



5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Facts About the Holy Bible

The Bible was written over a period of 1500 years, with over 40 different writers from different walks of life.

“¹⁶All 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 corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17 New Living Translation)

The twelve Apostles, along with the Apostle Paul, received their teaching directly from the Lord Jesus Christ.

“¹¹Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on mere human reasoning. ¹²I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me. Instead, I received it by direct revelation from Jesus Christ.”
(Galatians 1:11-12 New Living Translation)

The primary standard applied to a New Testament book was that it was written by an Apostle or by someone close to the Apostles. The early church continued in the apostles' doctrine by reading the Scriptures (the whole letter written to them) and applying the truths of that letter (Acts 2:42). Apostolic writings carried ultimate authority and were the teachings of Jesus as understood by the Apostles (Acts 2:42; 1 Timothy 6:3-4).

I personally adhere to the first-century church and what the early believers understood when they first heard a New Testament letter read to them. I personally do not believe that we should take Scriptures out of context (that which precedes and/or follows any part of a discourse). I personally do not adhere to a twentieth-century mystical interpretation that reads into the passage, doctrines that the early church did not know nor perceive.

The Apostle Paul told Timothy,

“Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.” (1 Timothy 4:13 NIV)

“The word for ‘Scripture’ in Greek is ‘graphe.’ In the New Testament this term is used exclusively of Scripture and is used in such a way that **quoting Scripture (or reading) is understood to be the same as quoting God** (See John 10:35; Romans 4:3; 9:17; Galatians 4:30)” (Expository Dictionary of Bible Words, page 544).

“The Scriptures were formally constituted into a **‘canon’** (a rule of measure that established them as being the true Word of God). The reading of them was, along with prayer, the chief part of the service of worship from the time of Ezra onwards. Indeed, it seems that the reading out of the law (the Word of God) gave the motivation [and pattern] for the first meetings for worship (in the New Testament church), where the word of God was heard. The first Christians were Jews among Jews.” (Dictionary of New Testament Theology Vol. 3, pages 485, 493).

It was always the **practice of God’s people to have the Word of God read aloud** in the congregation. This is true whether it was the Old Testament or the New Testament (Exodus 24:7; Deuteronomy 31:11; Joshua 8:35; 2 Kings 23:2; Nehemiah 8:7-8; Luke 4:16; Acts 15:21; Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27). In the book of Revelation it states,

“Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy (usually in the New Testament the epistles were read aloud) and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it... (that is, the blessing comes to those who obey and apply its words)” (Revelation 1:3 NIV)

There was also a warning that what was read, **was not to be added to or taken away from** (Revelation 22:18-19). When the rich man that had died asked for someone to come back from the dead so that they might go to his brothers and warn them (lest they come to the place of torment that he was in), he was told,

“...‘Moses and the prophets (The Word of God) have warned them. Your brothers can read their writings anytime they want to. ...If they won’t listen to the Word of God, they won’t listen even if someone rises from the dead.’” (Luke 16:19-31 NLT)

Jesus said,

“...man shall not live by bread alone, but by EVERY WORD OF GOD.” (Luke 4:4)

A “damnable heresy” (2 Peter 2:1) means “that which leads to spiritual ruin or destruction.” “Heresy” means “to pick or to choose, a self-willed opinion” (See Strong’s Greek Lexicon). If there are 40 Scriptures on two pages and you choose only 10 that you will acknowledge and believe, then you are already in “heresy.” Do I become your enemy because I tell you the truth? (Galatians 4:16)

Questions

1 Scriptures are used to do what?

2 The twelve Apostles, along with the Apostle Paul, received their teaching directly from _____.

3 The Apostle Paul told Timothy, “Until I come, devote yourself to _____.”

4 The Apostle Peter recognized the Apostle Paul’s letters as being Scripture.
True or False

5 We are not to add to or take away from the Scripture.
True or False

We want to hear from you!

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

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Answer Key

1 Scriptures are used to do what?

“¹⁶All 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 corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”
(2 Timothy 3:16-17 New Living Translation)

2 The twelve Apostles, along with the Apostle Paul, received their teaching directly from Jesus Christ.

“¹¹Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on mere human reasoning. ¹²I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me. Instead, I received it by direct revelation from Jesus Christ.”
(Galatians 1:11-12 New Living Translation)

3 The Apostle Paul told Timothy, “Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.”

“Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.” (1 Timothy 4:13 NIV)

4 The Apostle Peter recognized the Apostle Paul’s letters as being Scripture.

True

“¹⁵Remember that we are saved because our Lord is patient. Our dear brother Paul told you the same thing when he wrote to you with the wisdom that God gave him. ¹⁶He writes about this in all his letters. Some things in Paul’s letters are hard to understand, and people who are ignorant and weak in faith explain these things falsely. They also falsely explain the other Scriptures, but they are destroying themselves by doing this.” (2 Peter 3:15-16 New Century Version)

5 We are not to add to or take away from the Scripture.

True

“¹⁸I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to these words, God will add to that person the disasters written about in this book. ¹⁹And if anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away that one’s share of the tree of life and of the holy city, which are written about in this book.” (Revelation 22:18-19 New Century Version)