

Week 1

The Reliability of the Bible

The Bible does not merely contain the Word of God; it is the Word of God.



Monday, November 26
Read Deuteronomy 4:1-5

The Bible, God's Word

"Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it" (v. 5).

When I was sixteen, I bought my first car, a 1958 Olds 88, from my grandfather. That car symbolized opportunities and possibilities to me that I never had before. When Grandpa sold me that car, he gave me some advice: Learn the rules of the road and obey them, and you will get to enjoy the advantages of having a car.

The Book of Deuteronomy has been referred to as Moses' farewell address to Israel before their entering the land of Canaan. The Promised Land beckoned to them as a land of opportunity and possibility, but responsibility would accompany the blessings it held for them. To enjoy the benefits available, they would need to "keep the commandments of the LORD" (v. 2).

The Christian life holds great promise for "whosoever will" embrace God's Word and enter into an ongoing relationship with Him. The necessary object is to do God's will God's way. The psalmist said, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Ps. 119:11). The chorus I learned as a child is needed and applicable for all ages. (RBS)

*The B-I-B-L-E
I'll take it along with me.
I'll read and pray, and then obey,
The B-I-B-L-E.*

The Bible is the crossword key God has given us to solve life's puzzles.

Tuesday, November 27
Read Joshua 24:19-28

The Book of the Law of God

“And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the LORD” (v. 26).

“If it isn’t documented, it didn’t happen” is the largely accepted understanding in the court of law. To elicit a promise is one thing, but for the promising party to remember exactly what they promised and stick to it is something else! Have you ever made a promise and then tried to remember exactly what it was that you promised?

When Joshua warned the people of God’s expectations, the people promised: “We will serve the LORD” (v. 21). Knowing how capricious human nature can be, Joshua put this commitment in writing, even as he told them “ye are witnesses against yourselves” (v. 22). It was an effort to help them keep clear in their minds what they had promised before God.

The carnal heart has an affinity for making and breaking promises! Perhaps partly due to human “forgetting” and partly due to changing our minds! However, we expect God to stand by His promises. Therefore we should stand by ours! The written Word clearly gives us what God expects; perhaps it would do us good to write out our promise to God! (RBS)

*’Tis the Book that tells of the Father’s love
When He sent His Son to us from heav’n above,
Who by richest promise creates hope within,
For ’tis thro His blood we are saved from sin.
— George H. Carr*

The unfailing foundation of God’s Law is God’s love.

Wednesday, November 28
Read Psalm 19:1-14

God’s Word Is Effective

“Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward” (v. 11).

Descriptive nicknames and titles have frequently been used about the Bible, God’s Word. It has been referred to as “The Good Book.” It has been called “The Road Map to Heaven” or “The Christian’s Guide to Holy Living.”

In each case God's Word is seen to be filled with purpose and intention, inspiring those reading it to be better people. The evident fact is that God's Word is effective, meaning it produces "a decided, decisive, or desired effect" through its admonitions and examples.

In yesteryears, Bible reading and scripture memorization were common practice. It was believed that exposure to God's Word would have a positive effect. It provided a warning, instruction, and encouragement that inclined people to step back, weigh their choices and regulate their behaviors. Parents started each day sharing verses from God's Word with their children; school days were begun with teachers reading a passage from God's Word with their students. Respect for God's Word was instilled by giving it a place of priority; in turn, it effectively impacted many lives. It offers the same possibilities for those who will use it today! (RBS)

*Sweet are the promises; kind is the Word,
Dearer far than any message man ever heard.
Pure was the mind of Christ — sinless I see.
He the great example is, and pattern for me.*
— W. A. Ogden

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Ps. 119:11).

Thursday, November 29
Read Psalm 119:89-96

God's Words Are Eternal

"They continue this day according to thine ordinances: for all are thy servants" (v. 91).

