

THE PURPOSE OF THE BIBLE

EXPLORING GOD'S
AMAZING WORD #2

"Some time ago, I was driving in the Gold Coast area where really confused me due to much roadwork! I was trying to find my way to my friend's place. Though I was quite confident to reach there without realising on the map or my GPS, I realised that I was headed into the wrong direction. Instead of going straight to the address, I was going away further from the destination. After having tried to figure out the directions on my own, I finally gave up and decided to turn to my trusty GSP for help!

Finally, I managed to figure the right direction and get to my friend's place soon after that."

We are studying the navigator of life—the Bible. Just like a navigator...

- It serves as a tool of direction and orientation.
- It provides direction for anyone who is lost.
- It makes straight the crooked roads of life.

But just like a navigator, we need to know how to use it. We need to know how to interpret it.

The basic question of Bible interpretation is...
"What is its purpose?"

Why is it important to know the purpose of the Bible?

Imagine your reaction if I were to take a telephone book, open it up, and proclaim, "I have found a list of everyone who's on welfare!" Or "Here is a list of college graduates!" Or, "This book will tell us who has a red car." You'd probably say, "Now wait a minute—that's not the purpose of that book. You're holding a telephone book.

Its purpose is simply to reveal the name and number of residents of a city during a certain time frame."

Only by understanding its purpose can I accurately use the telephone book. Only by understanding its purpose can I accurately use the Bible. By assuming the Bible has some other purpose, people have made some false assumptions and inaccurate applications.

For example, some have assumed that the purpose of the Bible is to transplant the dress and food from first-century culture to today. Certain religions go into great detail about clothing and customs, assuming that is the goal of God and the Bible.

Some believe the Bible provides the student with a secret code of prophecy which, once deciphered, will reveal the day on which our Lord will return. Others believe the Bible is a secret success manual for wealth and health. Still others use the Bible to substantiate already-held beliefs.

Some Christians feel the purpose of the Bible is to provide a pattern for the organisation of the New Testament church.

Though the Bible may have thoughts on each of these subjects, none of them identifies the purpose of Scripture.

What is the purpose of the Bible?

Let the Bible itself answer that question!



**"YOUR WORD IS A LAMP TO MY FEET
AND A LIGHT FOR MY PATH."
PSALM 119:105 (NIV)**

LET'S LISTEN (20 mins):

Many people believe the Bible is a navigator of life. Many others scoff at such claims.

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ABOUT THE BIBLE?

- The Bible is a remarkable book in _____. The Bible has ONE central theme: _____.
- The Bible is a remarkable book in _____. The Bible tells it all!
- The Bible is remarkable in its _____. Many have tried to extinguish the Bible but have failed.
- The Bible is remarkable in its _____. The Bible is more than just another book.

HOW DO WE KNOW THE BIBLE IS TRUE ?

Luke 24:25-27

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. Can it pass the test of _____ ?
2. Can it pass the _____ test?
3. Can it pass the test of society? (1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

4. Can it pass the test of _____ ?

INTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. The voice of the _____.
2. The voice of _____.
3. The voice of the _____.

If you do not accept the Bible, what is your Plan B?

LET'S DISCUSS:

A. According to the following passages of Scripture, what is the purpose of the Bible?

2 Timothy 3:15:

John 20:31:

Romans 1:16-17:

B. The purpose of the Bible is simply to proclaim God's plan to save His children. It asserts that man is lost and needs to be saved. And it communicates the message that Jesus is God in the flesh sent to save His children.

How does the purpose of the Bible affect the message of the Bible?

C. The philosophy of man is ever-changing. There was a time when the common belief was that the world was flat. We now know that's not true. Today, the so-called wise teachers of science declare emphatically that man evolved from apes, and before that from microbes in the ocean. But this assertion contradicts the very science that these people hold to so religiously—there is simply no evidence on which to base a claim.

The textbooks that we used in science class when I was in elementary school would be laughed at today because we have discovered so many new things that we didn't understand then. Imagine what children in fifty years will say about the things that "wise" man hold as fact today.

The truth is that God has created such a complex universe, and there are so many new discoveries today that scientists are coming to the realisation that man's understanding of the world around him is imperfect, and will always be so.

But there is one thing in this world that is never changing, and that is **God's Word**.

Read 1 Corinthians 3:18-21. How does God see the wisdom of the world?

Read 1 Corinthians 2:6-16. How are the things of God revealed to us?

Whose mind do we have which enables us to understand the things of God?

D. It is the truly wise person who builds his life on the rock of God's Word!

The Bible was written over the span of some 1,500 years by forty different writers. These men and women lived centuries apart, in different areas of the ancient Middle East. The background of these people varied greatly from shepherds and fishermen, to doctors, lawyers, and kings. Parts of the Bible were written in three different languages: Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. There was no way for these people to gather and discuss what was being added to the Bible—it had to have been compiled under the divine direction of the Holy Spirit.

How trustworthy does the Bible seem to you? Explain your answer.

Though the Bible was written over sixteen centuries by at least forty authors, it has one central theme—salvation through faith in Christ. Begun by Moses in the lonely desert of Arabia and finished by John on the lonely Isle of Patmos, it is held together by a strong thread: God's passion and God's plan to save His children. What a vital truth!

Understanding the purpose of the Bible is like setting the GPS in the right direction. Calibrate it correctly and you'll journey safely. But fail to set it, and who knows where you'll end up.