

# Comments from Gloria Dei Bethel Graduates

## How would you describe your experience while going through the Bethel course?

Best Bible study I have ever experienced. - Pastor K

I loved it and grew to understand the Bible better. - Rick Ingram

It was fabulous having a great teacher help to provide an overview of Scripture that will be invaluable for the rest of my life. - Annette Wagenknecht

Interesting and informative course. It opened up the Bible and I saw it in sequence, rather than clumps from here and there. The old testament finally made sense - Faith Leyva

It was very fulfilling and clearly the most enlightening Bible study I've ever done. - Jeff Bertsch

This course made Scripture more meaningful. It connected Old and New Testament in the person of Jesus. - Julie Requadt

It was an unbelievably enlightening experience. It answered so many questions I've had all my life. - Ann Mintersmith

Fantastic overview of the main stories/concepts of Christianity - Anonymous

Life changing - Tim Hillebrand

Outstanding! The light bulb went off and all of the pieces finally fit together - Chuck Requadt

Very informative. The pictures are great. They leave a lasting impression of the scripture on the mind. - Cindy Babineaux

I was amazed at the contents of the Bible since I had never read it except as a child. Bethel and part of the Bethel Teacher course that I took opened my eyes as to God's will for me - Edward T. Motter

I loved it. This was the first time I have gone completely through the Bible. I learned so much. - Sandra Hempel

It was great to be able to understand the specific themes of the Books of the Bible and how they all fit together. - Tim Freise

It was AWESOME—I learned so much and then I went on to the colloquy program with Concordia to be a called teacher with LSA. - Rayann Harrison

Excellent course, well taught. - Richard Croner

Very enriching from a knowledge standpoint (my first Bethel class was the more intense teacher-training curriculum). Definitely the most I've learned from the Bible since college days at Concordia, Seward. - Mark Baacke

It was a great overview of the Bible. I would like to take the course again. - Kelley Freise

It opened up the Bible to me. I had just joined Gloria Dei and wanted to learn more about God's Word. - Frank Nelson

It took effort and discipline but well worth it. The information I learned I have used throughout my ministry and my life. The class, classmates and Pastor K gave me a great overall foundation. Even today, when I see one of my classmates, we sometimes still do our symbols to help us remember where things are found in the Bible. - Niki Stewart

Interesting and revealing - Stephen Nelson

I was really excited to be asked to be in the class. I was raised Catholic and was never really encouraged to read the Bible. In fact, I had never read the Bible "from cover to cover". And once I joined Gloria Dei and started trying to read the Bible in earnest, I didn't understand how the parts/books related to the whole; they seemed so disjointed. I mean, did God get a personality transplant between the Old and New Testaments or what? It never even occurred to me that these books could be organized by a 2000 year time line – what a revelation! That timeline really brought the entire class into focus for me. (I'm a highly visual learner.) - Marianna Parks

Long story, but 'Bethel' was the vehicle God used to bring me into Christianity! - John W Smith

I was enlightened to experience going through the complete Bible. - Platte Henderson

It was a great overview of the Bible. - Anonymous

The course was extremely informative and the teacher well-informed. The two years went by very quickly. - Linda Dankert

Excellent. I was so blessed by attending - not just while I was in the class, but afterwards to see how God continued to bless me and lead me to serve in ways I would not have ever guessed I would serve. - Lisa Hendricks

I enjoyed it very much. I love history and the series gave me a historical background on the Bible. - Gretchen Redding

It was a great experience and a challenging one. I have not had to memorize like that since college. - Todd Ariens

I had a new baby at the time, so I didn't spend the time or attention the course deserved. Kurt is an amazing teacher, and even without my full attention, I learned a lot. - Becky Roberds

I understand the Bible much better and I made life long freinds - Rick Ingram

The Bethel class provided a structured means of giving me a clear broad-brushed understanding of the scriptures and God's plan for mankind. The classroom and testing environment motivated me, thus helping me to gain the most possible from the study. The class-room discussions of the materials and lecturing provided encouraging and uplifting insights to the scriptures and provided greater understanding. I was more disciplined during Bethel class than ever else in my life to do daily personal Bible reading and study with a purpose. I looked forward to Bethel class night more than any other night of the week during my Bethel experience. - Dwight Michalk

