

Riverview Baptist Church  
Sunday School Lesson Guide  
September 28, 2014  
“The Bible: What’s It Good For?”

**Memory verse:**

*“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” 2 Timothy 3:16 NIV*

This week we will be studying a few of the many functions of the Bible.

- what do you use the Bible for?
- Do you go to it for strength and inspiration?
- Wisdom for making life decisions?
- Moral clarity?
- Anything else?

**The Bible: What’s It Good For?”**

As human beings, we are prone to take things for granted. We move from one task or experience to the next and often don’t let the meaning of it all sink in until long after the moment has passed, if we think of it at all. We are constantly focused on the future, seeking to avoid the failures or repeat the successes of the past, but rarely dwelling on the present. Being a Christian doesn’t make us immune to this tendency; however, God has given us a gift that helps anchor us in the here and now while also enabling us to learn from our past and giving us comfort and hope for the future. This gift is the Bible, God’s Word. When we read from it, meditate on it and apply its principles to our lives, we can reap an untold number of benefits from the Scriptures. Today we are going to look at just a few of the major ways God’s Word can be used to help us by comparing the teachings of two of Jesus’ apostles, Peter and Paul. Using scripture to interpret scripture, we will see that Paul’s description of God’s word provides an excellent answer for each of the commands Peter had for the early church.

Read: [1 Peter 1:13-16](#) (NIV)

Read: [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#) (NIV)

1. **Wisdom** for Salvation through Faith in Christ Jesus (1 Peter 1:13)

The primary function of the Bible is to bring people to faith in Jesus Christ. The history of God’s people, the Law, the Prophets all point to God’s plan to save His fallen creation, Mankind. The Gospels tell us about Jesus’ fulfillment of this plan and His offer of Salvation to us, the Epistles instruct us in doctrine and Revelation assures us of the success and victory of God’s eternal plan. The hearing of the Gospel through the Word of God is what allows us to “set [our] hope on the grace to be brought to [us] when Jesus Christ is revealed at his coming” as Peter tells us to do in verse 13.

2. Teaching - imparting **knowledge** and **wisdom** (v. 14)

The teaching of the Bible dispels ignorance: ignorance of sin, ignorance of judgment and ignorance of hope and grace. The Bible teaches all these things. It brings the light of knowledge and wisdom to those that hear and believe and it benefits those who apply its principles. As Peter says in verse 14, “when [we] lived in ignorance” we had desires, and those desires were... What? “Evil desires.” However, spiritually dead in our sins, we had no functional knowledge of what was pleasing or displeasing to God until someone used scripture to lead us to Christ and teach us right from wrong.

### 3. Rebuking - declaring what's **wrong** (v. 14)

Now, about those "evil desires:" somebody had to have the courage to tell us the truth about them. Someone had to be bold and say "My brothers, these things ought not to be so," like James 3:10. Sometimes someone just has to make the call and preach the truth in love no matter how hard it is, no matter how much it hurts. What fellowship can light have with darkness? How can something wrong be right? The answer is "It can't." And the Bible is useful for laying it on the line morally, ethically and spiritually every time. The Bible condemns sin, the Holy Spirit brings conviction and the result is repentance and reconciliation with God. The Bible doesn't speak definitively about every situation known to man, but it leads us to trust God and ask for His guidance and wisdom in those areas where the Bible is silent.

### 4. Correcting - guiding toward what's **right** (v.14)

If we are to be "as obedient children" like Peter urges us to be, then we had better figure out what rules we are to be obeying and who we need to be obedient to. Once again, the Bible has the answers. Some people regard the Bible as a big book of "Don'ts": Thou shalt not this, Thou shalt not that... don't look, don't touch, don't taste, don't listen... However, a guidebook that only told you what not to do would be frustrating and discouraging. Wouldn't you rather have a guide that explained the benefits of doing right, as well? Thankfully, that is exactly what the Bible is. The Bible is filled with instruction in the commandments of God and descriptions of the benefits of our obedience. God doesn't seek only to limit and remedy our sinful impulses, but He seeks to nurture the growth of our compassion and contentment by bidding us to serve each other and to serve Him.

### 5. Training in Righteousness - building **character**, being **holy** (v.15)

Once we've become believers through the faith that comes from the hearing of the Word... Once we've gained wisdom through sound biblical teaching... Once we've been rebuked, and brought to repentance... Once we have been corrected and guided toward the good and right path... Now we are ready for training in righteousness. Now we are ready to run the race. This is called discipleship and it is what we will spend the rest of our lives doing. Our pastors and brothers and sisters in Christ will coach us, the Holy Spirit will guide us and the primary tool that will show us the path to holiness is the Bible.

To be holy is to be set apart, to be different from the natural or ordinary. Our natural tendencies as sinful creatures are malice, anger, violence, suspicion, greed and lust... in short, Sin. However, when the Holy Spirit comes within us, He empowers us to live the holy life that we see modelled for us in the scriptures by Jesus Christ. Through dedication to His commandments and the power of God to conform us into Christ's image, we become something beyond the ordinary. We become holy, as He is holy. Just like the Bible says.

#### Take Home

- God's Word is a powerful tool in winning the lost, teaching the faithful, and growing believers to be more like Jesus.
- Resolve to spend time this week reading it every day
- Share your faith, encourage your fellow Christians and to worship God through obedience.
- **Memorize this week's memory verse and then Challenge another believer or family member to memorize it and recite it to you.**