

Traveling Route 66



Leader's Guide

Traveling Route 66

A Learning Track for all who want to
navigate the Scriptures

Designed for
one-on-one sessions
or small group study

By
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Session 1

Traveling Route 66 Session 1

Welcome to the “Mother Road.” This was the name given a famous and historic highway that led many Americans to wonderful new opportunities out west. Even today people of all ages and from all over the world retrace the path of this grand old highway as it boldly pushed toward the horizon through rich farm land and high plains, through deserts and over mountain passes. The highway stopped only at the magnificent Pacific Ocean where wonder again directed eyes and hearts to what lay even farther beyond. Route 66 represented the path to a better place. Within the hearts of human beings of all times and places, there is that longing for fulfillment and abundance. There is that spark of divinity within us that points our eyes beyond...to that better place.

This study will take us down another Route 66, a mighty highway that has led human beings to the better place for centuries. It recounts the experiences of real men and women as they have pushed for the horizon through fertile lands and desert, through the mountain passes of life and across raging rivers. And it has brought us all to the place where we look most longingly and wonder. At the bedside of loved ones or in our own quiet moments we think, “What lies beyond? Where is that ultimate better place?”

You realize by now that we are no longer speaking of a literal highway. We are talking about the Bible. Though many books have come later making claims of being special, there is **no book like the Bible**. It has endured the test of time and the malicious attacks of those who have tried to destroy it. However, with every serious encounter our own inner voice confirms that this book, or collection of books, is real, genuine, authentic, and unique. It speaks honestly of the lives of great people of the past, their failures and victories. It speaks truthfully of the costs of believing, of really following Jesus. It doesn't play games or make phony claims. It is what it is for us to accept or reject.

This study is called “Traveling Route 66” first because there are 66 books in the Bible. There are 39 books in the Old Testament and 27 books in the New Testament for a grand total of 66. Furthermore, when you study the Bible, you will be traveling. It is a trip from a point where you presently are to a better place. Don't study the Bible if you don't want or think you can change. The Bible is about movement! It goes somewhere, and it will take you. The Bible has a beginning point, and it travels to a vista where you actually glimpse what lies beyond. You are in for a real and life-long adventure if you decide to take the trip.

If you are ready, let's go together.



Let's first do some packing for the trip. There are some essentials we need to take. First, you will need *a Bible*. Any Bible will do fine for now. There is also some *basic knowledge* we need before getting on the highway.

1 Let's state the obvious as you look at your Bible: The Bible is a big book.

To say it is a book is both accurate and inaccurate.

Though it is bound in one volume, it is actually a library of books.

--Written by over 40 people

--Covers a period of over 1400 years

--Written on three continents [Asia, Africa, Europe]

--In 3 languages [Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek]

--In different styles [history, poetry, law, prophecy, story]

--Different writers with many different backgrounds [political leaders, a doctor, fishermen, shepherds, military leaders, etc.]

At first it appears overwhelming. Where does one begin studying the Bible?

--The answer lies in breaking it down into bite-size pieces, thus dividing it up into smaller parts. There are natural divisions as you will see.

2 The Bible is understandable.

The Bible, with some tools in your toolbox, can be understood **by you**.

--Scripture was never meant only for the professional.

--From the beginning it was written in the language of the common person.

3 The Bible will challenge us over an entire lifetime.

--Followers of Christ are called in Scripture "disciples," a word that simply means "students." We will spend the rest of our lives as "students" of the Bible. We graduate only at death.

You will never fully reach the depths or climb all the heights of Scripture. It's capable of challenging the ablest scholar. Men and women continue to receive doctoral degrees in Biblical studies from the most prestigious universities.

Yet contained in the Bible are the stories that have captivated children and common folks alike. Jesus often told simple short stories. The Bible says, "The common people heard gladly."

--The language of the New Testament, for example, is primarily the Greek of the marketplace, not classical Greek.

--God meant that everyone could understand if they so chose. Jesus would frequently end one of his little, but profound, stories with the statement, "He who has an ear, let him hear." For the one who is attuned to the heart of God, the message will become clear.

4 The Bible contains promises for you and all others who travel its path. All the time and effort you spend in its study will be worth it more than you can imagine.

What do you think so far?

Is this a study you want to continue?



Session 2

Traveling Route 66 Session 2



More packing for the trip: You have chosen to take this wonderful trip on the Mother Road. Here is another bit of basic understanding that you will need to make the trip. Life is about choices and is the accumulation of daily choices. Everything we know and experience begins with a choice. The Bible is about crucial choices made by God and mankind.

- 1 God chose one planet out of millions to make beautiful and suitable for his chosen special creation, human beings.

He chose humans over all other created beings to be His special children. Like all parents He wanted children to love and upon whom to shower gifts. God is described as a God of love. Love must have an object.

He chose a wonderful environment on the earth in which to place His children, the first humans: a garden that fulfilled man's and woman's complete needs. They were to live worry free lives within the protection of that garden.

- 2 God chose to give his special creation, human beings, the same power to choose as He possessed. Love can't be commanded nor loving action forced. Humans were created totally free to choose.

Total freedom means enjoying the results of good choices but also suffering the consequences of awful choices. Life would be all about choices.

- 3 Human beings from the beginning of their existence demonstrated the tendency to choose the road of self-will, going their own way instead of God's. Adam and Eve made a crucial choice in the Garden.

The word "sin" means rebellion, or to disobey the law of God. It is not error or mistake, not stumbling or falling accidentally. It is premeditated disobedience to the will of God. It is a choice that is consciously made.

