**Learn in Community**

 Small Group Study

**Volume Overview**

**Why is the Bible relevant to me?**

*All 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. (*[*2 Timothy 3:16*](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ti3.16)*)*

*Our upbringing often influences our view of the Bible. For some, the Bible is that oversized book that sat covered in dust on the coffee table. For others, it’s simply a book of good morals and suggestions or, even worse, outdated laws designed to keep us from having any fun. The truth is, the Bible is the living, breathing Word of God. Through it, God speaks to those who will listen, giving guidance and correction (*[*2 Timothy 3:16–17*](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ti3.16-17)*). At times, Scripture brings us hope and encouragement. It has the power to transform us. As we explore how the Bible is relevant to our lives today, perhaps one question we need to answer is: How can I be sure the Bible is God’s Word?*

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| First time leading *Learn* for Adults? Check out the [Facilitator Guide](https://0b769b0ed3569ef9d18b-f88d8272f61086866d50d048b43ef630.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/sites/biblengagementproject/Listen_Facilitator_Guide.pdf). |

**Engage**

In this ***Learn*** small group series, we’ll explore what the Bible says about core truths every believer needs to know. God’s truth for our lives is so much more than facts to remember. These truths will transform us as we learn from God through His Word.

The ***Learn*** journey will be twofold. When we meet as a group, we’ll do the **Learn in Community** section together. We’ll read and discuss featured Scripture portions as we invite the Holy Spirit to speak to us. Then we’ll pause and reflect on what we’ve learned, so we leave our group ready to put the core truth into action in our lives.

In the Bible Engagement Project app, you’ll also see personal devotions. These daily inspirations deepen your understanding of the core truth as you continue to **Learn on Your Own**. Research shows that spending just ten minutes four times a week can make a big impact on our faith journey. No spiritual discipline has the potential to produce more life transformation than engaging frequently with God through His Word. Let’s get started.

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| **QUESTION**Do you have any special letters, cards, emails, or maybe even text messages you have kept, just to read again later? Who wrote them and why are those writings important to you? |

Just as we treasure the written words from someone we love, we should treasure the words of our loving Heavenly Father. But some people see the Bible as a mere rule book, a list of God’s orders for us humans to follow. While it’s true the Bible includes critical guidelines for Christians, seeing it strictly as a list of rules misses the point.

You see, the Bible was written down by people—but it was *inspired* by God. He gave them the words to write. Compiled together in a book we call the Bible, it is God’s Word written to us.

**Watch**

As we watch this video, think about your response to the following question. What’s your favorite way to read the Bible: As a printed book, an e-book, through an app, listening as it’s read to you, or some other way?

As we go on this journey together, I pray we are all willing to listen *and* to learn from God. One of the best ways to do both is through His Word.

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| **QUESTION**What’s your favorite way to read the Bible: As a printed book, an e-book, through an app, listening as it’s read to you, or some other way? |

**Consider What the Bible Says**

The Bible has a lot to say about itself. In fact, you’ll see as we look at Scripture that the trustworthiness of the Bible is confirmed through its content. Though it was written by more than forty authors across generations, its message is remarkably consistent. From Genesis to Revelation, prophecies are given and later fulfilled. The Scripture’s truth changes hearts and displays the steady character of our God.

**God’s Word Is Trustworthy**

Read [Isaiah 7:14](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Is7.14).

Hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth as a baby, many details of His life were foretold in the Old Testament. As an example, we see in [Isaiah 7:14](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Is7.14) that the woman who would give birth to Jesus would still be a virgin. Let’s look at how the New Testament shows this prophecy was fulfilled.

Read [Luke 1:26–38](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk1.26-38).

Examples like this from the Gospel of Luke, and many other fulfilled prophecies within the Bible, help us know we can trust what God has said in His Word. As Mary proclaimed in [Luke 1:37](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk1.37), God’s Word will not fail.

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| **QUESTION**Why is it important to see how God’s prophecies are confirmed through His actions many years later? |

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| **QUESTION**In your own life, what have you seen God do that He said He would do? |

**God’s Word Is Inspired**

According to [2 Timothy 3:16](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ti3.16), God inspired His Word, but it was written down by people. One of the reasons we can have confidence in these writers is because they are firsthand eyewitnesses of God at work.

Read [2 Peter 1:16–21](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Pe1.16-21).

