

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

2 Timothy 2:15

I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** Several weeks ago we began a series of lessons with the general theme of “grow[ing] in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.” (2 Pet. 3:18)
 - A. These lessons are designed to help Christians grow and be strong in the Lord (1 Pet. 2:2).
 - B. We cannot remain “babes” in Christ (1 Cor. 14:20); and even if we’ve been Christians for many years, we need to be reminded of these first principles (2 Pet. 3:1)
2. ****** To grow spiritually we need to effectively study and understand God’s Word.
 - A. We need an overall view of the Bible (Old & New Testaments).
 - B. We need a deep respect for Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
 - C. **ALL** Christians must be diligent and thoughtful Bible students!
 - D. In many respects studying the Bible is like gaining knowledge in any subject: **EFFORT!**
3. ****** Notice Paul’s instructions to Timothy in 2 Tim. 2:15 (“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” KJV).
 - A. “rightly dividing” from Gr. *orthotomeo* lit., “to cut straight” (*orthos*, “straight,” *temno*, “to cut”), is found in 2 Tim 2:15, KJV, “rightly dividing,” RV, “handling aright” (the word of truth); the meaning passed from the idea of cutting or “dividing,” to the more general sense of “rightly dealing with a thing.” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*)
 - B. 1st step in “rightly dividing” the truth is coming to a general knowledge of the Bible.
4. ****** To most people the Bible is a jumbled mess; a collection of disconnected writings.
 - A. Some denigrate the Bible as the rantings and ravings of “Bronze Age goat herders”! 2 Cor. 2:9-13; Rom. 1:16-17
 - B. Some may know a few passages but have little idea of the general organization and purpose of the entire book; the scheme of redemption totally eludes them!
 - C. In bygone days members of the Lord’s church were known for their great depth of Bible knowledge (i.e., “walking Bibles”); sadly, those days are but a dim memory in many congregations (Hos. 4:6).
5. **3** Let’s take a look at some important facts about the Bible.

II. DISCUSSION:

1. **4** Inspiration of the Bible:
 - A. The Bible makes some very astounding claims about itself! **** 2 Tim. 3:16-17:** “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” (KJV)
 - B. ****** “Inspiration” means “God-breathed” (e.g., Plosives are consonants that are brought about by an explosive release of air from the mouth, e.g. b, p, t).
 - (1) To some “*inspiration*” means excitement, or motivation, or great rhetorical skill e.g., like Shakespeare or Hemingway were “inspired” to write their great works.
 - (2) But when the Bible claims to be “inspired” it means God miraculously gave the words of the Bible to its writers.

- C. ** The inspiration of the Bible is **verbal, plenary** inspiration, meaning that all of it is fully inspired even to the point of the choice of the words used.
- (1) Consider ** I Cor. 2:9-13
 - (2) ** Many people, even the majority of people who claim to be Christians, do not fully realize the far-reaching implications of “inspiration.”
 - (a) For example, many say that the Bible is historically inaccurate.
 - (b) Many say this because they do not believe in verbal, plenary inspiration.
 - (c) Rather they believe that most of the Bible contains myths and stories that were handed down over the centuries and eventually these “tales” were written down in relatively recent times (within the last 2,500 years or so).
 - (d) Therefore, over the years these “Bible stories” were greatly embellished by men; as a result this mindset claims:
 - ✓ Noah’s flood (Gen. 6-9) was not worldwide but merely a “local flood.”
 - ✓ Jesus was not born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22-25).
 - ✓ Jesus was not literally resurrected from the grave (Acts 2:32).
 - (3) ** There are grave and inescapable consequences to such beliefs.
 - (a) Such a belief makes the Bible an entirely unreliable and a false witness.
 - (b) If the Bible is wrong concerning its claims of verbal, plenary inspiration how could one trust anything else it has to say?
 - (c) Its worse than just false; it means the Bible deserves total rejection and destruction!
 - (4) **5** Jesus believed the Old Testament and recognized its authority!
 - (a) He accepted its two main divisions: “*the Law and the Prophets*”; Matt. 5:17; 7:12; etc.
 - (b) He quoted from 24 individual books of the Old Testament.
 - (c) He recognized the Psalms: He quotes from the Psalms eleven times.
 - (d) He considered the Old Testament as “*scriptures*”: Matt. 22:29
 - (e) He believed that important characters were real people (Adam, Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, Queen of Sheba, Elijah, Elisha, Zechariah).
 - (f) ** He believed **ALL** the major events recorded in the Old Testament (16):