The result of humankind's choice was and continues to be disaster. We see evidence all around and the human suffering that inevitably results.



Thinking out loud: What are some of the disastrous results you see today when human beings choose their way over God's way?

- 4 In response to human rebellion, God had to make another choice.

What were His options?

>Abandon the dream of children? Do you know the pain of giving up on a dream?

>Abandon these first humans? Imagine life without God and His benefits. Could a God of love turn His back on His most treasured creation?

>Ignore the rebellion and allow humans to flaunt their disobedience? Picture the result when children in a home are allowed to disobey without consequence. Disregard for law leads to chaos and violence. Civilization can not exist.

--Laws are meant to protect.

--For laws to be effective, there must be consequences for disobedience or punishment.

--In addition, discipline is an indication of love. The opposite of love is not hate, but indifference.

>Meet the demands of the law while demonstrating unbelievable love? But how could that be done?

5 God's choice was to take upon Himself the punishment that humans deserved.

He chose to come Himself and personally show humans how to live.

--To do this He would have to share the human experience completely from birth to death.

--God chose to offer Himself through Christ. Christ is described in human terms as God's only son. It was a sacrifice beyond comprehension.

6 God chose the world's most ambitious and courageous plan to save His precious human beings.

It would require centuries to fully implement with all its complexities.

But at precisely the right time, God would undertake this boldest of all missions to rescue His most precious creation and assume His rightful place as King in their lives.

7 To implement His great plan, God would make other major choices that impact our world profoundly even today.

God chose a person of great faith and his descendants through whom to work the plan.

--The man's name was Abraham.

--His descendants were the Hebrews.

Definitions: Hebrew = refers to race

Jew = refers to religion

Israel = refers to the nation

The terms are often used interchangeably; however, there are technical differences.



Don't forget to pack this: God did not love other races or people less. His purpose is to bless and save the entire human race. The Hebrews would serve as God's chosen people not because of superiority in any way. However, the Hebrews would serve as God's chosen:

- (1) to demonstrate the wisdom of God's laws and the blessings of obedience.
- (2) to demonstrate the terrible consequences of rebelling against God's laws.
- (3) to demonstrate the standards of holiness to which God would call all of His children. God calls human beings to come out and "be separate" (the meaning of holiness).
- (4) to demonstrate concepts that would serve as the basis for a new kingdom, the kingdom of Christ on the earth.
- (5) to demonstrate God's love and grace.
- (6) to be the human line for the Christ.

8 Another choice God made was to communicate with humans. While some people imagine God or gods as being far removed and detached, the God of the Bible speaks to humans and interacts with them.

In earliest times He spoke directly to individuals.

Now He has chosen to communicate through the Bible.

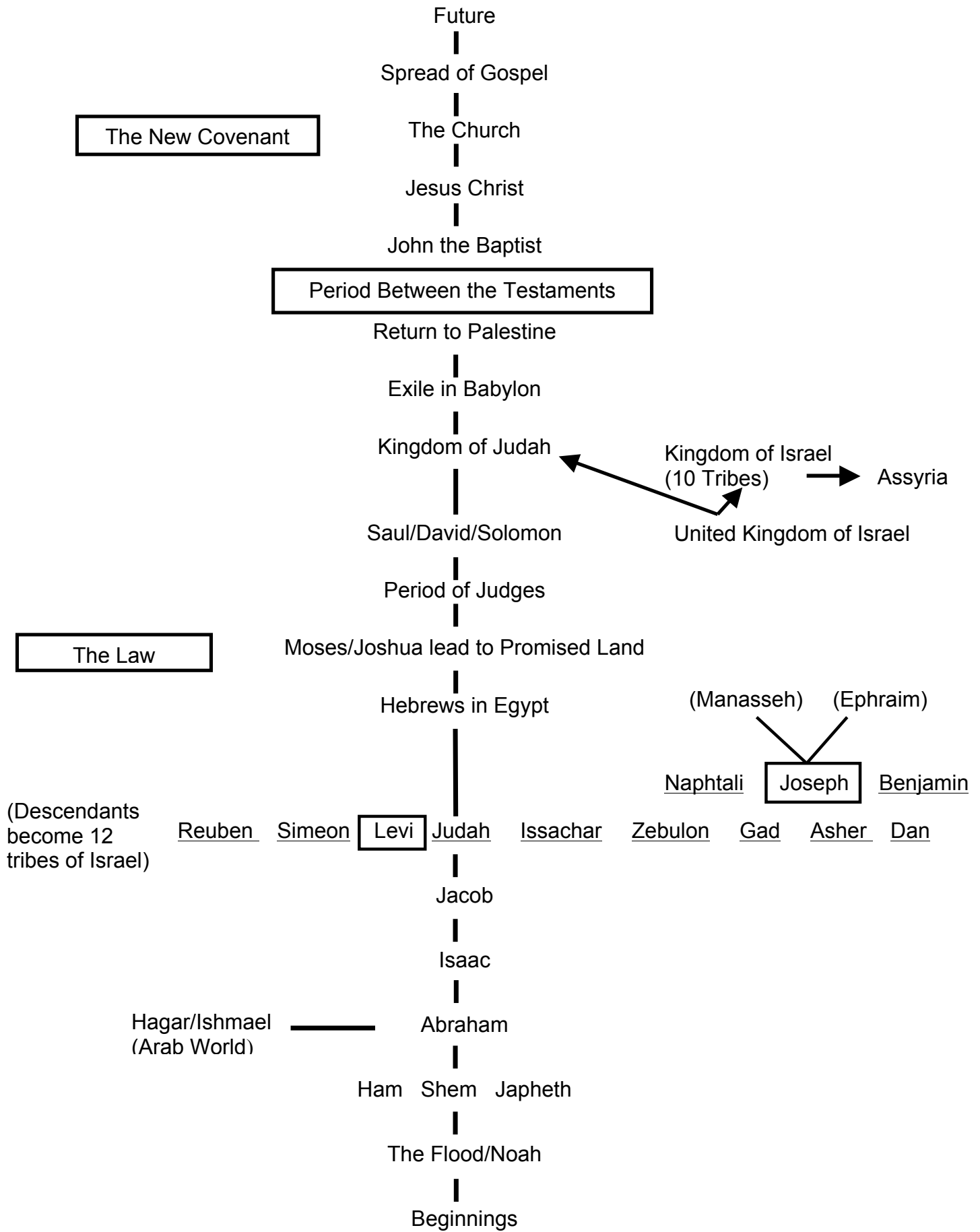
Bottom Line: The Bible is God explaining to men and women His great plan for saving them for Himself for all eternity.



