

# foundations

SMALL GROUP STUDY

taught by tom hOLLaday and kay warren

**T H E B I B L E**



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Foundations: *The Bible Study Guide*

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# 1

Session One

BUILDING CONFIDENCE  
IN THE BIBLE





## BIBLE TEACHING

Watch the video lesson now and take notes in your outline on pages 3-8.

## Three Important Words, Their Definitions, and Their Implications

1. \_\_\_\_\_ means that God has chosen to reveal his nature and his will to us through the Bible. The Bible was written so that God could show us what he is like and what he wants us to be like. An understanding of God comes solely through his decision to reveal himself to us.

*"And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD." (Ezekiel 38:23 NIV)*

2. \_\_\_\_\_ is the process through which God gave us the Bible. God worked in the hearts of human writers to inspire them to write down his words. God's words written through these people are perfect, infallible, and trustworthy.

*All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. (2 Timothy 3:16 NLT)*

3. \_\_\_\_\_ is the Holy Spirit's work of bringing light to the words of the Bible as we read them. Illumination is the means by which we understand the Bible.

*Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. (Luke 24:45 NIV)*

## How Do We Know the Bible Came from God?

**First: The \_\_\_\_\_ evidence says the Bible is a historical book.**

- The number of manuscript copies and the short length of time between the original manuscripts and our first copies of the New Testament

For the New Testament the evidence is overwhelming. There are 5,366 manuscripts to compare and draw information from, and some of these date from the second or third centuries. To put that in perspective, there are only 643 copies of Homer's *Iliad*, and that is the most famous book of ancient Greece! No one doubts the existence of Julius Caesar's Gallic Wars, but we only have 10 copies of it and the earliest of those was made 1,000 years after it was written. To have such an abundance of copies of the New Testament from dates within 70 years after their writing is amazing.<sup>1</sup>

— Norman L. Geisler

Why didn't God allow us to have the original rather than relying on a number of copies? One possibility: we would have worshiped an old document rather than reading and following his living Word.

- The extreme care with which the Scriptures were copied
- Confirmation of places and dates by archaeology

Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of innumerable details, and has brought increased recognition to the value of the Bible as a source of history.<sup>2</sup>

— William Foxwell Albright

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<sup>1</sup> Norman L. Geisler and Ronald M. Brooks, *When Skeptics Ask: A Handbook of Christian Evidence* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: BakerBooks, A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 1990), 159–60.

<sup>2</sup> William Foxwell Albright, *The Archaeology of Palestine* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Great Britain: Pelican Books, 1960), 127.

# BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN THE BIBLE

**Second: The \_\_\_\_\_ evidence tells us the Bible is a unique book.**

- The majority of the Bible is from eyewitness accounts
- The amazing agreement and consistency throughout the Bible

The Bible was written over a period of about 1,500 years in various places stretching all the way from Babylon to Rome. The human authors included over 40 persons from various stations of life: kings, peasants, poets, herdsmen, fishermen, scientists, farmers, priests, pastors, tentmakers and governors. It was written in a wilderness, a dungeon, inside palaces and prisons, on lonely islands and in military battles. Yet it speaks with agreement and reliability on hundreds of controversial subjects. Yet it tells one story from beginning to end, God's salvation of man through Jesus Christ. NO PERSON could have possibly conceived of or written such a work!<sup>3</sup>

— Josh McDowell

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<sup>3</sup> Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict: Historical Evidences for the Christian Faith* (San Bernardino, Calif.: Here's Life Publishers, Inc., 1972), 19–20.

## A CLOSER LOOK

### *What's the Difference?*

<p><b>The Bible</b> is translated from 24,000 copies of the New Testament alone, with millions of people having seen some of these copies. Those copies have been translated by thousands of scholars.</p>	<p><b>The Book of Mormon</b> is translated from a supposed single original that is claimed to have been seen and translated by one man: Joseph Smith (who was not an expert in languages). That original was “taken back.” There are no copies of that original.</p>
<p><b>The Bible</b> was written by more than forty different authors spanning over fifty generations and three continents. It speaks with agreement on all matters of faith and doctrine.</p>	<p><b>The Qu’ran</b> is the writings and record of one man, Muhammad, in one place at one point in history. It differs at many points with the Old and New Testament accounts of history.</p>
<p><b>The Bible</b> provides God’s distinctive solution to man’s problem with sin and focuses on God’s work in actual, verifiable history.</p>	<p><b>Hindu</b> scriptures claim all roads lead to the same place and focus on stories of things that happened in the “celestial realms.”</p>

**Third: The \_\_\_\_\_ evidence says the Bible is a powerful book.**

The Bible is the world’s bestselling book. Most people know that it was the first major book to be printed on a press (the Gutenberg Bible). The Bible, in whole or in part, has been translated into more than 2,100 languages.

Millions of lives have been changed through the truth in the Bible!

Remember, personal testimony is just one of the four proofs that the Bible is God’s book.

# BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN THE BIBLE

**Fourth:** \_\_\_\_\_ **said the Bible came from God.**

- Jesus recognized the Holy Spirit as the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Bible.

*<sup>43</sup>“Why, then,” Jesus asked, “did the Spirit inspire David to call him ‘Lord’? David said, <sup>44</sup>“The Lord said to my Lord: Sit here at my right side until I put your enemies under your feet.’”*  
(Matthew 22:43–44 GNT)

- Jesus quoted the Bible as \_\_\_\_\_.

*Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.”* (Matthew 22:29 NIV)

*He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.”* (Luke 11:28 NIV)

- Jesus proclaimed the Bible’s \_\_\_\_\_.

*“I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.”*  
(Matthew 5:18 NIV)

*“... Scripture is always true.”* (John 10:35 NCV)

- Jesus called the Bible the “\_\_\_\_\_.”

*“Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”*  
(Mark 7:13 NIV)

# FOUNDATIONS THE BIBLE

• Jesus believed that people and places in the Bible were \_\_\_\_\_.

1) He believed in the \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 22:29; 24:15).

2) He believed in \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 17:26).

3) He believed in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
(Matthew 19:4).

4) He believed in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
(Matthew 10:15).

5) He believed in \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 12:40).

## DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think it is important to know where the Bible came from?
2. Why should we trust the Bible more than any other book? What is so special about it?
3. What is one specific truth God has shown you about himself through the Bible?
4. Share one aspect of this week's study that was especially meaningful to you.

**Did You Get It?** How has this week's study helped you see that trusting in the Bible as God's Word is more than just a feeling we have?

**Share with Someone:** Think of a person you can encourage with the truth you learned in this study. Write their name in the space below and pray for God to provide that opportunity this week.

**LIVING ON PURPOSE**

*Discipleship*

The Bible reveals God to us. How should we respond to this book?

- With awe (Psalm 119:120)
- With delight (Psalm 1:2)
- With appreciation (Psalm 119:72)
- With praise (Psalm 119:62)
- With joy (Psalm 119:111)
- With love (Psalm 119:47, 97)
- With obedience (Deuteronomy 5:32; James 1:22; John 14:15)

Use the verses above in your quiet time before the next session. Take a few moments each day not only to read a verse but also to do what it says. It's amazing how our faith in God's Word is increased through this simple step of telling God how we value his Word.

**PRAYER DIRECTION**

Take some time as a group to talk about specific prayer requests and to pray for one another.