



LIVING TRUTH

experiencing Christ in you

A young woman with dark hair is sitting on a couch, reading an open book. She is wearing a grey t-shirt and has her chin resting on her hand. The room is dimly lit, with light coming from a window with blinds in the background. The book she is reading is open, and she is looking down at the pages.

THE **Word** OF **God**

MESSAGE GUIDE

Message Guide

This Message Guide may be a little different from those that you have used before.

The purpose of this Guide is not an in-depth study of the scriptures used, but rather to assist you or your Study Group as you reflect on these messages given by Charles Price.

We present questions in order to stimulate discussion. Sometimes we will give you the answer ... sometimes not. At other times a statement or a theme is presented for your consideration.

As you allow the Holy Spirit to guide the direction of your study and discussions we pray the flexibility of this Message Guide will help you as you delve more deeply into Charles' message, and that you will unearth more lessons from the Lord than may not have been immediately obvious.

Message Guide and Questions
The Word of God
Part 1 – Feeding the Soul
Ezekiel 2:1 – 5, 7 – 10; 3:1 - 4

1. What are the 5 'elements' contained in the Bible?

H _ _ _ _ _

P _ _ _ _ _

D _ _ _ _ _

E _ _ _ _ _

P _ _ _ _ _

2. What is the time period covered by the Bible?

3. What is the fantastic message that is at the heart of the Bible?

4. When the prophet Ezekiel was handed a scroll containing a word from God, what was he told to then do with that scroll?

5. There are 3 simple things to consider that we are going to look at today –

a. The A _ _ _ _ _ of Scripture

b. The A _ _ _ _ _ of Scripture

c. The A _ _ _ _ _ of Scripture

6. **a. The Authority of Scripture**

Read and consider Ezekiel 1:3

7. There are many other names associated with the physical authorship of the Bible.

Read and consider 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:21

8. Scripture is G __ speaking.

He I _____ human writers, carried along by the H ____ S _____.

The scriptures O _____ is in G __

He alone is it's A _____

9. **b. The Activity of Scripture**

Read and consider Ezekiel 3:1 and Matthew 4:4. These verses lead us to understanding 4 very important activities in which we must engage concerning the scriptures. We must

a. R ____ it.

b. M _____ on it.

c. B _____ it.

d. O ____ it.

10. **c. The Application of Scripture**

Read and consider – Ezekiel 3:4
Joshua 1:8
Isaiah 59:21

Final Thoughts

The Bible is not authoritative because of its content.
The Bible is authoritative because of its origin.
It originates in the mind of God.

No church is the Bible's authority –
no matter how big that church may be.
The scripture alone is our authority.

The Authority of Scripture – is that it is the Word of God!
The Activity of Scripture – is that it becomes our food!
The Application of Scripture – is that it becomes embedded in our mouths!

Message Guide & Questions
The Word of God
Part 2 – Revealing the Mind of God
Isaiah 55:6 – 11

1. Read and consider these familiar verses – Isaiah 55:6 – 11

Today we consider the A _____ and I _____ of scripture.

2. The Authority of scripture does not derive from its C _____

The Authority of scripture derives from its O _____

3. What is the huge assumption that is being made here?

4. What was the first thing that God did?

5. Read and consider Isaiah 55:8 - 9

6. If God's thoughts are not like our thoughts if they are higher, then how will we know His thoughts.

Is it by O _____ ?

Is it by S _____ ?

Or is it by R _____ ?

Read and consider 1 Corinthians 2:11 – 12

7. The Bible is both a D _____ book and a H _____ book.

8. The Bible has a Human Story – consider these facts.
Do you know or can you guess?

a. How many authors? _____

b. Written over how many years? _____

c. Written in how many languages? _____

d. Written on how many continents? _____

e. It is unquestionably the world's best selling book.

Do you have any idea how many copies have been sold? _____

9. Despite the amazing diversity of the Bibles, what is its single unfolding story?

The C _____, F _____, R _____ and F _____ of H _____ B _____

10. The Bible has a Divine Story.

Read and consider 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:21

Final Thoughts

If God has spoken ...

- we had better know what He has said!

If God has revealed His purpose for mankind...

- we had better make sure we know it,
understand it & believe it!

If God has made promises to us ...

- we had better know them, believe them
and experience them!

If God has given us instructions by which
we may experience life as He intended it...

- we had better understand and obey them!