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Creation; Adam & Eve: Mt. 19:4-5 ☛ Cain & Abel: Lk. 11:50-52 ☛ Flood: Mt. 24:37-39 ☛ Manna: Jn. 6:31 ☛ Moses & circum.: Jn. 7:22 ☛ Jonah: Mt. 12:38-41 ☛ David/showbread: Mt. 12:3-4 ☛ David/Psalms: Mt. 22:41-44 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Moses wrote the Law: Mt. 8:4 ☛ Prophets were persecuted: Mt. 5:11-12 ☛ Lot’s wife: Lk. 17:32 ☛ Dest. of Sodom & Gomorrah: Mt. 10:14-15 ☛ Dest. of Tyre & Sidon: Mt. 11:21-22 ☛ Daniel & book of Daniel: Mt. 24:15 ☛ Isaiah: Mt. 8:16-17; Jn. 12:37-38 ☛ Believed OT God’s Word: Jn. 10:35; Mt. 15:3-4
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 - (5) **Point:** You cannot believe one thing about Jesus and His teaching to be true **IF** you do not concede the veracity of the Old Testament scriptures as the Word of God!

D. **6** Also, the inspiration of the Bible is verified by:

- (1) Its unity (written by 40 writers over a 1,600-year time span with no contradictions).
- (2) These writers accomplished this great feat even though coming from different backgrounds, speaking different languages, living in different areas at different times, etc.).
- (3) Its prophecies have been fulfilled, many made hundreds and even thousands of years in advance. Examples:
 - (a) Cyrus, king conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. and founder of the Persian empire; the Bible foretells him by name nearly 200 years in advance of his time (Isa. 44:28).
 - (b) There are by some estimates ~400 prophecies fulfilled concerning the Christ.
 - (c) The mathematical probability of these prophecies being fulfilled in one man is est. at $1/84^{97}$, or in more common parlance, "slim to none, and slim just left town."

(4) Its scientific foreknowledge:

Isa. 40:22: *"It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in."*

Job 26:7: *"He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing."*

(5) Its historical and geographical accuracy:

- (a) Old Testament: Hittites mentioned 21 times; not confirmed until 1906.
- (b) New Testament: **Lk. 2:1-2:** *"And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria."*
 - (i) For years scholars claimed there was never a person named Quirinius that served as the Roman governor Syria.
 - (ii) But coins were found proving this to be true and papyri were found showing that, in fact, Quirinius served as the Roman governor of Syria twice!
- (c) Sir William Ramsay is regarded as one of the greatest archaeologists of all time.
 - (i) Trained in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century, Ramsay believed the book of Acts was written in the mid-second century A.D.
 - (ii) He was so firmly convinced of this belief that he set out to prove it.
 - (iii) Through his studies he eventually completely reversed his beliefs as he uncovered incontrovertible evidence in his research.
 - (iv) Ramsay said:

"Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy; he is possessed of the true historic sense; he fixes his mind on the idea and plan that rules in the evolution of history, and proportions the scale of his treatment to the importance of each incident. He seizes the important and critical events and shows their true nature at greater length, while he touches lightly or omits entirely much that was valueless for his purpose. In short, this author should be placed with the very greatest of historians."

(6) Its influence on the world.

- (a) Jesus of Nazareth, an itinerate Jewish preacher, was born & lived in relative obscurity.
- (b) He personally did not write one word that was preserved (Jn. 8:6).

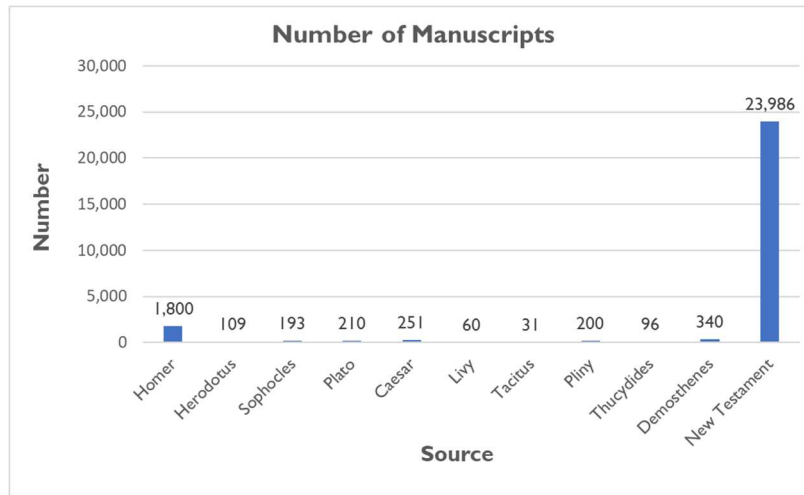
- (c) Yet more ink and paper have been devoted to chronically His life, His teachings, His morality than any man or group of men that ever lived!

