself:

1. **It always accomplishes it's purpose (Isaiah 55:11)** *"So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."* (Isaiah 55:11 NKJV)
2. **It will never die, lose its purpose or power, and will never fade in importance (Isaiah 40:8)** - *"The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever."* (Isaiah 40:8 NKJV)
3. **It is always right and pure truth (Psalm 19:8 & 33:4)** - *"The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;"* (Psalms 19:8 NKJV) *"For the word of the LORD is right, And all His work is done in truth."*(Psalms 33:4 NKJV)