

## **APOSTOLIC FAITH BIBLE STUDY**

### **LESSON 1: The Word, the Gospel, and the Doctrine**

To fully understand the Bible, it is necessary to know a few basic facts about it. First, let us look at the four divisions of the New Testament.

1. The Four Gospels: Mathew, Mark, Luke, and John
  - a. These biographies of Jesus Christ were written by four witnesses of Jesus' ministry: They record the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, The four writers recorded some of the same happenings, but they recorded many that are individual to each book as well.
2. Acts (Actions of the Apostles)
  - a. The history of the early church is recorded in the Book of Acts – events leading up to the Day of Pentecost, the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the first preached message of the church age, and several examples of churches being established.
3. The Epistles
  - a. The books of Romans through Jude are letters written by the apostles and other leaders to churches and people who had already received the salvation experience. They explain how to grow in God, they warn of false prophets, and they discuss the resolution of problems in the church.
4. Revelation
  - a. This is a book of prophecy written symbolic form. For example, in one place a pale horse represents death; in another; a woman represents a false church. This book is hard to understand without first studying the rest of the Bible. A new convert would be advised to begin Bible study with the Book of Acts or one of the Gospels.
5. The Importance of the Word
  - a. In order to please God, we must obey His Word. We can only obey the Word of God if we have first studied it so that we know what it says. Thus, the Word of God is of utmost importance.
  - b. Read Matthew 15:8-9
    - i. People in today's society boldly proclaim that they will worship God any way they see fit, and God will have to accept whatever worship they give Him. So it was in the days of Jesus, and here we find His response to this attitude. "In vain" means literally "to no effect."
    - ii. In the days of Adam, Cain tried to worship God in a way other than offering a blood sacrifice, which God specified, and his offering was rejected (Genesis 4:1-7). It was true in the time of Jesus, and it is still true today. We must worship God in the manner He specifies.
  - c. Read John 17:17-20.
    - i. Here Jesus specifies that we are to believe on Him through the apostles' words. Where do we find their words? In the Bible.
    - ii. In a confusing world where everyone preaches something different, how do we know what the truth is? God's Word is truth!

- d. Read 1 Peter 1:22-25
    - i. We find in this passage of Scripture that we purify our souls by obeying the truth, and we are born again by the Word. The Word, preached to us by the gospel, shows us how to be born again.
  - e. Read John 4:23-24
    - i. To be a true worshiper of God, we must worship Him both in Spirit and in truth. As we have seen, God's Word is truth (John 17:17). Along with the true teachings of the Bible, we must also have the Spirit, Likewise, we must not settle for just having the Spirit; we need to have the true teachings of the Word.
6. The Importance of the Gospel
- a. Let us look at some verses of Scripture about the importance of the Gospel.
  - b. Read Romans 1:16
    - i. How do we get salvation? By obeying the gospel, for the gospel is the "power of God unto salvation." If we want healing, we need the haling power of God. If we want salvation, we need the power of god to salvation. God could have chosen any way He wanted to save mankind, and He chose the gospel!
  - c. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:7-20
    - i. Many people begin to attend church to escape the wrath of God. However, this passage lets us know that we must know God and obey the gospel to avoid His wrath.
    - ii. Some people believe that the gospel was just for the apostles' time, but verse 10 shows that the same gospel the apostles taught is the gospel that is going to be believed in the last days.
    - iii. According to the Bible, the gospel of Christ is indispensable to our Christian life.
7. The Importance of Doctrine
- a. The word doctrine comes from the Greek word didaskalia, which means "instruction" or "teaching." It does not mean "opinion," as some believe. Doctrine is extremely important in our Christian walk with God, as the following verses of Scripture show.
  - b. Read 2 Timothy 3:14-16
    - i. Some people may say, "I don't have to change because the Bible tells me to continue in the things I have learned.: But if we understand the Bible, we realize that Paul is telling Timothy to continue in what Timothy has learned. God is no respecter of persons, so it only makes sense that we also should continue in what the apostle Paul taught Timothy. (See 2 Timothy 3:10.)
  - c. Read 1 Timothy 4:13-16
    - i. Remember that this entire book is a letter from the apostle Paul to Timothy. In this passage Paul clearly tells Tinmothy to give attendance to doctrine. He also tells him that doctrine will save him (Timothy) and those who hear him.