Bethel's the reason we decided to become members of Gloria Dei, i.e. it's a Bible based Church - Anonymous

It was my first time studying through the entire Bible. Past Sunday school classes taught valuable lessons but they were not presented in the context of the entire Bible and the books leading up to the lesson. - Jack Spiers

Positive. It was especially meaningful going through the coursework with my spouse and having Pastor K as instructor. - Donna Newland

It was a great study. I learned a lot and gave me a different prospective of God's plan for his people. - Joe Walter

A great study of the most important book ever, taught by three men I greatly respect - Bill Kaufman

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## How has your Bethel experience impacted your life?

I am a more confident leader in my spiritual, family and professional life. This knowledge gives you the theological confidence to lead small groups or help teach Bible Studies. - Ed Puckett

Quite often, I catch myself reflecting back on things that happened in the Bible and applying them to my everyday experiences. - Platte Hendersen

Having the overview makes me much more willing to continue study on my own in the future so that I hear what God has to say as it relates to my life. - Annette Wagenknecht

I understand segments from the Bible more fully. Years ago, I thought everyone in the Bible was perfect. I learned they were not. God's forgiveness always was present in an imperfect world. - Faith Leyva

Brought about a total change, at age 39, from devout paganism...into authentic Christianity! - John W Smith

I understand so much more about life and why we are here - not for ourselves but to bring the word of God to others. I want to go through it again. - Ann Mintersmith

I have always thought of myself as kind, caring and generous. Now I understand why. It's not about me; it's because I have been blessed ... to be a blessing for others. - Linda Cox

A solid foundation that has impacted my whole life - Rick Ingram

Bethel gave me a better understanding of what it means to lead a Christian life. - Jack Spiers

Reminded me that Bible study is an ongoing life experience. The Bible blesses us with new insights each time you open it according to what God is trying to reveal to us at different times of our lives. - Donna Newland

If I look at my spiritual growth over the years, I would have to say that Bethel provided the biggest impact on my life of anything I have done. It seemed hard at the time to make that commitment to go and study, but I am so glad God got me there week after week. Bethel gives you an overall view of the Bible that you don't always get just picking out one book/topic at a time to study. - Lisa Hendricks

Oh BIG TIME! Now I get it! I see the Bible as a story book with multiple chapters, all about the same "character", instead of a weird collection of stories. I wasn't real great with those memory verses, but I can remember where some of the "biggies" are. I am no longer confused about where I've come from, and what I'm supposed to be doing here! - Marianna Parks

It has enabled me to be able to refer to specific scripture when facing struggles in my life. - Tim Freise

I got closer to God. Because of it, I am a better person and it strengthened my belief. - Joe Walter

I can now see the relevance to present day historical events and governmental policies - Steve Blumenfeld

I now have a much better ability to understand and associate when the books of the Bible are referenced. - Robert King

Great overall foundation. Learned key points and where to find things in the Bible. Still use key learnings today with other people - Niki Stewart

It has reminded me again and again of God's great plan for His creation, including me. - Pastor K

It allowed me to get a firm foundation of the Bible and the timeline that everything happened, with regard to the world's history. This has allowed me to have many witnessing opportunities and allowed me to find the reference passages that I needed quickly. - Todd Ariens

Always seems to be the foundation for other Bible classes I've attended. Has been a great resource for Bible classes that I teach at LSA. I've also taught Bethel as an adult class at my former church. - Mark Baacke

It has provided a framework on which to hang the detailed knowledge of God's plan for me - blessed to be a blessing to others. It helps me make coherent sense of other courses of study, sermons, and my relationships with others. - Bill Kaufman

A great foundation that helps me all the time - Rick Ingram

I am more confident in leading and participating in Bible studies. - Jeff Bertsch

It's given me confidence that the Bible is in fact what it says it is - The Word of God - could there be a larger impact to one's life? - Tim Hillebrand

It's made me more hungry for God's word. I can always learn more. - Cindy Babineaux

It has given me much happiness and peace - Edward T. Motter

It opened the door to further study and understanding of God's Word and introduced me to many new people. - Frank Nelson