Looking At the Roadmap: The Bible story details different stages of God's plan for saving his most loved creation, human beings. Here is a list of the stages and the Bible books that generally relate to each:

Stage	Bible Books
Beginnings [The Creation and the Flood] Abraham and his Descendants [The Hebrews]	Genesis Job—probably occurred during this time
Hebrew Bondage in Egypt	Exodus
Hebrew Release From Bondage and Rebellion	Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
Hebrew Conquest of the Promised Land	Joshua
Period of Judges and Chaos	Judges, Ruth
Period of the United Kingdom Under Saul, David & Solomon	1 & 2 Samuel, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs
Period of the Divided Kingdom [North-Israel; South-Judah]	1 & 2 Kings; 1 & 2 Chronicles; Amos, Hosea, Jonah, Micah, Isaiah
Northern Kingdom Disappears & Southern Kingdom Alone	Isaiah (continued), Jeremiah, Lamentations, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Joel
Exile as Punishment in Babylon/Persia	Obadiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
Hebrew Return to Homeland	Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Zechariah, Haggai, Malachi
Period Between the Testaments [400 years]	No Bible Books written during this time
Jesus Comes to Earth & Teaches/ His Death/ Resurrection	Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
The Period of the Early Church	Acts of the Apostles Letters or Epistles—Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John, Jude Prophecy—Revelation

BIBLE OVERVIEW



That's a brief look at the roadmap. Now, are you ready to get behind the wheel?

When can we get together again?

Notes





Session 3

Traveling Route 66 Session 3



Ready to get your hands on the wheel? Let's look again at the 39 books of the **Old Testament**. We will break it down into smaller bites. Remember, the Old Testament, like the New Testament, is a library of books.

The Old Testament is the foundation of a new building. Concepts are introduced that are absolutely essential to an understanding of the New Testament. For example:

- We could not understand Jesus giving his blood on the cross unless we had some idea of the **sacrificial system** introduced in the Old Testament.
- The idea of the **kingdom of God** would have little meaning to us unless we could visualize what a kingdom looked like and how it functioned in the Old Testament.

Much of what is written in the Old Testament is called a "type."



Important to know—A "type" is something that represents something more important or significant in the future. An example is animal sacrifice. Such **sacrifices** were a type of Christ's blood sacrifice on the cross.

Though not mentioned by name, Jesus Christ is seen throughout the Old Testament. Many statements of the Old Testament have their fulfillment in Christ.

For example...

Acts 8:26-35

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." ³⁰ Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

³¹ "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³² The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture:

"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before the shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth."

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself

or someone else?" ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. NIV

2 Timothy 3:14-15

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. NIV

Also, like all history we can learn from good and bad examples. Wisdom is learning from the past and not repeating predictable outcomes. So we have the Old Testament in order for us to learn and thus have the wisdom necessary to live a good and fulfilled life.

1 Corinthians 10:6-11

⁶ Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. ⁷ Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry." ⁸ We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. ⁹ We should not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes. ¹⁰ And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel. ¹¹ These things happened to them as examples and

were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. NIV

Taking the wheel on Route 66...

Step 1 –Start at Genesis and turn to the beginning of the book of Joshua. The 5 books you have in your left hand are the **books of Law**.



Important to Know: There's some history mixed in, but they are called the books of Law because they contain God's law given through Moses to the Hebrew people. This is the law that would be in force for God's chosen people, until the establishment of the new era in Acts 2. Jesus Himself was born, lived and died under this law. His death on the cross is what brought the former law to an end.

Colossians 2:13-14

¹³ ... He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. NIV



Let's unfold the roadmap and look ahead...
The books and their special message:

Genesis—the beginning of the creation and humankind

Exodus—the release of the Hebrews from bondage in Egypt followed by God giving His law to Moses on Mt. Sinai at the beginning of their journey to the Promised Land

Leviticus—instructions to Israel about how to worship during their continuing journey to the Promised Land

Numbers—more laws during the time of their wandering in the desert, a punishment for rebellion

Deuteronomy—Moses' review for Israel of the importance of God's law just before his death and just before Israel entered the Promised Land

Step 2 –With a finger at the beginning of Joshua, turn all the way to the book of Job (12 books over). What you have in your left hand are the Old Testament **books of History**.



Important to Know: These books record the history of...

- Israel's conquest of the Promised Land.
- the period of time after the conquest when Israel was governed by local leaders called "Judges." There was no national leader, which made it a time of confusion.