Message Guide & Questions

The Word of God

Part 3 – Revealing the Heart of God

Job 12:22

1. Read and consider Job 12: 22
2. Charles suggests that “the great danger in thinking that Scripture is primarily revealing God’s thoughts is that we begin to think that the highest response to God is found in the K_____ of His M_____ and in O_____ to His W_____.
3. So what is the highest virtue? Read and consider Deuteronomy 6:5

4. We know that physiologically speaking the heart is a key organ in our body, but let’s have some fun here and consider how our ‘heart’ is a key to our personhood.
 - a. If someone is K____, we say they have a heart of G_____.
 - b. If someone lacks compassion, we call them H_____,
or say that they are C_____ - H_____
 - c. If someone is courageous we say they are B_____ - H_____
 - d. Our deepest hurts we call H_____
 - e. Jilted lovers are describe as being B_____ - H_____
 - f. On vacation we feel L_____ - H_____
 - g. When deeply in love we say we L_____ W_____ A_____ O_____ H_____
 - h. When we talk at the deepest level we call in a H_____ - H_____ talk
 - i. And when we lose passion for something we say, my H_____ I_____ N_____ I_____
5. Read and briefly consider the following scriptures.

Deuteronomy 11:1	Deuteronomy 19:9
Deuteronomy 11:13	Deuteronomy 30:16
Deuteronomy 11:22	Deuteronomy 30:20
6. Read and consider the following scriptures in the New Testament.
Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30 and Luke 10:27. Then 1 John 4:19

Final Thoughts

Read Roman 5:5

Are you actually enjoying His love?

Are you actually experiencing His Love?

Are you liberated by His love?

Are you confident in His love?

Are you in touch with God's heart?

Ask Him to soften your heart, and to make you a recipient of His love.

Message Guide & Questions

The Word of God

Part 4 – Interpreting the Bible Accurately

Psalm 119:9 – 16

1. Read and consider Psalm 119:9 - 16
2. There are thousands of different denominations in the world, and hundreds of Christian sects. What is the distinguishing feature of all of these?

3. With such a plethora of different interpretations we have to ask ourselves 3 questions
 - a. Are there S _____ ?
 - b. Are there ways to read the Bible with C _____ ?
 - c. Can we be F _____ C _____ that we are right in our U _____

The technical word for this is H _____

4. It is possible to make the Bible say almost anything we want to; so it is of vital importance that the scripture is interpreted C _____

5. Normal communication is broken up in units of –

T _____

W _____

S _____

P _____

S _____

6. **Unit of Truth # 1 – The Sentence**

Read the first part of Psalm 14:1

7. **Unit of Truth # 2 – The Paragraph**

Read Matthew 4:5 & 6

8. **Unit of Truth # 3 – The Subject**

Read 1 Corinthians 13

9. **Unit of Truth # 4 – the Book**

Read Job 22:21

10. **Unit of Truth # 5 – The Testament [Old or New]**

See Leader's Notes

11. **Unit of Truth # 6 – The Whole Bible**

See Leader's Notes

12. **Unit of Truth # 7 – Christ**

In The New Testament – with Christ the Word became flesh!
He is the ultimate exegetical context – “I am the Truth”

The key to scripture is Jesus Christ – so read it through His eyes.

Final Thoughts

This may sound controversial, but the worst kind of preaching
is 'preaching BACKED UP by scripture'.

That is where a great idea is presented,
and then scripture texts are used to back up that idea.

In this way the scriptures are being USED

- often taken completely out of context and distorted
- to fit into a human idea.

True and accurate Biblical preaching must flow OUT OF the scripture itself.

And finally - We cannot adequately understand the scriptures
without the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:14

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

This Leader's Guide is prepared to help the Study Group Leader to keep the discussions moving along. Maybe your people will come up with different answers, or perhaps they will need a little prompting from you.

Remember, you want to encourage your people to fully participate. This is not a 'teaching session' by the Group Leader, but rather a discussion group. This may at first seem like a contradiction, but you will need for the Lord to give you wisdom to keep the discussions 'on track' whilst also allowing the Holy Spirit to direct your path.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

The Word of God

Part 1 – Feeding the Soul

Ezekiel 2:1 – 5, 7 – 10; 3:1 - 4

1. The 5 'elements' contained in the Bible are . . .
History, Poetry, Doctrine, Ethics and Prophecy
2. The Bible runs from Eternity Past to Eternity Future.
3. The fantastic message that is at the heart of the Bible is that God intervened in our affairs by becoming a man, in order to restore fallen people to a relationship with the creator.
4. After the prophet Ezekiel was handed a scroll containing a word from God, he was then told to EAT IT!

