

# THE BIBLE

## Outline for "First Principles Class"

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### INTRODUCTION:

1. The Bible is the world's most valuable and vital possession.
  - a. All of the combined works, of all the ages, by all the greatest thinkers of this world pale into utter, absolute insignificance when weighed against and compares to the "Book."
  - b. The reason is the Bible is the Word of God.
2. The Bible has undergone a vicious barrage of attacks in this generation, even in the hands of its self proclaimed "friends."
  - a. A number of reasons may be cited, among which is that man does not want to submit himself to God's authority.
  - b. Another reason given by some is that it is not "scholarly" and "scientific" to accept such an old book, written by "unlearned and ignorant men," long before most of the world's scientific discoveries and the latest "philosophical thought."
3. The enemies of Christ, of redemption, and of biblical morality and ethics realize that no building is stronger than its foundation; destroy the foundation, and the building crumbles of its own weight.
4. Some of the most notorious critics of the Bible fill pulpits in countless churches and fill professional and administrative positions in colleges whose very charters were established in defense of the Bible and whose purposes were to train defenders of the Scriptures.
5. No matter how much the Bible is attacked it will stand forever (Matt. 24:35; John 12:48).
6. How did the Bible come into being, Can the Bible be trusted, Is it hard to understand, and is it all that man needs to direct him to heaven? These are just a few questions that need to be answered concerning the Bible, the Word of God.

### I. FIRST LOOK AT SOME DEFINITIONS THAT WILL HELP IN A STUDY OF THE BIBLE!

- A. Authenticity – refers to the truth of the facts, integrity, trustworthiness and credibility of the record.
- B. Autograph – writing produced under the direction of apostle or prophet or inspired writer, original writings.
- C. Biblos – name given to the outer coat of a papyrus reed in Egypt, Latin term Bibla then transliterated into the Old French biblia later modern English word Bible.
  1. Greek Bible – Torah, 12 books of history, 5 poetry and 17 books of prophecy to these the early church fathers added gospel accounts, Acts, 13 Pauline epistles, 8 general epistles and Revelation.
  2. Hebrew Bible – made of 22 or 24 books. Torah (law), Nebhiim (the prophets) and Kethubhim (the writings).
  3. LXX – Septuagint – Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament translated by 70 scribes about 200 B.C. in Alexandria.
- D. Canon – means "measuring rod." Thus, those books in the "canon" measure up to some standard.
- E. Credibility – the right to be believed.

- F. Genuineness – refers to the truth of the origin, its authorship.
- G. Inerrancy – without error, usually used of scientific and historical accuracy of the Scriptures.
- H. Infallible – literally – not breakable; Divine character of Scripture which necessitates its truthfulness (John 10:35).
- I. Inspiration – Divine influence directly exerted on the mind of man to enable him to speak or to write God’s Word. (II Tim. 3:16).
  - 1. Plenary inspiration – full and complete, extending to all parts of Scripture; contrasted to demythology.
  - 2. Verbal inspiration – the very words of the Bible are vested with Divine Authority and not merely the thoughts or ideas.
- J. Papyrus – ancient paper.
- K. Revelation – an uncovering, revealing.
- L. Torah – English transliteration of the Hebrew Word for Law – referring to the 5 books of the Law of Moses.
- M. Transmission – process by which manuscripts have been copied and recopied through the ages.
- N. Translation – from one language to another.
- O. Transliteration – letter for letter transposition from one language to another.

## **II. Who wrote the Bible?**

- A. Prior to the written word God made Himself and His will known to man by speaking to him verbally.
  - 1. God spoke to Adam (Gen. 2:16). Adam and Eve “heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden (Gen. 3:8).
  - 2. He later reproved Cain for his fruit offering (Gen. 4:6).
  - 3. God continued to speak orally to Noah, to Abraham, as well as Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, etc.
- B. On other occasions, the Lord sent angels as messengers to tell men what He wanted them to know, as the three visitors of Abraham (Gen. 18:2) and the two angels who talked to Lot (Gen. 19:1).
- C. The thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven of the New Testament were written one at a time by men from all walks of life.
  - 1. Most of the writers were unacquainted with each other.
  - 2. They lived in many different places, and all did not speak the same language.
  - 3. The Old Testament writers wrote mostly in Hebrew, with some portions being written in Aramaic (some of Ezra and Daniel).
  - 4. The New Testament was written in the Greek language.
  - 5. Some of the authors were highly educated men (Moses and Paul) while some were fishermen (Peter and John).
    - a. David and Solomon were kings.
    - b. Luke was a physician and Matthew a tax-collector.

