

# The Good Book

## Intro to the Bible and the Year of Biblical Literacy

### Reading - 2 Peter 1:3-21

<sup>3</sup> His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. <sup>4</sup> Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

<sup>5</sup> For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; <sup>6</sup> and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; <sup>7</sup> and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. <sup>8</sup> For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

<sup>10</sup> Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, <sup>11</sup> and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

<sup>12</sup> So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. <sup>13</sup> I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, <sup>14</sup> because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. <sup>15</sup> And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.

<sup>16</sup> For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. <sup>17</sup> He received honour and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." <sup>18</sup> We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

<sup>19</sup> We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. <sup>21</sup> For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

### A brief recap of Sunday evenings teaching

*10 things we should know about reading the bible*

**1. The Bible is both a divine and a human book** - Every word of the Bible is inspired by God. He spoke through the various human authors, using their unique personalities and writing styles to communicate exactly what he wanted to say (2 Pet. 1:20-21).

**2. The Bible is a story** - The Bible is not simply a collection of religious sayings or a collection of various people's religious experiences - it's the story of God's people. The Bible tells us the true story of the world, the way things truly are and the way things should be.

**3. The Bible focuses on God and his plans for the world** - God is the main character of the Bible. The plot is God's plan of salvation.

**4. The Bible is not written to us but for us** - None of us are ancient Israelites following Moses through the wilderness. None of us are first-century (AD) Christians living in Rome, Philippi, or Ephesus. But as God's people, the Bible was written for us to instruct us, empower our

perseverance in the faith, and produce hope in the fulfilment of God's promises (Romans 15:4). Scripture is God's gift to us, to help us on our journey of faith and to draw us closer to him.

**5. The Bible is God's tool to transform us** - Sin has warped our ability to clearly reflect God's image. God's Spirit uses the Bible to transform us to reflect the image of Jesus Christ in every area of our lives. As we read the Bible as individuals and with others, God grows us in godliness. As we hear the Word preached and taught, study it together in small groups, and talk about it with other believers, God uses his Word to transform us to look more and more like his Son, Jesus Christ.

**6. The Bible shows us the glory of God and the beauty of Christ** - Scripture is the primary way in which God has chosen to reveal himself to us today. Every time we open up God's word, by the power of the Holy Spirit God is revealing to us his glory and the beauty of Christ. This is a living and breathing book.

**7. The Bible reveals a basic pattern for the Christian life** - At the centre of the Christian life is a pattern of repentance and belief. This was the message that Jesus, the messiah brought in Mark 1:14-15. This is not a one time action, but something we must do continually. The bible reminds us that the very basic part of discipleship is coming back to Christ, turning from our sin and putting our trust in him. And as we get to know Jesus better, as we keep coming back to him, we learn how to live that life that Jesus is calling us to (2 Peter 1:3)

**8. The Bible shows us our sin** - God's Word penetrates to the core of our being, revealing how our thoughts, intentions, attitudes, desires, and actions that are out of step with God's ways (Hebrews 4:12-13). The Bible can even reveal hidden sin at work in our lives, and lead us to the freedom that we find in the forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

**9. The Bible shows us the gospel** - The Bible reveals how God addresses our sin through the gospel. Because of Jesus' perfect obedience and sacrificial death on the cross, we can receive mercy and grace in our time of need. The whole of scripture points to the moment where Jesus gave his life upon the cross, and rose back to life, conquering both sin and death.

**10. The Bible applies to our entire life** - There is not one part of our lives that the bible cannot speak into. The bible is there not just for the bit of lives that we spend in church, but for our working lives, family lives, relationships - for everything that we do, say and think. That shows us that we have a God that cares and a God that longs to speak to us and be with us.

### Questions for discussion

Firstly take some time as a group to discuss whether you would like to continue following the Sunday teaching notes, or whether you might like to use the notes relating to the daily reading plan for this year.

Read the passage aloud - what strikes you from this reading? What things from the passage immediately come to mind about what it means to live as a disciple of Jesus?

Share your own experiences of reading the bible. Do you find it easy? Do you have a top tip you could share with the group that has helped you hear God speak through the bible?

Is there any of the 10 points above that you are unsure about or that you had not thought about before? Discuss this further as a group.

What does verses 3 and 4 from the passage mean for us as disciples? How does it make you feel?

### Things to pray for:

Prayer points for church taken from our prayer diary;

- Jonny and Anna Dade - For non-believers who attended our community Christmas events / For the Alpha launch in January / For our new Missional Communities as they seek to build connections with those outside the church.
- Crime to Christ - For wisdom and success as we try to set up a new social enterprise. Early thoughts are to open a hair and beauty salon, so please contact us if you can volunteer to help / For a new gardening project we are setting up with male offenders, to teach them new skills, manage time well, exercise well and produce fruitful outcomes.
- School and Street Pastors - Caring for the young people on the streets and in schools.