Bearing this in mind, and that the Bible uses edible metaphors about itself such as; milk, bread, meat and honey, we can see how we need to FEED upon the Word of God, absorb it,
5. The 3 simple things we are going to consider today are –
 - a. The Authority of Scripture
 - b. The Activity of Scripture
 - c. The Application of Scripture
6. The Bible is 'the word of the Lord', and that phrase is found no less than 54 times in the book of Ezekiel alone.
7. Did these men claim authorship of the scriptures?
Do we divide up the honour between them?
Do we give credit to these men for their insights?

True – these men put ink to paper, but they do not claim authorship.
8. Scripture is **God** speaking.
He **Inspired** human writers, carried along by the **Holy Spirit** .
The scripture's **Origin** is in God.
He alone is it's **Authority**.
9. These verses lead us to understanding 4 very important activities that we must engage in concerning the scriptures. We must
 - a. **Read** it. Read Colossians 3:16
 - b. **Meditate** on it. Read Psalm 119:97
 - c. **Believe** it. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:24
 - d. **Obey** it. Read James 1:22 – 25
This is what 'eating the Word of God' means.
10. Is the Word of God in your mouth?
Is that what people hear?
Does our speech have the 'ring of God' about it?

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

The Word of God

Part 2 – Revealing the Mind of God

Isaiah 55:6 – 11

1. Today we consider the **Authority** and **Inspiration** of Scripture.
2. The Authority of scripture does not derive from its **CONTENT**.
The Authority of scripture derives from its **ORIGIN** who is doing the speaking?
If God speaks, what He says is authoritative!
3. The Bible starts with the words, “In the beginning God ...” The assumption is –
Whenever the beginning began - God was there!
Whatever happened at that stage - God did it!

The Bible makes no attempt to explain it – the Bible just proclaims it!
God can not be explained!

4. The first thing that God did was – He spoke
Read Genesis 1 verses 3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24 and 26

This was all God did – speak – because it was all He needed to do.

When God speaks, things happen!

5. Speaking is necessary to reveal our mind, our thinking.
However, God's thoughts are not our thoughts. His thoughts are higher.
6. God's thoughts are not like our thoughts they are higher, so then how will we know His thoughts.
Is it by **OBSERVATION**?
Is it by **SPECULATION**?
No, it is by **REVELATION** according to 1 Corinthians 2:11 – 12

7. The Bible is both a **DEVINE** book and a **HUMAN** book.

8. The Bible has a Human Story – consider these facts.
Do you know or can you guess?

- a. How many authors? - over 40
- b. Written over how many years? - over a 1,500 year time span
- c. Written in how many languages? - 3 – Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek
- d. Written on how many continents? - 3 – Africa, Asia and Europe
- e. It is unquestionably the world's best selling book.

Do you have any idea how many copies have been sold?

In just one year – 2001 – the United Bible Societies distributed

23.2 million complete Bibles

19 million New Testaments

512.9 million Gospels and portions of the Bible.

This is just one Bible distributor in just one year!

9. Despite the amazing diversity of the Bible, the single unfolding story is

The **CREATION, FALL, REDEMPTION** and **FUTURE** of **HUMAN BEINGS**.

10. God did not directly dictate the writings of scripture, but He inspired the writers by His Holy Spirit.

The personalities of the writers, with all their experience of life. are ingredients in the message, because God works through personality.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

The Word of God

Part 3 – Revealing the Heart of God

Job 12:22

1. Last time, based on Isaiah 55:6 – 11 we considered the Inspiration and Authority of the Scriptures. The Theme was really 'The Bible and the Mind of God'. Today we are going to consider '**The Bible and the Heart of God**'

2. "The great danger in thinking that Scripture is primarily revealing God's thoughts is that we begin to think that the highest response to God is found in the **KNOWLEDGE** of His **MIND** and **OBEDIENCE** to His **WILL**."

Of course, these are vitally important issues, but it would be dangerous to think that scripture is primarily revealing God's thoughts. That is not enough.

Remember, the Pharisees were obsessed with obedience to the will of God, but Matthew 23 is full of God's anger towards those who display outward conformity while harboring inward corruption.

3. God is more than just a mind. If we think of Him as some supreme intelligence we reduce Him to being some powerful celestial computer, but God has a **HEART**.