- c. Ezra was a priest and scribe, while Nehemiah was a cup bearer to a king.
- 6. The book of Job was probably written many years before Moses lived.
- 7. Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible approximately 1491 B.C. many years following the events about which he wrote.
- D. How did these men write the Bible?
  - 1. They wrote by inspiration.
  - 2. What is inspiration?
    - a. The word “inspiration” appears only twice in the KJV Bible (Job 32:8; II Tim. 3:16).
    - b. In Job 32:8 inspiration is from a Hebrew (neshamah) meaning to breathe.
    - c. In II Timothy 3:16 the word (theopneustos) which is translated inspiration means God-breathed or breathed out of God.
  - 3. There are several false theories concerning inspiration. All of these have as their necessary design the lowering of ones view of Scripture.
    - a. There is the general inspiration theory.
      - 1) This theory uses “inspiration” and “inspired” in reference to the Bible and its writers in the same way that men speak of the “inspiration” of the great authors such as Shakespeare or Homer.
      - 2) A preacher may do an outstanding job in a particular sermon and someone may say, “He was really inspired today.” By this use of the term it is meant that one thus inspired has demonstrated an exceptional ability of some sort.
      - 3) While it is true that the Biblical writers demonstrated exceptional ability in their writing, the Bible’s own claim goes far beyond this.
    - b. There is the “Bible contains the Word of God” theory.
      - 1) This theory may at first sound innocent, for indeed, no Bible-believer would deny that the Bible contains the Word of God.
      - 2) The aim of those who promote this theory is actually to deny that the Bible is God’s Word.
      - 3) In saying that it contains God’s Word, they leave room for it also to contain myths, fables, legends and various human errors.
      - 4) The Bible is not merely a bucket or box that has some of the Word of God in it all mingled with errors, myths, and such like.
      - 5) Who but fallible, biased, subjective men will decide which contents of the Bible are inspired and which are not, if this theory is followed?
        - a) Would not the drunkard be tempted to disallow the proscriptions against drunkenness.
        - b) Would not the fornicator be tempted to disallow the proscriptions against fornication.
        - c) The list could go on and on (Homosexuals, smokers, those in unscriptural marriages, etc.).
    - c. There is the “theme and general thoughts are inspired” theory. This view says that the Bible is merely inspired in its general direction or in its broad subject matter.
    - d. There is the “personal inspiration” theory.
      - 1) In this view the Bible writers were enlightened in various degrees, purified morally, and brought into an intimate and immediate communion with God by the Holy Spirit.
      - 2) The emphasis in this view is upon the moral and religious quality of the writers rather than upon the words they wrote.
    - e. There is the “partial inspiration” theory.
      - 1) This theory is similar to the “Contains” theory, but instead of

making allowances for errors in the Bible in the form of myths, legends, and the like, it allows for errors in matters of science, geography, history, and other such subjects.

2) In this view, only the religious teachings of the Bible in the areas of doctrine and practice can be attributed to inspiration.

4. What is the truth concerning inspiration? How did these men write the Bible?

a. The Bible is the plenary and verbally inspired Word of God (II Tim. 3:16).

1) Men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit (II Peter 1:19-21).

2) These men spoke words that the Holy Spirit gave them (I Cor. 2:10-13).

3) The conclusion is simple concerning inspiration. God gave the writers the very words they were to write.

b. The Old Testament claims to be inspired of God (Ex. 4:12,15; Deut. 18:19-20; Jer. 1:4-9; Ezek. 2:7; Isa. 1:10; II Sam. 23:2; Isa. 8:1; Jer. 36:2; Ex. 17:14; 34:27; Isa. 51:16; Jer. 5:14; Num. 12:8).

1) These claims are representative of all of the 39 books of the Old Testament. It has been calculated that no fewer than 3,808 times the expression "thus saith the Lord," or a like expression, occurs in the Old Testament.

2) Jesus and the New Testament writers confirmed that the Old Testament is the Word of God (Matt. 5:17-19; Luke 24:44-47).

c. The New Testament claims to be inspired of God.

1) Peter makes three claims pertaining to the inspiration of the New Testament (II Peter 3:15,16).

a) He states that Paul wrote his epistles "according to the wisdom given unto him." Paul did not write out of his own insight and human wisdom; he wrote according to the wisdom imparted to him by God.

b) Peter labels Paul's epistles as "scripture."

c) Peter declares that to twist Paul's writings is to invite destruction.

2) Peter placed himself and the other apostles on a par with the writers of the Old Testament (II Peter 3:2).

3) Paul affirms verbal inspiration for himself and his fellow apostles (I Cor. 2:1-13; I Tim. 4:1; Gal. 2:2; II Cor. 12:7; I Thess. 1:5; 2:13; I Cor. 14:37; II Thess. 2:15; 3:6,14; Eph. 3:1-5).

4) John claims that the Revelation was given by God to Christ and, in turn to him (Rev. 1:1).

d. What does the New Testament say concerning the Old Testament?

1) More than 10% of the New Testament text is composed of quotations from or direct allusions to the Old Testament. There are about 350 direct quotations from the Old Testament, or about one in 23 passages of the New Testament.

2) Jesus quoted from the Old Testament concerning:

a) Creation (Mark 10:6)

b) Satan (John 8:44)

c) Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:29-32)

d) Elijah, Elisha, and Naaman (Luke 4:25-37)

e) Jonah (Luke 11:29-32)

3) Jesus quoted Scripture in His hour of temptation (Luke 4:1-12; Matt. 4:1-11; Deut. 8:3; 6:11,16).

4) While hanging on the cruel cross of Calvary Jesus made seven

statement of these four were allusions of direct quotations of Old Testament scripture (John 19:28; Psa. 69:21; Luke 23:34; Isa. 53:12; Mark 15:34; Psa. 22:1; Luke 23:46; Psa. 31:5).

5) Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost as recorded in the book of Acts contains 27 verses and 17 of those are either allusions or direct quotations from the Old Testament (Acts 2).

6) Stephen defended himself by quoting the Old Testament. Luke records 60 verses of which 50 are direct quotations or allusions to a detailed account of Hebrew history (Acts 7).

7) Phillip begin to teach the eunuch from the Old Testament (Acts 8:26-38).

8) Paul says the Old Testament was inspired of God (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11; Heb. 10:1; Gal. 3:24,25).

