

What Are Our Core Values?

Developing a Life of Devotion and Service



Lesson 2

1. Please list a favourite verse or passage from the Bible. Why is this verse or passage important to you?

In lesson one we discussed that Jesus said the greatest commandment was to *“love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind”* (Matt 22:37). We also discussed prayer and how David, Paul, and Jesus expressed their love for God. In prayer we communicate with the Father and as we read the Bible, God communicates with us.

There are a number of mistakes we can make in our use of the Bible. 1) It is possible to take the Bible out of context, using it to fit our preconceived ideas; 2) We can use the Bible as a textbook and make it so academic that we forget that this message is “God-breathed (2 Tim 3:16). This is a real message from a personal God. This message is *“living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”* (Heb 4:12). 3) Perhaps the biggest mistake we make in our use of the Bible is our lack of familiarity with it. How many Bibles sit on shelves unused during the normal course of the week?

Why is the Bible so very important? Why should our faith be firmly planted in the Word of God? Why is the Bible a part of our core-values which help us to love God fully? Let’s try to answer these questions.

I. God’s Word Reveals Truth

The Bible is important and trust in the Word of God is one of our core values because the Bible reveals truth. As Christians we believe that some truths cannot be discovered outside of God’s revelation. For instance, we cannot know about how the creation and life itself came to be unless God reveals it to us. We cannot know what God wants from us and how we are to respond to Him unless He has told us.

Today’s culture is one in which absolute truth is rejected. People view truth as changeable. Each person can have his or her own truth and what is true for one may not be true for another. Furthermore, what may be true today, may not be true tomorrow. Jack Cottrell writes, “This view goes by various names: relativism, contextualism, situationalism, multiculturalism. The main point is the denial of absolute truth in any significant sense.”¹



¹ Cottrell, Jack. *Faith’s Fundamentals: Seven Essentials of Christian Belief*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1995.

The well-known apologist Josh McDowell writes about the current view of truth. "In our post-modern culture, there has been a total change in the concept of truth. We were trained to discover truth. But in post-modernism there is no objective truth....Young people also exclaim, "Don't impose your values on me; let me determine what is right and wrong for me." Furthermore, the number one reason today why people think Christianity is false is because it claims to be true and it declares that all other religions are false."²

Since the Bible is not seen as authoritative then there is no standard to determine right and wrong. Morality is seen in relative terms. What is right and wrong depends on the time, place, and circumstances. To many, there are no absolute values.³

2. What are the implications of the way our world views truth as it relates to the church and to evangelism?

3. What does God's Word say about it's relationship to truth? (John 17:17; 2 Tim 2:15; James 1:18)

2001 National Church Life Survey in Australia	
Percentage of population that believes the Bible is God's Word and completely true	20%
Percentage of non-churched population that believes the Bible is God's Word and completely true	8%
Percentage of population that believes premarital sex is wrong	17%
Percentage of non-churched population that believes the premarital sex is wrong	7%

4. What is the importance of the teaching found in Ephesians 2:20

The Bible is emphatic in claiming to be revealed truth. For the Bible to reveal truth, three things must be true: 1) There must really be truth; 2) God must be real and capable of revealing truth; 3) The Bible cannot have error.

II. God Gave His Word to Us

There are two ways in which God's Word has come to us. First is *revelation*. God has revealed certain things to us that we could not know otherwise. (2 Sam 23:2; Heb 1:1,2). God has spoken and God has led men to record what He has said in the Bible.

² McDowell, Josh. *Reaching a Postmodern Culture*. http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/199903/050_postmodern_gen.cfm

³ Bellamy, et. al. *Why People Don't Go to Church*. Adelaide: Openbook Publishers, 2002.

Second, God has used *inspiration* to bring His word to us. Men are fallible and our memories sometimes falter. To protect the integrity of His word God inspired men as they wrote. Even the apostles who were writing about things they witnessed first-hand, needed to be inspired (2 Pet 1:21; 2 Tim 3:16).

5. The Bible is called the Word of God (Acts 6:2, 13:5; Eph 6:17; Rom 3:2; Heb 4:12). What bearing does this have on how we read the Bible?

6. Name five truths that we could not know apart from the Bible.



III. The Bible is Both Infallible and Inerrant

To say that the Bible is infallible means that it cannot make an error while inerrant simply means that it does not have errors.

7. What do the following Scriptures tell us about the inerrancy or infallibility of God and His Word? (Titus 1:2; John 17:17; John 10:35)

IV. Anyone Can Understand the Bible

The God who created us and all of the universe is capable of communicating with us in a way that we can understand. Here are some important thoughts to consider.

- A. Every statement in the Bible has a specific intended meaning. It was spoken to a certain person at a certain place at a certain time; therefore it has a specific meaning.
- B. God wants us to understand and expects us to understand the Bible. That is why He gave us the Bible. (John 8:32; John 20:31) -- Remember these rules of Bible study:
 - i. Most passages will have only one message. (1 Cor. 1:10)
 - ii. The most simple and obvious meaning of any passage is probably the correct one.
 - iii. Interpret passages in harmony with their context.



- iv. No passage in the Bible will contradict another passage.
- v. Use easily understood passages to help explain more difficult ones.
- vi. Study all passages on any given subject. (A topical Bible might be helpful here).

C. Personal experiences cannot contradict the Bible. While our “feelings” are important, they are not always reliable. God’s Word is always true.

Remember that God’s Word is lamp for our feet and a light for our path. (Psalm 119:105) While we might call the Bible a textbook, it is much more. It is the Word of God. It is His revelation to us. It provides us with comfort, and joy, and hope.

Don’t read the Bible to only learn facts. Read and study the Bible to better understand God, to see His love displayed to you, and to learn more about the spiritual journey you are on.

As a church, we must believe wholeheartedly that God has communicated with us and that this communication is authoritative. This is one of our core-values without which we cannot love God with all our hearts, souls, and strength.