We too have hearts, and God desires that our hearts connect with His heart.

4. We know that physiologically speaking the heart is a key organ in our body, but let's have some fun here and consider how our 'heart' is a key to our personhood.

- a. If someone is **KIND**, we say they have a heart of **GOLD**.
- b. If someone lacks compassion, we call them **HEARTLESS**, or say that they are **COLD-HEARTED**.
- c. If someone is courageous we say they are **BRAVE-HEARTED**.
- d. Our deepest hurts we call **HEARTACHES**.
- e. Jilted lovers are described as being **BROKEN-HEARTED**.
- f. On vacation we feel **LIGHT-HEARTED**.
- g. When deeply in love we say we are in **LOVE WITH ALL OUR HEART**.
- h. When we talk at the deepest level we call it a **HEART TO HEART** talk.
- i. And when we lose passion for something we say, my **HEART IS NOT IN IT**.

And so it is that our essential relationship with God is not with the head – but with our heart.

Without knowing the heart of God and without loving Him with all our heart we can read and study the Bible to get to know God – but it would be like studying the anatomy of a corpse in an attempted to get to know the person who once inhabited it.

5. **Obedience to the law will be meaningless without loving God with all our hearts.**

6. To love God with all OUR hearts requires us to know HIS heart. It is in knowing His heart that releases our hearts to love.

Message Guide & Answers

The Word of God

Part 4 – Interpreting the Bible Accurately

Psalm 119:9 – 16

1. Of all the verses that you may highlight in your Bibles these should definitely be among them.
2. There are thousands of different denominations in the world, and hundreds of Christian sects. The distinguishing feature of all of these is that they **all interpret the Bible differently**.
3. With such a plethora of different interpretations we have to ask ourselves 3 questions
 - a. Are there **SAFEGUARDS**?
 - b. Are there ways to read the Bible with **CONFIDENCE**?
 - c. Can we be **FAIRLY CERTAIN** that we are right in our **UNDERSTANDING**?

The technical word for this is **HERMENEUTICS**

Hermeneutics is the science of interpreting scripture.

4. It is possible to make the Bible say almost anything we want to; so it is of vital importance that the scripture is interpreted **CONTEXTUALLY**.

Taking a text out of its context can make it mean anything, and is very dangerous.

5. Normal communication is broken up in units of –

THOUGHTS, WORDS, SENTENCES, PARAGRAPHS and SUBJECTS

To help us read the Bible and interpret in accurately Charles is suggesting **Seven Units of Truth**

6. **Unit of Truth # 1 – The Sentence**

NEVER base anything on less than a full sentence.

7. **Unit of Truth # 2 – The Paragraph**

We should not limit our reading to just the verses either side of our favourite verse. While the verse divisions can be helpful, we need to remember that this device was added later, and sometimes they can also be unhelpful.

The Bible was written with ‘paragraph’ divisions and so we should at least read it in entire paragraphs.

8. **Unit of Truth # 3 – The Subject**

We often refer to 1 Corinthians 13 as the 'love chapter' but is that really what it is about? To fully understand what Chapter 13 is all about we need to read Chapters 12 and 14. The subject is **Spiritual Gifts**.

9. **Unit of Truth # 4 – the Book**

These words, actually written by Eliphaz the Temanite, sound really good don't they! After all, we all want to know how we can become prosperous. Right?

But take a closer look at the book of Job and you will see that in Job 42:7 the Lord actually rebukes Eliphaz for saying what he did.

10. **Unit of Truth # 5 – The Testament [Old or New]**

Of the 613 commands of Moses in the Old Testament not all of them necessarily apply to us today.

There were Moral Laws - the 10 Commandments.
... but there were also Ceremonial Laws for sacrificial procedure,
... and Civil Laws – Israel's national laws for crime and punishment at that time.

Consider also Psalm 51:11 Might God cast me from His presence?
Can I loose the Holy Spirit? If the only source of reference on this subject is Psalm 51:11 it would seem so.

But that is the Old Covenant. Something happens in the New Testament.
Read Ephesians 1:13b and 14

11. **Unit of Truth # 6 – The Whole Bible**

The Old Testament must be interpreted by the New Testament.

The Old Testament is a Jewish book
The New Testament is the new body of Jews and Gentiles

The Whole Bible is a progression of Truth.
Not part truth to full truth, but promise to fulfillment.

Go to question 12 and then Final Thoughts.

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