9) When Paul encountered the philosophers of the Epicureans and Stocis on Mars Hill, he referred the book of Genesis, Deuteronomy, Psalms, and Job to explain to them the unknown God (Acts 17).

#### E. Fulfilled prophecy is proof that the Bible was written by God.

##### 1. Who is a prophet?

a. The basic meaning of the word prophet is one who speaks for another.

b. Aaron was to be Moses spokesman (Ex. 4:16).

c. A prophet was chosen to be so by God, had words from God put in his mouth and was to speak only that which God commanded him.

##### 2. Jesus warns of false prophets (Matt. 7:15).

##### 3. John warns of false prophets (I John 4:1).

##### 4. Peter warns of false prophets (II Peter 2:1).

##### 5. There were false prophets in the Old Testament times (Jer. 14:14; 23:32).

a. Isaiah stood against the false prophets of his day (Isa. 41:22,23; 48:3,5).

b. Elijah withstood the false prophets of his day (I Kings 18).

##### 6. God declares how one could know if a prophet was speaking the Word of God (Deut. 18:22; Jer. 28:9).

##### 7. What are the characteristics of Bible prophecy?

a. Bible prophecy often involves that which is remote as to time and place, even that which is nonexistent at the time of the prophecy.

1) Daniel interpreted the dream of Nebuchadnzzar (Daniel 2).

2) The kingdoms about which Daniel spoke were not in existence at that time (Medes-Persians, Greeks and Romans).

3) Daniel said the kingdom of Christ would be established in the days of these (the Roman) kings (Dan. 2:44).

b. Bible prophecy is often very specific and detailed.

1) Isaiah prophesied of the birth of Christ (Isa. 7:14).

2) Isaiah did not prophesy just that the Christ would be born, nor that He would be born of just any woman, nor that He would be born of just any "young woman," but that He would be born of a virgin.

3) Matthew describes the fulfillment of this prophecy (Matt. 1:22,23).

c. Bible prophecy is often contrary to man's reasoning.

1) What man would have predicted that the long awaited Messiah would be rejected (Isa. 53:3; John 1:11).

2) What man would have predicted that Edom would fall (Obadiah)?

3) What man would have predicted that Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed (Micah 3:12)?

d. What are the mathematical possibilities of prophecies being fulfilled?

1) Bobby Liddell has a article in the Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship Book, 1989, "The Bible– None Like It In Fulfilled Prophecy."

2) Brother Liddell writes: "For ease of calculation, let us assign the number one hundred as the number of prophecies being fulfilled in Christ (there are far more). Suppose that in the case of each prophecy the chance of successful fulfillment in one person was even; that is, one in two, then the probability that all one hundred prophecies would be fulfilled in one person would be  $(\frac{1}{2})^n$  where  $n = 100$ . The chances of one hundred prophecies being fulfilled would be one chance in 1,267,651,000,000,000,000,000,000,000." That is 1,267,651 with 24 zeros following it.

8. Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets (Matt. 5:17,18). There are twenty-four prophecies, written in the Old Testament which were fulfilled literally in one 24 hour period concerning Christ. These were written between 500 and 1,000 years before Christ was born.

- a. Sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12; Matt. 26:14,15)
- b. Betrayed by a friend (Psa. 41:9; 55:12-14; Matt. 26:47-50)
- c. Money to go to a potter (Zech. 11:13; Matt. 27:3-10)
- d. Disciples to forsake Christ (Zech. 13:7; Mark 14:27)
- e. Accused by false witnesses (Psa. 35:11; 109:2; Matt. 26:59,60)
- f. To be smitten and spat upon (Isa. 50:6; Matt. 26:67)
- g. Dumb before accusers (Isa. 53:7; Matt. 27:12-14)
- h. Wounded, bruised and striped (Isa. 53:5; Matt. 27:26)
- i. Strength to fail (Psa. 109:25; John 19:17; Luke 23:26)
- j. Hands and feet to be pierced (Psa. 22:16; Luke 23:33; John 20:25-27)
- k. Crucified with thieves (Isa. 53:12; Mark 15:27,28)
- l. Prayed for persecutors (Psa. 109:4; Isa. 53:12; Luke 23:24)
- m. Scorn and ridicule (Psa. 22:7,8; Matt. 27:39-43)
- n. Staring eyes (Psa. 22:17; Luke 23:35)
- o. Gambled for garments (Psa. 22:18; John 19:24)
- p. Cry to God (Psa. 22:1; Matt. 27:46)
- q. Gall and vinegar (Psa. 69:21; Matt. 27:34; John 19:29-30).
- r. Commend spirit unto God (Psa. 31:5; Luke 23:46)
- s. Friends to stand afar off (Psa. 38:11; Luke 23:49)
- t. Bone unbroken (Ex. 12:46; Psa. 34:20; I Cor. 5:7; John 19:33-36)
- u. Side pierced (Zech. 12:10; John 19:34-37)
- v. Heart broken (Psa. 22:14; John 19:34)
- w. Darkness (Amos 8:9; Matt. 27:45)
- x. Buried with rich (Isa. 53:9; Matt. 27:57-60)
- y. These 24 prophecies are not all that could be cited; it has been said that no less than 333 prophecies regarding Christ exist in the Old Testament. These were selected because they were fulfilled in one 24-hour period. One prediction could be a guess; two, a coincidence; but 333?