Established a strong foundation for studying scripture more in depth. - Robin Jenkins

I now have a better understanding of what is going on in the Middle East. - Gretchen Redding

The process of studying the Bible is very rewarding. Kurt's instruction with knowledge and background gave the Bible life. - Richard Croner

A more clear historical understanding of the struggles and the sin that can so consume us and how blessed I maybe to live in this day and age. We do not have to atone for our sins because He already did. - Joyce Morlang

Strengthened my belief and provided the 'how to' live my faith. Scripture, while still mysterious, became more relevant. - Julie Requadt

I can look at life, individual people, the church, nations, our society, and my job through concepts I learned in Bethel. I want my life to be at harmony with God's plans for me. - Dwight Michalk

Taught me different ways to study the Bible, encouraged me to continue learning about God in my life. - Liz Spinnenweber

At the time I took the class, the first Gulf war had just started. I should say the first Gulf war that involved American troops had just started since there has been fighting in the region forever. The in-depth look at how things were in Biblical times and how things still appear to be now was eye opening. It allowed me to have a better understanding (not necessarily agree with) but to have a better understanding of where these individuals come from. - Sandra Hempel

# Comments from Gloria Dei Bethel Graduates

## How has your Bethel experience impacted your spiritual life?

Completing Bethel makes the reading of the Bible more meaningful and gives insight to the consequences of God's saving grace. - Pat Hemminghaus

I have a better understanding of the Bible and its primary message to Christians. God has a single purpose throughout the Bible. This class reveals his purpose and shows God's master plan. - Ed Puckett

I feel so much closer to God and feel I now have a personal relationship with Jesus. - Ann Mintersmith

It has encouraged me to study God's Word more in order to learn God's will. - Linda Cox

This was the first time I really realized how important studying the Bible is. I mean, I grew up in a Christian home, but nobody actually read the Bible. Seeing how it all fit together, how much actually living in the word should be a part of my daily life was eye opening and profound. - Becky Roberds

It's brought me closer to God - Anonymous

It gave me a hunger for more of what God means to communicate to us - can't get enough today. - Tim Hillebrand

I've been a Lutheran all of my life and grew up in the Lutheran church, going to church and Sunday School every Sunday. As a child, you hear the Bible stories on a regular basis and have a general knowledge of the Bible. To study those same events as an adult from an adult perspective has been enlightening. It is reassuring to me to see examples of normal, every day people (like me), experiencing the same situations, having the same problems, and fears, and being used by God in extraordinary ways. - Linda Dankert

Confidence in my knowledge has emboldened me in sharing and teaching about scripture. I have been able to serve as one of the primary scripture resources in several different groups. I have been more confident in leading small group studies. I have been able to help others discover insights into the scripture that they have never understood before. I have felt comfortable discussing scripture with people who have questions. - Jeff Dybdahl

I have grown spiritually by leaps and bounds. I feel closer to God and more confident in searching for my purpose, the purpose God has for my life. - Sandy Dybdahl

My faith has been strengthened in ways I would never have expected! Not only did I serve as an assistant lay minister, lay minister, and communion assistant, God has given me a passion for teaching children in Sunday School. - Lisa Hendricks

When people start criticizing Christianity or trashing the Bible, I'm no longer intimidated because I know what's in the Book, and I know what it means, even if I don't have scripture memorized. I feel like I've matured light years as a Christian! - Marianna Parks

It has opened up a whole new way of reading and understanding the scripture. I grew up in the Lutheran church and attended church and Sunday School every Sunday. I can hear/read the same words from the scripture I have heard/read all my life but get so much more out of them. - Sandra Hempel

I found that having an overall view of the events of the Bible has been very helpful, as I have continued in other Bible Studies. I believe that the knowledge I gained through the Bethel course has enriched the sermons and other worship events I have experienced at church. - Christina Ronshausen-Terrell

It provided me with a great foundation with which to build upon and allowed me to go into deeper studies of the Bible - Todd Ariens

Taught me different ways to study the Bible, encouraged me to continue learning about God in my life. - Liz Spinnenweber

It has helped me understand the incredible providence and grace of God in Jesus. - Pastor K

