*Session 1*

*The Bible as God’s Word*

God communicates to us in many ways.

Romans 1:19-20

General Revelation

Special Revelation

The Bible communicates God’s message of salvation

1. **The Importance of the Bible**

 Time bound truths = ***descriptive*** of events that took place long ago and spoke to specific situations and cultures.

Timeless truths = ***prescriptive*** truths that apply to any time or

The Bible was not written ***to us*** but ***for us***

The Bible has authority that comes from God and recognized by the church

By faith we believe these words are still relevant to us today.

1. **Challenges to Interpreting the Bible**

**How do the two canons relate to each other?**

* 1. The Bible has both **unity** and **diversity**

We must balance these two.

One voice but different expressions.

* 1. The problem of **language**: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek

The **Bible is** **God’s Word but not every word in the Bible is God’s**.

D**ifferent literary types and styles**

D**ifferent ethical systems and lifestyles**

1. **Common Reasons for Misinterpretation**

Failing to read it

Taking **a passage out of its context**

Forcing our **own understandings**

**Using the Bible for things it was not intended for**

**Neglecting to see the primary purpose**

* 1. **Lack of knowledge**
	2. **Pre-occupation with other things**
	3. **Reading out of a sense of duty**
	4. **Being bound up with a scientific worldview**
	5. **Presuppositions**
	6. **No response of obedience**
1. **Overcoming the Challenges**

Realize we are involved as interpreters in reading the Bible.

We all have a method of Bible study.

We can develop more skills and accuracy.

We need to balance devotion and academic study.

1. **The *Shema*** (Deuteronomy 6:4-9:

*4 “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates (ESV).*

* 1. **The focus of our faith,** v. 4
	2. Stronger relationship with God, v. 5
	3. Internalize commandments, v. 6
	4. Teach the next generation, v. 7a
	5. **Apply and live out**, vv. 7b-9
1. Some skill level is needed by interpreters:
	* + 1. **Language** (translation, hearing and reading)
			2. Knowledge of the various **contexts** of the Bible
2. What does it mean to say the Bible is the highest and final authority?
	1. The authority of the Bible is **derived from God**.
	2. The Bible has authority **over the church**.
	3. The Bible is **the product of God’s people**.
	4. Our **conscience** and **reasoning** ability **cannot be the final authority**.
3. What does the Bible claim about itself?

The teacher can look at any of the following passages and discuss them with students. Give students the opportunity to read the passage and respond about what these verses say about the inspiration or authority of the Bible. Teachers may also ask how these verses speak to the needs of the students’ local ministry setting, personal life, or family and friends.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

2 Peter 1:21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

John 1:1-5, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2**He was in the beginning with God. **3**All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. **4**In him was life,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+1&version=ESV#fen-ESV-26038a)] and the life was the light of men. **5**The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

**14**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Sonfrom the Father, full of grace and truth.

Romans 15:4

**4**For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Isaiah 40:8

The grass withers, the flower fades,
    but the word of our God will stand forever.

Jeremiah 23:29

Is not my word like fire, declares the Lord, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?

Psalm 119

Deuteronomy 4:2

**2**You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you.

Luke 8:11

**11**Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

Joshua 1:8

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Psalm 19

2 Peter 1:20

 no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

John 5:39

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,

John 17:17

Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

Matthew 5:18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

**Big Ideas**

* 1. To accept the Bible as God’s word to us is a matter of faith.
	2. The Bible is a complex document that requires careful study and faithful obedience.
	3. As interpreters of the Bible, we are responsible to teach others, especially our children.
	4. The Bible is the highest authority and the primary test of doctrine.
	5. The purpose of the Bible is to bring us closer to God.