9. Much more could be said concerning prophecy that was fulfilled. There are prophecies concerning cities (Tyre, Nineveh, Samaria, etc.) and nations (Babylon, Greek, etc.).

F. Scientific accuracy is proof that God wrote the Bible.

1. The Bible is not a science book but where it makes scientific statements, the statements are scientifically correct.
  - a. Science can speak only in the realm of the physical, that is concerning

things which can be perceived with the five senses and which can be weighed, measured, touched, and divided.

b. Science is unable to speak concerning spiritual subjects or values.

c. If true knowledge is obtained only by the observation of trained people, then science cannot speak about something which it has not observed.

2. The biblical concept of time has proved to be consistent with observed reality.

3. Scientific facts support the Genesis account of creation.

a. The first law of thermodynamics support the fact of creation. This law is known also as the law of conservation of mass energy. The total amount of energy remains constant. Though the forms of energy change, its sum total can never vary. Since matter is a type of energy, creation is not taking place at all now.

b. The second law of thermodynamics support the fact of the creation. The universe is like a clock; it is running down. The total amount of useful energy becomes less.

c. The law of biogenesis supports the fact of creation. This law states that life always comes from life, never any dead matter.

d. The law of order or design supports the fact of creation. There is order in the universe. The sun rises and sets to cause day and night; the earth is tilted to cause winter and summer.

4. How would Isaiah know of the circle of the earth (Isa. 40:22)?

5. How did Job know that the world hangeth upon nothing (Job 26:7)?

6. How did the Psalmist know of the paths of the sea (Psa. 8:8)?

7. How did Paul know that the blood of man was one (Acts 17:26)?

G. Archaeology confirms that God wrote the Bible.

1. Archaeology is often defined as the “scientific study of material remains of past human life and activities.”

2. Archaeology does not prove that the Bible is inspired, but the results of archaeological findings do confirm that the Bible is right and the results of the various excavations do shed light on the lives of the ancient peoples.

H. Conclusion of the matter – God wrote the Bible, every word of it, by using men. God miraculously gave the original writers the very words (the original words – the Greek words, the Hebrew words, the Aramaic words) – the original words were words selected by the Holy Spirit and revealed by the Holy Spirit to inspired men, and these men spake it and wrote it down in words selected by the Holy Spirit.

### **III. WHAT IS THE BIBLE?**

A. The Bible is one book containing 66 books divided into the Old Testament (39 books) and the New Testament (27 books).

1. There are 1,189 chapters (divided by Cardinal Hugo in 1250).

2. There are 31,173 verses (divided by Robert Stephens in 1551).

B. What is the Old Testament?

1. The Old Testament was written for our learning (Rom. 15:4).

2. The Old Testament has four subdivisions.

a. The Law – containing the 5 books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

b. History – containing the 12 books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther.

c. Poetry – containing the 5 books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon.

d. Prophecy – containing the 5 major prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel) and the 12 minor prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi).

3. The Old Testament was preparatory for the work of Christ.

C. What is the New Testament?

1. The New Testament has four sub-divisions:
  - a. The gospel accounts – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
  - b. Acts
  - c. Epistles – Romans through Jude.
  - d. Revelation
2. The New Testament is a record of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Christ, the gospel of Christ..

D. The Bible is:

1. God’s complete revelation to men.
2. God speaking.
3. God’s power.
4. Man’s standard.

E. Do we live under the Old Testament Law or the New Testament Law?

1. The Bible covers three dispensations.
  - a. Patriarch – embracing the events from the Creation to the giving of the Mosaic law.
  - b. Mosaic – embracing the events from the giving of the Law to Pentecost of Acts 2.
  - c. Christian – embracing the events and time from Pentecost to the Judgment.
2. The Old Law has been nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14).
3. The new covenant has made the first old (Heb. 8:13).
4. Let us make a comparison between the two covenants.

OLD		NEW
The Lord (I Kings 8:9,21)	<b>Maker</b>	The Lord (Jer. 31:31,32)
Israel left Egypt (I Kings 8:9,21)	<b>Effective</b>	After death of Jesus (Heb. 9:16,17)
Moses (Deut. 5:5; Gal. 3:19)	<b>Mediator</b>	Jesus (Heb. 12:24)
Children of Israel (I Kings 8:9,21; Ex. 34:27)	<b>Made with</b>	All Nations (Matt. 28:18-20)
Keep commandments (Ex. 34:28; Deut. 4:13)	<b>Man’s Part</b>	Commandments of Jesus (Matt. 28:20)
Prosperity in the Land (Deut. 5:33; 11:8,9)	<b>God’s blessings (Heb. 8:6)</b>	Heaven (I Peter 1:3,4)
Taken from the land (Lev. 26:14-33; Deut. 29:24-28)	<b>God’s punishment (Heb. 10:27)</b>	Hell (Matt. 10:28; 25:31-46)

Blood of animals (Ex. 24:5-8)	<b>Dedicated (Heb. 9:18-22)</b>	Blood of Jesus (Matt. 26:28)
Jacob (Ex. 34:27)	<b>Children of</b>	God (Rom. 8:16,17; Gal. 4:7)
Flesh (I Cor. 10:18)	<b>Birth</b>	Water and the Spirit (John 3:5; Gal. 3:26,27)

5. Jesus' death made possible the eternal inheritance also for those under the first testament (Heb. 9:15).
6. The New Testament is now in force (Heb. 8:7,8; 10:9).