Judges 21:24-25

²⁴ At that time the Israelites left that place and went home to their tribes and clans, each to his own inheritance. ²⁵ In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit. NIV

- the establishment by God of a kingdom whereby the entire Hebrew nation would be governed by one king.
- the discord and eventual division of the kingdom into two separate kingdoms. The northern kingdom would retain the name Israel, and the southern kingdom would be called Judah.
- the eventual destruction and captivity of both kingdoms by stronger nations as punishment because of sin and disobedience to God.
- return to Palestine

The books and their special message:

Joshua—conquest of the Promised Land

Judges—the chaotic period of no national leader and disobedience

Ruth—a personal story of love and loyalty during this time of upheaval

1 Samuel—transition to the monarchy of Israel

2 Samuel—the fall of King Saul and the rise of King David

1 Kings—the death of King David and the division of the kingdom into north (Israel) and south (Judah)

2 Kings—the captivity of both kingdoms of Israel and Judah

1 Chronicles—an after-captivity review of Judah’s history

2 Chronicles—a spiritual history of Judah written after the captivity

Ezra—the return and rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem

Nehemiah—the return and rebuilding of Jerusalem’s walls

Esther—the story of a Jewish orphan who became the queen of Persia

Step 3 —Hold your place at the first of Job and turn to the book of Isaiah. What you have in your left hand are the five **books of Poetry**.



Important to Know: It’s poetry of the ancient Hebrew kind, not like we are used to. These books are also called “wisdom” literature. That is, they give instructions on how to live life well with God’s wisdom. These books also delve into issues of the heart by asking questions about human suffering, the meaning of life, and what it is to love God and other people. The poetic books of the Old Testament are some of the most profound and fascinating works of all literature.

The books and their special messages:

Job—the problem of suffering and evil

Psalms—a collection of poems designed to be sung in worship

Proverbs—a collection of sayings that describe wise living

Ecclesiastes—a man’s search for life’s meaning

Song of Solomon or Song of Songs—a picture of romantic love

Step 4 —With your finger at the end of the Song of Solomon turn all the way to the end of the Old Testament. These are the **books of the Prophets**.

A prophet was a special person with a special calling to “**speak for God.**” God would communicate His message to a prophet in many different ways, and the faithful prophet would communicate that message to fellow human beings. The prophets initially delivered God’s message primarily to His chosen people, the

Hebrews. However, like all of the Bible, the message applies in many ways to people of all places and times.

The message of the prophets often would not be received well because it was not what people wanted to hear. A prophet would often denounce sinful practices and call people back to right living. Prophets would warn of coming judgment and punishment if the listeners did not repent.

The prophecies also contained beautiful descriptions of God's restoring His people when they turn back to Him. Many of those passages have their fulfillment in Jesus Christ and the establishment of His church when people who come to God in humble obedience will share in a wonderful new life of hope. Jesus fulfilling these prophecies written centuries earlier is one proof that Jesus is indeed who He claimed.

Definition: The word "Messiah" and the word "Christ" mean the same thing, *the anointed one*. "Messiah" is from the Hebrew language, and "Christ" is from the Greek.



Important to Know: These books are sometimes divided into two groups, major and minor. This division is not made on the basis of importance, but merely on the basis of the length of the books. Some are long books with many chapters, while the others are much shorter. The message, whether long or short, is of equal importance.

All of these prophets lived and prophesied during the time of the **Divided Kingdom** and the time that followed the **exile**, when the Hebrews were in captivity in Babylon and later Persia.

The Books and their special message:

The "Major" Prophets:

Isaiah—a rebuke of Judah but assurance of a savior

Jeremiah—a rebuke of Judah's sins with pleading to return to God

(Lamentations—Jeremiah's sorrow over Judah's rebellion and fall)

Ezekiel—an explanation of the exile to those experiencing it

Daniel—a figurative description of the coming kingdom of the Messiah

The "Minor" Prophets:

Hosea—a picture of spiritual adultery

Joel—a message to repent and avoid the coming Day of the Lord

Amos—warnings about coming disaster unless there is repentance

Obadiah—warning to the nation of Edom

Jonah—a picture of God’s grace extended to the people of Nineveh in
Babylon

Micah—a message to stop pursuing evil and injustice

Nahum—the picture of the destruction of Nineveh in Babylon

Habakkuk—trusting God even with the reality of suffering

Zephaniah—a description of the coming great day of the Lord, or judgment

Haggai—encouragement to those returning to rebuild the Temple

Zechariah—encouragement to rebuild and prepare for the Messiah

Malachi—a rebuke of sinners in desperate need of the Messiah

Hopefully the Bible is not quite as intimidating as it was before.

How do you feel about continuing the trip?



Session 4

Traveling Route 66 Session 4



Are you ready to see some of the most beautiful scenery on Route 66? Let's look at the **New Testament**. Turn to the table of contents and find the book of Matthew.

Everything to the left of that page (the biggest part) is **history** in one form or another. It's the Old Testament.

The Old Testament interfaces with all parts of the Bible.

--There is a thread or a theme that runs throughout the entire Bible.

--Directly and indirectly Jesus Christ and His saving all humankind is the focus of the entire Bible.

--The main section in your Bible that tells us about Jesus Christ and His new Kingdom is the section that is titled: "**The New Testament.**"

Step 1 Beginning with Matthew, where you will leave a finger, turn the pages until you get to Acts of the Apostles.

The four books you have in your left hand are called the four **Gospels**.



Important to Know: "Gospel" means "good news." These books contain the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. The Gospels tell of His life as well as His death on the cross, His burial and His resurrection. This is the good news because what He accomplished is the reason we can be saved and go to heaven when we die.

Why are there **4 Gospels**?

