

# 5 Ways That Your Life Depends on Studying the Bible

One fundamental reason for a follower of Jesus to study the Bible is that Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, studied the Bible. Jesus' education, like that of other Jewish boys growing up in first-century Israel, included memorization of the Scriptures—especially the written Torah. What Christians refer to as the “Old Testament” was the first “Bible” of the early church, and it formed the context in which Jesus was recognized as fulfilling the Scriptures. For Jesus and many of the first Jewish Christians, Scripture study was a priority woven into daily life. For most Christians living in the first century of the third millennium, however, Bible study is a deliberate, counter-cultural choice requiring good reasons for the necessary investment of time, energy, and resources. Study of a key series of events in Jesus' earthly life, as recorded in Luke 4, brings to light at least five good reasons for studying the Bible (both Old and New Testaments) in our day.

## **1. Truth is your weapon against the devil's lies.**

Immediately after Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit led Him to fast for 40 days in the wilderness, where the devil tempted Him when “He was hungry” (vv. 1-3). Jesus answered each temptation with scriptural truth (v. 4 – Deuteronomy 8:3; v. 8 – Deuteronomy 6:13; vv. 10-12 – Deuteronomy 6:16 and Psalm 91:11-12 correctly memorized). Even the most mature Christian is vulnerable to temptation because the devil is a ruthless enemy intent on poisoning, perverting, ruining, and undermining everything good and every testimony to God's goodness. The primary battleground is the mind. Studying (and memorizing) Scripture fortifies your mind with truth that can effectively identify, refuse, and destroy Satan's weaponry—both subtle and blatant lies aimed at

areas of both weakness and strength (see 2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:12).

2. **Scripture portrays your true identity.** At least twice, Satan questioned Jesus' identity (vv. 3, 9). Jesus knew He was the Son of God (see Luke 3:22), and so did the devil, suggesting that Jesus therefore had the right to change stones into bread to satisfy His hunger (4:3) and to force God's hand (vv. 10-11). Knowing the Scriptures, Jesus recognized not only that Satan was misquoting them but also that His identity was bound up in what Scripture revealed about Him (e.g., Isaiah 53; also see John 6:30-58).
3. **Scripture reveals what life is all about.** By affirming that, "Man must not live on bread alone" (Luke 4:4), Jesus underscored that God's Word answers the burning questions of meaning and existence. Life is about more than the pursuit of happiness, pleasure, or even daily bread. What the "more than ..." actually is can be discovered only in Scripture.
4. **Bible study is necessary for maintaining and nurturing a right relationship with God.** When the devil presented Jesus with alternatives to fulfilling His mission (vv. 5-7, 9-11), Jesus' responses from Scripture reflect that His biblically formed identity (see reason #2) and priorities (#3) were expressions of an intimate relationship with God maintained by concentrated obedience, faith, and humility (vv. 8, 12).
5. **Your true purpose is expressed in the Bible.** As Jesus boldly declared in Nazareth's synagogue, His purpose was "written" in the Scriptures (Isaiah 61:1-2). Jesus was "sent" by the Father to fulfill these verses (and all the written Torah—see Luke 24:26-27, 32, 44-49), and the crucified and risen Jesus also sends His followers in the same manner (John 20:21).

Studying the Bible requires more effort and commitment than reading alone, but these five reasons indicate that your life

depends on it.

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