

GOD'S **LOVE** LETTER TO YOU



SHEPHERDCHURCH

WEEK 3: THE “STRUCTURE” OF THE BIBLE

*****CHECK OUT THE STUDY RESOURCES AT THE END OF THIS LESSON!!!**

WELCOME

Lightning Round!!!!!! As a group, use a timer on someone’s mobile device and answer as many of the following prompts as you can in 120 seconds. When the timer is up count how many questions you answered correctly.

- How many books are in the Bible?
- How many people wrote the Bible?
- Name 5 authors of the Bible.
- The Bible was written over a period of _____ years.
- Name the 3 languages the Bible was written in.
- Name 3 of the 13 countries where the Bible was written.
- Name 5 different backgrounds or jobs of biblical authors (e.g., Samuel was a prophet).
- Name 5 of the circumstances that different biblical authors faced when they wrote the Bible (e.g., Moses was wandering in the desert).
- Name 3 settings where the Bible was written (e.g., Solomon was probably in a palace).

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WORSHIP

Choose one of the following options:

- Sing a couple of worship songs together. Ask someone to play the guitar, play a YouTube video, or go a cappella!
- Ask someone to read Psalm 33 and then, give some time for people to voice whatever prayers that Psalm brings to their minds.

WORD

1. Use one word to describe the Bible and share why you chose that word.

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2. Which genre in the Bible do you relate with the most and why? Which genre do you understand the least and should study more deeply?

3. How do stories in the Bible compare to modern storytelling (books, movies, streaming series, stories from the news media, etc.)?

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4. What do *Luke 24:27*, *Luke 24:44*; *John 5:39*; and *Galatians 4:4* teach us about Jesus and the timeline of the earth?

5. In our fast-paced and fragmented culture, what can the Bible’s structure and unified message teach us about pursuing clarity and purpose?

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6. How might understanding the Bible’s structure help us navigate uncertainty, face challenges, gain wisdom, or find encouragement?

7. Read ***Nehemiah 9:1-3***; ***Psalms 1:1-3***; ***Psalms 119:105***; and ***Colossians 3:16***. What do these passages say about spiritual disciplines (e.g., prayer, fasting, studying the Bible, etc.) and the value of practicing them? Name one practical way you can leverage the Bible’s structure to grow in your practice of spiritual disciplines.

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WITNESS

This week, how can you encourage someone to view the Bible as more than just a rulebook or collection of random stories?

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DEEPER STUDY FOR THIS WEEK

- Memorize **Hebrews 4:12**.
- Read **Jeremiah 31:31-34** and then read **Deuteronomy 29:1; Ezekiel 36:26-27; 2 Corinthians 3:2-3**; and **Hebrews 8:6-13**.
 - Write down what these verses teach about the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.
 - How does **Jeremiah 31:31-34** describe the New Covenant as different from the Old Covenant?
 - What does it mean for God’s law to be written on hearts instead of tablets of stone?
 - How does this idea challenge, change, or encourage the way you think about obedience to God?
- Read **Romans 3:25-26; Galatians 4:4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 2 Peter 1:19-20**. Write down what these passages teach about the structure and reliability of the Bible.
- To gain a partial understanding of Jesus’ view of the Old Testament, read **Matthew 8:4-11; Matthew 15:1-9; Matthew 22:41-45; Matthew 24:38-39; Mark 10:1-15; Mark 12:26; Luke 4:1-27**; and **John 6:14**. Using the information from these passages, make a list of the Old Testament people, events, and circumstances that Jesus viewed as historical.

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RESOURCES

Here are some opportunities to continue your study of the Bible:

- Watch and/or listen to previous sermons from **Shepherd Church**.
- For your Bible reading plan, use the book, *Anchored: 365-Day Bible Reading Guide and Journal* by Dudley Rutherford (order from Pillars Café, **Lift Up Jesus**, Amazon, or wherever books are sold).
- Download the **YouVersion Bible app** to read or listen to the Bible, start a reading plan, and find daily devotionals.
- **Ozark Christian College** offers free online Bible courses.
- **Dallas Theological Seminary** offers free online Bible & theology courses.
- Through the **Silo Project**, **Eternity Bible College** offers free online courses.
- **Bible Gateway** is a good website to look up verses and key words from the Bible.
- If you want to learn more about how to study the Bible, check out the following book: *Living by the Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible* by Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks (order from Pillars Café, Amazon, or wherever books are sold).