

A MOST PECULIAR BOOK

EXPLORING GOD'S
AMAZING WORD #1

EXPLORING GOD'S AMAZING WORD

To read the Bible is to stir questions of interpretation.

For example, Jesus washed His disciples' feet. He commanded that His disciples do the same.

We, however, have no foot-washing Ceremony....should we?

"A woman must not wear men's clothing" (Deuteronomy 22:5)

Does that mean women should sell their jeans?

Paul commanded Christians in Rome to greet one another with a holy kiss.

Are we disobeying if we don't pucker up? If we are to kiss, where are we to kiss? How often should we kiss? What if we forget to kiss? Can someone kiss for us in our absence?

How do we answer questions such as these? We begin by remembering that the Bible is God's Word given in man's language. Scripture is a marriage of eternal truth with historical particularity.

- ★ It was written in another time.
- ★ It was written in another culture.
- ★ It was written in another language.

Our world is different than the world of the Bible. Our language, dress, and culture are not the same of those of ancient Israel.

We pray that this Life Group study, Exploring God's Amazing Word will provide you with the tools you need to better understand the Bible and apply it to your own life.

"Do you know a book that you are willing to put under your head for a pillow when you lie dying? That is the book you want to study while you are living. There is but one such book in the world: The Bible."

—Joseph Cook



Maecenas pulvinar sagittis enim.



Rhoncus tempor placerat.



Rhoncus tempor placerat.

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

OVERVIEW

The Bible is a peculiar book. Words crafted in another language. Deeds done in a distant era. Events recorded in a far-off land. Counsel offered to a foreign people. This is a peculiar book. It's surprising that anyone reads it. It's too old. Some of its writings date back five thousand years. It's too bizarre. The book speaks of incredible floods, fires, earthquakes, and people with supernatural abilities. It's too radical. The Bible calls for undying devotion to a Carpenter who called Himself God's Son.

Logic says this book shouldn't survive. It's too old, too bizarre, too radical. The Bible has been banned, burned, scoffed, and ridiculed. Scholars have mocked it as foolish. Kings have branded it as illegal. A thousand times over the grave has been dug and the dirge has begun, but somehow the Bible never stays in the grave. Not only has it survived, it has thrived. It is the single most popular book in all of history. It has been the best-selling book in the world for three hundred years! There is no way on earth to explain it. Which perhaps is the only explanation.

The answer? The Bible's durability is not found on earth; it is found in heaven. For the millions who have tested its claims and claimed its promises there is but one answer—the Bible is God's book and God's voice.

What is the purpose of the Bible? Salvation. God's highest passion is to get His children home. His book, the Bible, describes His plan of salvation. The purpose of the Bible is to proclaim God's plan and passion to save His children. Before reading the Bible, pray. Invite God to speak to you. Don't go to Scripture looking for your idea; go searching for His. The Bible is not a newspaper to be skimmed, but rather a mine to be quarried.

Don't be discouraged if your reading reaps a small harvest. Some days a lesser portion is all that is needed. What is important is to search every day for that day's message. A steady diet of God's Word over a lifetime builds a healthy soul and mind.

A little girl returned from her first day at school. Her mother asked, "Did you learn anything today?" "Apparently not enough," the girl responded, "I have to go back tomorrow and the next day and the next...." Such is the case with learning. And such is the case with the study of God's Word. Understanding comes little by little over a lifetime.

Are you ready to roll up your sleeves and begin? Let's get started!

LET'S LISTEN! (8:42 MINS)

THIS MOST PECULIAR BOOK

Read Luke 3:3-4 & Listen to the audio & fill in the blank below.

★ Book = Biblos = Bible

★ The Bible is a Book that records God's involvement in the world.

★ The Bible is divided into TWO testaments.

SECTIONS OF THE BIBLE

Old Testament:

★ The _____ Section:
Genesis through Deuteronomy

★ The _____ Section:
Joshua through Esther

★ The _____ Section:
Job through Song of Solomon

★ The _____ Section:
Isaiah through Malachi

New Testament:

★ The _____ Section:
Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

★ The _____ Section:
Acts

★ The _____ Section:
Romans through Jude

★ The _____ Section:
Revelation

KEY FACTS

* _____ writers wrote the Bible over a _____ century period.

* The central theme of the Bible:

LET'S DISCUSS!

❖ Has there ever been a time when reading the Scriptures helped you through a difficult time in your life? Explain.

❖ Has there ever been a time when reading the Scriptures has been difficult for you to do? Why or why not?

❖ Read Matthew 7:7. How can the principles of "ask, seek, and knock" be applied to the study of God's Word?

❖ How have you followed these three steps in your own Bible study? What was the result?

❖ According to James 1:25, what is the reward for choosing to learn and obey God's Word? How have you seen this reward in your own life?

What is the purpose of the Bible? Let the Bible itself answer that question. According to 2 Timothy 3:15, what is the purpose of the Holy Scriptures?

❖ This is the reason this book has endured through the centuries: It dares to tackle the toughest questions about life. But how do we use the Bible? Countless copies of Scripture sit unread on bookshelves and nightstands simply because people don't know how to read it. What can we do to make the Bible real in our lives? The clearest answer is found in the words of Jesus.

According to Matthew 7:7, what three steps does Jesus say we should take to understand the Bible?

❖ The first step to understanding the Bible is to ask God to help us. According to John 14:26, whose help should we ask for? What is promised to us in this passage?

❖ Any worthy find requires effort. The Bible is no exception. To understand the Bible, you don't have to be brilliant, but you must be willing to roll up your sleeves and search. This is step two in understanding the Bible.

Write out 2 Timothy 2:15. To you, what does it mean to "use the true teaching in the right way"?

❖ Here's a practical point. Study the Bible a bit at a time. Hunger is not satisfied by eating twenty-one meals in one sitting once a week. The body needs a steady diet to remain strong. So does the soul. When God sent food to His people in the wilderness, He didn't provide loaves already made.

According to Exodus 16:14, how was the manna sent?

❖ God sends spiritual food the same way. He opens the heavens with just enough nutrients for today's hunger. How does Isaiah 28:10 tell us the Scriptures should be studied?

❖ There is a third step to understanding the Bible. After the asking and seeking comes knocking. After you ask and search, then knock.

What does Matthew 7:7 say will happen for the person who knocks?

❖ To knock is to stand at God's door. To make yourself available. To climb the steps, cross the porch, stand at the doorway, and volunteer. Knocking goes beyond the realm of thinking and into the realm of acting.

Summarise the three steps involved in understanding the Bible. How have you followed these three steps in your own Bible study? How can you follow them in the future?

❖ It's one thing to know what to do. It's another thing to do it. But for those who do it, those who choose to obey, a special reward awaits them. What is this reward (see James 1:25)?

What a promise! Happiness comes to those who do what they read! It's the same with medicine. If you only read the label but ignore the pills, it won't help. It's the same with food. If you only read the recipe but never cook, you won't be fed. And it's the same with the Bible. If you only read the words but never obey, you'll never know the joy God has promised.

Ask. Search. Knock. Simple, isn't it? Why don't you give it a try? If you do, you'll see why the Book you are holding is the most remarkable book in history.