--The record of Jesus' life and teachings is important enough to be told from different perspectives.

--We have the eyewitness testimony of not one person, but four!

--Some accounts are parallel while others tell something unique about Jesus that the other accounts do not tell.

Who were these men whose names are on the Gospels?

Matthew—was a tax-collector by profession before he followed Jesus. He was accustomed to keeping good records and accounts. He became one of the twelve Apostles.

Mark—was a younger man who grew up in a family that followed Jesus. Later he was an associate of the apostles Paul and Peter who doubtless provided many eyewitness accounts of Jesus to Mark.

Luke—was a medical doctor who undertook a thorough history of the life of Jesus and the early church after Jesus' ascension into heaven. He was a companion of Paul and accompanied the apostle on many travels.

John—was one of the earliest followers of Jesus who later became one of the twelve Apostles. He would also write 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John and the book of Revelation.

Each of these gospel accounts is different in arrangement, different in purpose, and different in target audience. But they all tell one consistent story of the King of kings.



Important to Know: The Bible is a big book, but not all of it is of equal importance. In other words, some of it could have been left out, and we could still know enough to become a Christian, live a happy life and go to heaven. The four Gospels are different. They are the heart of the entire Bible because they tell us the crucial information about Jesus, our Savior. John in his gospel says it this way...

John 20:30-31

³⁰ Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. NIV



Side Trip: Do you ever get confused about the words “disciple” and “apostle”? What’s the difference? **Disciple** means a student, learner or follower. **Apostle** means one who was sent on a special mission of some kind. Jesus selected twelve apostles. All apostles were disciples, but not all disciples were apostles.

God, in His wisdom, saw to it that we will not lack any vital facts or important aspects of His will for us.

There is more to the New Testament.

Do you want to continue?

When?



Session 5

Traveling Route 66 Session 5



...Moving On!

Step 2 With a finger left between the Gospel of John and Acts, turn the pages to Romans.

The book you now have in your left hand is called “Acts” or “Acts of the Apostles.”

It's the only New Testament book of **history**. It was written by Luke.

Luke was...

- a medical doctor.
- a traveling companion of the apostle Paul on many of Paul's missionary journeys.
- the same man who wrote the Gospel of Luke.



Important to Know: **Acts chapter 2** is the beginning of the church of Jesus Christ and of Christianity.

Everything in the Bible, even the Old Testament, has been leading up to this event. The death of Jesus on the cross is the most important event, but He died for a purpose: to establish and save His church.

How it unfolded...

- The “good news” or “gospel” was preached for the first time by the apostle **Peter**. People were invited to be Christians for the first time. It all occurred during an important Jewish holiday, **Pentecost**, in the city of Jerusalem. Jews from all over the Roman Empire were in attendance.
- To the large audience, Peter preached about the risen Christ for the first time.
- Thousands of people responded and became the first Christians.

Acts 2:37-41

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸ Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." ⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. NIV

The first congregation of Christ's church began in Jerusalem on Pentecost.

The good news of Jesus spread throughout the world, and other congregations were begun.

Jesus' Apostles, the Apostle Paul, and other inspired writers guided the first Christians' belief and practice with their teaching and writings.

As Christ's church today, we follow those same teachings of Jesus and His chosen apostles as they faithfully wrote what the Holy Spirit told them.

John 16:12-13

¹² "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. NIV

2 Peter 1:16, 19-21

¹⁶We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁹And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, 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. ²⁰Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹For prophecy never had its

origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. NIV

Step 3 With a finger left between Acts and Romans, turn all the way to the last book of the New Testament, the book of Revelation.

The section of Scripture you have in your left hand is called the “**Epistles**” or the “**Letters**” to different churches or individuals.



Important to Know: Most of the letters or epistles were written by the apostle Paul, but not all. Others who wrote letters were: **Peter, James, Jude,** and **John.**

The churches to whom Paul wrote [many of which he helped establish, but not all]:

Romans—letter to the church at Rome

1st and 2nd Corinthians—two letters to the church at Corinth

Galatians—letter to the churches in the region of Galatia [an area of modern-day Turkey]

Ephesians—letter to the church at Ephesus

Philippians—letter to the church at Philippi

Colossians—letter to the church at Colosse

1st and 2nd Thessalonians—two letters to the church at Thessalonica

The individuals to whom Paul wrote:

1st and 2nd Timothy—two personal letters to a younger co-worker Timothy

Titus—a personal letter to a co-worker

Philemon—a personal letter to a leader in the church at Colosse

The letters written by others to the church in general rather than to a church in a particular city:

Hebrews—of unknown authorship; many think it was written by Paul.

James and **Jude**—written by two brothers of Jesus (i.e., reared by

Joseph and Mary)

1st and 2nd Peter—two letters written by Peter to the church in general throughout the Roman Empire

1st, 2nd, and 3rd John—three letters written by John to the church in general

Step 4 With a finger left between Jude and Revelation turn to the end of the book of **Revelation**. This is the last book of the New Testament.



Important to Know: It was written by the apostle John. It's a message of encouragement to Christians who were suffering as a result of persecution.

In the Book of Revelation, John makes use of literary devices that were used at the time:

--dramatic and memorable images

--possibly some code language (Remember, the Roman government was persecuting Christians so if it knew what Revelation was actually saying, Christians could get into even more trouble.)

--figurative language that is not always to be taken literally

The grand old highway, Route 66, ended at the Pacific Ocean. Having completed a long journey across the nation's heartland, travelers stood at the water's edge and looked beyond to a new horizon of beauty, but also of mystery. That is the common human experience. Deep within every human heart is the desire to know about what lies beyond. As we continue to make investment in the land beyond with family members and friends who pass from this life to the next, the desire increases to know more about heaven and hell.