To help me to keep seeking knowledge about God and Jesus. - Rick Ingram

It opened up an understanding of the Bible - Tracy Frere

My outlook on life and my spiritual life has been uplifted. I feel closer to God. I feel an obligation to share my relationship with God to others. - Platte Henderson

It changed my fundamental understanding of the Bible and God's plan for his children. - Jeff Bertsch

Definitely it has blessed me so that I can be a blessing to others. It has also been the stimulus for continued Bible study...there's always more to learn. - Mark Baacke

It has solidified it and given it new meaning - Steve Blumenfeld

A rock solid base to help me recognize how God works in my life everyday - Rick Ingram

Definitely has strengthened my faith. I know that it has given me confidence to share my faith with others because of the sharing in the classroom and the confidence gained from the Bible knowledge gained. - Chuck Requadt

My beliefs are strengthened and being aware of my past mistakes, I am able to move forward in my spiritual walk - Edward T. Motter

It helps me "hear" God's message and how He is specifically speaking to me. - Tim Freise

Gave me a framework for further study. - Robin Jenkins

I seek Him daily - Rayann Harrison

It has helped me to realize that God has a plan for each of us. He expects us to share His love for us with others and has given each of us the ability to do so. - Bill Kaufman

I am able to more fully understand the bible as a whole, and I see how forgiving God is. He always gives His children forgiveness; His mighty love is there for the asking. He is always there for us even when we are not there for him. It blows my mind to think that He came in flesh to die for me. - faith leyva

I may be a bit more forgiving and patient with myself and my family. I try not to take for granted not only His Grace but also His constant mercy in my life and my family's. - Joyce Morlang

It has had a positive experience on my spiritual life. As with any study, learning more about the Bible draws me closer to God. - Kelley Freise

Learned to trust God more fully as modeled by the people in Scripture. Affirmed God is in control and He is good. - Julie Requadt

## Comments from Gloria Dei Bethel Graduates

### How has your Bethel experience impacted your spiritual life (continued)?

Completing Bethel makes the reading of the Bible more meaningful. Bible history and scripture have more meaning and I understand the context and purpose of the Bible and God's plan better. I listen to sermons, worship readings, and enjoy the lyrics of worship songs with the ever-present awareness of how each of these worship experiences fits with the concepts of Bethel. This provides a more complete worship experience. I am able to be a better witness to others and tell the gospel message better because of Bethel - Dwight Michalk

It has infused me with a continued desire to read/study the Word of God - Anonymous

Bethel gave me a more thorough understanding of the entire Bible. Understanding the meanings behind the messages and the common threads makes for easier application in life. I am more confident in my knowledge of the scriptures. - Jeff Dybdahl

It made us more aware of biblical timelines and how much detail the Bible has that we were unaware of. The class gave us a basic foundation of understanding which we can now build upon. - Tommy and Angela Vong

Challenged me in my spiritual disciplines. Biblical Knowledge grew. I can still recall today where things are located in the Bible due to memorization - Niki Stewart

I want to continue to grow. I have been blessed to be a blessing. Regardless of how large or small of a contribution, in money or in service, I am to make it to the Glory of God, it will be a blessing in God's Ministry and in the lives of others. The message of blessed to be a blessing is clear throughout the study of Bethel. Thank God for sending Jesus Christ to BRIDGE the GAP between God and Man! - Cindy Babineaux

Bethel highlights the Biblical theme of Man's journey in relationship to God. Despite God's desire to have a lasting relationship with all Mankind, the Bible shows Man fluctuating between rejecting and seeking God. The cycle is maintained through Man's repeated sin and God's faithful forgiveness. This cyclic journey of repetitive sin/forgiveness mirrors my own life. I know that, through God's gift of Jesus' resurrection, I can always repent and receive His forgiveness. - Donna Newland

Bethel encourages you to read the entire Bible. I did that at the time I took the class and I continue to read through it front to back. It may take me several years, but I have read it at least 4 times. Each time I learn new teachings from God. - Gretchen Redding

## Comments from Gloria Dei Bethel Graduates

### Would you recommend the Bethel course to others? Why or why not?

A must take course. Very few Bible studies cover the Bible in this way. - Ed Puckett

