

LifeGroup Study
2024-04-28
SKEPTICS WELCOME
I Can't Take the Bible Seriously
Leader Notes

OVERVIEW: Welcome back to our series, “Skeptics Welcome”. For week 4 of our series we are exploring this objection – “I can’t take the Bible seriously.” To speak to this objection we will explore how we got the Bible, the trustworthiness and reliability of the Bible, fulfilled prophecy, divine accuracy and internal consistency. We will also explore the transformative power of the Bible in our daily lives. The goal of this study is to build our confidence that we can take the Bible seriously as God’s authoritative Word to guide and grow our faith.

THE BIG SERVE LifeGroup Sign-Up This Week!

Check out THE BIG SERVE projects and let us know by May 4th where your group would like to serve. Or, let us know about a project you have in mind. <https://www.creeksidechurch.ca/thebigserve-groups/>

ICEBREAKER: Growing up with (or not with) the Bible

I have several memories of growing up at home with the Bible. When I was 8 years old my parents got me a children’s bible. I still have it! I also have memories of my parents taking a bible along with them to church, and of the huge, hard cover family bible on the table in our living room. What about you? Do you have memories of having Bibles in your home growing up? If not, what is an early memory for you of encountering the Bible? **Share your story with the group!**

STUDY:

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

WATCH the following overview of the Bible.

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/what-is-bible/>

1. Near the beginning of the video the narrators say the Bible is one of the most influential books in history. How have you experienced the Bible’s influence in your own life?
2. Why do you think God would choose to reveal himself through the history, struggles, and meditations of one particular people situated in one particular corner of the earth?

LEADER NOTE: In the video the narrators share how God raised up prophets to record the story of how God was at work in Israel. Israel’s experience – including the calling of Abraham, the 400 years of

slavery in Egypt, the exodus, their time in the wilderness and their arrival in the Promised Land - all became the central story of what God was up to in redeeming us. God chose Israel as his people to show us who he is and his plan to save us through his Son, Jesus.

3. How do the diverse genres of poetry, letters, law texts, and wisdom writings complement the narrative texts and thus contribute to our overall understanding of the overarching story? Why the diversity of genres?

LEADER NOTE: The diversity of genres help us to wrestle with and think about the deep issues of life such as who God is, who we are and what he is up to in our lives. For example, the poetry of the Bible can help us give expression to life's most complicated questions about the existence of evil, death and what to expect in the afterlife. The diversity of genres in the bible are like a kaleidoscope, bringing symmetry, depth and meaning to our lives.

4. What is the value in God revealing himself through texts spread out over 1000 years and written by different authors?

LEADER NOTE: God's revealing himself over time gives us perspective in how he was at work in the people of Israel throughout that period of history. We get to read, for example, about Abraham's calling, the 12 patriarchs, the journey in the wilderness the battles fought in the Promised Land. Seeing God at work over this lengthy period of history gives us a deeper understanding of who he is. The diversity of authors also give us a deeper perspective about God's character and plan. Through this diversity of authors we see God's plan unfold through one unified redemption story.

IS THE BIBLE TRUSTWORTHY AND RELIABLE?

5. READ: 2 Peter 1:21.

"For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." ESV

- Why should we trust the Bible?

LEADER NOTE: The Scriptures tell us that what has been written down in the Bible is what God wanted to have written. God used ordinary people (the human authors of the bible) to write his words. This means that we can trust the Bible to be authoritative in our lives.

6. READ: 2 Timothy 3:16

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." ESV

- How does the Bible claim to be true?

LEADER NOTE: The Bible is divinely inspired (God breathed). The fact that the Bible is divinely inspired makes it unique from any other book. The Bible's claim to be true is based on the claim that it is God's recorded words, written down for us. This self-attestation can grow our faith in the reliability of the bible as the true word of God.

7. How reliable do you think the Bible is? What kinds of arguments have you heard about the manuscripts not being trustworthy?

WATCH this video and then discuss - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lCeOjLQ61vo>

- How can we respond to those who doubt the Bible's trustworthiness?

LEADER NOTE: The trustworthiness of the Bible is discussed in this video – particularly that we can be confident that what we have written in our modern translations teaches the same tenants as the original manuscripts.

8. READ: John 17:17

“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.” ESV

- How can we practically trust the Bible in our daily lives?

LEADER NOTE: Ask your group members to share about how their spiritual habits and practices like engaging with the Bible, prayer and community helps them to trust God's leading in their lives.

INTERNAL CONSISTENCY

Considering the Bible was written over approximately 1,500 years by more than 40 authors from diverse backgrounds, its internal consistency is remarkable. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible presents a cohesive narrative of God's relationship with humanity, His plan for redemption, and the establishment of His Kingdom. This harmony is evidence of the Bible's divine orchestration, as human authors, separated by time and culture, contribute to a unified message without contradiction. This consistency reinforces the Bible's reliability, suggesting that its teachings and claims are not the product of human invention but of divine inspiration.

9. In what ways do you find the internal consistency of the Bible to be a compelling case for its reliability and authority?

TRANSFORMATIVE POWER

Finally, the spiritual experience of engaging with the Bible is a profound reason many trust it. Individuals across the globe and throughout history have reported encountering God's truth and presence through the pages of the Bible. This experience is often described as a deep sense of conviction, comfort, or

understanding that transcends intellectual knowledge. For believers, the Bible is not just a historical document or a collection of moral teachings; it is the living Word of God that speaks directly to hearts and minds, guiding, correcting, and inspiring.

READ: Hebrews 4:12

“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword...” ESV

10. How has the Bible transformed lives throughout history?

LEADER NOTE: Encourage your group participants to share personal testimonies of how encountering God through Scripture has impacted them and people they know.

LEADER NOTE: It has been said the Bible is the only book that reads you. God’s Word is alive. God can use his Word to speak into your daily life and experience, to give you wisdom, encouragement, hope, conviction and so on. It is sharper than any two-edged sword – meaning God’s Word can penetrate to the depths of your heart, speaking to the core of who you are.

PRAYER:

Thank God today for His Word, the Bible. Ask him to continue to give you an open mind to understand and open heart to receive his message for you. Particularly, ask him to use his Word to grow you as you FOLLOW JESUS, LOVE GOD and LOVE PEOPLE.