

discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living
Study Guide

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

LESSON 7: THE WORD OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Discipleship Essentials module entitled Our Relationship with God. This series of lessons examines the relationship we have with God. It begins by understanding our identity in Christ, which is a result of our becoming a child of God. This series of lessons looks at the attributes of God, how we learn about God and know Him better, and how we develop this personal relationship. Understanding ourselves in God's eyes, and having a clearer picture of who God is, will help us live the life that God designed for us.

The Student's Guide is intended for an individual to look deeper into a specific lesson on their own. The lessons can be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials, such as the video and audio productions found on www.discipleshipessentials.org.

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LESSON 7: THE WORD OF GOD

WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

What is so important about the Bible? This lesson looks at the Bible from the viewpoint that it is not just another book, but rather the special Word of God to us – a book that has authority and life-changing power.

JUST SO YOU KNOW...

The Bible isn't just a book of stories to base your life values around, but rather a book that requires us to make a decision about what we believe. Within it are the answers to life's biggest questions, as well as the way of having peace with God and eternal life. It was not written by people who make errors, but was breathed out by God. In order to get the most out of our Bible and understand God more, we must really study our Bible to find out what it says. While this lesson will challenge you to regularly read your Bible, you should also try to keep some record of what you learn so that you can grow in your faith and not forget the truths God reveals to you!

GETTING STARTED

1. What is your favourite story in the Bible, and why? Do you have a Bible verse that is especially meaningful to you?

2. Why do you think mature Christians recommend reading the Word of God daily? Why is it important to spend time reading the Bible?



STUDY

❖ **THE PURPOSES OF GOD’S WORD:** The Bible is a tremendous resource to guide us in our Christian lives. It isn’t just a true account of God’s interactions with mankind but every word of it is meant for our benefit!

- What does 2 Timothy 3:16-17 say the purpose of the Word of God is?

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We must remember that every story in the Bible, and every verse can teach, reprove, correct, train and equip us. The very experience of reading the Bible trains our minds to think as God desires us to, and can convict us of our sins. There are many purposes and benefits of God’s Word.

- Read the following verses and write down some of the other purposes and benefits of God’s Word:

Romans 1:16	
Romans 10:17	
1 Peter 1:23	
John 5:39	
Acts 20:32	

❖ **THE NATURE OF GOD’S WORD:** Among all the books in written in this world, the Bible is wholly unique. But what is its nature? What does God say about this book?

- **The Bible has an Author:** We learn that the Bible has one ultimate author, God Himself. Read 2 Timothy 3:16. What does it tell you about who wrote all the Scriptures, and how?

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- The word “inspired” comes from the Greek word theopneustos. Theos means "God." Pneo means "to breathe."
 - This is translated "breathed out by God" in 2 Timothy 3:16 and in some translations, “God breathed”. The meaning here is that the words themselves are filled with God just as our lungs fill with air, or sails are filled and moved by the wind.
 - The Bible had many human authors, but each of them wrote filled by the Holy Spirit so that the unique perspective and background of the writer came through, as well as the truth of God.
- Why is it important to know how the Bible was written? How would you explain that the Bible is written by God but also men?

- **The Bible has Authority:** Not only was it written by God, but it is the authoritative final word on matters of life and faith – the New Testament now clarifies the Old Testament and is the truth and rule by which we must live our lives.
- Read the following verses and write down how Scripture references other parts of the Bible. What words are used?

Daniel 9:2	
2 Samuel 23:2	
2 Peter 1:16-21	

- How do these verses demonstrate the authority of all parts of the Bible?

- **The Bible has Authenticity:** The Bible itself is unique in countless ways – it has been preserved longer than any other book, it perfectly reflects the character of its ultimate author, and its truth is applicable in every age. Consider what the Bible says about itself:



- Scripture is perfect (Psalm 19:7).
 - Scripture is Eternal (Psalm 119:160, Matthew 24:35).
 - Scripture is alive and active, reaching our heart and spirit (Hebrews 4:12).
 - Scripture alone is true (John 17:17, Psalm 119:160).
 - Scripture will never fail in its purpose (Isaiah 55:11).
 - This book makes claims on itself that have been proven in the changed lives of people who follow it. Those who study and obey it have not found it lacking in anything, but it clearly lays out its purpose.
- Why do you think these assurances are written in the Bible for us? Which have you found to be true in your own life?

❖ **WHAT DID JESUS SAY ABOUT THE SCRIPTURES?** Some people may think they want to follow Jesus, but not the Bible. Some view the Bible as a set of rules and an ancient text from another time. Jesus – who spoke so much about love and forgiveness – might sound like someone easier to follow. And yet, Jesus spoke so much about the importance of these words of God!

- Jesus quoted from the Old Testament (the only Scripture available at the time) frequently, especially when talking to religious leaders to correct their understanding of the words.
- Jesus demonstrated that the Scriptures are useful for everyday living, and defeating evil in the world. When Satan tempted Jesus in the desert, Jesus used Scripture as his only weapon (Matthew 4:4, 7-10)
- Jesus reminded His followers that the scriptures prophesied that He would come, and that scripture was God’s word to them. (John 5:39-40, Matthew 22:29-33).

❖ **OUR RESPONSE TO GOD’S WORD:** What should the Christian response to God’s Word be?

- **Value God’s Word:** Our response to God's Word ought to be to value, and give it a prominent place in our life. It is a precious gift! It is the very words of God given to us!
- **Treasure God's Word:** Look at the following verses from the Bible and write down how each of these people treasured and obeyed God’s word.

Moses Deuteronomy 32:44-47	
David Psalm 19:9-11	



A Psalmist Psalm 1:1-3	
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- **Obey God's Word:** We are to implement God's Word in our lives. We should look for commands to obey in every passage, and examine ourselves against the Scriptures. What does the Bible say about listening to and applying God's commands?

Luke 6:46-49	
John 14:21	

- **Apply God's Word:** We can do this by looking at each passage of the Bible and asking ourselves what it is teaching us, and how it is reproofing us, correcting us, and training us. Look for lessons to learn, sins we need to repent of, and things that we need to change.

❖ **WHAT CAN WE CONCLUDE?** Jesus and the authors of the Scriptures clearly claim that the Bible is the unique and inspired Word of God. These claims are further substantiated by historical and archeological evidence and the unity of the message of the Bible as a whole. When we read it for ourselves, we see the power contained in the very Words of God and their truth for our lives.

IN SUMMARY

- ❖ The purpose of God's Word is for our teaching, reproof, correction, training and equipping.
- ❖ God's Word refines, comforts, and reveals the will of God to us.
- ❖ We should respond to God's Word by placing a high value on it, treasuring it, obeying it and applying it to our lives.
- ❖ We should know that the Bible is the gift of God – given in its perfect form by God, and maintained by God's power.
- ❖ The Old Testament and New Testament have equal weight as God's Word.
- ❖ Jesus Himself testified to the truth of the scriptures as reliable, unchanging and full of power.
- ❖ We can conclude that the Bible is the unique Word of God.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How can you make a plan to read the Bible more effectively? What are your goals for Bible reading? (For instance, reading through the Bible in one year, using various Bible reading plans, keeping a record of what you read in a journal, etc.)

2. How could you explain to someone who had doubts about the reliability of the Bible that it is the true Word of God?