Jn. 21:25: “And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.”

- (d) His influence on the world has been incalculable! (e.g., B.C. vs.A.D.)

2. **7** How we got our Bibles:

- A. None of the original copies (i.e., autographs) of the Bible books are available today.
- B. Our English Bibles of today are based upon copies (manuscripts, MSS) of the original autographs which were written in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and Latin.
- C. These MSS were very carefully copied and recopied over the years (e.g., Jewish scribes).
- (1) Additionally, there are ancient copies of translations into various languages and the writings of the “Church Fathers” who quote a great portion of the Bible (All but 11 verses of the New Testament!).
- (2) ****** God has providentially preserved His Word! **1 Pet. 1:23-25:** “*having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 24 because ‘All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, 25 But the word of the LORD endures forever.’ Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.*”
- D. ****** How reliable is the Bible as an ancient book? How does the reliability of the New Testament compare to other books of antiquity? How does the NT stack up as a historically accurate document?
- (1) ****** Scholars use what is called the **bibliographical test** in the examination of the textual transmission of ancient documents.
- (2). Why is this test necessary? Because, whether one speaks of any ancient writings (e.g., Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Thucydides, Pliny, etc. or the New Testament) none of the autographs (originals) are still in existence.
- (3) All that exists are copies of the autographs. These copies are called manuscripts (abbreviated MSS). In the case of **all** ancient writings, the text we read and use has been reconstructed from these copies (MSS).
- E. ******Two primary tests in the bibliographical test:
- ❶ Number of ancient copies (i.e., manuscripts, MSS).
 - ❷ Time span from original writing (autographs) until earliest manuscripts.
- F. The purpose of the bibliographical test is to determine:
- (1) Are the MSS a faithful representative of the original (autograph)?
 - (2) Are the MSS free of changes, errors, or collusion?
- G. Application of the bibliographical test (need common standard!):
- (1) Number of copies: **How many copies (MSS) of the document are available?**
- ✓ Obviously, the more copies (MSS), the better,
 - ✓ Also, more copies (MSS) allows more “cross-checks” to be made to see if the copies are in agreement.
 - ✓ How does the New Testament compare to other ancient writings? **8**

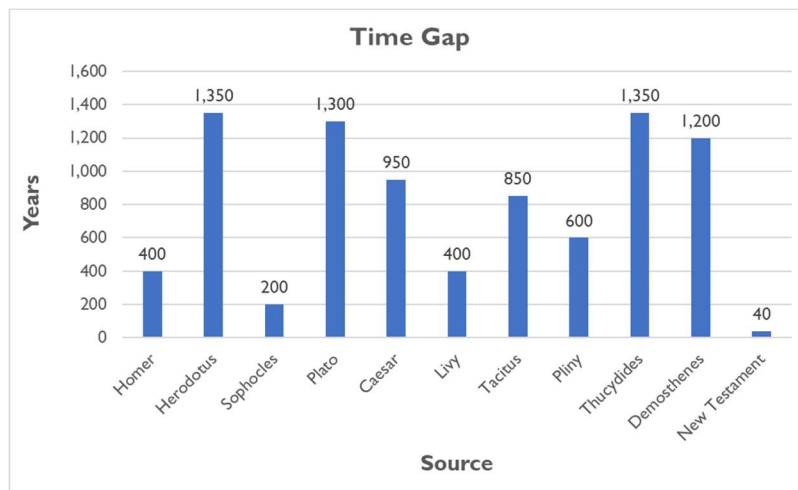


NOTE: The most up to date count of New Testament manuscripts is from the blog of Sean McDowell (*Bringing Truth to a New Generation*):

