Opening

Gathering: Give an example of how the Bible has helped you in your everyday life.

Today's Focus: To understand what the Bible is, why God gave it to us and how it is organized to help us find and apply its truths to our lives.

Key Verses: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16

These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. John 20:31

Opening Prayer

Lesson

What We Believe (John 20:31)

Does it matter what we believe?
Acts 4:12
What does it mean to be saved, and what is this name by which we must be saved?
John 17:3
Is thinking about God enough to know Him and be saved?
Mark 12:24
How can we know God and Jesus enough to receive the life He offers?
John 20:31

The Bible for Everyday Life (2 Timothy 3:16)

Is the Bible given only to build our faith to receive eternal life?
Matthew 4:4
How can the Bible help us in our daily lives?
2 Timothy 3:16-17
Other than growth, what promise does God give to those who study His word?
Luke 11:28

What is God's Word? (John 1)

How long has God's Word been around?
John 1:1-3
Why does John refer to the Word as “him”?
John 1:14
How were all things made through the Word?
Genesis 1:3, 31
How did the Word become flesh?
Luke 24:27

Note: Moses and the Prophets or Law and Prophets was name for Bible (OT) in Jesus’ time.
Law and Gospel  *(Romans 3:21-24)*

What two paths towards salvation are revealed in the Bible?
Romans 3:21-24
Is God's Law only found in the Old Testament?
Matthew 5:17-18, 21-22a
Is God’s Gospel (“Good News”) of grace found only in the New Testament?
Genesis 12:1-3

God's Law  *(Matthew 22:37-40)*

What are the three types of God's Law?
*Civil* - Exodus 22:1
*Ceremonial* - Exodus 34:22
*Moral* - Exodus 20:3-4, 7-8, 12-17
How did Jesus summarize God's Moral Law?
Matthew 22:37-38
Matthew 22:39-40

Since all fall short of being saved by obedience, what are the purposes of God's Law?
Curb - 1 Timothy 1:9-10
Mirror - Romans 7:7
Guide - Psalm 119:9 (119:1-9)
What are the promises of God's Law?
Deuteronomy 6:24-25
What are the curses of God's Law?
Deuteronomy 8:19-20 (see Galatians 3:10-13)

God’s Gospel  *(Ephesians 2:8-9)*

How did Paul summarize God's Gospel?
Ephesians 2:8-9
What purpose does God have in this Gospel?
John 3:16
What are the promises of God's Gospel?
Ephesians 1:4-8, 13-14
What are the curses of God's Gospel?
John 3:36

Contrasts of Law and Gospel  *(Galatians 3:10-25)*

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The Bible

Not one book, but a book of books (66)

biblion

Canon
List of books recognized as the genuine, original inspired, authoritative Word of God

What did Peter explain to be the source of the books in the Bible?
2 Peter 1:20-21

How did Paul, the author of nearly half of the New Testament books, feel about the message he gave?
Galatians 1:11-12

How seriously should we consider the words in the Bible to be the exact Words of God?
Galatians 1:8

The Old Testament

Testament - A covenant or agreement between two parties, especially between God and His people.
Implies a strong relationship between the two.

What was God’s old testament?
Leviticus 26:3, 6, 9, 12

What is the focus of the Old Testament books of the Bible?
Genesis 28:13-15

Current Old Testament canon selected soon after return from Babylon, around the time of Ezra
Books organized mostly chronologically within 5 categories (39 books):
The Law (Torah) - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
History - Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther
Poetry - Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs
Major Prophets - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel
Minor Prophets - Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

The New Testament

What was God’s new testament?
Hebrews 9:15

Is this new covenant still restricted to the children of Abraham?
Galatians 3:6-9, 14, 29

What is the focus of the New Testament books of the Bible?
Ephesians 3:4-6

Current New Testament canon selected in 397 AD at the Council of Carthage
Were any of our New Testament books regarded as Scripture before this time?
2 Peter 3:15-16

Books organized thematically within 5 categories (27 books):
Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
History - Acts
Letters of Paul - Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
Letters of Others - Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude
Apocalypse - Revelation
Versions

Old Testament originally written in Hebrew. New Testament originally written in Greek

**Translation** - A rendering of the original text into another language

**Paraphrase** - A careful restatement of the authors thoughts

**Literal Bible Versions**
- Translations aimed at word-for-word accuracy
  - Septuagint (Old Testament Hebrew translated into Greek) - 285-132 BC
  - Vulgate (Bible translated into Latin by Jerome) - 405 AD
  - German Bible (Translated by Martin Luther) - 1522-1534
  - King James Version (KJV, Authorized) - 1611
  - Revised Standard Version (RSV) - 1952
  - New American Standard (NASB) - 1960