#### **IV. WHEN WAS THE BIBLE WRITTEN?**

- A. Job was written approximately 2000 B.C., therefore the oldest of the books.
- B. Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) between 1491 and 1451 B.C.
- C. The other Old Testament books were written between 1451 B.C. and 444 B.C.
- D. The New Testament books were written between A.D. 44 and A.D. 96.

#### **V. WHY WAS THE BIBLE WRITTEN?**

- A. The purpose of the Bible is the glory of God and the salvation of man, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
  1. The Bible relates to the need for human redemption.
  2. The first three chapters in Genesis are designed to explain the need for redemption.
  3. All accountable persons share this need for redemption.
  4. The Bible shows that redemption is through Jesus Christ.
  5. The Old Testament points to the Christ.
  6. Human redemption glorifies God (Eph. 1:6; 3:21; Rom. 16:27; Gal. 1:5; Phil. 2:11; Rom. 11:36).
  
- B. The theme of the Bible is the coming of Christ.
  1. The Old Testament message is Christ is coming.
  2. The New Testament message is Christ has come and will come again.
  
- C. Each book of the Bible gives a picture of Christ:  
**OLD TESTAMENT**
  1. Genesis – the creator and Seed of Woman.
  2. Exodus – the lamb of God for sinners slain.
  3. Leviticus – our High Priest.
  4. Numbers – the star of Jacob.
  5. Deuteronomy – the prophet like Moses.
  6. Joshua – the captain of the Lord's Hosts.
  7. Judges – the messenger of Jehovah.
  8. Ruth – our kinsmen Redeemer.
  9. Samuel – the despised and rejected King.
  10. Kings and Chronicles – the Lord of Lords and King of Kings.
  11. Ezra & Nehemiah – the Lord of Heaven and earth.
  12. Esther – the providence of God.
  13. Job – our risen and returning Redeemer.
  14. Psalms – the blessed man, the Son of God, the coming one, the reigning one, the leader of Praise.
  15. Proverbs – the wise man.

16. Ecclesiastes – the forgotten wise man.
17. Song of Solomon – my beloved.
18. Isaiah – our suffering substitute.
19. Jeremiah – the Lord of Righteousness.
20. Lamentations – the man of Sorrows.
21. Ezekiel – the throne sitter.
22. Daniel – the smiting Stone.
23. Hosea – David’s Greater King.
24. Joel – the Lord of Bounty.
25. Amos – the rescuer of Israel.
26. Obadiah – the Deliverer upon Mt. Zion.
27. Jonah – the buried and Risen Savior.
28. Micah – the everlasting God.
29. Nahum – the stronghold in the day of Wrath.
30. Habakkuk – the anchor of our faith.
31. Zephaniah – the judge and Cleanser.
32. Haggai – Lord of presence and power.
33. Zechariah – smitten Shepherd.
34. Malachi – the Son of Righteousness.

#### NEW TESTAMENT

1. Matthew – the King of the Jews.
2. Mark – the Servant of God.
3. Luke – the Perfect Son of Man.
4. John – the Son of God..
5. Acts – the Ascended Lord.
6. Romans – Our Righteousness.
7. I Corinthians – Firstfruits from the dead.
8. II Corinthians – Made Sin for Us.
9. Galatians – the end of the Law.
10. Ephesians – Our Armor.
11. Philippians – the supplier of every need.
12. Colossians – the pre-eminent One.
13. I Thessalonians – our returning Lord.
14. II Thessalonians – The World’s Merciful Judge.
15. I Timothy – the Mediator.
16. II Timothy – the Bestower of Crowns.
17. Titus – Our Great God and Savior.
18. Philemon – the Father’s Partner.
19. Hebrews – our Rest and fulfillment of types.
20. James – the Lord of Sabbath.
21. I Peter – the Theme of Old Testament Prophecy.
22. II Peter – the Long suffering Savior.
23. I John – the word of Life.
24. II John – the target of Anti-Christ.
25. III John – the Personification of Truth.
26. Jude – the believer’s Hope.
27. Revelation – the King and Lord.

D. The New Testament gives the plan of salvation. The New Testament records the gospel of Christ.

1. The gospel of Christ is God’s law of pardon to the alien sinner and His law of

- instruction to the Christian, and it has been revealed through the Holy Spirit and recorded in the New Testament.
2. The gospel is all that man needs to accomplish his release from sin and to enjoy eternal salvation in heaven.
  3. Therefore, any additional revelation or doctrine, all tradition and decrees of men must be regarded as useless, damaging and should be rejected.
  4. The gospel of Christ is powerful (Rom. 1:16,17).
    - a. The word power means strength, ability, power, inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature. This word is found 120 times in the New Testament. It is translated power 77 times, mighty work 11 times; strength 7 times; miracle 7 times; might 4 times; etc.
      - 1) This is God's plan (Eph. 1:3,4).
      - 2) This was God's plan from all eternity (Eph. 3:10,11; II Tim. 1:9).
    - b. The Gospel of Christ is God's power "UNTO SALVATION" that is unto a complete deliverance from sin and death and results in ultimate salvation in heaven.
  5. The gospel of Christ is perfect (James 1:25).
    - a. The word perfect means to be complete, reach the goal, purpose. Adult, full-grown, of full age as opposed to little children.
    - b. Cannot add or subtract from it and it still be perfect (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:5,6; Rev. 22:18,19).
    - c. The Law of Moses could not bring perfection (Heb. 7:19). That does not mean that those under the Old Law that keep the law could not be saved (Luke 1:5,6).
    - d. The word perfect means to carry through completely.
      - 1) The Old Law was a shadow of good things to come (Heb. 10:1), and a school master to bring us to Christ (Gal. 3:24).
      - 2) Eternal life was not known with any degree of certainty until Jesus came.
      - 3) Jesus came to fulfill the Law (Matt. 5:17).
      - 4) Jesus nailed the Old Law to the cross (Col. 2:14).
    - e. The all-sufficiency and adaptability of the Bible to meet the demands of the human family can be seen in the words of Paul and Peter (II Tim. 3:16,17; II Peter 1:3).
      - 1) Where the Bible speaks we speak and where the Bible is silent we are silent (I Peter 4:11).
      - 2) For the Christian to accept any ritual, handbook, manual, confession of faith or prayer book to govern our religious activities, would be to make void our faith in the all sufficiency of the Scriptures.
  6. The gospel of Christ is prevailing (Matt. 24:35).
    - a. The word of the Lord is unmoveable, fixed and permanent.
    - b. Since the word, the Gospel of Christ, will prevail forever, it is by it that we shall be judged (John 12:48; Rom. 14:11,12; II Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-5).