The experience Peter mentions in [2 Peter 1:19](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Pe1.19) references the time when Peter and others *heard* God speak (see [Matthew 17:5](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt17.5)). God proclaimed that Jesus is His Son. As an eyewitness, Peter knew God is the author of His Word.

As you probably know, the words of the Bible weren’t just written by Jesus’ followers. God was inspiring writers long before then. And in this letter Peter wrote to Christians, he helps us know that those older writings are still important. God’s Holy Spirit was not just telling prophets what to say to His people then. He was also giving relevant truth for those of us living thousands of years later.

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| **QUESTION**How might our personal testimony give others confidence in God’s Word? |

Read [1 Thessalonians 2:13](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Th2.13).

This verse and others also reinforce that God’s Word is His message, not the thoughts and ideas of humans. The good work the Bible continues to do in people’s lives is more proof that it is God’s inspired Word.

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| **QUESTION**How is God’s Word doing good work in your life? |

**Did You Know?**

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| The journey of the Bible from God’s inspiration to our hands is quite a long one. The collection of books we call the Bible is also known as the *canon*. The word *canon* basically means a measurement. Each book of our Bible met the requirements of ancient Jews and early Christians at key points in history. They recognized these writings could be trusted as an authentic message from God to all His followers for all time.Though the content was accepted, it wasn’t accessible to many people because of language barriers. The Scriptures were mostly authored in Greek and Hebrew. To bring this content into other languages required lifetimes of work. It included collecting and comparing ancient manuscripts and critically analyzing each to faithfully recreate the original documents. Once recreated, translators applied their expertise to bring these ancient messages from foreign lands into text a modern reader can understand.It’s no stretch to say that people have given up their lives (even through martyrdom) in order to bring God’s Word into languages people can recognize. And the result of their diligent efforts is a trustworthy collection that faithfully passes on God’s eternal message to His people. |

**God’s Word Is Consistent**

Read [Hebrews 1:1–2](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Heb1.1-2).

God never changes ([Hebrews 13:8](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Heb13.8)) and neither does His Word. This passage from Hebrews clarifies that the message of God and the message of Jesus are one and the same. [John 1:1](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn1.1) introduces Jesus as the Word of God, or the ultimate expression of God to us. In this way, the Bible is also true in terms of its consistency. It doesn’t waver in its message of a relational God in pursuit of His people.

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| **QUESTION**How has God used the Bible to speak to you personally? |

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| **QUESTION**This passage indicates that God speaks to us in many ways. In what other ways has God spoken to you? |

**God’s Word Is Life Changing**

Read [Hebrews 4:12](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Heb4.12).

The Word of God is relevant for believers because it’s alive. The Bible has the power to actively transform our life from the inside out by shining truth in the darkest corners of our minds and hearts. This transformation, however, can only take place when we allow His light to shine. In other words, our thought patterns and motivations will undergo lasting change only when we listen to God’s Word and apply its truths to our life.

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| **QUESTION**How do you move beyond reading to listening to the truth of God’s Word? |

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| **QUESTION**Has the Bible helped you to see something that needed to change in your own life? How did that revelation lead to transformation for you? |

**Reflect**

**The Bible Is God’s Word**

God desires to have a relationship with each of us. From the time of creation, across all generations, and even to this very moment, He has made a consistent effort to speak to His people. As the Word of God, the Bible stands not only as a cornerstone of our faith, but also as a precious treasure for every believer. In its pages, we can discover truth and learn more about the nature and heart of God, our Creator and Savior.

Though audible words from God are rare today, He still speaks to His people through the Bible. Martin Luther, a key figure in church history, once said, “Let the man who would hear God speak, read Holy Scriptures.” In essence, the act of reading the Bible allows us to hear the voice of God every day.

**Listen to God**

Let’s pause and listen to what God might want to say to us. Be silent for a few moments and reflect on the following questions. Respond to the one that most resonates with what God is saying to you now. Then complete the others during Day 1 of your devotion time this week.

**Personal Reflection Questions**

*Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.*

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| **QUESTION**Why do you think it’s important to read the Bible and connect with God on a regular basis? |

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| **QUESTION**What truth from God’s Word has been the most meaningful or transformative in your own life? Explain. |

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| **QUESTION**What truth from God’s Word do you have the most trouble receiving? Why do you think that is? |

**Activate**

As followers of Jesus, we’re not meant to simply learn and follow a list of rules from the Bible. Instead, we’re called to the adventure of developing a personal relationship with God. From our human relationships, we know one way of getting to know a person is by being a good listener. Part of “listening” to God is reading and meditating on His Word.