The Book of Revelation, like old Route 66, ends at the water's edge. As the last book of the Bible, it directs one's eyes forward to eternal life with God. It was written to suffering Christians of all times, assuring them that their labor for Christ is not in vain and that their sacrifices will be remembered by God who has prepared a wonderful place for them to spend eternity. A great day is coming, at which time He will invite all who have been washed by the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ, into the great new heavenly city.

At the same time, the book of Revelation tells of the destruction of Satan and all who follow him. They will be cast into the lake of fire prepared for this rebellious angel and all his lieutenants. Sadly, it will also be the destiny of human beings who have bought into Satan's many lies and have lived their lives by his direction.

The book is not as mysterious as many believe it to be. Once one unlocks the code by realizing that it was written in highly figurative language and in a style that was fairly common in that period, **the message rings loud and true:**

Join the winning side of Christ while you can, and if you have already joined, stay with the Lord even if sometimes it looks like He is losing. The Christ will not lose! In fact, He has already won, and Satan, the evil one, has been mortally wounded by Christ and is in his final days. Like a wounded animal, he will be more dangerous than ever for a short time before his end. That appears to be the time in which we now live.

Whew! That's a fast look at the entire New Testament!

You will spend a lifetime learning the many important lessons found inside. Maybe this overview will help.

There are some other important facts and concepts.

Do you want to go a little further?



Session 6

Traveling Route 66 Session 6

When time is short on a road trip, we often look to save a few miles. The longer drive would be much more beautiful and in many ways more fulfilling. But for time's sake let's take a shorter route for now with the promise to ourselves of returning for the more complete experience later.

1 "Testament" means "will" as in "last will and testament."

Just as we leave final instructions that are expected to be carried out in a final will and testament, so God has left us instructions. There was a former will or testament. Now He has a "new" will and testament. Though studying the former or "old" testament is important in understanding concepts and principles that are central in the "new" testament, the actual law of the Old Testament is no longer officially binding on Christians.

Colossians 2:14

14 ... [God through Christ] having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. NIV

Mixing the testaments will always lead to mistaken and even false teaching.

Humans are under only one regime or law at a time.

We are now under the authority of Jesus Christ, not the former Law of Moses or even what came before that.

2 The entire Bible encompasses three different law periods:

- (1) when God dealt with the earliest people through tribal heads of families [Genesis 1-Exodus 19]
- (2) when God dealt with the **Hebrews** through a national Law [Exodus 20-Acts 1]
- (3) when God deals with all people through Jesus Christ [Acts 2-Revelation 22]



Are we almost there?

3 The most crucial question one can ask in all of life is: “**How do I become a Christian?**” After the apostle Peter preached the very first Christian sermon, the listeners responded with just that question.

Acts 2:37

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” NIV

To answer the crucial question of how to become a Christian, we go to the book of Acts in the New Testament. There we learn what people of the Bible did to become Christ’s followers. Christ’s followers became known as simply Christians.

Acts 11:26

²⁶...The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch. NIV

The term “Christian” was not a name given to themselves by the early followers of Christ.

--“Christian” was a name given to these followers by outsiders.

--It possibly was a name of ridicule.

Another term that was used to describe those who chose to identify with Jesus Christ was “The Way.”

Acts 9:1-2

¹ Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest ² and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. NIV

Acts 19:9

⁹ But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. NIV

Acts 22:4

⁴ I [Paul] persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, NIV

Acts 24:14

¹⁴ However, I admit that I worship the God of our fathers as a follower of the Way, which they call a sect...NIV

To be a Christian is not taking one of many roads to God. It is taking the way to God.

John 14:5-6

⁵Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" ⁶Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." NIV

To be a Christian required deep faith and a counting of the cost socially, financially, and even physically.

Christians at that time, as some are today in parts of the world, were persecuted.

Yet thousands of people did become Christians as is recorded in the book of Acts.

4 There are ten examples in the book of Acts of what people did to become Christians. A clear pattern develops in these many examples as to what is surely required now:

>They heard the simple gospel message of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for everyone's sin and to forever overcome death.

Acts 2:37

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" NIV

>They believed or had faith in this message.

Acts 16:29-34

²⁹ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do

to be saved?" ³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." ³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. ³³ At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. ³⁴ The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole family. NIV

>They turned from their old life and to the Lord.

Acts 11:20-23

²⁰ Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

²² News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³ When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. NIV

>They confessed Jesus Christ as their new Lord.

Acts 8:26-39

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." ³⁰ Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

³¹ "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ³² The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture:

"He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,

and as a lamb before the shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.

Who can speak of his descendants?

For his life was taken from the earth."

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?" Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The eunuch answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. NIV

>They were immersed in water, or baptized, in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of their past sins.

Acts 2:40-41

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. NIV

>They were given the gift of the Holy Spirit to empower their new life.

Acts 2:38

³⁸ Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. NIV

>They were added by God to Christ's body, the church.

Acts 2:46-47

⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. NIV

>They began their new life under Christ's direction and power.

Acts 2:42-47

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. NIV

>They lived the rest of their lives enjoying relationships with other Christians.

Acts 4:32-35

³² All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. ³³ With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. ³⁴ There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales ³⁵ and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need. NIV



ROADSIGN: It's very important to know that when one becomes a Christian, his or her new life is just beginning!

The experience is described in different ways [i.e., “new birth,” “being born again,” etc.]

The apostle Paul described it this way...

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! NIV

Imagine, being able to start fresh! That’s a reality only in Jesus Christ.