“We list the numbers for other classical works and specific biblical manuscripts in the updated *Evidence*. But here are the key manuscript updates: Greek Manuscript total 5,856; Earliest manuscript: AD 130 (John Rylands Papyrus: P⁵²); Non-Greek Manuscripts (Armenian, Latin, etc.): 18,130+; Total Manuscripts: 23,986 (What Is the Most Recent Manuscript Count For the New Testament?, *Bringing Truth to a new generation*, March 15, 2018: <https://seanmcdowell.org/blog/what-is-the-most-recent-manuscript-count-for-the-new-testament>)

(2) ***Time span:* What length of time passed between the writing of the original to the writing of the earliest copies (MSS)?**

- ✓ The more distant the copies (MSS) are in time from the original, the more potential for changes in the text that we could not detect,
- ✓ The shorter the interval of time between the copies (MSS) and the original would increase our assurance in the reliability of the copies. **9**



NOTE: The time interval between the autographs and the most ancient copy of the complete New Testament is 245 years. This assumes the New Testament was complete by 80 A.D. and is based on the MSS known as the “Codex Vaticanus” dated 325 A.D. This Greek MSS contains nearly all the Bible (Old and New Testaments) except Mk. 16:9-20 and Jn. 7:53-8:11. This MSS and the Greek MSS “Codex Sinaiticus” (350 A. D.) are considered by all reputable New Testament scholars as the two most valuable MSS of the New Testament. We have already noted that there are fragment New Testament MSS and quotations of the New Testament that are within 15-50 years of the autographs.

- ✓ According to Geisler & Turek there are 9 fragmentary MSS (contested?) of six New Testament books (Mark, Acts, Romans, 1 Timothy, 2 Peter, & James) found with the Dead Sea scrolls that date to 50-70 A.D. (Geisler, N.L., F.Turek, *I Don’t Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, pp. 225-226). **Amazing!**

H. **10** There are different versions of the Bible in English.

- (1) Some are good standard translations like the *King James*, *New King James*, *American Standard* and *New American Standard*.
- (2) Some are not so good because they either paraphrase instead of translating or are translated with a “theological bias” (*Good News for Modern Man*, *The Living Bible*, *New International Version*, *New World Translation*).
- (3) ****** What’s the difference?
 - (a) Formal equivalence: A formal equivalence translation takes a word-for-word approach to translation; e.g., an English word is used that means the same thing as the Hebrew or Greek word (KJV, ASV, NKJV, NASB, ESV).
 - (b) Paraphrase: A paraphrase is a very free rendering of the biblical text in a thought-for-thought approach; the paraphrase is more concerned expressing the ideas of the text rather than actual words (i.e., very subjective!)(TLB, NLT, etc.).
 - (c) Dynamic equivalence: This category seeks to take a middle of the road between a word-for-word translation and a thought-for-thought approach. For example, where the biblical text may name a specific cost (100 denarii), this category might say “four months of a worker’s wages” to make the cost more understandable for the reader (e.g., NIV, GNB).
 - (d) Trash: Translations that intentionally change the original text; “wrest...the scriptures” (2 Pet. 3:16). Classic example is the JW’s so-called translation the New World Translation.
- (4) Also, one must be extremely careful with so-called “study Bibles” (e.g., *Ryrie Study Bible*, *Scofield Study Bible*, *Thompson Chain Reference Bible*, etc.), because their notes are very heavily slanted towards false doctrines such as premillennialism and Calvinism. Any translation of the Bible that is printed with any kind of “notes” is bound to teach error somewhere!
- I. ****** Also, remember that the chapter and verse divisions were not in the originals. Stephen Langton put the chapter divisions in in 1227 A.D. and the verse divisions were added by Robert Stephens in 1551 A.D. Chapter and verse divisions sometimes interrupt and/or change the context!
- J. ****** How the Bible came to be translated into English.
 - (1) Many brave men in the Middle Ages/Reformation made great sacrifices to make the Holy Bible available to the average person.
 - (2) Great men such as John Wycliffe (1328-1384; 1382 A.D.; excommunicated by Pope, after death his bones burned), William Tyndale (1494-1536; 1525 A.D.; persecuted by Catholic Church and ultimately burned alive Oct. 6, 1536), King James Version (1611 A.D.; major revisions in 1629, 1638, 1762, 1769).

