**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 For others, it’s simply a book of good morals and suggestions or, even worse, outdated laws designed to keep us from having any fun.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 know the Bible is true?*

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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**

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| **QUESTION**How would you define truth in your own words? |

Truth. Just thinking about the word brings up images of people arguing about their version of the truth. But [Psalm 119:160](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps119.160) tells us that God’s Word is truth. “Truth does not accommodate belief; belief has to accommodate truth,” said Christian philosopher Dallas Willard. In other words, we must conform what we believe to what God’s true Word tells us, not the other way around. Some may be tempted to use Scripture incorrectly to justify their beliefs. Instead, reading God’s Word should shape what we believe.

Today we’ll be talking about applying the truth of Scripture to our lives. God’s Word does not change as time, culture, or even people often change. Jesus shows us how to rely on God’s relevant and timeless truth to live victorious lives.

**Watch**

As we watch this video, consider this question: How can you distinguish someone who knows what they’re talking about from someone who doesn’t?



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| **QUESTION**How can you distinguish someone who knows what they’re talking about from someone who doesn’t? |

**Consider What the Bible Says**

The Scripture we’re going to look at takes place at the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry. He had just come from a forty-day fast in the desert. During this time the devil tried to tempt Jesus with power, position, and provision. We’ll find out more about that later in this series about the Bible. Jesus fought each of these temptations by declaring verses of Scripture. He knew that only the true words of God could win the battle against the devil. After fasting and defeating temptation, Jesus traveled around healing the sick and teaching in the synagogues. This is where we find Him now.

**Jesus Taught the Scriptures**

Read [Luke 4:14–16](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk4.14-16).

In the Bible, we often find Jesus teaching in the synagogue, a Jewish place for hearing and learning Scripture. He wasn’t just any teacher. When He taught, people were amazed at His understanding ([Matthew 7:28–29](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt7.28-29)). Often His enemies tried to challenge or even trap Him. They would ask Him questions about God’s Law that they were sure He couldn’t answer. But time after time, Jesus demonstrated His understanding of God’s Word went beyond following the letter of the Law. He also embodied the heart behind the Law.

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| **QUESTION**Who were some memorable teachers you’ve had? What made them stand out? |

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| **QUESTION**Who first taught you God’s Word? Did their life help you to trust the Bible? Why or why not? |

**Jesus Fulfilled the Scriptures**

Read [Luke 4:17–22](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk4.17-22).

Jesus not only taught God’s Word, but He also proved God’s Word is true. Jesus read from Isaiah, a book that was written hundreds of years before His birth. Then Jesus revealed those words were about Him. Can you imagine how shocking that would be? Those who heard Jesus reading that day may have only known Him as the son of Joseph, the carpenter. But Jesus connected the dots between himself and a seven-hundred-year-old prophecy. He boldly declared himself to be the Messiah (a Hebrew word that means *anointed one*)! Jesus’ life is evidence that every word from God is true ([Proverbs 30:5](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Pr30.5)).

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| **QUESTION**Beyond reading Scripture, Jesus knew how to apply it to His own life. Why does applying Scripture to our lives matter? |

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| **QUESTION**How have you experienced promises from God that came true after years of waiting in your life or in the life of someone you know? |

**Jesus Still Teaches Us God’s Truths through the Scriptures**

Jesus’ understanding of Scripture was deepened by His commitment to obey it and live it out in His earthly life ([Hebrews 5:8](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Heb5.8)). Through His obedience, the Bible’s promises came powerfully alive. We can learn from His example. When we choose to obey the Bible, we can understand and experience God’s Word even more.

Read [2 Timothy 3:14–17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ti3.14-17).

In his letter to Timothy, the apostle Paul encouraged his disciple to teach Scripture with authority. Paul encouraged Timothy to continue to do what he had been taught ([Psalm 33:4](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps33.4)). He emphasized the trustworthiness of Scripture and testified about its divine origin.

If we treat the Bible as mere words of men rather than as God’s trusted guidance, reading it will be a waste of time. Instead, God’s inspired Word helps us to know when we need to correct our thoughts or actions. When we change in obedience to His correction, we’ll have a healthy relationship with Him.

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| **QUESTION**Scripture can tell us about faults in our thoughts and actions. How have you experienced this as you have read God’s Word? |

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| **QUESTION**Paul taught the Word of God to Timothy and asked him to live by its teaching. Who in your life can you teach the Word of God to? |

**Did You Know?**

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| Before the Dead Sea Scrolls, the earliest manuscripts we had of the Old Testament were texts that dated to around AD 920. Discovered in the late 1940s, the Dead Sea Scrolls contained an almost-complete representation of the Old Testament (except for the Book of Esther). The earliest copies of the Scriptures in this collection date to around 200 BC. Although the difference of over one thousand years between these copies of the Bible is massive, scholars were shocked to see that the biblical texts were virtually unchanged over the course of that time. This find proves that scribes took the transmission of Scripture incredibly seriously. The result is a biblical text we can trust today. |

**Reflect**

**The Bible Is True**

When we trust something, we change our lives to reflect that trust. We trust elevators to safely take us up and down inside a building. If we saw smoke coming from that elevator, we wouldn’t get on it. We’d no longer trust it. We’d adjust our behavior to reflect that lack of trust by taking the stairs.