## **VI. HOW DID WE GET THE BIBLE WE USE?**

- A. We do not have the original writings of the Bible (autographs) but we have thousands of manuscripts from the New Testament and accurate manuscripts for the Old Testament.
- B. The Bible was originally written in Hebrew, Greek and small portions in Aramaic and has been translated from the original languages into English.
- C. Whole books have been written explaining how the Bible has come down to us in the English form.

- D. By the use of manuscripts, ancient versions, lectionaries and many writings, the text of the Bible has been determined with accuracy and validity.
- E. What about evidence for the Old Testament?
1. Manuscript evidence for the Old Testament is not as abundant as for the New Testament.
  2. The oldest full copy of the Hebrew Bible available dates from A.D. 1008. The recent discoveries of the Dead Sea Scrolls shows no major errors in the above text.
  3. The strict set of regulations which governed the early Jewish scribes is a chief factor which guarantees the accurate transmission of the Old Testament text.
- F. What about evidence for the New Testament?
1. There are over 5,000 pieces of manuscript evidence for the New Testament.
  2. By the end of the first century all of the books of the New Testament were in existence, as well as some good writings (as from Polycarp) not inspired; and some spurious texts.
  3. The collection of the New Testament books was one of the preliminary steps to canonicity.
  4. The writings of the early church “fathers” lend credibility to the authenticity and genuineness of the New Testament books.
  5. One of the helps in determining canonicity was the belief of those closest to the source of the genuineness of the books.
  6. From the time of Irenaeus (A.D. 130 to 202) the New Testament contained practically the same books as we have today. Irenaeus either quoted from or considered authentic 23 of the final 27 books of the New Testament.
  7. Polycarp (A.D. 150) quoted freely from Matthew, John, ten of Paul’s epistles, I Peter and 1 and 2 John.
  8. Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 200) matched Irenaeus almost book for book. Books not on their list had already been approved by other authorities years before.
  9. Marcion (A.D. 140) accepted only the Gospel of Luke and ten of Paul’s epistles. He threw everything else out. The Scripture he recognized was distorted, twisted and changed beyond recognition. Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and other were nice to Marcion, they called him a heretic.
  10. Athanasius of Alexandria (A.D. 298 to 373) is considered the first to declare canonical the 27 books we have in the New Testament.
  11. The councils of Hippo (A.D. 393) and the Carthage (A.D. 397) agreed with Athanasius and others and approved the present canon.
  12. God was the source for the canon, The Bible.
- G. What about our English Bible?
1. The first copies of the Bible in England were in Latin, Jerome’s Vulgate, not in English.
  2. Some sources suggest that there were Bibles in England as early as the fourth century during the persecutions instigated by Diocletian.
  3. The first real translation into Anglo-Saxon was by Aldheim around A.D. 705 when he translated a portion of the Psalms.
  4. Some sources say that Eadrith and Bede may have produced earlier translations, but these were among the very first.
  5. John Wickcliffe is called the “Morning Star of the Reformation.”
    - a. He translated Jerome’s Latin Vulgate into English.
    - b. It was hand written in ancient forms with a word-for-word procedure.
    - c. In 1408, the Catholic bishops declared his work to be that of heresy.
    - d. Seventy-five years after his death (some say forty), his bones were dug up

- and burned, with his ashes thrown into the river.
6. The man who is called the “Father of the English Bible” is William Tyndale.
    - a. Tyndale was a student of Erasmus, who completed a Greek text of the New Testament in 1516.
    - b. Tyndale completed his New Testament translation in 1526, with portions of the Old Testament to follow.
  7. A year before Tyndale was executed, Myles Coverdale produced a complete Bible direct from Hebrew and Greek.
    - a. This was the first complete printed Bible in England, even though it was printed in Germany.
    - b. This was the first Bible to circulate in England without official hindrance.
  8. Other Bibles followed the Coverdale Bible.
    - a. In 1537, John Rogers, under the pen name of Thomas Matthew, produced what is called Matthew’s Bible.
    - b. The Great Bible – 1539
    - c. Geneva Bible – 1560
    - d. The Bishop’s Bible – 1568
  9. The King James Version came upon the scene in 1611.
    - a. After the death of Elizabeth, James I commissioned the Hampton Court Conference to produce a new translation, without notes, without personal views, as exact as possible to the original languages.
    - b. Fifty-four scholars were selected, although only 47 actually worked on the task.
    - c. King James had nothing to do with it except provide for the needs of the translators.
    - d. It was began in 1604 and took seven years to produce.
    - e. Set rules were established and pains taken for accuracy more than any previous translation.
    - f. What was produced was a translation that has endured. A translation that has become a standard.
  10. What about other versions?
    - a. Many others versions have come on the scene since the King James.
    - b. The English Revised Version – 1881
    - c. American Standard Version – 1901
    - d. Revised Standard Version – 1951
    - e. New American Standard Version
    - f. New International Version
    - g. New King James Version
    - h. New Century Version
    - i. Many others versions could be named.

