

1. WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

LUKE 24:15-52

Before we begin: A friend asks you "What is your favourite book of the Bible?" You tell them what it is and why. You say...

1. WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

- "Bible" = "books"
- 39 OT, 27 NT
- Many different genres
- Dates: Moses in about 1500BC to Apostles in 1st century AD

2. WHAT IS THE BIBLE'S MESSAGE?

- = "the gracious and sovereign plan of God, to glorify Himself, by reversing the effects of sin and establishing the unchallenged rule of His Son."

- Mark 1:14-15, "After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. ¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

3. WHAT ARE THE MAIN DIVISIONS IN THE BIBLE?

(a) Old Testament and New Testament

(b) How does the Old Testament divide up?

- **The story of the OT**
 - OT written in Hebrew (and Aramaic) between 1500-400BC
 - OT translated into Greek (Septuagint , LXX) in 200BC

- **Our English Bibles follow the Greek LXX ordering of the OT:**

| Historical books | Mixed poetry | Prophetic books |
|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Genesis to Esther | Job to Song of Songs | Isaiah to Malachi |

- **The Hebrew Bible has a different order: law, prophets and writings (e.g. Luke 24:44, Romans 3:21, Acts 28:23):**

| The Law: | The former prophets: | The latter prophets: | The writings: |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Genesis | Joshua | Isaiah | Psalms |
| Exodus | Judges | Jeremiah | Job |
| Leviticus | 1 & 2 Samuel | Ezekiel | Proverbs |
| Numbers | 1 & 2 Kings | Hosea | Ruth |
| Deuteronomy | | Joel | Song of Songs |
| | | Amos | Ecclesiastes |
| | | Obadiah | Lamentations |
| | | Jonah | Esther |
| | | Micah | Daniel |
| | | Nahum | Ezra |
| | | Habakkuk | Nehemiah |
| | | Zephaniah | 1 & 2 Chronicles |
| | | Haggai | |
| | | Zechariah | |
| | | Malachi | |

4. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT ITSELF?

"WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS IS WHAT GOD SAYS"

(a) The Bible is "inspired" by God

- 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness..."
- "God-breathed" = *theopneustos*
 - It DOES mean...
 - It DOESN'T mean...

(b) The Bible is God's Word through human authors

- 2 Peter 1:21, "For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."
- Also Psalm 2 cited in Acts 4:25; and Psalm 110 cited in Acts 2:34, Hebrews 1:13 and Matthew 22:43

(c) Jesus believed that...

- **The OT is God's Word**
 - Matthew 19:3-6 (who "said" Moses words in Genesis 2?)
 - Matt 4:4 (law); Mark 12:10ff (poetry); Mark 7:6 (prophets)
 - He submits and fulfils it as God's word: e.g. Mk 1:14-15, Mt 26:24,53f ,Mk 8:31, Lk 22:37, 24:25-27,44-46, Jn 5:39-40
- **His own words were God's Words**
Mark 13:31, John 6:63, 15:3, 8:31, 14:24
- **The NT writers wrote God's words**
John 14:26, 16:12-13
2 Peter 3:15-16

5. APPLICATION: HOW WE TREAT THE (WHOLE) BIBLE SHOWS WHAT WE THINK ABOUT GOD

- An example
- Sin (e.g. Genesis 3:1)
- Godliness (e.g. Psalm 1:1-2)

GOOD RESOURCES

- **The Bible – read it!**
- **Bible overview books:**
Vaughan Roberts, *God's Big Picture*
Christopher Ash, *Remaking a broken world*
Don Carson, *The God who is there*
- **Doctrine of Scripture / the Bible as the Word of God:**
J.I. Packer, *Fundamentalism and the word of God*
- **Learning to read the Bible well:**
Nigel Beynon and Andrew Sach, *Dig Deeper*

HOMEWORK

- Please read Genesis chapters 1 and 2 for next week.