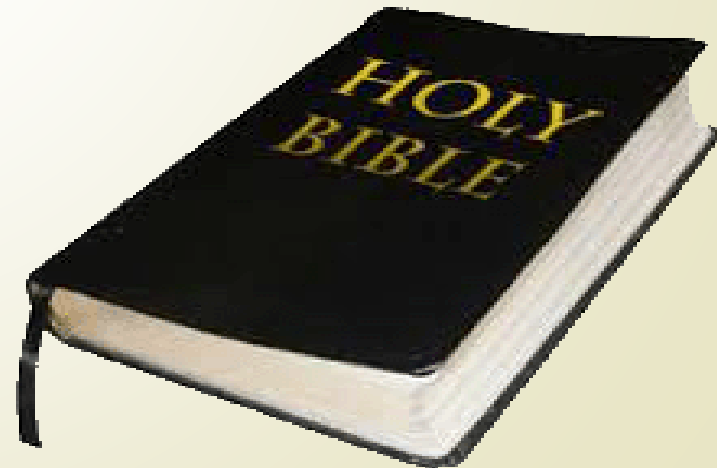


The Bible


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WHY DO WE NEED THE BIBLE AT ALL?

- ❖ Psalm 19 tells us about two kinds of revelation, general revelation and special revelation, that stand together in complementary relationship. General revelation tells us that there is a God (Romans 1:18-20,) while special revelation tells us how to make peace with God (Romans 3:21-26).
- ❖ Special revelation is necessary (2 Timothy 3:14-17). God has written some laws in nature, but not all; some things we cannot know on our own.
- ❖ The witness in creation is non-verbal and leaves us to try to figure out things from the outside. If we want to know a person, we will be limited if we only observe his behavior and appearance.
- ❖ We need the person to talk and open up to us to really know him. God speaks to us so that we can know him, giving verbal communication.
- ❖ He gives that verbal communication in writing, rather than orally, in order to give us a public standard so we do not delude ourselves. I need to know what God says to you, and you need to know what God says to me: the written Word makes God's truth universal and objective.



We reverently receive the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and believe them to be the inspired Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

What We Believe About The Bible At MT Zion Missionary Baptist Church

MT Zion MBC, since its founding in 1809, has held to a "high view" of Scripture. That is, we hold it to be God's inspired, inerrant word that is sufficient for all matters of faith and Christian living. A person who takes his or her Christian faith seriously will want to give serious attention to the Bible in its entirety. It becomes a matter of life commitment to understand properly what God has said to us as a church and to us as individuals.

In addition to hearing the Bible preached weekly, we must spend time daily feasting upon the Word of God. Our high view of Scripture must translate into a deep dedication to know God's Word and to live it out.

The Bible Is Inspired By God

We believe the Bible is inspired by God. The 10 commandments are the first "Bible," and set the pattern for all the rest of Scripture (Exodus 20:1; 31:18; 34:27).

First, the moment the commandments were written, they were authoritative; in the same way, the rest of Scripture was authoritative the moment it was written (and not authoritative just because the Church later decided it to be: it is not the Church that forms the Word, but the Word that forms the Church).

Second, God commissioned Moses to write and considered Moses' words to have the same authority as his own. The first stone tablets were "written by the finger of God" (Exodus 31:18).

The Bible Is Inspired By God

After this the people begged for Moses, rather than God, to communicate with them because they were too full of fear. So after the golden calf incident, God told Moses to cut two new stones like the first and that he would write on them as before (34:1); however, this time he tells Moses to write what he says (34:27).

The Implication is that there is no difference in the authority of what God commanded Moses to write, and what God had formerly written himself. In the same way, God "commissioned" the authors of the rest of Scripture and considers their words to have the same authority as if he had written with his own finger.

We know that **the** Bible is the Word of God from the testimony of Scripture itself. Jesus considered the Old Testament, his Bible, to be God's Word (**Matthew** 4:4; **Matthew** 22:41-44).

The Bible Is Inspired By God (continued)

If we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, then we must believe his witness concerning Scripture. The writers of the New Testament also considered the Old Testament and their own writings **to** be authoritative (1 **Corinthians** 2:12-13; **Romans** 3:1-2; 2 **Peter** 1:20-21; 3:15-16).

Considering the testimony of Scripture to support that the Bible is the Word of God may seem circular. We must also have the inward witness of the Holy Spirit to know that the Bible is God's Word (John 16:12-15; (**Ephesians** 6:17 with **Hebrews** 4:12)).

The inward witness of the Holy Spirit is just as necessary to recognize the Bible as the Word of God, as it is to recognize that Jesus Is the Son of God. This is not a matter of imparting new information, but of enlightening darkened minds.

The Bible Is Inspired By God (continued)

The Bible is Inerrant

We believe that the Bible Is without error (inerrant). The very words of the original texts of the 66 books of the Bible are free from error, not just in matters of faith and practice, but also in all aspects (**Galatians** 3:16, Matthew 22:32). The character of God informs the way we approach his Word: it is the product of an all-powerful, all-knowing God who is free from error (**Psalms** 12:6; 18:30; 19:7; **Proverbs** 30:5-6; John 17:17).

The Bible is Sufficient for all matters of faith and practice. We believe that the Bible is sufficient for all matters of faith and practice, or Christian living (2 **Timothy** 3:16-17; 2 **Peter** 1:3), Experience is severely limited as a basis for determining truth because it is changeable, ambiguous (it does not interpret itself), and is subject to self-deception. Thus, we should seek to Interpret our experience in the light of God's Word, rather than interpreting God's Word in light of our experience.

The Bible Is Inspired By God (continued)

Finally, it is instructive to understand that the Bible is a "covenant document." God made a covenant with Israel that resembled covenants made in the surrounding culture, using what was familiar to the people to teach spiritual truth (like Jesus did with parables). "Covenant" describes the relationship between the King and his people:

- ❑ It bound together two unrelated parties in a new family relationship, a relationship that required certain duties and was guarded by a witness.
- ❑ A covenant is a three-way agreement (two parties and a witness to enforce it), as opposed to a contract, which is a two-way agreement (two parties, but no witness).

In God's covenant with his people, he is both one of the parties and the witness. All covenants would have a document that described the parties involved and the terms of the arrangement.

The Bible Is Inspired By God (continued)

The Bible, encompassing the Old and New Covenants, is the "covenant document that governs our covenant relationship with God.


In it, he tells us who he is, who we are, and how we are to live in relationship with him and inherit his promises.

All covenants also included a stipulation about how often to read them.

In Deuteronomy **31:9-13**, we read that Moses commands the law to be read to the people of God every seven years. We have much more than just the law (the first five books of the OT) **in** our Bible now, but if we were to follow the seven-year plan, we would read about three chapters a week to read through the Bible in seven years. No matter what our reading plan, we are to meditate on God's Word every day (**Deuteronomy 6:6-7**)

What are the 5 books of Bible called?

The Pentateuch includes the first five books of the Hebrew Bible: **Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy**. The literary category of the Pentateuch reflects the traditional Jewish grouping of these books together as the Torah.



Questions For Review, Thought & Discussion

- ☐ What would be the implication for Christianity and for your own life if the Bible were simply an ordinary book and not inspired by God?
- ☐ If someone were to say to you that the Bible can't be trusted, because it is full of errors and outdated information, how would you respond?
- ☐ What opportunities do you have to hear the Word of God? What can you do to be more intentional about applying the Bible to your life after you hear it preached or taught? Are you currently involved in a small group? Why or why not?
- ☐ Do you have a personal "reading plan" for the Bible? if so, what is it? If not, what can you do to implement one?