



Introducing the Bible

The Bible is a library of books, divided into two Testaments – Old and New. Together they form one story that centres on Jesus Christ.

Session 1

The impact of the Bible

MY NOTES 



The popularity of the Bible

The Bible is the world's bestseller year on year

- Over 400 million copies sold or distributed each year
- Plus millions of downloads
- Translated into over 2,500 languages

MY NOTES 



Holy

Means 'sacred'
or 'other'

Bible

From Greek
biblia, meaning
'books'

The Bible is inspired

The Bible was written by more than 40 human authors, over a period of 1,500 years. But God was the architect. He inspired it.

'All Scripture is inspired [breathed out] by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.'

2 Timothy 3.16–17

MY NOTES 



St Paul's Cathedral
London

The books of the Bible

History (Red)

GENESIS
EXODUS
LEVITICUS
NUMBERS
DEUTERONOMY
JOSHUA
JUDGES
RUTH
1 & 2 SAMUEL
1 & 2 KINGS
1 & 2 CHRONICLES
EZRA
NEHEMIAH
ESTHER

Wisdom (Blue)

JOB
PSALMS
PROVERBS
ECCLESIASTES
SONG OF SOLOMON

Prophecy (Green)

ISAIAH
JEREMIAH
LAMENTATIONS
EZEKIEL
DANIEL
HOSEA
JOEL
AMOS
OBADIAH
JONAH
MICAH
NAHUM
HABAKKUK
ZEPHANIAH
HAGGAI
ZECHARIAH
MALACHI

Gospels (Purple)

MATTHEW
MARK
LUKE
JOHN
ACTS

Letters (Blue)

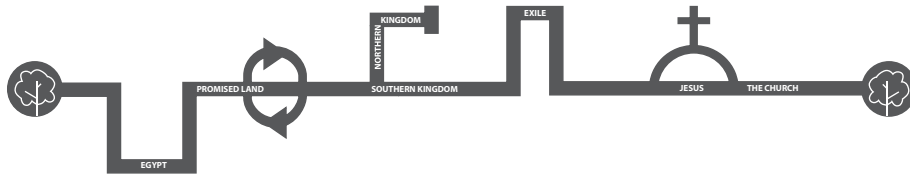
ROMANS
1 & 2 CORINTHIANS
GALATIANS
EPHESIANS
PHILIPPIANS
COLOSSIANS
1 & 2 THESSALONIANS
1 & 2 TIMOTHY
TITUS
PHILEMON
HEBREWS
JAMES
1 & 2 PETER
1 & 2 & 3 JOHN
JUDE
REVELATION

The books are grouped together by style or genre of writing.

In the teaching videos, colour coding on the spine of each book indicates the genre.

The Bible is a story

The Bible is BIG – so we need to see the big picture.



- The Bible is a unique collection of books written over a period of 1500 years by various authors including kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen and scholars.
- It includes three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) and covers hundreds of controversial subjects. Yet it has a harmony and continuity from Genesis to Revelation.
- The God of the Bible is not a remote, unknowable divine force, but a loving God with whom ordinary people develop personal relationships.

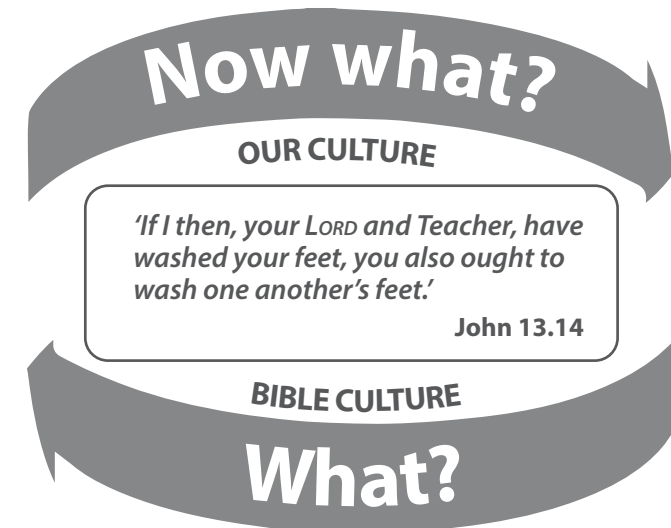
The Bible needs interpreting

The Bible is OLD – so we need some coaching to apply it.

