

GOD'S WORD

THE BIBLE

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"We can find many uses for the Bible, even many good uses like learning about history, but the most important reason is to learn about God. The Bible, including the Old Testament tells us all we need to know about God so we can be all we need to be." - Dr. Stephen Lennox

"I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from The Saviour of the world is communicated to us through this Book." - Abraham Lincoln

Summary In A Sentence

It is the account of creation, subsequent fall, and final restoration of fallen humanity that God accomplishes through the death, resurrection, and return of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible was

- Written over a 1500-year span.
- By more than 40 authors.
- From a variety of backgrounds and professions including kings, military leaders, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, tax collectors, poets, musicians, statesmen, scholars and shepherds etc.
- In different places: Moses in the wilderness, Daniel on a hillside and in a palace, Paul in prison, Luke whilst travelling etc.
- On three continents: Asia, Africa and Europe.
- In different times: War, peace and prosperity, under occupation.
- With different emotions: Joy, sorrow, despair, certainty, confusion, doubt.
- In three languages: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.
- In a variety of literary styles: Poetry, history, song, romance, memoirs, satire, biography, autobiography, law, prophecy, parable, allegory.
- It addressed hundreds of controversial subjects: Marriage, divorce, obedience to authorities, real love, parenting, the true character of God.
- It is full of many memorable moments.

In spite of all this diversity it presents a single unfolding story, God's redemption of human beings.

The Central Character In The Bible Is Jesus, All Of It Points To Him

- The law – provides a *foundation* for Christ.
- The history – shows the *preparation* for Christ.
- The poetry – *aspires* to Christ.
- The prophecies – show an *expectation* for Christ.
- The Gospels – record the historical *manifestation* of Christ.
- Acts – relates the *propagation* of Christ.
- The Epistles – give the *interpretation* of Christ.
- Revelation – shows the *consummation* of all things in Christ.

The Bible is unique and like no other collection of written works!

It Is Unique In Its

- Circulation.
- Translation.
- Survival – through time, persecution, criticism.
- Teaching – prophecy, history, character

It was originally written on papyrus, parchment and vellum as scrolls. Later on, it was produced as a Codex (book).

Tests for inclusion in the NT Canon

- Was it written by a prophet of God?
- Was the writer confirmed by acts of God?
- Did it tell the truth about God?
- Did it come with the power of God?
- Was it accepted by the people of God?

Reasons for the NT Canon

- They were prophetic.
- The early churches needed to know what to read!
- To avoid heresy
- Facilitate missions
- To show what is sacred in times of persecution?

The earliest record we have of the NT as we know it, is provided in a letter by Athanasius (AD367) to the churches.

The Old Testament we have, is the same as the Hebrew Bible that was used in the time of Jesus.

Extra's

The Gospel Project made a great video about the story of the Bible. It was produced for children but it is a great summary of the Gospel. Check it out here.

<https://vimeo.com/123430346>

God's Word to You: A 300-word summary of the Bible (The Gospel Coalition)

In the beginning, the all-powerful, personal God created the universe. This God created human beings in His image to live joyfully in His presence, in humble submission to His gracious authority. But all of us have rebelled against God and, in consequence, must suffer the punishment of our rebellion: physical death and the wrath of God.

Thankfully, God initiated a rescue plan, which began with His choosing the nation of Israel to display His glory in a fallen world. The Bible describes how God acted mightily on Israel's behalf, rescuing His people from slavery and then giving them His holy law. But God's people – like all of us – failed to rightly reflect the glory of God.

Then, in the fullness of time, in the Person of Jesus Christ, God Himself came to renew the world and restore His people. Jesus perfectly obeyed the law given to Israel. Though innocent, He suffered the consequences of human rebellion by His death on a cross. But three days later, God raised Him from the dead.

Now the church of Jesus Christ has been commissioned by God to take the news of Christ's work to the world. Empowered by God's Spirit, the church calls all people everywhere to repent of sin and to trust in Christ alone for our forgiveness. Repentance and faith restore our relationship with God and results in a life of on-going transformation.

The Bible promises that Jesus Christ will return to this earth as the conquering King. Only those who live in repentant faith in Christ will escape God's judgment and live joyfully in God's presence for all eternity. God's message is the same to all of us: repent and believe, before it is too late. Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, and you will be saved.