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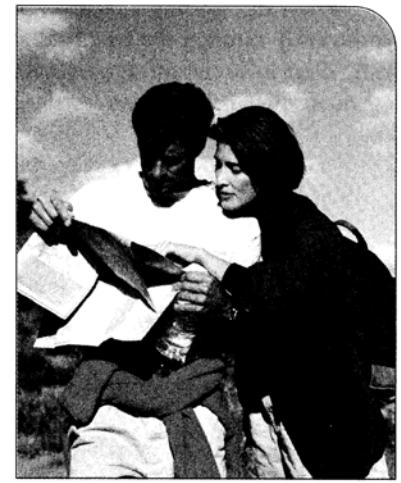
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IT IS WRITTEN TELEVISION PRESENTS:
SEARCH FOR Certainty

How to Understand the Bible

Directions for the 21st Century



Let's suppose that you are driving to a very important appointment. It's urgent!

The appointment is a thousand miles from your home. It is an unfamiliar city. Your appointment is at 2:00 p.m. at a business address that is totally new. The president of one of America's leading corporations has offered you a valuable position.

Sixty miles from your destination you doubt whether you will make it on time. You are not even sure whether you are going in the right direction. You stop to ask for help. Each of the people you ask gives different directions. Totally confused, you become hopelessly lost. You are now certain that you will miss this crucial appointment.

The most important directions in life involve getting from earth to heaven.

In your desperate search to find the address, you ask a gas station attendant. Fortunately, he not only knows the way but gives you a map with explicit directions. With new confidence you set out assured of your destination. You make the appointment precisely on time.

God has given us directions for the twenty-first century. The most important directions in life involve getting from earth to heaven. The most important appointment in life is to be ready to meet Christ when He returns. There is no second chance on eternity. To miss an eternity with Christ is to miss life's most important appointment. Yet multitudes have

taken wrong "religious directions." They are helplessly lost on the road of life. With no "religious" map to guide them, they are confused. They have searched for truth on their own but have come up empty. They have listened to misguided voices, and their desperate search has led nowhere. They are on the wrong road, and they know it.

Where can we find a reliable map? Are there directions to guide us confidently through the twenty-first century? There are. The Bible provides clear information. It presents understandable answers to the deepest questions of the human heart. Questions such as:

- *How can I be certain of eternal life?*
- *If God is so good, why is the world in such a mess?*
- *How can I have peace of mind?*
- *How can I become the person I really want to be?*
- *What happens five minutes after death?*
- *What is the ultimate solution to stress?*
- *Are we living at the end of human history?*
- *How will the world end?*

These lessons are especially designed to answer your questions directly from the Bible. You can place your confidence in God's Word. If you have never studied the Bible before, you are in for a rich reward. God's Word will give you encouragement and hope as you seek for life's deepest meaning. If you are an experienced Bible student, these lessons will lead you deeper into the truths of God's Word.

The first lesson, entitled "How to Understand the Bible," unlocks the hidden secrets of understanding the Bible for yourself. The Bible was written over a 1,500-year period. It contains 66 books, written by about 40 different authors. The Bible's authors deal with the most difficult and controversial topics imaginable, yet they agree. They do not contradict one another. These writings give evidence of divine inspiration.

There is one central message throughout the Bible, Christ the Saviour of humankind. The Bible story begins in Eden, God's perfect world, and ends in Eden, God's perfect world restored.

Before sin entered the world, God communicated directly with Adam and Eve. Sin separated our first parents from God. Today face-to-face fellowship with God is no longer possible. Still the heart of a loving God longs to communicate with a planet in rebellion. Let's discuss how.

? 14. What will happen in our lives as we study the precious promises of God's Word?
2 Peter 1:3, 4

The Bible answer: _____

_____

The Scriptures testify or bear witness of Jesus. As we study the Bible, the power of the living Christ will transform us.

MY DECISION:

❒ *It is my determined purpose to allow the Holy Spirit to shape my life as I open my heart to discover Jesus' love and truth in His Word.*

11. If God is guiding us into truth when we study the Scriptures, what method of Bible study will be especially helpful in discovering God's truth? Isaiah 28:9, 10; 1 Corinthians 2:13

The Bible answer: _____

_____

Let's suppose you are putting together a jigsaw puzzle. Do you come to a conclusion regarding what the finished picture will look like without looking at the original picture? Certainly not! It's the same with God's Word. God invites us to study all the texts on a given subject before coming to a conclusion regarding what the Bible teaches on a particular topic.

12. What guarantee has Jesus given to ensure that as we study the Bible with a sincere heart we will be led into His truth? John 16:13

The Bible answer: _____

_____

As the Holy Spirit leads us in our Bible study interpreting line upon line and text after text we will know the truth of God. God has not left us alone in our pursuit of truth. He has promised the Holy Spirit's guidance.

13. Who is the central theme of the Bible? John 5:39

The Bible answer: _____

_____

1. How does God communicate with a fallen race? 2 Peter 1:21

The Bible answer: _____

_____

God spoke through His Holy Spirit and inspired the prophets to write down His messages. Although they recorded these messages in their own words, the message of the Bible comes directly from God. The Bible is God's Word.

2. Since the Bible was written by human beings, how much of it is actually inspired by God? 2 Timothy 3:16

The Bible answer: _____

_____

Both the Old and New Testaments are inspired by God. The Old Testament consists of the first 39 books of the Bible from Genesis to Malachi. It reveals God's plan for His people before Jesus' birth. The New Testament, the last 27 books of the Bible (from Matthew to Revelation), reveals the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It especially describes God's instructions to His church today.

3. Since scribes copied the Bible repeatedly throughout the centuries, is it still reliable today? Can we really trust the Bible? Psalm 12:6, 7

The Bible answer: _____

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The same Holy Spirit who inspired the Bible has preserved it throughout the centuries. Recent archaeological and historical discoveries have further confirmed its accuracy and reliability. God's Word is a safe, reliable guide.

4. What was God's purpose in giving us the Bible? Psalm 119:105

The Bible answer: _____

_____

God's Word is like a flashlight. When you are in a dark place, the flashlight's beams penetrate the darkness, providing light on the path ahead. The Bible enlightens our understanding.

5. What is the first principle of understanding the Bible correctly? 2 Peter 1:20

The Bible answer: _____

_____

We avoid "private" interpretation by letting the Bible explain itself. The Bible is its own interpreter. By allowing one passage of Scripture to explain another we discover God's interpretation.

6. What is the source of God's truth? John 17:17

The Bible answer: _____

_____

7. With so many people interpreting the Bible differently, is it possible to know truth? John 8:32

The Bible answer: _____

_____

8. What attitude is essential in understanding Bible truth? John 7:17

The Bible answer: _____

_____

An understanding of the Bible largely depends on a willingness to do whatever God requires. Bible study is not simply a mental exercise. It is a heart experience. If you are willing to do whatever God asks you in His Word, He will guide you into all truth.

9. Why do some people have difficulty understanding Bible truth? Isaiah 53:6; Proverbs 16:25

The Bible answer: _____

_____

Understanding the Bible is difficult for some people because of their unwillingness to give up their own ideas. God invites us to seek His way, not our own. He invites us to turn from the pride of our own understanding to humble acceptance of His revealed will in His Word.

10. What does the Bible tell us we should do to understand truth? 2 Timothy 2:15

The Bible answer: _____

_____

It is very important to study the Bible for yourself. We can't rely on what others tell us. God invites you to go on a personal discovery of truth from His Word.