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| **QUESTION**Brainstorm how you could become a better listener in your relationship with God. What’s one strategy you can put into action this week? |

**Prayer Requests**

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| Note any requests from the group and remember to pray for them during the week. |

Before next time, continue to learn from God’s Word with the personal devotions.

**What We Believe**

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| **The Bible Is Inspired**The Scriptures of the entire Bible are verbally inspired of God. Not just the ideas were inspired. Even the choice of words was inspired as the original writers were moved by God to write what He wanted them to say. Therefore, we believe that the Scriptures are:1. God’s Word and a way of revealing himself to us;
2. infallible (everything they teach is true, trustworthy, and will not fail); and
3. the divinely authoritative guide for our faith, belief, and way of living ([2 Timothy 3:15–17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ti3.15-17); [1 Thessalonians 2:13](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Th2.13); [2 Peter 1:21](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Pe1.21)).
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| **The Significance of This Doctrine**If we do not agree that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God ([2 Timothy 3:16](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ti3.16)) and is therefore infallible and authoritative, we have no objective standard on which to base our lives. Instead of having a guide that is fixed and reliable, everything becomes relative and uncertain. However, since God does not change ([James 1:17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jas1.17)), we can be certain that His truth also remains steadfast, enduring all time, generations, and cultures. |

**Learn on Your Own**

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| *Before you begin each devotion, pray and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Record your answers to the following questions in the space provided or in your personal journal.* |

**Day 1: The Bible Is God’s Word**

Read [Isaiah 7:14](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Is7.14); [Luke 1:26–38](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk1.26-38).

Look back over Learn in Community and complete your responses to the Personal Reflection Questions. If time permits, reread the Scripture too.

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| **QUESTION**What is God saying to you about the Bible as His Word? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 2: Prophecy Fulfilled**

Read [Psalm 22:12–18](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps22.12-18).

On the surface, [Psalm 22](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps22) poetically describes a time when its author, David, was under attack. But once we compare it to the story of Jesus’ crucifixion, we can see the psalm is actually a prophecy. Just as people had done to David in the Old Testament, the people around Jesus injured Him, mocked Him, and gambled for His clothing. Jesus even quoted the first verse of the psalm just before He died ([Mark 15:34](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mk15.34)).

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| **QUESTION**How does [Psalm 22](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps22) help you better understand how Jesus suffered on the cross? |

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| **QUESTION**How does the fulfillment of this prophecy show our redemption was part of God’s plan all along? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 3: Jesus Prays for His Followers**

Read [John 17:1–5](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn17.1-5), [13–21](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn17.13-21).

In this passage, Jesus prayed for His followers before He returned to heaven. In verse [20](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn17.20), He even prayed for *you!* He describes God’s Word as truth and asked God to use it to teach us and make us more like Him. His prayer for future believers is a kind of prophecy itself. Jesus knew His followers would grow in number long after He returned to the Father.

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| **QUESTION**What is most meaningful to you about Jesus’ prayer in this passage? Explain. |

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| **QUESTION**Jesus didn’t hand out copies of the Bible while He was on earth. How did He give us His Word as He claims in verse [14](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn17.14)? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 4: God Helps Us Understand His Word**

Read [1 Corinthians 2:9–16](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Co2.9-16).

In this New Testament passage, the apostle Paul explained to the believers in Corinth that God’s Spirit helps us understand spiritual principles more clearly. This is very helpful since God told us in [Isaiah 55:8](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Is55.8) that He doesn’t think the same way we think! God generously gave us not only His Word, but also the key to unlock its truths through the Holy Spirit.

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| **QUESTION**How does the Holy Spirit help us understand spiritual truths? *(See verses* [*11–12*](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Co2.11-12)*.)* |

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| **QUESTION**How do God’s efforts to connect with you reveal how much He loves you? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 5: God Is True to His Word**

Read [Isaiah 55:8–11](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Is55.8-11).

Through the prophet Isaiah, God told us His Word never fails. He pointed out that we can judge the truth of this statement by looking at the *results* of His Word. His will is accomplished throughout history as well as in our individual lives. [Hebrews 10:23](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Heb10.23) reaffirms God’s faithfulness in the New Testament. God will do what He says He will do.

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| **QUESTION**How can [Isaiah 55](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Is55) give you hope, no matter what you’re facing? |

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| **QUESTION**In your own life, how has God worked in a way you couldn’t even imagine? |