The same is true about God and His Word. Trust in God that doesn’t change our behavior is not really trust. Jesus’ repeated use of Scriptures shows us the trust He placed in them. We show we believe God’s Word is true by demonstrating that same kind of trust. And when we place our trust in God’s true Word, He will change us as we live our lives in obedience to it.

**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**[Psalm 33:4](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps33.4) tells us to trust everything God does. Sometimes we don’t understand why God does what He does. But God’s Word tells us to trust Him anyway. What area of your life is the hardest for you to trust God with? (A) Your finances; (B) Your health; (C) Your future; (D) Your relationships |

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| **QUESTION**There’s often an element of trusting God’s Word while we wait to see it fulfilled. What seems more difficult for you personally—trusting what God said or having patience to wait for the fulfillment of what God said? Why do you think that is? |

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| **QUESTION**Do you truly believe God’s Word is trustworthy? What is a specific Scripture that changed your life as you believed it and followed it? |

**Activate**

The Bible tells us to trust God’s Word. Just as we are to trust what the Bible says, we should share what we’ve learned with others.

**Challenge**

What did you learn about the Bible in this session? Who is someone you can share it with? Consider sharing it with your child, someone younger than you, or someone who has been a Christian for less time than you.

**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 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 True**

Read [Luke 4:14–22](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Lk4.14-22); [2 Timothy 3:14–17](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ti3.14-17).

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 do you sense God saying to you about the truth of His Word? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 2: God’s Word Will Last Forever**

Read [Psalm 119:89–93](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps119.89-93); [Matthew 24:35](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt24.35).

God’s Word is eternal ([Psalm 119:89](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ps119.89)). Time and its effects don’t wear out His Word because it is fixed and unchanging. Think of diamonds that take years to form or more than hundred-year-old trees that have stayed alive through generations. The way we respect these creations is very different from the way we treat a disposable cup. Things that last through time have higher value, and since God’s Word lasts forever, we must esteem it above all things. God’s Word is true not just in this age, but throughout and beyond all time. Learning His Word during our lifetime allows us to discover things we will carry into eternity.

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| **QUESTION**Think about long-lasting things, such as diamonds, mountains, and mature trees. How do you treat things that last a long time? |

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| **QUESTION**How do you perceive God’s Word—that lasts longer than anything in all of creation? |

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| **QUESTION**The Bible is not freely available to everyone in the world. Those of us who possess a Bible are privileged to have access to it. During your prayer time today, express your gratitude to God for the gift of His Word. Write out your prayer here. |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 3: God’s Word Keeps Us from Being Deceived**

Read [2 Timothy 4:2–4](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.2Ti4.2-4).

Truth has many counterfeits in our world. And worse, we may accidentally encourage untruth. Sometimes we listen to people who tell us what we want to hear. But as believers, knowing God’s Word helps us learn the nature of truth so we can reject anything that doesn’t align with Scripture. The devil is constantly at work to entice us into believing things that will justify sin and corruption. We must resist him with the knowledge of God’s Word. We must take God’s side.

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| **QUESTION**Have you noticed an increase in deception in what you see and hear? |

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| **QUESTION**What are some practical steps you can take to keep yourself from being tricked into following things that aren’t in the Bible? |
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**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 4: God’s Word Is the Standard of Truth**

Read [Acts 17:10–12](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Ac17.10-12).

The Bible commends the believers of Berea because they not only listened to Paul’s message, but tested it. They searched the Scriptures to know if what he told them was true. They actively learned the truth from Paul, but only took in truth that stood the test of Scripture. We should view every teaching, belief, and thought through the lens of God’s Word before believing it too. Anything that is against God’s Word has no room in our lives.

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| **QUESTION**Who in your life can help you learn the right meaning of Scripture? How can you involve them in your study of Scripture? |

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| **QUESTION**How can you search the Word of God for yourself after hearing messages or reading books that explain the Word? |

**Learn on Your Own**

**Day 5: God’s Word Is Protection to Those Who Trust in It**

Read [Proverbs 30:5–6](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Pr30.5-6).

Knowing God’s Word is a protection for us when we trust in it. Scripture warns us that the devil comes to kill, steal, and destroy ([John 10:10](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn10.10)). But we can have protection from his destructive acts. Those who know the Word of God will not be easily persuaded. We can get behind God’s promises of healing, provision, His presence, and much more in our times of trouble. God’s Word helps us remember we are protected when we go through difficult times. If we do not know His Word, the truth of His Word cannot be held as a shield of protection in front of us.

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| **QUESTION**Think about the idea of a shield. How does a shield held defensively in front of you protect you more than a shield that is kept by your side? |

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| **QUESTION**What does this principle for using a shield tell us about how to use God’s Word? |