5 The new life will need to be fed and nurtured by a regular diet of God’s Word, the Bible, and by active participation in the body of Christ, the church.

Are you ready to become a Christian?

*Don’t rush. It takes time to thoughtfully consider. Remember, however, that the really good stuff is only available to you **after** you commit to Jesus and become a Christian!*

How has the trip so far been different than what you expected?

Do you want to continue?



Session 7

Traveling Route 66 Session 7

After committing to Jesus Christ and becoming a Christian, you will want to read the Bible more in depth. So, for some **practical pointers** on reading the Bible seriously...

1 You will do better with a system, but customize it to fit you. It's not a "one size fits all" thing. Also, there are many ways to study God's Word.

Some examples of approaches to serious Bible reading:

- >Start in Genesis and read through to the end of Revelation. It's one approach, but is not recommended because it's easy to get bogged down in some more difficult parts like the old laws of Moses. But if you're not faint of heart, jump right in and start reading.
- >Start with one of the four Gospels. The gospel of John is a little more complicated so you might stick with Matthew, Mark or Luke to begin.
- >After the Gospels, read Acts of the Apostles to learn the history of the church nearest the time of Jesus. The church then was most like what the Lord had in mind for His church anytime. Some fear that much of what we call "church" today is not what the Lord conceived. We can start making it like the original or find others who are trying to do that already by grasping the Bible image.
- >One way for a beginner is to read a good children's Bible story book such as *Hurlbut's Story Book of the Bible*. It's an easy-to-read summary of the great stories and events of the Bible.

2 Take advantage of structured classes like those at church. Find a class that is taught by someone with the gift of teaching and who prepares thoroughly for the class. Just like in public schools, not all teachers are good teachers or have the gift of teaching. It's important, especially at the beginning, to find a teacher of the Bible who connects with you and makes it understandable, as well as practical.

3 Take notes during the sermon. Jot down questions you would like to ask the speaker or would like to study deeper. Note-taking during the sermon helps to focus your mind and hold your interest. By the way, get a good seat near the front to get away from as many distractions as possible. It will help!

4 Always be like the people of the town of Berea, a short distance from the city of Thessalonica, where Paul visited on one of his missionary trips. The book of Acts described them this way...

Acts 17:11

¹¹ Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. NIV

A **healthy** skepticism never hurts in studying the Bible. There are many teachers and preachers out there who don't agree. Two opposing ideas cannot both be true. Only one path can be chosen. Choose carefully.

However, keep in mind that there will always remain **questions** and **mysteries** in God's Word. Sometimes we must admit that we just don't know or can't find the answer to all our questions. But the Lord has given us all **we need!**

Romans 14: 1

¹Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.

2 Peter 1:1-4

¹ Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,
To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: ² Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³ His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. NIV

5 Fundamental to knowing and understanding God's Word is **putting it into practice.**
We learn what we do.

James 1:22-25

²²Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and

continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

Philemon 1:6

⁶I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.



Important to Know: God will change us supernaturally from the inside through his gift of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:19-25

¹⁹ The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;

²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.
NIV

We must, however, cooperate with God's Spirit inside and not put up obstacles to His working in our lives.

1 Thessalonians 5:19-24

¹⁹ Do not put out the Spirit's fire; ²⁰ do not treat prophecies with contempt. ²¹ Test everything. Hold on to the good. ²² Avoid every kind of evil. ²³ May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it. NIV

2 Peter 1:3-11

³ His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. ⁸ 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. ⁹ But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. NIV

You can do this!

Bible reading and knowledge is not just for an elite few.

*God had **you** in mind when He provided the Bible!*

We are all just students learning together. We don't graduate until death.

What questions do you have at this point in your trip?

Notes





Session 8

Traveling Route 66 Session 8

1 Some helpful books that will help you in your study of the Bible:

Bible Dictionary—Gives the meaning and pronunciation of Bible words.

Bible Concordance—A book with every word that appears in the Bible. Think of any subject, look up the key word and find all the verses in the Bible with that word in it.

Topical Bible—A book that divides the Bible up into topics. Think of a topic [example: love or death or marriage]. It will have all the Bible passages that speak to that topic.

Commentary—Explanations of all the passages of a particular book, books, or even the entire Bible. Be careful, however, and remember the meaning of a Bible passage in a commentary is the thinking of a human being. Commentaries will be helpful, but don't depend upon them as being the word of God. It is someone's interpretation of the word of God. It may be correct; it may not be!

Study Bibles—The complete text of Scripture along with study notes. Again, be careful to distinguish between the text of Scripture and the notes written by a person, even though he or she may be an authority on the subject.

Bible Atlas—Tells you where events of Scripture took place. Remember, the events of Scripture occurred in real places at real times in history. Most Bibles have a few maps in the back to help you find the locations of important places mentioned in the Bible.

2 Helpful features of your Bible:

Table of Contents—helps you to not struggle finding a particular book. Look it up and simply turn to the page number.

Cross References—Some Bibles will list other passages in addition to the one you are studying that are along the same line or contain related information.

Concordance—A shorter listing of other passages that contain key words.

Bible Maps—Key maps of major periods of Bible history.



Your Bible contains “sacred” information (that is, belonging to or related to God) but **your Bible is not itself sacred**. In other words, the book you hold in your hand is just a book. It is not to be worshiped nor thought to hold any kind of mystical power.

The gospel it contains is POWERFUL!

Romans 1:16-17

¹⁶ I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes... NIV

But the word must go from the printed page into your mind and down into your heart to be effective.

