THE BIBLE: GOD'S AMAZING WORD

Introduction: Why should we have confidence that the Bible is worth studying? Is it any better than the Koran of the Muslims, or the Bhagavad Gita of the Hindus? Isn't it arrogant to say that it is God's Word?

What tool does God use to work saving faith in the human heart?

- Romans 1:16-17, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. ^{17} For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'"

God uses the _____ (meaning _____ _____) as his _____ to

work saving faith in people's hearts. We call this tool the "_____ ____ _____", that

is, the Gospel coming to us both in _____ and in _____.

Where did the Bible come from?

- 2 Peter 1:20-21, "Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." *(Old Testament)*
- John 14:26, "The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." *(New Testament)*
- 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is God-breathed…*"*

The Holy Spirit _____ (_____ _____) men to _____ down the very

_____ and _____ of God as he _____ them along. This teaching is called

_____ _____.

Key evidences of verbal inspiration of the Bible: No ordinary book!

Internal evidence

- Its own _____

- Fulfilled _____

- Jesus' own _____ of Scriptures

External evidence:

- Profound _____("something big happened here")

- Its _____

- Integrity and _____ over millenia (cf. Dead Sea Scrolls)

What are the main purposes of the Bible?

- John 20:31, "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

- 2 Timothy 3:15, "From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

The main purposes of the Bible are to bring us to _____ in Jesus and so _____ us, and to _____ Christians for God-pleasing _____ as his children.

A Good Way to Meditate on the Bible

Reading the Bible without meditating on it is like trying to eat without swallowing.

--Anonymous

Some people like to read so many [Bible] chapters every day. I would not dissuade them from the practice, but I would rather lay my soul asoak in half a dozen verses all day than rinse my hand in several chapters. Oh, to be bathed in a text of Scripture, and to let it be sucked up in your very soul, till it saturates your heart!

--Charles Haddon Spurgeon

Turn every portion of the Bible into a lesson of its own. Anticipate God is about to deepen your faith and understanding in him!

Ask and answer four questions: (Luther: "Weave a wreath of four strands")

1) What is the Holy Spirit here telling me?
2) What in these words makes my heart rejoice?
3) What in these words accuses me and leads me to repent?
4) What do I need to be praying for?

EXAMPLE: Psalm 50:15, "Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me."

1) Lord, I hear you inviting me to _____ and promising that

_____

2) I am so happy and thankful that _____

3) But I have to confess that _____

4) Help me, dear Father, to _____

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:
- Do I believe that the Bible is truly God's Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit and thus absolutely true--or do I think of it as only a human document, subject to error?
- Do I intend to feed my faith by growing in my understanding of the Bible through private devotion, meditation and public worship?

FOR NEXT TIME
Complete Worksheet for Lesson 6.   NEXT LESSON DATE: _____