

## Front Line

The Bible does not merely contain the Word of God; it is the Word of God. It is God's authoritative Book and has the answers to all life's problems.

## His Lines

**Printed Text:** Proverbs 30:5, 6; Matthew 5:17-20; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21

**Background:** Deuteronomy 4:1-14; Psalm 19:1-14; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:12-21

## Anchors

1. If God's Word is important for getting us to heaven, how accurate does it need to be?
2. If God's Word is perfect, how important is it that you know what it says?
3. Why did God have His message written down and preserved for later generations?

## Royal Line

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16).

## *Lines From the Bible*

*S Deuteronomy 4:1-14.* Don't leave parts of it out. Don't add anything to it. No government, civilization, or single genius has ever improved upon God's standards and judgments. The Bible is perfect. Keep reading it!  
*M Deuteronomy 27:1-10.* "Write all the law very plainly, and do it someplace permanent!" Those were Moses' orders. When God explains how He wants things to work, we need to listen up, understand, and pass it along to others.

*T Joshua 24:19-28.* The "covenant" Joshua made was an agreement between God and His people – as strong and encompassing as marriage vows. And God never gives up on His Word.

*W Psalm 111:1-10.* Because He is honorable, God will always live up to the covenant He made, even long after the people failed. Because He is all-powerful,

God will never even struggle to keep His promises. He is perfect.

*T Proverbs 9:1-18.* God's Word is the source of all true wisdom. You don't have to scale a mountain to get wisdom! Fear the Lord. That's just the beginning.

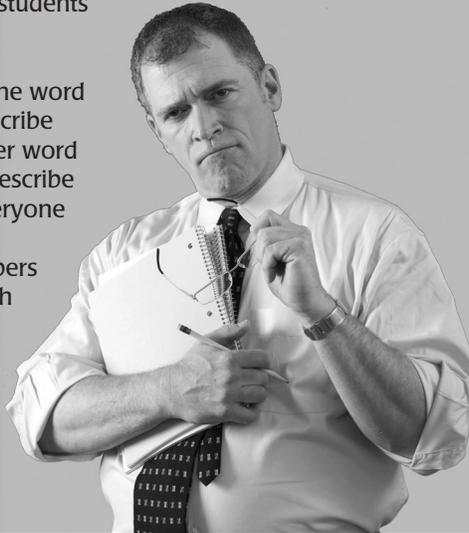
*F 2 Peter 1:13-21.* The Bible isn't "a collection of good stories" or even history from a certain point of view. God's Word is His message to humanity. He spoke clearly to the writers and has powerfully protected the Bible ever since.

*S Revelation 21:1-7.* When God told John to "write this down," He wasn't closing communication with people. Thanks to the Apostle John and others like him, we do have God's complete message to humanity, but the Father still wants to talk with His children! Are you listening?

# To the Teacher

This lesson begins a unique study: a study of the Word, and a guide to the various ways of studying the Word. Each week's lesson will make suggestions for continued study and cumulative memorization of the Bible books, etc. Let this series of lessons be a foundational study that will impact your students for a lifetime.

**Icebreaker:** What's one word you would like to describe yourself and one other word people often use to describe you? (Twist: Have everyone write their two words down, mix up the papers and try to guess which words belong to which person.)



# Opening Lines

God's holy, inspired Word, which we call the Bible, is the best-selling and most quoted book on earth. Great people from many walks of life have learned to depend on it. Abraham Lincoln declared, "I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated to us through this Book."

The composition of the Bible is astounding. It is a small library in itself, composed of sixty-six books. The words were recorded by forty authors, all under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. These people did not collaborate. They had few things in common and often knew very little, if anything, about the other writers.

The writers had diverse skills. Moses, the first writer, had been trained in the greatest university of Egypt, since he was raised by Pharaoh, but Peter, one of the New Testament penmen, was only a fisherman. We do not know whether he ever attended any school.

However, the fact remains, each one was inspired by God. God can use anyone who will obey Him!

The Bible was written over a period of 1500 years in three different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek), and on three different continents.