## **VII. CAN WE TRUST THE BIBLE WE USE?**

- A. God has operated through His providence in providing His Word to man (I Peter 1:24,25; Matt. 24:35; John 12:48).
- B. We can trust our Bible if it is a reliable translation.
- C. The King James Version and the American Standard Version of 1901 are reliable translations.
- D. The modern versions from the Revised Standard Version through the latest version on the market today, with the possible exception of the New King James, are not reliable versions, perversion would be more correct.

E. What was the purpose of the translators in producing these modern versions? Much can be learned from the preface as to the purpose of the translators..

1. The 47 translators of the King James Version never intended to produce a new translation:

Truly, good Christian Reader, we never thought from the beginning that we should need to make a new translation, nor yet to make of a bad one a good one...but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones one principal one, not justly to be expected against; that hath been our endeavor, that our mark (Preface King James Version).

a. They used translations already in use and were not concerned with the length of time required for the work.

b. The translators fulfilled their purpose, for the King James Version has for more than three years been the standard used among English-speaking Christians.

c. Modern versions following the King James Version have used it as a model and in many instances used the KJV and made a revision instead of a translation.

2. Beginning with the American Standard Version the theory of translation begin to change. Especially following the ASV translators begin to seek for a more than word for word translation. Westcott and Hort's theory of translation begin to be followed.

3. An example of how the theory of translation changed notice the New International Version preface.

a. The translators were from many denominations – including “Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Brethren, Christian Reformed, Church of Christ, Evangelical Free, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Nazarene, Presbyterian, Wesleyan and other church...” When did the church of Christ become a denomination?

b. The first concern of the translators was accuracy and fidelity to the thought of the “biblical writers.” The workers sought for more than just a word-for-word translation.

c. How is it possible to get the meaning of the thought?

F. For a more detailed discussion concerning the versions brother Robert Taylor, Jr. has a great book *Challenging DANGERS of Modern Versions*.

## VIII. CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE?

A. The Bible says we can understand it (Matt. 5:6; John 8:32; 7:17; II Tim. 2:15; Eph. 3:3,4, 8-10; Matt. 11:25; Psa. 19:7; 119:130).

1. The word Hear carries with it the connotation of “understanding” and frequently we are admonished to hear (Acts 9:7; James 1:22; Matt. 7:21-24; Luke 11:28; 8:21).

2. The implication from the following text suggest that we can understand the Bible (John 3:10; Matt. 13:15; 22:29; Acts 8:30).

B. The divine exhortation to study implies we can understand that which we are to study(II Tim. 2:15; I Tim. 4:15,16; John 5:39; Rev. 1:3; Acts 17:11; Isa. 8:20; 34:16; James 1:25).

C. The fact that we shall be judged by the Word of God implies that we can understand the Bible. To entertain for a moment that we shall be judged by a standard that we cannot even understand is to reflect on the justice and equality of God (John 12:48; Rom. 2:2; John 17:17; Rom. 2:16; Acts 17:30,31).

D. The figures of speech applied to the Word of God imply that the Bible can be understood.

1. The Bible is our Food (I Peter 2:1-3; Matt. 5:6; Psa. 19:8-10; Heb. 5:12-14). If we cannot understand the Bible, then we have been given food we cannot consume or digest. This would be comparable to feeding a newborn babe beef steak or popcorn.
2. The Bible is the Sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12). If we cannot understand the Bible, then we are like a soldier in battle being completely ignorant of the weapon he has to use.
3. The Bible is our Road Map (Psa. 119:105,130). If we cannot understand the Bible, then we are like a man in an exceedingly dark room with a lamp he cannot get to burn.
4. The Bible is our Mirror (James 1:22-25). If we cannot understand the Bible, then we are like a person having a mirror so marred or insufficiently silvered that he cannot see his image therein.

E. The fact that a lack of knowledge is punishable implies that we can understand the Bible.

1. God's people were destroyed for a lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6).
2. God no longer winks at the times of ignorance (Acts 17:30).
3. God will take vengeance on those who know not (II Thess. 1:7-9).

F. The simplicity of the Word of God suggests that the Bible can be understood (II Cor. 11:3,12; Rom. 12:8).

1. This word translated simplicity is translated Bountifulness (II Cor. 9:11), liberal (II Cor. 9:13), singleness of heart (Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22) and liberality (II Cor. 8:2).
2. There are several examples of the simplicity of God's will (II Kings 5:10; Joshua 6:3-5; Genesis 6:14-16; Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38).

