

The Bible as God's Word: *What shall we do with it?*

I. We recognize the Bible as His life-saving Word to us.

A. The Bible is His revelation about Himself and how we relate to Him.

1. What He says about His true identity – Isa. 42:8, Isa. 45:18-22
2. What He says about our sin (Law) – Rom. 3:18-19
3. What He says about our Savior (Gospel) – 2 Tim. 1:10, John 20:30-31

→ This revelation is primarily what the Bible is about and the reason why He gave it to mankind.

B. The Bible is His communication of reliable truth for all people.

1. Clearly communicating all that He wants us to know – Ps. 119:105
2. Having no error in any of its passages – Ps. 119:160
3. Having the power of God at work (the Holy Spirit) – 1 Thess. 2:13
 - a. To convince and enlighten the mind
 - b. To convict and convert the heart (2 Tim. 3:15)

→ The Bible's power makes it effective in what God wants it to do (Isa. 55:11). Relying on that power is necessary in our use of the Bible (1 Cor. 2:9-14).

II. We let the Bible speak for itself.

A. In the Bible God says what He means (means what He says).

1. No need to decode hidden messages (God does not use encryption)
2. No problem with ambiguity (each statement has one meaning)
3. No need for outside authorities (The Bible is its own authority) – 2 Pet. 1:20

B. All clear (literal) passages are to be taken literally.

1. In their biblical context
2. Even if seemingly unbelievable or unacceptable
 - a. In conflict with human reason and observation – Isa. 55:8-9
 - b. In conflict with human experts – Rom. 3:4
 - c. In apparent contradiction with the laws of nature – Luke 1:37, Acts 2:22

- C. The meaning of an “unclear” (not clear to us) passage is to be determined in agreement with all the clear passages (2 Pet. 3:15-16).
 - 1. One’s interpretation of a difficult passage, of course, will be tentative.
 - 2. Such less clear passages cannot be used as a foundational basis for any Bible teachings or principles.

III. *We apply the Bible to ourselves.*

- A. By regular reception of its message
 - 1. Hearing it with fellow Christians (Luke 11:28, Col. 3:16)
 - 2. Reading it on our own
- B. By unconditional acceptance of its entire content
 - 1. Believing all that it says (1 Tim. 1:15, 2 Tim. 3:16-17)
 - 2. Following all that it decrees (James 1:22, Matt. 28:20)
- C. By unconditional acceptance of its authority in our lives
 - 1. Repenting when we go against it (2 Tim. 2:24-25, Isa. 66:2)
 - 2. Rejoicing when we are restored by it (Ps. 51:8-13)

IV. *We share it with others.*

- A. The Bible is to be translated and made available to all.
 - 1. Working from the Hebrew Old Testament (Rom. 15:4, 2 Tim. 3:15)
 - 2. Working from the Greek New Testament (1 Thess. 5:27)
- B. The Bible is to be preached and taught in its entirety.
 - 1. Law and Gospel proclaimed properly – 2 Tim. 2:15
 - 2. All Bible teachings proclaimed faithfully (accurately) – Matt. 28:20
- C. The Bible’s content is to be delivered worldwide.
 - 1. That is God’s will for all people
 - 2. And thus our mission as believers (Matt. 28:18-20).

Bible passages quoted in the outline
The Bible as God's Word: *What shall we do with it?*

* The passages below (mostly New King James) are listed in sequential order from the handout.

I. *We recognize the Bible as His life-saving Word to us.*

Isaiah 42:8 “*I am* the LORD, that *is* My name; and My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images.”

Isaiah 45:18-22 For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited: “*I am* the LORD, and *there is* no other. ¹⁹ I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth; I did not say to the seed of Jacob, ‘Seek Me in vain’; I, the LORD, speak righteousness, I declare things that are right. ²⁰ Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you *who have* escaped from the nations. They have no knowledge, who carry the wood of their carved image, and pray to a god *that* cannot save. ²¹ Tell and bring forth *your case*; yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? *Who* has told it from that time? *Have* not I, the LORD? And *there is* no other God besides Me, a just God and a Savior; *there is* none besides Me. ²² Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For *I am* God, and *there is* no other.”

Romans 3:19-20 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

2 Timothy 1:10 [This grace (v. 9)] has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

John 20:30-31 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Psalms 119:105 Your word *is* a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Psalms 119:160 The entirety of Your word *is* truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments *endures* forever.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

2 Timothy 3:15 And that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 55:11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it.

1 Corinthians 2:9-14 But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”¹⁰ But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.¹³ These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

II. We let the Bible speak for itself.

2 Peter 1:19-20 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.

Isaiah 55:8-9 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

Romans 3:4 ... Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: “That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged.”

Luke 1:35-37 And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.³⁶ Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible.”

Acts 2:22 “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know.”

2 Peter 3:15-16 Consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,¹⁶ as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures.

III. We apply the Bible to ourselves.

Luke 11:28 [Jesus] said, “More than that, blessed *are* those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

1 Timothy 1:15 This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

James 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Matthew 28:20 “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.”

2 Timothy 2:24-25 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient,²⁵ in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth.

Isaiah 66:2 “For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being,” declares the LORD. “But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word” (NAS).

Psalms 51:8-13 Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice.⁹ Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.¹¹ Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.¹² Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me *by* Your generous Spirit.¹³ *Then* I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You.

IV. *We share it with others.*

Romans 15:4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

2 Timothy 3:15 And that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.

2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.” Amen.