**Dynamic Bible Versions**
- Translations aimed at dynamic equivalency (phrase-by-phrase)
  - New International Version (NIV) - 1978

**Paraphrases**
- Sentences and verses rewritten to maximize readability in today’s language
  - The Living Bible (TLB) - 1971
  - Today’s English Version (Good News) - 1976
  - The Message - 2002

How To Take Advantage of God’s Word

Why should we study the Bible?
Matthew 22:29

How should we begin to study the Bible?
Colossians 1:9

How can praying help us better understand the deep truths of the Bible?
John 14:26

But what if what we read is too difficult to understand?
Hebrews 5:11-14

What are three main ways we are to study the Bible?
Acts 17:2-3
Acts 17:11
2 Timothy 3:14-15

Closing Prayer

Response

1. Why should I regularly read and study the Bible?
   (John 16:12-15; 20:31; Romans 15:4; Hebrews 5:11-14; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
2. How seriously should I take and trust the words in the Bible?
   (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; Acts 24:14; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21)
3. When and how have I been blessed by studying God’s Word?
   (Deuteronomy 4:1-14; 8:1-10; Psalm 119; Ezekiel 3:1-3; Matthew 4:4)
4. When and how have I been cursed by ignoring God’s Word?
   (Deut 8:11-20; 11:26-28; Prov 30:5-6)
5. What steps can and will UI take to learn more about God’s plan for my life and my future with Him?
   (Proverbs 1:7; Colossians 3:16-17; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-15; James 1:21-25)
Books of the Old Testament

The Law - *Torah* (Hebrew for “law” or “teaching”), *Pentateuch* (Greek for “five volumes”)
- Genesis - Beginnings of God’s People
- Exodus - Birth of God’s Chosen Nation
- Leviticus - Instructions for Living as God’s Holy People
- Numbers - Israel’s Journey to the Promised Land
- Deuteronomy - Moses Reminds Israel of Her Calling

History - *Stories of the Jews before Christ*
- Joshua - Israel Enters, Conquers and Sets the Promised Land
- Judges - Israel’s Early Years as a Confederacy
- Ruth - Story of God’s Love and Care to Ancestor of David and Jesus
- 1 Samuel - God Gives Israel a King - Saul
- 2 Samuel - Israel’s Second and Most Faithful King - David
- 1 Kings - Israel Under Solomon and Divided into Two Kingdoms
- 2 Kings - Kings and Fall of Israel and Judah
- 1 Chronicles - Chronicle of the Reign of King David
- 2 Chronicles - Chronicle of the Reigns of Solomon and Kings of Judah
- Ezra - Jews Return from Exile and Commit to God
- Nehemiah - Jews Rebuild Jerusalem and Rebuild Holy Nation
- Esther - Story of God’s Protection of His People

Poetry - *Also called Wisdom Literature*
- Job - Faithful Man Tries to Understand God’s Will Through Suffering
- Psalms - Hymns, Poems and Prayers of Israel
- Proverbs - Words of Wisdom from Solomon and Other Wise Israelites
- Ecclesiastes - Solomon’s Thoughts on the Vanity of Earthly Life
- Song of Solomon - Love Songs Symbolizing God’s Relationship With His People

Major Prophets - *Pointed Israel Back to God, Warned of Judgment, Promised Hope*
- Isaiah - Prophet to Southern Kingdom During Northern Kingdom’s Destruction, Foretold of the Messiah
- Jeremiah - Prophet to Southern Kingdom of Judah During its Last Days
- Lamentations - Songs of Mourning by Jeremiah Over Exile of Judah
- Ezekiel - Prophet of Judgment and Hope to Jews During Exile in Babylon
- Daniel - Prophet of God’s Plans to Jews During Exile in Babylon

Minor Prophets - *“Minor” Because Books are Smaller*
- Hosea - Prophet to Northern Kingdom of Israel During its Last Days
- Joel - Prophet to Judah Compares Famine to the Day of the Lord’s Judgment
- Amos - Prophet of Judgment Against Social Injustice
- Obadiah - Prophet of Judgment Against Judah’s Neighbor Edom
- Jonah - Story of Unwilling Prophet to Ninevah (capital of enemey, Assyria)
- Micah - Prophet Against Social, Political and Religious Evils
- Nahum - Prophet Foretells Destruction of Ninevah (capital of enemy, Assyria)
- Habakkuk - Prophet Questions God’s Purpose in Imminent Babylonian Conquest of Judah
- Zephaniah - Prophet Proclaims God’s Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem For Evils
- Haggai - Prophet Reprimands Jews to Return to Rebuilding the Temple
- Zechariah - Prophet Calls Jews to Rebuild Temple and Reveals God’s Future Plans
- Malachi - Prophet Calls Jews to Commitment and Obedience While Awaiting the Messiah
Books of the New Testament

