

The Bible

Purpose of Bible: Divine revelation. It is God telling us things about Himself and us that we could not know otherwise. The main focus is redemption history. It reveals our origin, the fall, and the path to our redemption. The Bible begins and ends with humanity in fellowship with God. All other elements are secondary, but all other truth must adapt to scripture and not the reverse.

Origin of the Bible: The Bible repeatedly refers to itself as the Word of God. The words come from God, not man. Ex 24:3-4 says Moses wrote down God's words. The Prophets credit God with the words – see Isaiah 1:2,10,18,20,24. Jeremiah 1:9 and Ezekiel 2:1-7 reiterate the source as God. The Minor Prophets are filled with the phrases, "The word of the Lord came..." and "Thus says the Lord." That is why Peter said, "... no prophecy came by the will of man (2 Peter 1:20-21)."

Canon of the Bible: The Old Testament was intact and translated into Greek by 200 BC. The early Church accepted it as God's word. Clement of Alexandria listed the present books about 200 AD. Council of Hippo (393 AD) with Augustine affirmed such a list. Councils of Carthage in 397 AD and 419 AD confirmed the list. Present issue is manuscripts for New Testament. The two main camps are Majority and Alexandrian. The former focuses on quantity and geographical spread while the latter focuses on age.

Power of the Bible: The Bible can cleanse and guide us (Psalm 119:9 & 105). It can sanctify us per John 17:17. Hebrews 4:12 says the Bible can discern our motives and convict us. Romans 10:17 says it produces faith. John 5:39 and 2 Timothy 3:15 tell us that it brings salvation. This all stems back to the fact that it is a revelation from God about our relationship to Him.

Study of the Bible: People of God are expected to pass the words on (Deut 6:4-9). Meditating on the Bible will bring instruction and subsequent blessing – see Psalm 1; 19:7-11; 119:11. We are told to know it well (2 Tim 2:15); desire it (1 Peter 2:2); and teach it (Heb 5:12-14).