

About the Bible

Foundational Truths Course: Week 1

WHY WE USE THE BIBLE

The Bible is the Christian's handbook.

The word 'Bible' comes from a Greek word meaning 'books' in plural – it is a library of 66 books and was written over a period of almost 1,500 years by 40 different authors ranging from kings to fishermen.

It is divided into two parts: OT and NT 39 and 27 books respectively.

Old Testament (OT) = before Jesus was born

New Testament (NT) = from Jesus' birth onwards

- Each book has chapters and verses.
- References are usually abbreviated e.g:

Zech 3:2 or Zech 3v2 means Zechariah, chapter 3, verse 2

References are always written in this order, book, chapter, verse.

Make use of the index in the front of your Bible, it will help you find your way around.

DIFFERENT TRANSLATIONS

There are many different translations of the Bible. Some of the best known are:

- King James (KJ)
- New King James (NKJ)
- New International Version (NIV)
- Good News (GNB)
- Living Bible (LB)

When the text of the Bible was first written it was in the following languages:

- OT Hebrew
- NT Greek (and a little Aramaic)

Languages cannot always be translated word for word because some words have more than one meaning. For example, in **Gen 1:2** the Hebrew word 'Ruwach' can be translated either 'Spirit' or 'Breath' *the Spirit (or breath) of God was hovering over the waters*. In order to discover the true meaning of a word we need to look at the original text.

WHY WE NEED TO STUDY THE BIBLE?

The Bible is the Christian's handbook. Jesus said: *Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word.....* **Luke 4:4**

- It tells us how much God loves us
- It reveals Jesus to us
- It is God's inspired Word to us
- It contains guidelines for living the Christian life
- It shows us God's hand in world history, past, present and future
- It safeguards us against deception by wrong teaching and deceiving spirits

We should expect God to speak to us (through the Holy Spirit) when we read our Bible.

The following verses exhort us to put God's Word into practice:

Josh 1:8 *Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.*

Prov 23:12 *Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge.*

Prov 4:20 *My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words.*

Prov 4:21 *Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart;*

Prov 4:22 *for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body.*

2 Tim 3:16 *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness*

Jesus often quoted from Scripture:

Luke 4 Jesus answered, ***It is written...***

If you want to get to know God better you must get to know His Word!