While different religions claim to have holy books, there are errors and discrepancies found in them all. God's Word, the Bible, is the only true authority. His

Word reveals human nature and the plan of salvation which leads to God. In fact, this Book is the story of salvation. It is the only accurate account of life, peace, joy, and eternity.

While the Book was written many years ago, it is as relevant today as it was when it was first penned. It is the basis for all authority. It is the hope for all humanity. It is the greatest document ever written. It is the eternal, infallible Word of the only true and living God – the written revelation of His divine will for mankind.

# Between the Lines

## God's Word Is Sacred

**Proverbs 30.** <sup>5</sup>Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. <sup>6</sup>Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

Looking back to verse 1 of this chapter, we meet the man called Agur. While we know very little about him (we don't even know if this was his real name), he was clearly an honest collector of truth and wise sayings. His search led him to this conclusion: Although there is very much that I don't understand, one thing is sure – God's Word. It is pure in its declarations, intent, and purpose.

The Word of God is free from error, and God does not change His opinions, commands, or expectations. There is no moral corruption in the pages of the Bible. The Bible plainly records some immoral practices. Nowhere does the Bible try to cover up the immorality. It simply tells it like it is.

## Fine Lines

jot – Matt. 5:18 – Smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Used figuratively for something of apparently small importance.

tittle – Matt. 5:18 – Small, horn-shaped mark used to indicate accent in Hebrew.

In its precepts and directives and in its revelation of God to man, the Bible is pure and sacred. By being open and honest in its declarations, the Bible inspires trust and faith in the God of the Bible. It also inspires reverence for the Living Word, Jesus Christ.

While many things about God remain a mystery, He has revealed enough. We can respect His wisdom and laws.

1. If the Bible is sacred, how should we treat it? Should we worship the Bible?
2. Times are much different now than when the Bible was written. How can the same words meet their needs and ours too?

We can trust His forgiveness and grace. We can experience His compassion and love Him back.

### God's Word Is Enduring

**Matthew 5.** <sup>17</sup>Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup>For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. <sup>19</sup>Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup>For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

The Old Testament, which preceded the coming of Christ as Emmanuel, is still valid. Jesus did not destroy the Word of God as given to the old prophets. He did, however, fulfill much of it. He showed the meaning of the old rituals such as the sacrifice of animals, and He did not take away the need of a sacrifice for sin. That need is still there.

The difference is that Christ became the perfect sacrifice, once and for all. He came to obey the commands of the law, because He was "made under the law" (Gal. 4:4) He was obedient to the law. He obeyed and honored His parents, He hallowed the Sabbath, He prayed, and He helped the poor. As one writer states it, "He did not make void the law, but He made good the law."

This helps to affirm the fact that God's Word never changes. It is enduring. It is eternal. The Old Testament was inspired by God and recorded by Moses and the prophets. It was actually God's preliminary words to humanity, but in the "fulness of the time" God sent His Son, the living Word, and assigned men to record His additional and final message to humanity.

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave ample instructions and warning about the durability of the inspired Word. Putting it in our language, we might quote Jesus as saying, "Don't think for a moment that I have come to do away with the Old Testament! I tell you, heaven and earth shall be utterly destroyed, but not even one punctuation mark of my Word, not one stroke of the pen, will be destroyed until everything is accomplished!"

The bottom line: God's Word has and always will endure the passage of time, the embattlement of unbelievers, and the stubbornness of those who refuse its precepts. Not one thing that any person can say or do will change God's Word.

### God's Word Is Inspired

**2 Timothy 3.** <sup>14</sup>But continue thou in the things which thou hast

**learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; <sup>15</sup>and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup>All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup>that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.**

The word "inspire" means to "breathe upon; to have an animating effect upon; influence, or impel; to cause, guide, communicate, or motivate as by divine or supernatural influence; to prompt, or cause to be written or said" (Webster).

By saying that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God" we are saying it was literally God-breathed, God-directed, and God-anointed. The Bible is never to be taken lightly. We are to read it and allow it to correct us, to teach us, and to keep us in the straight path of righteousness.