*Take a text out of context,
and we're left with a con.*

Ask two questions:

- **WHAT** – What did it mean in its original context?
- **NOW WHAT** – Now what does this passage mean for my life today?



Discussion Time

Pause the video for 25 minutes.

- What surprised or impressed you about the influence of the Bible on our world?
- Have you ever tried reading the Bible? How did you find it?
- What are you hoping to get out of The Bible Course?
- What do you make of the claim that the Bible is 'inspired by God'?



Restart the video and move on to PART 2.

PART 2

Frequently Asked Questions

How was the Bible formed?

Are the Bible texts reliable?

Why so many translations?

Why believe the Bible is God's book?



'Scripture is like a lion. Who ever heard of defending a lion? Just turn it loose; it will defend itself.'

Charles Spurgeon
(London preacher, 1834–92)

Canon

A Greek word meaning 'rule' or 'standard'. It refers to the books included in the Bible which are considered to be uniquely authoritative.

MY NOTES 



How was the Bible formed?

The formation of the New Testament

- Phase 1** The historic life of Jesus – birth, death and resurrection
- Phase 2** Eyewitness evidence for the Gospels, published in the lifetime of Jesus' contemporaries
- Phase 3** Other books and letters (epistles) were written or endorsed by foundational church leaders (Apostles)
- Phase 4** New Testament finalised – the early church recognised that these writings had a unique authority. Other later writings lacked credibility

Are the Bible texts reliable?

Old Testament

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls confirmed its reliability.

New Testament

Thousands of manuscripts survive as proof that the texts are reliable.

MY NOTES 



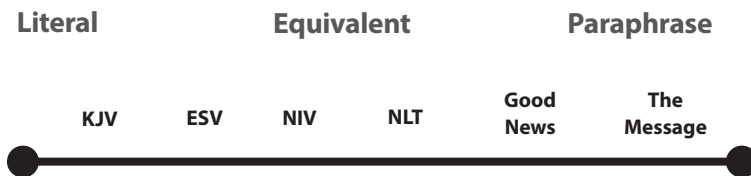
Dead Sea Scrolls Qumran Caves



4th-century fragment of John's Gospel

Why so many translations?

- Old Testament – Ancient Hebrew
- New Testament – Koine Greek



Mark 6.37

ESV	NIV	The Message
Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread?	That would take more than half a year's wages!	Are you serious? You want us to go spend a fortune on food?



'If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that drives the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou does.'

William Tyndale (1494–1536):
to a clergyman who opposed his translation

Why believe the Bible is God's book?

The Bible was endorsed by Jesus

- When tempted: 'It is written ...' (Matthew 4)
- When teaching: 'I have not come to abolish [the law and prophets] but to fulfil them' (Matthew 5.17)

The Bible has miraculous harmony

- Many authors over several centuries, unaware of each other's writings
- Prophecies fulfilled – Jesus' birth, betrayal, death, burial
- The writers were blind to the future but guided by the Holy Spirit

The Bible transforms people today

MY NOTES 



Personal Reflection

Suggested: 10 minutes

Take a moment to reflect on this verse:

All Scripture is inspired [or breathed out] by God.

2 Timothy 3.16

Write down something from this verse or the session that has inspired you ...

Write down something that has challenged you ...

Why not share your reflections with others and pray to finish.

Daily Bible Readings: Week 1

Read each passage through carefully. Then consider:

WHAT? *What did this passage mean in its context?*

NOW WHAT? *Now what does this passage mean for my life today?*

- Write down a key verse or phrase that stands out.
- Pray it through, asking God to help you live this truth today.

- Day 1** Genesis 1.1–31
Creation, beauty and humanity – the origins of everything
- Day 2** Genesis 3.1–24
Temptation, the fall and evil – where it all went wrong
- Day 3** Genesis 8.1–22 and Genesis 9.1–17
The flood, the ark and the rainbow – time for a new start
- Day 4** Genesis 11.1–9 and Genesis 12.1–9
The tower, the promise and Abraham – God's got a plan
- Day 5** Genesis 22.1–19
Isaac, the sacrifice and the substitute – a big test of faith
- Day 6** Genesis 37.1–36
Joseph, the coat and the dreams – down to Egypt