Gospels - “Good News” of Jesus, the Christ (Messiah)
  Matthew - Story of Jesus as the Promised Messiah, Directed to Jews
  Mark - Story of Jesus as the Active Son of God, Directed to Romans
  Luke - Story of Jesus as the Perfect Son of Man, Focuses on Jesus’ Humanity
  John - Story of Jesus as the Full Son of God, Focuses on Jesus’ Divinity

History - Story of God’s New Covenant People
  Acts - Formation and Expansion of the Christian Church

Letters by Paul
  Romans - Explanation of Christianity, Saving Righteousness Comes Through Faith
  1 Corinthians - Exhortations Against Disorders Within the Church
  2 Corinthians - Reconciliation Between Christians and With God
  Galatians - Christians Are to Live By Grace, Not By Law
  Ephesians - Live As Members of Christ’s Body, the Church
  Philippians - Be Joyful and Thankful in all Circumstances
  Colossians - Salvation is in Christ and in Christ Alone
  1 Thessalonians - Remain Steadfast While Awaiting Christ’s Return
  2 Thessalonians - Misconceptions of Christ’s Second Coming Corrected
  1 Timothy - Advice for Pastor of Christian Congregation
  2 Timothy - Persevere in Faith Despite Persecution and Godlessness in the World
  Titus - Guidance to Pastor in Handling Opposition
  Philemon - Forgiveness and Acceptance of Runaway Slave as Fellow Christian

Letters by Others
  Hebrews - Christ Supersedes All Things of God’s Old Covenant
  James - True Faith is Evident in its Resultant Good Works
  1 Peter - Encouragement to Stay on the Narrow Road Despite Persecution
  2 Peter - Condemnation of False Teachings Within the Church
  1 John - Avoid False Teachings and Live Out God’s Love For Others
  2 John - Avoid False Teachers and Obey God’s Commands
  3 John - Hospitality Commended in Face of Opposition From Church Leader
  Jude - Defending the Faith Against False Teachers

Apocalypse - Highly Symbolic Writings that Describe Future Times
  Revelation - Visions of Heaven and the Last Days Given to John
Books of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

Apocrypha & Pseudepigrapha

- Religious writings not accepted as divinely inspired (not in canon)
- Old Testament canon defined by rabbis at Jamnia in 90 AD
- Produced and circulated during period of 200 BC - 100 AD
- Contain various historical references and stories
- Recommended by Jerome & Luther for ethical but not doctrinal teaching
- Many apocryphal New Testament writings also exist, such as:
  - Gospel of the Infancy, Gospel of Thomas, ... Nicodemus, ... Bartholomew
  - Acts of John, ... Paul, ... Peter, ... Andrew, ... Philip, ... Thomas

Apocrypha - Greek for hidden things

- Contain ideas that disagree with Protestant doctrine
- Purgatory, masses for the dead, good works earn merit with God
- Roman Catholics accept 12 of these 15 books as Deuterocanonical
  - Accepted at Council of Trent in 1546 in response to reformers
- Eastern Orthodox accept all but 2 Esdras as canonical
  - 1 & 2 Esdras
  - Tobit
  - Judith
  - Additions To Esther
  - Wisdom of Solomon
  - Ecclesiasticus
  - Baruch
  - Letter of Jeremiah
  - Song of the Three Young Men
  - Susanna
  - Bel and the Dragon
  - Prayer of Manasseh
  - 1 & 2 Maccabees

Pseudepigrapha - Greek for false authorship

- Falsely claimed to be written by a well-known ancient figure
- Given even less credence than apocrypha
- Called Apocrypha by Roman Catholics
- Eastern Orthodox accept 3 & 4 Maccabees as canonical
  - Enoch
  - Psalms of Solomon
  - Books of Adam and Eve
  - Martyrdom of Isaiah
  - Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs
King James Version

23 THE Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.
3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his names sake.
4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

The Living Bible

23 Because the Lord is my Shepherd, I have everything I need!
2,3 He lets me rest in the meadow grass and leads me beside the quiet streams. He gives me new strength. He helps me do what honors him the most.
4 Even when walking through the dark valley of death I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me, guarding, guiding all the way.[b]
5 You provide delicious food for me in the presence of my enemies. You have welcomed me as your guest:[c] blessings overflow!
6 Your goodness and unfailing kindness shall be with me all of my life, and afterwards I will live with you forever in your home.

New International Version

23 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,
3 he restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.
4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Revised Standard Version

23 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want;
2 he makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters;
3 he restores my soul.
He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.
4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.
5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
thou anointest my head with oil, my cup overflows.
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.