3. **11** General information about the Bible:

- A. The word Bible means “book”; the word “bible” is derived from *Byblos*, which was an ancient Phoenician city famous for exporting papyrus an early type of paper.
- B. The overall theme of the Bible is the salvation of man; ******Genesis 3:15 states the overall purpose of the book: the revelation of salvation to man through Jesus Christ.
- C. ****** Though the Bible is one book, it is made up of 66 books; these books were written by 40 writers over a 1600-year time span from about 1500 B.C. to A.D. 96.

- D. ****** The Bible has two major divisions: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The word “testament” refers to an agreement or covenant.
- (1) **I2** The Old Testament consists of 39 books which were originally written in Hebrew and is mainly a history of the origin of man and of the Jewish people. (**Note:** Small portions of the Bible were originally written in Aramaic (e.g., portions of Ezra, Daniel, Jeremiah, and a smattering of words in the NT)).
 - (2) The Old Testament has four main divisions:
 - ① ****Law** (5 books; aka “Torah” [teaching, doctrine, instruction] “The Law,” “Pentateuch” [from Gr. for ‘five’]): The Law of Moses given to the Jews (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy).
 - ② ****History** (12 books): The history of the Jewish people (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther).
 - ③ ****Poetry and Wisdom** (5 books): Poetry containing wisdom (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon).
 - ④ ****Prophets** (17 books): Inspired teachers sent by God to Israel.
 - (i) **Major Prophets** (5 books): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel.
 - (ii) **Minor Prophets** (12 books): Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.
 - (3) **I3** The New Testament consists of 27 books which were originally written in Greek (smattering of Aramaic words). It deals with the coming of Christ and His church, and the spread of Christianity. It also has 4 parts.
 - (a) ****Gospels** (4 books): The life of Christ (The “synoptic gospels,” Matthew, Mark, and Luke, plus the gospel of John).
 - (b) ****History** (1 book): History of the early church (Acts; cont. of Luke’s gospel).
 - (c) ****Epistles** (21 books): Letters giving instructions to Christians.
 - (i) ****Churches:** Paul’s letters to churches (9 books): Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians.
 - (ii) ****Individuals:** Letters to individuals (6 books): Paul’s “pastoral” epistles, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus; plus, Philemon, 2 & 3 John.
 - (iii) ****General:** Gen. letters (6 books): Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1 John, Jude.
 - (d) ****Prophecy** (1 book): Future of the persecuted church (Revelation).
 - (3) **I4** New Covenant: The old law of Moses was replaced by the gospel of Christ at Jesus’ death on the cross (Rom. 1:16-17).
 - (a) ****** Many claiming to be Christians use bits and pieces of the Old Testament to justify their practices today (“cafeteria-style religion”).
 - (b) For example: Sabbath keeping, burning of incense and candles, dietary restrictions, and instrumental music.
 - (c) ****** The Old Testament is valuable, but it is not the source of authority for Christians (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11; Heb. 1:1-2; Matt. 17:5; Col. 3:17; Jn. 14, 15, 16).
 - (d) **I5** Law of Moses was only temporary: Gal. 3:15-29
 - (e) ****** Its end was prophesied: Heb. 8:6-13 (note prophesy was ~600 years before Christ! Jer. 31:31-34)

- (f) ****** It ended at the cross: Col. 2:14; **Heb. 9:16-17**: “For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17 For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.”
- (g) ****** Man cannot be justified by it: **Gal. 2:16**: “knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.”
- (h) ****** The old law could not take away sin: **Heb. 10:1-4**: “For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.”; **Heb. 10:9-10**: “He takes away the first that He may establish the second. 10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”
- (i) ****** Thus, if we seek justification by the law we are lost! **Gal. 5:4**: “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

4. **16 Outline of Bible History**: Bible history can be divided into three historical periods or dispensations:

A. **** Patriarchal**: (family religions): Creation to 1491 B.C.

- (1) Before the Flood (“Antediluvian”): Genesis 1-5 (1656 years).
- (2) After the Flood (“Postdiluvian”): Genesis 6-11 (427 years).
- (3) Journeys of the Patriarchs: Genesis 12-50 (215 years).
- (4) Egyptian Bondage: Exodus 1-11 (215 years).