G. Not only can we understand the Bible, but we can all understand it alike.

1. If we understand the Bible, we understand it alike!
2. We can understand the Bible alike, or unity would not be possible (John 17:20ff; Eph. 4:3-6).
3. We can understand the Bible alike, or God would be a respecter of persons, accepting men on different terms (Acts 10:34,35).
4. We can understand the Bible alike or else we would not be able to speak the same thing (I Cor. 1:10).
5. One man cannot preach four different, conflicting doctrines and be right and honest. How, can four different men teach four different and conflicting doctrines and all four of them be right?
6. We expect school teachers all to teach the same thing in geography (we would not want one teacher teaching that New York is in Europe, another to say it is in Asia, and another to say that it is in North America), and arithmetic. Why cannot we expect the same thing in religion?
7. All had to understand God alike on the occasion of the walls of Jericho falling, looking to the brazen serpent, crossing the Red Sea, etc.

H. In the final analysis, the following deductions should be considered concerning our ability to understand the Bible.

1. Either God could not give us a book we can understand or
2. God could have but did not, or
3. God did give us an understandable book.
  - a. The first deduction limits the power of God.
  - b. The second deduction reflects on God's justice, since we shall be judged by the Word of God—yet we cannot understand it according to this deduction.
  - c. Therefore, the third deduction must be right!

## **IX. ARE PAUL'S WRITINGS HARD TO UNDERSTAND (II Peter 3:16)?**

A. Peter is writing to call Christians to remember (II Peter 1:12-15; 3:1,2). Peter was demanding a remembrance, not merely of his writings, but of all the commands of Christ.

B. Outline of II Peter:

1. Remember who wrote the epistle (1:1,2).
2. Remember you are a peculiar people to whom God has provided precious promises (1:2-4).
3. Remember you are a peculiar people, therefore, peculiarities must be pursued (1:5-11).
4. Remember Peter's eye witness testimony (1:12-21).
5. Remember denial is destructive (2:1-3).
6. Remember how God deals with those who deny Him (2:4-9).
  - a. Remember what God did with the angels who sinned (2:4).
  - b. Remember what God did to the old world (2:5).
  - c. Remember what God did to the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (2:6).
  - d. Remember Lot (2:7,8).
  - e. Remember God is able to deliver the godly and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment (2:9).
7. Remember how to recognize false teachers (2:10-22).
8. Remember the day of the Lord is coming (3:1-18).
9. Remember to be found without spot (3:14).
10. Remember, the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation (3:15).
11. Remember do not twist the scriptures (3:16).
12. Remember do not be led away from your steadfastness (3:17).
13. Remember to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord (3:18).

C. Peter says Paul's writings are scripture (3:16).

D. Paul's writings are not hard to be understood if they are studied (Eph. 3:4).

E. The writings of Paul are hard to be understood by some.

1. The unlearned have trouble understanding Paul's writings.
  - a. Unlearned is translated from a word which means ignorant.
  - b. This is the only time this word is used in the New Testament.
2. The unstable have trouble understanding Paul's writings. Unstable is translated from a word which means unsteadfast. Used only by Peter (II Peter 2:14; 3:16).

F. The unlearned and unstable wrest the scriptures. The word wrest is translated from a word which means "trortuosus...to torture, put to the rack...to prevent, of one who wrests or tortures language to a false sense." This is the only time this word is used in the New Testament.

G. How do the unlearned and unstable wrest the scriptures to their own destruction?

1. What could be more twisted than the damnable doctrine of the AD 70 theory?
2. Men affirm today that salvation is by "faith alone."
3. Men attempt to wrest Paul's writings concerning grace (Eph. 2:8,9).
4. Men today attempt to twist Paul's writing freedom (Gal. 5:1).
5. Men attempt to prove by the scriptures that there is a power of the Holy Spirit working on man to convict them and convert them separate and apart from the Word of God.
6. Men twist the scripture in an attempt to prove that baptism is not essential to

salvation.

H. Paul's writings are scripture. They are hard to be understood only by the unlearned and unstable.

**X. SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE.** Compiled by B.C. Goodpasture

A. The Bible contains 3,566,480 letters, 773,746 words, 31,172 verses, 1,189 chapters and 66 books.

B. In point of length the average word of the Bible contains fewer than five letters.

C. The word "and" occurs 46,277 times and the word "reverend" but once (Psa. 111:9).

D. The book of Esther contains ten chapters, but neither the word "Lord" nor "God" is to be found in it.

E. The middle chapter and the shortest is Psalm 117. It contains only two verses.

F. The middle verse in the Bible is Psalm 118:8.

G. The middle book of the Old Testament is Proverbs.

H. The middle chapter of the Old Testament is Job 29.

I. The shortest verse in the Old Testament is I Chronicles 1:25; the longest Esther 8:9.

J. The middle book of the New Testament is II Thessalonians.

K. The middle verse in the New Testament is Acts 17:17.

L. The shortest verse in the New Testament, in English is John 11:35 and in Greek is I Thessalonians 5:16.

M. The longest verse in the Bible is Esther 8:9; it contains ninety words.

N. The nineteenth chapter of 2 Kings and the thirty-seventh chapter of Isaiah are nearly identical.

O. The first Bible printed in this country was in the Indian language in 1663. This translation was made and published by John Eliot, the so-called "Apostle to the Indians."

P. The first English Bible printed in this country was in 1782.

Q. The whole Bible, divided into chapters and verses, first appeared in 1560 in what is known as the "Geneva Bible." It is also called the "Breeches Bible," because Genesis 3:7 is translated: "They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves breeches."

R. The Bible is the most translated book in the world. It has been translated into more languages and dialects than any other book.

S. Above all things, the Bible should be studied and obeyed and taught.