



According to the Guinness Book of World records, the Bible is the world's best-selling and most widely distributed book. Billions of copies are sold every year, 'Amity Press' prints one Bible a second in China and the Gideons have been responsible for donating billions of Bibles in hotels, schools and many other places for over a hundred years. What makes the Bible so popular, can we be confident in our scriptures and their relevance to our lives? **Read 2 Tim 3:10- 4:5**

### Is the Bible Trustworthy?

- Over the centuries there have been many attempts to burn or ban the Bible: they have all failed. These days vocal critics point to contradictions, doubt its divinity and question its provenance.
- Linguistics, archaeology and science have proved the truth of the Bible as a historical document. But it is more than an ancient history book with some moral teaching thrown in: it claims to be the Word of God **Isaiah 40:8** Following a Bible reading we say, 'This is the Word of the LORD', thus affirming that this Word (*Logos\**) is God's communication of Himself to us: it is His self-expression. **Cf. 1 Thessalonians 2:13**
- The more we read it the more we are convinced the Bible must be divinely inspired as we recognise the Holy Spirit prompting us to change our attitudes and behaviours. Countless lives have been transformed and whole value systems shifted as our thoughts and actions conform to those of God. So ...

### We have to Know the Scriptures. Verse 15

- Somehow, we need to make space in our busy lives to read the Bible at home and quietly reflect on what it is teaching us. If we don't know its content, we can't claim His promises or engage in debate about its worth.
- Some of us will have known Bible stories since we were young; but there is a difference between this and using the Bible as our manual for life: engaging with it, growing in our faith through it and praying over it.
- After His baptism, Jesus spent 40 days in the desert, tempted by the devil: He resisted by quoting scripture. Reading the Bible regularly and memorising key verses can help us to build up a bank of biblical knowledge.

### All Scripture is God-Breathed. Verse 16

- The power of the breath of God is one of the consistent themes throughout the Bible. God breathed life into Adam **Gen. 2:7**, Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit into His disciples **John 20: 21**. Our speech is carried on our breath. Scriptural insights come directly from God, carried on His breath to His chosen and holy people.
- As we read the Bible we become aware of the still small voice guiding us, offering consolation, companionship and hope of restoration. It shows us where we are going wrong: every human emotion is reflected in its pages

### All Scripture is Useful. Verse 16

- **It teaches us** what God is like, tells us what pleases Him and shows how deeply He loves us. It teaches us all about Jesus and has practical life-lessons on how to eat well, use our money and develop healthy relationships
- **It rebukes us** when we go wrong; either by pricking our consciences or confronting us directly. **Hebrews 4: 12**.
- **It corrects us:** by trusting in Jesus to forgive our sins, we will find ourselves changing to a different pathway.
- **It trains us** to live as God wants us to live. God's Word gives practical wisdom and direction. **Psalms 119: 105**. God can't open our eyes to the truth if we refuse to open our hearts to Him. If we are willing to let Him in, then Jesus promises us the Holy Spirit will teach us and remind us of His truths (John 14:26) and He'll guide us when we feel lost (John 16:13). The truth of God is found in the Word of God. (John 17: 17).

Why do we spend so much time reading & watching stuff we know is not true—and so little time with our Bibles, where we can meet the Creator of the universe who breathed out a book? Cherish your Bible!

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### Questions for discussion

1. **How can we make time for regular Bible reading and reflection? Share ways in which it works for you.**
2. **Many of us find learning memory verses hard. What can we do instead to build up a bank of biblical knowledge?**
3. **Can some of us share stories of how the Bible has spoken to us when in a difficult or perplexing situation?**
4. **From 3: 15-17 trace the varied ways in which the Bible impacts us at different stages of our lives.**
5. **So – when we are adults, what are we being equipped for? Read 4: 1-5 again for clues and also 1 Timothy 6:11.**
6. **Are there other ways in which God makes His will for our lives plain?**