In this passage the Apostle Paul is urging young Timothy to remain faithful in everything he has been taught, to stand by the truth, to hold on to the things he has learned. And the reason? He should consider who taught him, even from a child, and not only who taught him, but what he had been taught – the sacred Scriptures.

And what was so important about that? The Word he had been taught was the "holy scriptures" which were "able to make [him] wise unto salvation." That is, they contained the wisdom and information which would impart saving grace for his eternal salvation.

Then Paul went on to declare that every Scripture is God-inspired. It is able to make anyone who reads it "wise unto salvation." Not only so, but this Scripture is good to teach, to correct, to reprove or refute error, and to guide. It teaches us true faith in the living God and helps us set the direction for our lives.

It also trains us in the ways of righteousness and the moral discipline of doing right.

The term "all scripture" means literally all the Old Testament as well as the New Testament, as far as it had been written at the time of Paul. The design or purpose of this inspired Word was for convicting men of their wrong beliefs. That is its revealing power. It also has a correcting power. It is useful for correcting that which is wrong in the lives of those who read it.

### God's Word Is Sure

**2 Peter 1.** <sup>19</sup>We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: <sup>20</sup>knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. <sup>21</sup>For the

1. Is it necessary for the New Testament Christian today to obey the Old Testament?

2. The Book of Hebrews says that the New Testament is better than the old one. In what way is it better? Since both are from God, how can one be better than the other?

1. Does the word "inspire" mean that the writers of the Bible were God's "robots" who wrote for Him? How can you tell from the text itself?

2. What is the difference in meaning for the word "inspire" in the following two statements: "This song was inspired by a certain event in my life," and "God's Word is inspired"?

**prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**

Something that is sure can be depended on; it is totally trustworthy. It cannot be doubted, questioned, or disputed. It is absolutely true and certain. It can be counted on to happen without faltering.

So what does Peter mean by saying we have a “more sure word”? Bible scholars seem to agree that what Peter is actually saying is this: “We have the word from the old prophets; and we have believed it. Now we have the message of those prophets fully confirmed by all that we have seen and heard in Christ. Thus, His Word is absolutely sure, revealing the accuracy and validity of the prophets of old.”

Those Old Testament prophecies were very meaningful, even to the Gentiles. Isaiah had said, “Behold my servant . . . [my chosen] in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. . . . to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house” (42:1, 7).

This was exciting confirmation for these Gentile believers. Peter was saying that they had a “more sure word” because Christ had finally come; He had made salvation available to them.

Peter had earlier been chosen by Jesus Christ as one of the twelve apostles. Later he had been commissioned to preach the gospel to the Gentiles as well as write these letters to strengthen the churches. He had been on the Mount of Transfiguration and seen the glory surrounding Christ and heard the pronouncement by God, “This is my beloved Son: hear him” (Mark 9:7).

He had seen the empty tomb after the resurrection. He had been in the Upper Room with the seventy when Jesus made

His personal appearance. He knew, indeed, that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah, the Son of God. He had been an eyewitness of the majesty of Christ.

Now he is writing to the Christians and extolling his Lord. “His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us . . . that . . . ye might be partakers of the divine nature” (vs. 3, 4).

What does he mean by a “more sure word”? What could be any more sure than his own personal encounters with Christ and knowing that His coming was a direct fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy?

Of course Peter was careful to remind them that while Christ’s appearance confirmed or fulfilled the old prophecies, they were not to take the old words lightly. They were still meaningful – even more so. Those prophecies didn’t come by some man’s imagination. Those “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (v. 21).

The explanation of the surety of God’s Word which Peter gave to those Gentiles is also a source of inspiration and faith in the Word for us. God’s Word is sure. He will do just what He has said. His timing is often different from what we might want it to be, but He is never late and never early. He always does just what He says at the time He had said it would be done.

1. What meaning do the Old Testament prophecies have for us today?
2. Why is the Bible more meaningful to us at some times than at others?
3. Why is it important for us to know the Bible is God-inspired?