Makes 'Bible' make sense, as one learns to relate it's parts to the whole, and the whole to it's parts! - John W Smith

It helps to see the Bible as a cohesive "whole" rather than a bunch of disconnected stories. Helps to see what the OT & NT have to do with each other. - Mark Baacke

Absolutely! It was a life changing experience. - Ann Mintersmith

A great way to start a lifelong study of the Bible - Anonymous

Because it is very thorough and the best Bible course out there. - Anonymous

I would recommend it. I think it puts all of the stories you have heard over time into perspective and gives you a better understanding of God's plan. - Gretchen Redding

I believe it is also the best "leadership training" a Christian can have. - Pastor K

It was a good study and well worth the long committment. - Tommy and Angela Vong

It think for some people it is a neat way to learn about the Bible - Greg and Kelly Adams

Challenging our minds to learn is a must if we do not want to get mushy brains. - Joyce Morlang

Expands your foundation - Richard Croner

Bethel provides you with wonderful Biblical foundation. - Todd Ariens

Everyone should experience reading the Bible following an outline with a powerful theme. (Blessed to be a blessing) - Platte Henderson

Only if you want to understand the Bible in a deeper and richer way. - Jeff Bertsch

I thought it was a good course for those of us who did not take religion courses in our youth. - Joanne Palladini

Because they will be personally blessed. - Dwight Michalk

The Bethel course provides fertile ground for spiritual growth. - Jack Spiers

It's a must do for every God-seeking Christian - Tim Hillebrand

Great as a way to start to get to know the Bible before taking deeper dives into the Word. - Robert King

Gives a good understanding of the Bible - Al Mumma

I recommend it to people all the time, especially those coming out of traditions that do not emphasize Bible Study. - Marianna Parks

I have considered taking the course again myself. - Sandra Hempel

It's the best way to learn the purpose of the entire Bible. - Tim Freise

It's a good place to begin, or to pull together what has already been learned and give order to it. - Robin Jenkins

I would recommend Bethel to anybody. - Joe Walter

I would because it is a great curriculum and by the power of the Holy Spirit brings understanding. - Rayann Harrison

Each of us needs to see the "big picture" of God's revelation of Himself to us throughout history - culminating in the birth, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ and His coming again for us. - Bill Kaufman

It really helps you to know God more and helps you witness to others. You can use the pictures to lead someone through the Bible. - Rick Ingram

It is important for Christians to be able to hear what God has to say to us through his Word. Having an ongoing opportunity for people to learn the Bible from a knowledgeable teacher and/or study is very important. - Annette Wagenknecht

It is a great class and helps you identify what to believe and why to believe it. - Anonymous

It is the Word of God and it will enrich your spiritual knowledge and it will be a blessing to your spirit, mind, and body. It is so interesting to see the Old Testament support the New Testament and the New Testament support the Old Testament. God's word is so amazing. Not boring at All! - Cindy Babineaux

The Bethel course is a wonderful introduction to someone who has not had much experience in Bible Study. I believe that it enriches the sermons and other worship events at church. - Christina Ronshausen-Terrell

God desires a closer relationship with us. Bible study is a key to growing that relationship. If you're like me, your Bible study is enhanced when you're regularly held accountable to study. The assignment deadlines and Christian interaction are vital parts of the Bethel coursework that keep you accountable! - Donna Newland

I think we all need to strive to learn more, whether we are new to Bible study or whether we have done it all of our lives. There is always more to learn, to add on to what we already know. We are blessed to be a blessing. The more we know, the better we can relate to others. - Linda Dankert

I would definitely recommend Bethel for everyone - especially people that are new to the church/Christian faith. You walk away knowing God more intimately and recognizing his plan for salvation through Jesus so much more clearly. - Lisa Hendricks

The Bethel Study presents the entire Bible in an easy to follow format. The images help reinforce the lessons and scriptures. I found the Bethel course generated the big picture in my understanding of the scripture. God is God, in both the Old and New Testament. Many people think of a vengeful God in the Old and a loving God in the New. - Jeff Dybdahl