National Geographic recently (March 2018) came out with thirteen discoveries about the planet earth that uniquely enable life as we know it around this globe. Little "exact" things like earth's distance from the sun, the size of our moon, even the size of the sun, all are evidence of Divine Design and ongoing regulation due to a Resource greater than happenstance. The constancy, due to God's "ordinances," assures us that He is in control, and we can count on Him! The repetition of day and night and the seasons of the year remind us of God's faithfulness that His words are eternal.

History has revealed the fulfillment of Bible prophecies, and time has proven God's promises to be true. Two of the gospels (Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33) record Jesus saying, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away." Though many attempts have been made to discredit God's Word, His Word still stands for "whosoever will" to bank on and live by! His Word timelessly offers hope and help to everyone everywhere. (RBS)

*The Bible stands like a rock undaunted
'Mid the raging storms of time;
Its pages burn with the truth eternal,
And they glow with a light sublime.*
— Haldor Lillenas

God's Word is an anchor connecting us to the Solid Rock!

Friday, November 30
Read Proverbs 1:1-7

Instructions From God's Word

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels" (v. 5).

"Advice" is a "recommendation concerning a decision or direction."

It gives suggestions to be considered in determining one's response or course of action. "Instruction," on the other hand, is "direction calling for compliance," or obedience to get a specific result. In writing a second letter to Timothy, the Apostle Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16).

It has been said, "When all else fails, read the instructions!" God's Word abounds with instruction that will help us set and establish priorities giving us purpose and meaning in life, even as it guards us against falling prey to the evil tendencies of our day. Advice involves suggestions that may either help or hinder, but God's Word provides instruction we can count on. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God" (Matt. 6:33), "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" (Mark. 12:30), "Put on the whole armor of God" (Eph. 6:11), etc. Don't wait until other options fail, read God's instructions first! (RBS)

*How precious is the book divine,
By inspiration given!
Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine,
To guide our souls to heaven.*
— John Fawcett

Be proactive; follow the instruction of God's Word.

Saturday, December 1
Read 2 Peter 1:13-21

Divinely Inspired

“For the 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” (v. 21).

Men dreamed and planned, then set out to build a “flying machine.”

In fact, they have dreamed and planned, and then set out to do a lot of things including the writing of fact and fiction. Technical books have been written for “dummies” where the writers spelled out step by step instructions to accomplish a task. But no one ever hung a “Do Not Disturb” sign on their door, saying “No interruptions please, I am going to write part of the Bible!” God’s Word did not originate in the minds of men by the will of man!

The Bible, written over a 1500 year period by numerous writers, who did not have each other’s writings available for reference, still has a cohesive unity that is timelessly applicable and effective for everyone everywhere. How could that happen? Behind the scenes, divine will and influence provided the direction and inspiration so men could write God’s will in their own words, yet precisely His message. Divine inspiration addresses the issue and offers the solution in a manner far surpassing anything we could ever come up with on our own! (RBS)

*The Bible stands and it will forever,
When the world has passed away;
By inspiration it has been given,
All its precepts I will obey.
— Haldor Lillenas*

The Bible was God’s plan, not man’s!

Sunday, December 2
Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17

The Use of God’s Word

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (v. 16).

With the Driver’s Manual came the admonition: “Study this; it contains everything you will need to know to pass the test.” I found it was full

of instructions, and from them, I learned the expectations. Continuing to follow those instructions enabled me to get where I wanted to go and kept me safe. I learned to watch for signs, to pay attention, and to look ahead. Over the years I have benefitted immensely from this.

Life is complex with many choices; numerous voices offer advice that can be conflicting and frequently changing. In the midst of life's storm-tossed seas, God's Word stands like a beacon offering hope and help to a safe harbor. His Word contains all we need to know to pass the tests. The psalmist said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105). To follow the instructions of His Word is to be strengthened by the promises that go with them. You can count on God's Word to help you with your thoughts and words and actions when you practice His teachings in your daily life. (RBS)

Thy Word have I hid in my heart,
That I might not sin against Thee;
That I might not sin, that I might not sin,
Thy Word have I hid in my heart.
— Author Unknown

*The BIBLE — Read it Regularly to
Realize its Rich Rewards!*

