

Alpha

2024



WHY AND HOW DO WE READ SACRED SCRIPTURE?



Sacred Deposit of the Church

- Scripture was given to the Church, for the Church – Canon settled at the Council of Nicaea in 382.
- Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition form one sacred deposit of which is committed to the Church.
- The task of authentically interpreting the Word of God, whether written or handed on, has been *entrusted exclusively* to the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ. DEI VERBUM 10

The Bible

Septuagint/Vulgate

- 73 Books, *a collection of books, a library*
- 46 OT (TANAK—Torah, Prophets, Writings (Wisdom) (7 DT), 27 NT
- Literary Styles
 - Narrative (historical, archetypes, parables, illustrations) 43%
 - Poetry (dense, symbolic, metaphors, allegories) 35%
 - Discourse – reason and logic (apostolic writing, proverbs) 25%

“The New Testament lies hidden in the Old Testament, the OT is unveiled in the NT.” St. Augustine

Why We Read Scripture

*"I interpret as I should, following the command of Christ:
"Search the Scriptures and Seek and you shall find."*

Christ will not say to me what he said to the Jews: You erred, not knowing the Scriptures and not knowing the power of God.

For if, as Paul says, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, and if the man who does not know Scripture does not know the power and wisdom of God, then ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ."

St. Jerome (347-420)

The Scriptures are Inspired by God

"All Scripture is God-breathed (inspired) 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."

2 Timothy 3:16-17

"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account."

Hebrews 4:12-13

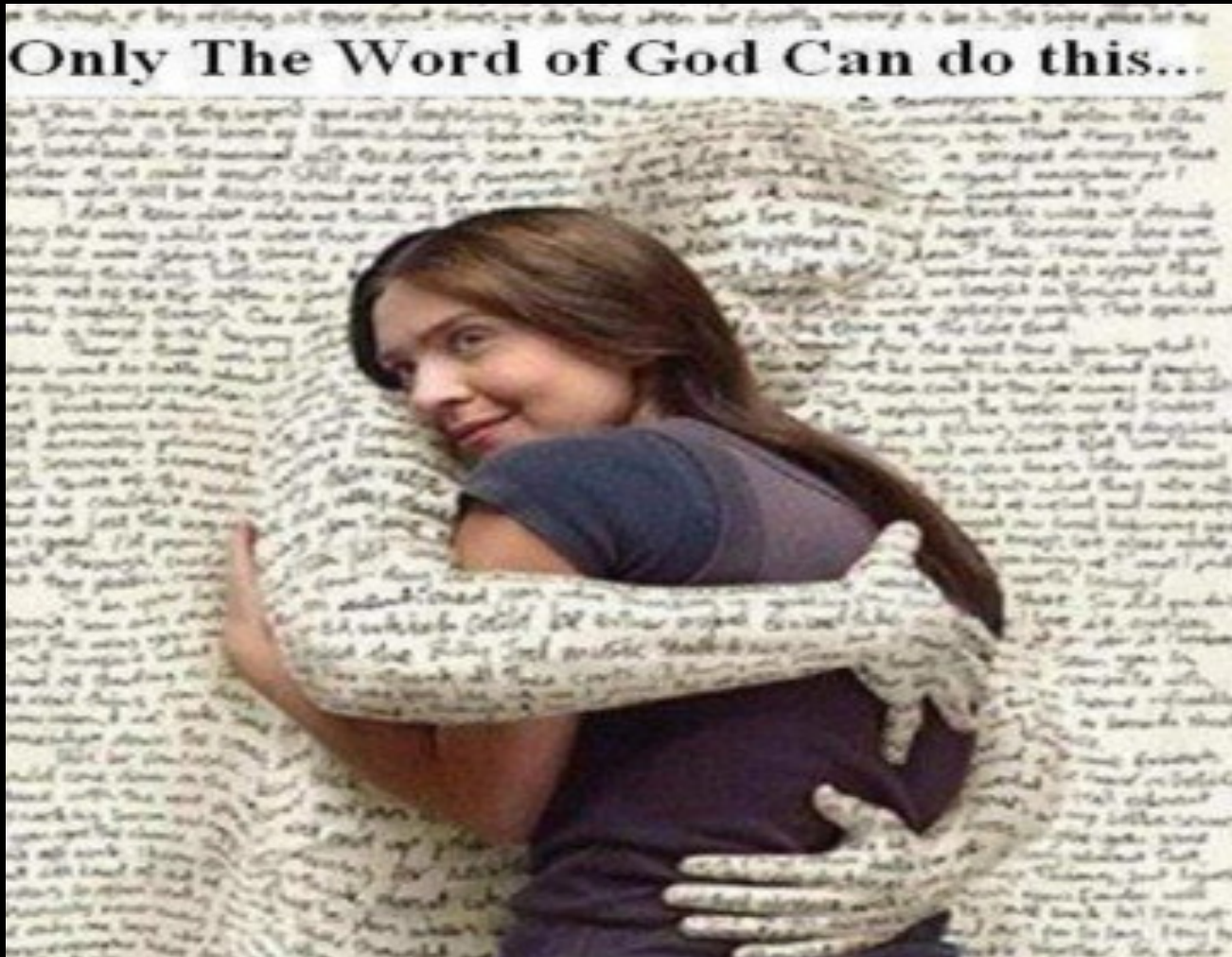
<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/the-story-of-the-bible/ore/video/what-is-bible/>

Bible Project Video

Overview

God Speaks – The Great Communicator

St. Augustine says that “the Bible does nothing but speak of God’s love for us.”



The Power of the Scripture

- **Conveys** – *God’s love, His joy, His peace, His hope His nature and His plan for us and the world*
- **Converts** – (metanoia- a transformative change of heart) *by revealing truth, healing, teaching, rebuking, correcting, training, strengthening, encouraging, comforting.*
- **Counsels** – *It molds us into the shape of Jesus, aligning us with His Kingdom values and gives us vision, guides us into the knowledge of His will.*

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Romans 12:2

How to Read Scripture

What does the passage say?

– *What's the context? It's meaning?*

What does the passage say about God?

– *His attributes, His character*

What does the passage have to say to me?

– *Conversion, conveyance of truth, counsel and guidance?*



“Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28-30

Where to begin- Have a plan

- Read the daily lectionary in the Magnificat
- Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)
- Romans (basis of faith/morality)
- Book of Proverbs (Read 1 chapter a day – practical wisdom)
- Book of John (personal relationship with Jesus), Luke
- Book of Isaiah
- Psalms (literary form of poetry, Godward orientation)

Questions

- 1. *What readings have had the most influence on you?***
- 2. *What has been your exposure to Sacred Scripture?***
- 3. *In reading the Scriptures, what has been the most influential lesson?***
- 4. *Which of these three effects do you feel the most when reading Scripture?***
 - 1. *Conversion (conviction to change),***
 - 2. *Conveyance (God's love, His joy, His peace, His hope)***
 - 3. *Counsel (guidance, wisdom, understanding, discernment)?***
- 5. *What is actionable for yourself.***