## Comments from Gloria Dei Bethel Graduates

### What comments or suggestions do you have for people considering enrolling in a Bethel course?

Just do it! - Pastor K

Bethel is one of those courses, where you don't understand or see the total benefit until later. It sneaks up on you. The lessons learned from this class extend into all avenues of your life. I find myself applying these concepts to the challenges I face as a disciple, husband, father, employee and manager. - Ed Puckett

Make a commitment to stay the course. It will be life changing. - Julie Requadt

No matter what point you are in your life spiritually, the course will enrich your life. - Becky Roberds

Do not be intimidated by the challenge. Embrace the study and make time for the daily/weekly study. You will be inwardly blessed, better able to share the Gospel message, and understand scriptures and God's plan for mankind as never before. - Dwight Michalk

You get out more than you put in. - Anonymous

Carve out the time for Bethel and make it a priority. Pray God will keep you committed. Consider this opportunity to draw closer to God a real privilege. - Donna Newland

It is a great course to get the know the Bible in overview. - Tracy Frere

Strongly recommend. I have not been the same person since I took Bethel because God took me from where I was and began the journey of taking me where He wants me to be, banging me into someone who knows Him and the power of His resurrections - Robin Jenkins

Commitment to doing the work is crucial. - Richard Croner

Do it, you'll love it. - Pat Hemminghaus

Pray for God's will. - Rick Ingram

Bethel is a wonderful course but it is a huge commitment with a huge pay-off. You come out of this study with a great Biblical foundation with which to build upon. - Todd Ariens

Once you start the course it's difficult to miss a class or stop. You are afraid you may miss some important fact. - Platte Henderson

Hesitate not! Enroll now - faith leyva

Make whatever adjustments to their time management as is necessary, to allow them to complete a study that WILL change their lives, for the BETTER..... forever! - John W Smith

There are no qualifications when Jesus said "come follow me" - Joyce Morlang

You must commit to it and work hard at it, and remember to have fun. - Jeff Bertsch

Requires a commitment of time and study but the blessings are worth the effort. Not for the "casual" Bible study attendee or anyone who is sporadic in their attendance. - Mark Baacke

Recommended! - Kelley Freise

It is a commitment of time that is the best use of our time we could have. - Ann Mintersmith

Study hard and get all the course has to offer - Rick Ingram

Make the time!!! - Anonymous

I would suggest that anyone beginning Bethel be committed to doing the pre-class study each week as this will enable them to get the most out of the class. - Jack Spiers

Be prepared to spend the time necessary to make it worthwhile - Stephen Nelson

Definitely enroll and make it a priority to complete the entire course - Chuck Requadt

Do it as soon as possible - Edward T. Motter

Take the entire course, do the reading, enjoy. - Frank Nelson

Make the commitment to do it and attend every class. You will never regret the time spent. - Sandra Hempel

Attend every lesson. - Joe Walter

I suggest getting a Bible with a typeface that you can easily read. I have always enjoyed the supplemental information provided in the Zondervan "Student" Bible and "Serendipity" Bible. I also found the audio Bible to be extremely helpful during lessons with larger amounts of readings. Using a printed and an audio Bible, I read the entire Bible during the course. - Jeff Dybdahl

The notes and handouts are great - but it helps to be organized. Also, be committed - it's not a come-and-go type of study. You'll miss a lot if you even miss one week. - Tommy and Angela Vong

I knew nothing about the Bible and very little about Christianity going into this class. I was intimidated by the quantity of information being given. Don't be overwhelmed by the kings and all the OT memory stuff. Of course, the more you put into the class, the more you'll get out of it. But, I didn't put too much extracurricular activity into the class, even missed quite a few classes, and still got a whole lot out. - Tim Hillebrand

It is important to do the necessary reading. It makes a difference in how much you understand and absorb during the class. - Susan Hillebrand

I think we all need to strive to learn more, whether we are new to Bible study or whether we have done it all of our lives. There is always more to learn, to add on to what we already know. We are blessed to be a blessing. The more we know, the better we can relate to others. - Linda Dankert

Don't worry about having to spend too much time studying. God's power will enable you to take away what you - Tim Freise

By all means sign up for it, but realize that it will take quite a bit of time to do the reading required to get the most out of the course. It is worth the effort! - Bill Kaufman