- d. Read Romans 6:17-18
    - i. This book is a letter from the apostle Paul to the Romans. In it he explains that they were made free from sin because they obeyed the doctrine that the apostles delivered to them. Once again, God is no respecter of persons, so we need to obey that same doctrine.
  - e. Read 2 Timothy 4:2-3
    - i. The apostle Paul prophesies of a time when men will not endure sound (complete or whole) doctrine. Instead, they will hire a preacher who will “tickle their ears,” or preach what they want to hear.
    - ii. We should be careful not to follow a preacher just because he sounds good or tells us what we want to hear. Instead, we should look for one who teaches sound apostolic doctrine.
8. Additional Scriptures on the Word
- a. Here are some additional verses of Scripture about the Word with points we must understand in order to be successful in our walk with God.
  - b. Read 2 Peter 1:20-21
    - i. We’ve all heard people say, “I have my interpretation, and you have yours.” But the Bible says that the Scriptures are of no private interpretation. The Bible means what it says!
  - c. Read 2 Peter 3:15-17
    - i. The apostle Peter points out that the apostle Paul wrote letters “according to the wisdom given unto him.” He is letting us know that there are things in the Bible that take wisdom to understand, so it is possible to twist the Scriptures to our own destruction.
    - ii. If we find something in the Bible that we do not understand, we should keep obeying what we do understand and wait for fuller understanding of the rest. We should not let the deeper things make us fall from our steadfastness.
9. Beware of False Prophets
- a. Read Matthew 7:13-24
    - i. When the bible speaks of sheep, it generally refers to God’s people. “Come to you in sheep’s clothing” means that a false prophets will come as ministers of God. In today’s terminology, they would be called preachers of the gospel.
    - ii. How can these false prophets be detected? Jesus said we can know them by their fruits, or their actions. If they call on the name of the Lord but do not do His will, they are false prophets.
    - iii. Many people will follow the teachings of these false prophets, sincerely believing that they have a place in heaven. But they will be terribly deceived. Jesus will call them “workers of iniquity” even though they thought they had done wonderful works in His name.
    - iv. Whoever hears Jesus’ sayings and does them is like a wise man who builds his house on a rock. Where do we find the sayings of Jesus? In the Word of God.

- b. Read 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
  - i. The apostle Paul warns the church about false prophets. They pretend to be apostles of Christ, but Paul calls them “deceitful workers.”
- c. Read 2 Timothy 3:13
  - i. The apostle Paul warns that evil men and seducers will deceive and will be deceived. Even if they were deceived and sincerely believed what they were teaching, even if they did not realize their error, they would still be wrong. We should not hate them or wish them ill, but we certainly should not follow them.
- d. Read 2 Timothy 3: 1-7
  - i. The days we are living in are perilous to our spiritual walk. Some people have a form of godliness (they belong to some kind of religion), but they “deny the power” of God to work in man’s life today. They may get involved in theological discussions and possess an incredible amount of knowledge about the Bible, but they never come to the simple knowledge of salvation.
- e. Read Matthew 15:14
  - i. Jesus compares some Pharisees to blind men. We can use the same comparison to the false prophets of our time. No matter how much the people following them believe in their teachings, they are all going to fall in the same ditch.
- f. Read Galatians 1:6-12
  - i. Even in the apostles’ day, some people were trying to change (pervert) the gospel.
  - ii. Paul emphasized that if a man, or even an angel from heaven, preaches any other gospel than that which the apostles preached, he is accursed. False prophets will arise in our day, preach a message different from what the apostles preached, and bring upon themselves the curse of God.
- g. Read Colossians 2:8-9
  - i. We must beware of philosophies and traditions of men. If we allow ourselves to believe something a man says instead of what the Word of God says, then we are “spoiled.” The word “spoil” here has the connotation of being defeated or robbed, as in “the spoils of war.” In a sense it means that we could have our salvation stolen from us because we believed men’s philosophies instead of the Bible.
- h. Read Romans 3:4
  - i. If a man says something that disagrees with the Bible, then the man is wrong and the Bible is right.

## Lesson 1 Work Sheet

1. Jesus prayed not only for the apostles but the people who believed on Him through their what?
  - a. Offerings
  - b. Words
  - c. Feelings
2. What is the purpose of the gospel?
  - a. To provide entertainment
  - b. To provide salvation
  - c. To provide diversion
3. In the last days, Jesus is coming back in flaming fire and taking vengeance on whom?
  - a. Those who do not have insurance
  - b. Those who do not obey the gospel
  - c. Those who are not deceived
4. What is the result of our heeding the doctrine?
  - a. We will be saved.
  - b. We will become proud
  - c. We will become political leaders
5. No Scripture is of any what?
  - a. Private interpretation
  - b. Religious significance
  - c. Godly inspiration
6. How did Jesus say that we can identify a false prophet?
  - a. By the way he looks
  - b. By his fruit (actions)
  - c. By the size of his congregation
7. To what did Jesus liken a man who hears his sayings and does them?
  - a. A man who builds his house on the beach
  - b. A man who builds his house on a rock
  - c. A man who builds his house in a forest
8. Even an angel from heaven can be cursed for doing what?
  - a. Not dressing like a sheep
  - b. Blowing a trumpet
  - c. Preaching a perverted gospel
9. What did Paul call false apostles?
  - a. Mised souls
  - b. Derelicts
  - c. Deceitful workers
10. In Colossians 2:8, what does the word “spoil” mean?
  - a. Ferment
  - b. Defeat or rob
  - c. Mold