



WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

A Foundational Guide to Understanding God's Word

Based on *Written and Read – Season 1, Episode 1*

A teaching ministry of Dr. Robert C. Crowder

INTRODUCTION

If someone asked you a simple question like this, how would you respond?

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

At first, that question sounds easy. But the way you answer it will shape how you approach everything about the Christian faith.

Is the Bible just a religious book? A collection of moral teachings? A record of history? Or is it something more?

Christians believe the Bible is not merely a book about God. It is **God's revelation to humanity**. It is how God has made Himself known, revealed His will, and shown His plan of redemption.

Understanding what the Bible is changes how we read it, trust it, and live by it.

THE BIBLE IS A COLLECTION OF BOOKS

The word *Bible* simply means “books.”

The Bible is not a single book in the ordinary sense. It is a **library of sixty-six books** written by more than forty human authors over approximately fifteen hundred years.

These authors came from very different backgrounds. Some were kings, others were shepherds. Some were prophets, fishermen, physicians, and scholars.

Yet despite that diversity, the Bible tells **one unified story**.

From Genesis to Revelation, Scripture reveals:

- Creation
- The fall of mankind into sin
- God's plan to redeem humanity through Jesus Christ

That unity is one of the most remarkable features of the Bible. Though written across centuries, it presents a consistent and purposeful message.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT ITSELF

One of the clearest places where the Bible describes itself is Psalm 119.

This chapter is entirely focused on the Word of God. Nearly every verse uses a different term to describe Scripture. These terms help us understand what the Bible truly is.

Here are some of the key descriptions:

1. The Law of the Lord

This reminds us that Scripture carries authority. It is not advice. It is God's instruction for life.

“Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.” (Psalm 119:1)

2. Testimonies

The Bible bears witness about God. It reveals who He is and what He has done.

3. God's Ways

Scripture shows the path God has laid out for believers to follow.

4. Precepts

These emphasize careful instruction. The Bible speaks into the details of daily life.

5. Statutes

God's Word is fixed and unchanging. It does not shift with culture or time.

6. Commandments

The Bible carries moral authority. It reveals what God requires.

7. Judgments

These are God's righteous decisions and rulings.

8. The Word

This is the broadest term, referring to God's revealed message.

Taken together, these descriptions show us something important:

The Bible is not simply information about God. It is God's instruction, testimony, and guidance for life.

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE

If the Bible was written by human authors, why do Christians call it the Word of God?

The answer is found in the doctrine of **inspiration**.

Scripture teaches that God guided the human authors so that what they wrote was exactly what He intended.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God...” (2 Timothy 3:16)

The phrase “inspiration of God” means **God-breathed**. The Bible originates from God Himself.

This means:

- The Bible has **human authors**, each with their own style
- But it also has a **divine Author**, ensuring truth and accuracy

Jesus affirmed the authority of Scripture down to the smallest detail:

“Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law...” (Matthew 5:18)

God did not bypass human writers. He worked through them, ensuring that His message was perfectly communicated.

HOW THE BIBLE IS ORGANIZED

The Bible is divided into two main sections:

The Old Testament (39 books)

- Written before the birth of Christ
- Covers creation, the nation of Israel, the law, and the prophets
- Contains promises of a coming Messiah

The New Testament (27 books)

- Records the life and teachings of Jesus Christ
- Describes the growth of the early church
- Provides instruction for Christian living

Together, both Testaments point to one central truth:

The Bible is ultimately about Jesus Christ and God’s plan of redemption through Him.

WHY THE BIBLE STANDS APART

Many people view the Bible as just another religious book. But the Bible stands apart in several important ways:

1. It Claims Divine Authority

Throughout Scripture we find statements like, “Thus saith the Lord.” The Bible consistently presents itself as God’s message.

2. It Has Remarkable Unity

Written across centuries by many authors, yet it tells one consistent story.

3. It Contains Fulfilled Prophecy

The Bible records predictions that are later fulfilled in detail.

4. It Maintains Historical and Theological Consistency

Its message about sin, redemption, and Christ remains unified from beginning to end.

These characteristics set the Bible apart from ordinary literature.

WHY THE BIBLE MATTERS

Understanding what the Bible is is not just an academic exercise. It has real implications.

If the Bible is truly God’s Word, then it is:

- The foundation of what we believe
- The authority for how we live
- The source of truth about God, sin, and salvation

The Bible answers life’s biggest questions:

- Who is God?
- Who are we?
- Why is the world broken?
- How can we be redeemed?

And the answer centers on one person:

Jesus Christ.

The Bible is not simply a book to admire.

It is a book to:

- Believe

- Obey
- Proclaim

CONCLUSION

So, what is the Bible?

It is a collection of sixty-six books written over many centuries by many authors, yet unified by one message:

God's plan of redemption through Jesus Christ.

More than that, it is **God's revelation of Himself to humanity.**

And that means when we open the Bible, we are not just reading words on a page.

We are encountering the truth God has given for our lives.

Want to Go Deeper?

In the next lesson, we'll explore another important question:

How do we know the Bible is really the Word of God?