James 1:19-25

¹⁹ My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰ for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires. ²¹ Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. ²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵ But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does. NIV

In order for that to take place, you must use your Bible! Mark it up! Underline words! Dog-ear pages! Wear it out! Get another one and repeat the process!

A word of advice: Find a readable Bible.

- a version that uses words you understand
- a book with print size that is comfortable
- a Bible that has a good “feel” to you, one that...

-- is easily carried.

--has pages that are easily turned.

-- may or may not be a Bible given you at a special time in your life.



Side Trip: About translations.

Which is best? That depends. There is no “official” Bible.

People have their personal preferences.

Most versions have strengths and weaknesses.

Differences in translations:

- Some are “**word-for-word**” as much as possible from the Hebrew language [Old Testament] and Greek [New Testament]. These languages are different from English so these translations may seem a little more awkward and somewhat more difficult to understand by the beginner.
- Some versions try to smooth out the translation from the Biblical languages to English by providing more the **meaning of the thought** rather than word-by-word.
- Some versions try to strike a **balance** between the two by accurately translating words but also making sure the entire thought of the text is translated.
- Some Bibles are not translations in the technical sense but are merely a person’s idea of what the Bible is saying. These are called “**paraphrase**” Bibles. They can be helpful but are not to be relied upon. Again they are one person’s idea.

All legitimate translations are the work of large committees of Hebrew [Old Testament] and Greek [New Testament] scholars. This provides a natural check and balance system for deciding on the proper words for the translation.

3 Brief Overview of Some Popular Translations:

Word for Word Translations

King James Version [KJV]—King James of England commissioned this translation in 1611. It remains the most widely distributed translation in the

world today. It is unequaled in beauty. Because of its beauty and widespread use through the years, it has the “ring” of Scripture. The major deficiency for modern use is the use of words that are not readily understood by all. The scholarship behind the version is well respected.

American Standard Version [ASV]—Translated in 1901, this translation was an attempt to make Scripture more understandable by Americans at the time. This version is considered very reliable and true to the original languages. It was an attempt to update the King James and carries over the use of old English words such as “ye” and “saith.” However, being over a hundred years old itself, it is not always easy to understand.

Revised Standard Version [RSV]—Translated in 1952, it parted from old English expressions and was the first American attempt to make the Scripture understandable by common people. It is generally considered to be superior in its translation of the Old Testament. Critics will point out, however, such translations as “young woman” instead of “virgin” diminish the supernatural birth of Jesus.

New King James Version [NKJV]—A 1982 update of the KJV, it maintains the beauty and rhythm of the original. .

New American Standard Bible [NASB]—Translated in 1971 and revised in 1995, the NASB was an effort to take the best of the older ASV and update the language and punctuation.

English Standard Version [ESV]—Considered a modern language yet reliable translation of the ancient texts.

Thought-for-Thought Versions

Good News Translation [GNT]—A product of a small group of translators and published by the American Bible Society, its purpose is to be understood by people who are not native English speakers. Thus it is more widely distributed and used by groups whose purpose is to be evangelistic.

New Century Version [NCV]—Translated in 1987, this version attempts to be even more understandable by use of modern terms including the modern equivalents of weights and measures. It is also good about providing footnotes explaining ancient customs and concepts.

Combination of Word-for-Word and Thought-for-Thought

New International Version [NIV]—Originally published in 1978 with several revisions since, it has been the best-selling version of the Bible for several years.

New Living Translation [NLT]—Released in 1996 and revised in 2004, the NLT removes theological terms and substitutes meanings, making them more understandable.

Paraphrases

The Living Bible—This paraphrase was written by a father who wanted the Bible to be understandable for his children. On his daily commutes by train, he worked on this paraphrase that has become widely used worldwide.

The Message—Also, authored by one man, Eugene Peterson, this has become a widely read adaptation of Scripture to modern language.

Confused? What are some questions we can research if necessary?

Remember, we are both students, learning together.

There is no such thing as a “dumb” question!

What is your next step?



Session 9

Traveling Route 66 Session 9

1 The Bible makes some amazing claims for itself. For instance:

2 Timothy 3:14-17

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. NIV

2 Peter 1:20-21

²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. NIV

Logic tells us that it is indeed what it claims to be, **or** it is the most evil and complex hoax ever imposed on humankind.

There can be no middle ground or indifferent opinion about the Bible. The Scripture demands decision and by its nature forbids neutrality.

2 The power of the Bible to change lives is one of the most compelling evidences of its truthfulness and that it came from God. This aspect has been called the *self-validating* nature of Scripture.

In other words, if the principles of Scripture are tried with seriousness for a period of time, the authenticity of the Bible is proven in one's life.

The powers of observation alone testify to the truthfulness of the Bible.

All world religions have their sacred texts.

--All contain rules to follow and rituals to observe.

--All include promises to a better life.

The Bible uniquely points the way to the fulfilled life that comes from a fundamental change of the heart.

--Likely you know and respect individuals whose lives have changed dramatically.

--They are people who have respect for Scripture and study Scripture regularly.



Tell of people you have known who were or are living testimonies to the self-validating nature of Scripture. That is, their lives testify to the power of the Bible to change lives. If you can't think of anyone in your life's experience, maybe it can begin with you!

3 Imagine how your life could be different if you studied the basic principles taught in Scripture and then tried living consistently by those principles for a period of time.

Your own experience would authenticate the Bible's claims of being God's Word and the source for abundant living.

John 10:10

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. NIV

Millions have undertaken this life and testify that what the Bible says is true.

Would you be willing to test-drive the Scripture?

There's an exciting trip to be taken...

Traveling Route 66!