<p><b>Bible Search</b> Read the following passages of Scripture and answer the question for each one.</p> <p><u>Matthew 4:4, 7,10</u> What authority did Jesus use to answer Satan?</p> <p><u>Matthew 19:3-6</u> How did Jesus interpret the story of the creation of man as given in Genesis?</p>	<p><u>Matthew 22:29-40</u> What authority did Jesus use to answer those who questioned Him?</p> <p><u>Luke 24:25-27</u> How did Jesus describe those who didn’t believe the Old Testament prophecies?</p> <p><u>John 5:46, 47</u> What did Jesus say would be the result of not believing the Old Testament?</p>
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<p><b>What Can We Learn?</b> Read this passage from Matthew [5:17-20], then answer the questions below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who recorded this passage?</li> <li>2. Who was he quoting?</li> <li>3. What two things did the speaker make clear in verse 17?</li> <li>4. How long will God’s law be with us?</li> <li>5. What two main things did the speaker teach in verse 19?</li> </ol>
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## Wrap-Up Lines

The writer of Hebrews summarizes the message of our lesson this way: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. . . . Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. . . . [The earth and the heavens] shall perish, but thou remainest. . . . Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail” (Heb. 1:1-12).

The writer of Hebrews also tells us, “When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself. . . . Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie” (6:13-18).

Why can we trust the Book? Because we can trust the Author!

### The Bottom Line

Send each person home with a stack of mini Post-It® notes and the assignment to write at least five simple promises to give away (“I’ll see you at 7.” “You can ride with me tomorrow.”). Then be sure to keep those promises!

## Outside the Lines

**Start With the Basics.** For this quarter’s study it is basic that your group learn where to find every book in the Bible. Begin by showing them that the Bible is divided into two main sections – Old Testament and New

Testament. This week concentrate on memorizing the first five books of the Old Testament – the books of the Law (Pentateuch). By breaking them up into sections, your group will understand how the Bible is put together and be better at finding the books even if they aren’t perfectly memorized.

**Journalistic View.** Encourage your students to study the Word, using the journalist’s approach – always asking: Who? What? Where? When? How? Why? While not every question will be answered in every passage, it gives a good launching point for study. Sometimes it is necessary to go backwards or forwards from the chosen passage in order to find the answer. Starting with this passage: Who? Agur (back to v. 1). What? Starts with personal confession (vs. 2, 3), then tells us something about God’s Word. Where was it written? (Not stated.) When? (Not stated, probably about 700 B.C.) How is the truth illustrated or conveyed? By establishing where wisdom comes from. Why was this written? To convey the sacredness of Scripture. Try this activity: Divide the group into pairs. Have the first person in each set ask the other person Who? What? Where? When? How? Why? about a recent event he or she personally witnessed. Then, have the second person in each set ask the first person the same questions about an event in the Bible. Discuss the differences in details remembered when you witnessed it as opposed to reading about it.

**Test the Word for Sureness.** Give the following references to your students and have them state what they say about God’s Word being sure or how they illustrate that fact.

1. Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 12:18.
2. Mark 9:5; 2 Peter 1:16-19.
3. Deuteronomy 12:10-12; 1 Kings 8:56.
4. Deuteronomy 28:15; Ezekiel 12:25; Daniel 9:12.
5. Psalm 111:7, 8.
6. Psalm 19:7-11.
7. Luke 21:33.

**Check It Out.** Be sure every student has a Bible. Ask them to quickly scan Genesis 1 and Revelation 22, then have them summarize the range or extent of the contents of the Bible. Simply stated, from those two chapters we have the beginning and end of God’s plan for mankind. All chapters and books in between simply fill out the story more in detail. Everything started out good – it will end by being wonderful!

**Record It.** One way to memorize Scripture is to listen to it over and over. Your teens probably all have smartphones that are capable of recording. Divide into smaller groups and make several different types of recordings, depending on your strengths – dramatic, musical, etc. Share the recordings with each other and work on the memorization throughout the week.

**Emphasize.** Place special emphasis on daily Bible study. You may want to challenge your students to read specific passages, such as the ones which have to do with the next Sunday’s lesson. Keep a record and offer incentives for those who read and study the Word daily.