

Introduction: The Search for Truth

The quest for truth has sometimes been called an endless quest. For hundreds of years, philosophers have been seeking for the truth, and made many impressive observations, but have not found it. Someone has said, *"The truth is really an ambition which is beyond us."* Some would even doubt that the truth exists at all, and would say, as Pontius Pilate said with indifference, *"What is truth?"* (John 18:38).

Thankfully, the truth we need has been revealed to us by God. God wants you to know the truth, because it is vital both for the present life as well as the next. This is the truth that you need, in order to make sense of your existence here, and to make good use of your life.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." (Matthew 7:7, the Bible)

Study No. 1 - Where Is The Truth Found?

"Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?"
(Job 11:7, the Bible)

The truth you need cannot be found in philosophy, natural science or by transcendental meditation. These things may contain some facets of the truth, but they are insufficient to show you truths about God and His purpose for your life. God has revealed these things by writing them in a book called the Bible.

I. What Is The Bible?

1. It consists of sixty-six books written over a time span of 1,600 years (1500 B.C. - A.D. 100) by about forty writers who were inspired by God, its real Author.
2. It is divided into two parts:
 - a. **The Old Testament:** These are the first 39 books of the Bible which describe the origin of man, his need for a Saviour, and prophecies about His first coming. Most of the Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and some small portions were written in Aramaic.
 - b. **The New Testament:** These are the 27 books written about 400 years after the Old Testament was completed. They describe the life, teaching and purpose of the Saviour, Jesus Christ at His first coming, His relevance to life, and prophecies about His second coming. The New Testament was written entirely in Greek.

II. How Was The Bible Written?

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:16,17, the Bible)

"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." (2 Peter 1:21, the Bible)

1. The Bible was written through a very unique process: The Spirit of God (known also as "the Holy Ghost") came upon a human writer and moved him so that every word he wrote was from God. The Bible therefore does not consist of the ideas, opinions, beliefs and thoughts of mere men.
2. Every part of the Bible was written by God through this same unique process working in 40 different writers from different backgrounds. The result was that every part of it is in full agreement with the other parts. The message of the Bible is consistent from beginning to end.

3. Since every word was from God, there are no mistakes or errors at all in the Bible, since God never makes a mistake! Neither would God allow any misleading or false information such as myths and legends in His book. This means that it is fully reliable and dependable. You can trust completely in every word of the Bible.
4. Consider some other evidences of God's authorship of the Bible:
 - a. The Old Testament refers to itself as "the Word of God" 3,808 times and the New Testament, 525 times.
 - b. There are about 187 prophecies in the Bible that have already been fulfilled. Some prophecies even predicted what name an individual would be given, hundreds of years before his birth.
 - c. There are 180 recorded miracles in the Bible, including six instances when the dead were brought back to life!
 - d. In the Old Testament alone there are at least 80 historical events that have been corroborated by recently-discovered archaeological evidence. The Bible has been shown to be fully accurate in its recording of historical events – with no embellishments nor exaggerated figures.
 - e. The Bible has more ancient manuscript evidence than any ten pieces of classical literature combined – over 24,000 for the New Testament alone. Studies of manuscripts that are more than 2000 years old have shown that the Bible has remained virtually unchanged since it was first written, until the present time!
 - f. Despite many campaigns since ancient times to destroy every copy of the Bible or to distort its message, it has survived, remained intact, and continues to be the most widely distributed and translated book in the world today. It has been translated into over 2,000 languages and has left an indelible influence on many civilisations and nations.
5. These are the amazing things that we would expect from a book that is written entirely by God.

III. Is The Bible Complete?

1. There are some who have claimed that God still continues to write new books, and that these should be added to the Bible, or even replace it.
2. But God Himself declared that the Bible is complete, when He wrote the last book about A.D. 96: "*For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book*" (Revelation 22:18)
3. The Bibles used in the Catholic church today have more than 66 books. The extra books, known as the *Apocrypha*, were included only within the last 400 years. They are therefore not written by God and have no authority. The early church of the 1st and 3rd century A.D. declared that only the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments were to be received as the Word of God.
4. The only books that can become outdated and need replacement, are books written by men. Unlike men, God is eternal and never changes. He always remains the same. The same must then be true of the Bible which He wrote. What He has written remains forever the same.

Conclusion:

- The Bible is worthy to be read, studied and believed as the truth from God Himself.
- The Bible is all that you need in order to know all that God wants you to know.
- The Bible should be the most important book to you. It gives you all the answers you need to life's questions.

Assignment:

1. Complete the attached answer sheet and submit it in order to receive: **Study No. 2 -“Knowing God”**
2. Obtain a Bible for all future studies in this course. There are a number of different English versions of the Bible available. You should get the King James Version (also known as the Authorised Version).
3. Familiarise yourself with the Bible. Flip through its pages and take a glance at the text. You will notice that each book is divided into chapters and each chapter is in turn divided into verses. Hence, the first verse of the Bible is Genesis, Chapter 1, Verse 1. This is abbreviated in references to: Genesis 1:1. The next verse after this would be Genesis 1:2.

ANSWER SHEET FOR STUDY NO. 1

Name: Age:.....

Address:

..... Tel:.....

Email address:.....

Fill in the blanks after reading the study material:

- 1. The Old Testament has _____ books, while the New Testament has _____ books.
- 2. The Bible has been shown to be fully _____ in its recording of historical events.
- 3. The Bible was completed at about the year A.D._____.

Questions to Ponder:

- 1. If the whole truth of God is found only in the Bible, how should you regard it?

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- 2. How should you regard all other books, in relation to the Bible? ..

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- 3. Read each of the following verses taken from the Bible itself and then describe in your own words what they say about the way you should regard it:

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

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“Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.” (Deuteronomy 8:3)

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“Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.” (John 17:17)

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“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17)

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“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35)

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If you have filled in the blanks on this sheet, **submit it** so that you will receive **Study No.2 - "Knowing God"**