B. **17 Mosaic**: (national religion): 1491 B.C. to A.D. 30.

- (1) Wilderness Wanderings: Exodus 12-Deuteronomy 34 (40 years).
- (2) Conquest of Canaan: Joshua (51 years).
- (3) Judges: Judges 1-1 Samuel 8 (305 years).
- (4) United Kingdom: 1 Samuel 9-1 Kings 11 (120 years).
- (5) Divided Kingdom: 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17 (253 years).
- (6) **18 Judah Alone**: 2 Kings 18-25 (136 years).
- (7) The Exile (i.e., Babylonian captivity): 2 Kings 25 (70 years).
- (8) Post-Exile (restoration of Judah & Jerusalem): Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther (305 years).
- (9) Silence (i.e., time between the Testaments): No revelation for 400 years.
- (10) Gospel History (i.e., the life of Christ): Matthew, Mark, Luke, John (~30 years)

C. **19 Christian**: (universal religions): ~A.D. 30 to present

- (1) Establishment and spread of the church: Acts (33 years).
- (2) Post-Pauline: Revelation (A.D. 96).

5. Important people and events of the Bible

- ☛ Creation of the universe (Gen. 1-2): Gen. 1:1
- ☛ Adam & Eve (Gen. 2): Gen. 2:18, 24
- ☛ The first sin (Gen. 3): Gen. 3:6
- ☛ 1st prophecy of Christ (Gen. 3): Gen. 3:15
- ☛ The flood (Gen. 6-8): Gen. 6:5-8
- ☛ Abraham (Gen. 12-23): Gen. 12:1-3
- ☛ Lot (Gen. 19): Gen. 19:24-26
- ☛ Jacob (Gen. 27-35): Gen. 35:23
- ☛ Joseph (Gen. 37-50): Gen. 45:4-5
- ☛ Moses (Ex. 2-6): Ex. 3:10
- ☛ 10 plagues (Ex. 7-11): Ex. 7:5
- ☛ Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12-13): Ex. 12:51
- ☛ Red Sea crossing (Ex. 14): Ex. 14:21-23
- ☛ Law of Moses (Ex. 20-24): Ex. 20:1-17
- ☛ Tabernacle (Ex. 25-40): Ex. 25:9
- ☛ Joshua (Josh.): Josh. 24:15
- ☛ Samson (Jud. 14-16): Jud. 16:21
- ☛ Naaman (2 Kgs. 5): 2 Kgs. 5:11
- ☛ Job (Job 1-2): Job 1:22
- ☛ Jonah (Jonah): Jonah 1:17
- ☛ Daniel (Dan. 6): Dan. 6:16
- ☛ John the Baptist (Luke 3): Lk. 3:2-6
- ☛ Birth of Jesus (Matt. 1): Matt. 1:22-23
- ☛ Sermon on Mount (Matt. 5-7): Matt. 7:24-27
- ☛ 12 Apostles (Matt. 10): Matt. 10:2-4
- ☛ Betrayal of Jesus (Matt. 26): Matt. 26:1-2
- ☛ Crucifixion (Lk. 23): Lk. 23:33
- ☛ Resurrection (Jn. 20): Jn. 20:1-2
- ☛ Ascension (Acts 1): Acts 1:9
- ☛ Church established (Acts 2): Acts 2:47
- ☛ Stephen stoned (Acts 7): Acts 7:57-58
- ☛ Paul's 3 journeys (Acts 13-28): Acts 26:28-29
- ☛ God's universal call (Acts 17:30; Rev. 22:1)
- ☛ God's universal warning (Rev. 22:18-19; 2 Thess. 1:7-9)
- ☛ God's promise to all faithful Christians (Phil. 3:20-21; 2 Tim. 4:6-8)

III. CONCLUSION: 20

1. Let's be determined to learn more about the precious Bible God gave us and follow it as our only guide in life (**Psa. 119:105**: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."; 1 Pet. 4:11).
2. ** *"Last eve I paused beside a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime,
Then looking in, I saw on the floor
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.
'How many anvils have you had,' said I,
'To wear and batter all these hammers so?'
'Just one,' he said; then with a twinkling eye,
'The anvil wears the hammers out you know.'
And so, I thought, the anvil of God's word
For ages skeptics blows have beat upon,
Yet though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed and the hammers are all gone!"*

Adapted from: *Growing in Grace and Knowledge of the Lord*, by Johnie Edwards, Titus Edwards, Johnie P. Edwards, Edwards Publishing, pp. 37-40)