



PotofOil.org

Pouring out what God pours in

What Christians Believe About...

The Bible - part 3

Its structure

By Catherine Slight and Lin Pearson
(Presentation Notes)

NOTE: This is part of a series entitled *What Christians Believe*.

This section is the third part of a four-part treatment of the subject of the Bible.

If you have received this presentation by some means other than a personal download from our web site, you may like to know that you can download, free of charge,

Part 1 of About The Bible from

<http://effectivechildrensministry.org/2010/01/15/free-powerpoint-can-the-bible-be-trusted/>

Part 2 of About The Bible

<http://effectivechildrensministry.org/2010/02/15/free-powerpoint-more-reasons-to-believe-the-bible/>

Eventually other subjects will also be available from our blog at www.EffectiveChildrenMinistry.org.

At the time of writing we are working on another website which will have many more downloadable resources, tips and ideas—www.childrensministryfreestuff.org. News of the launch of this site, and of fresh material uploaded from time to time, will be found at the blog. The web address once again—www.EffectiveChildrensMinistry.org.

The red symbols [▶] in these notes are cues for changing the PowerPoint slide. The triangle tells you to click forward to the next slide; the words in red describe what you should see, unless that is obvious in the text of the notes.

Throughout the notes there are headings. You do not need to read these out. They are simply to guide you through the material.

A note on copyright is included in the first slide. Naturally, you do not show that. It is for your information only.

How much ground will you cover in one session? That will depend upon the time you have available, the age and powers of concentration of your group (this material is suitable for all ages—children, teen and adults), the amount of questions and discussion you incorporate into the session, and also the number of illustrations from your experience, or that of others, that you include.

The wording of these notes is only a suggestion. You must feel free to use your own style of presentation. We pray that you will experience God drawing near and helping you as you present this series.

COPYRIGHT

All material by Catherine Slight and Lin Pearson is copyrighted. However, these materials may be freely downloaded, copied and distributed unaltered for the purpose of study and teaching, so long as they are made available to others free of charge, and the copyright is included as follows:

Copyright 2010 Catherine Slight and Lin Pearson—PotofOil.org and EffectiveChildrensMinistry.org

These materials may not, in any manner, be sold or used to solicit 'donations' from others, nor may they be included in anything you intend to copyright, sell, or offer for a fee.

This copyright is exercised to keep these materials freely available to all. Any exceptions to these conditions must be explicitly approved by the authors.



This work is licensed under Creative Commons license.

For details go to <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

The Bible - part 3

The Structure of the Bible

[The Bible- no text]

▶ THE BIBLE IS A LIBRARY

The Bible is bound as one book, but it is actually made up of 66 books within one cover. It is a portable library. Like a library the Bible is divided into sections for different subjects.

▶ [Empty shelves]

There are 2 main sections, The Old Testament and The New Testament.

The word 'Testament' means *promise or agreement*.

▶ The Old Testament

The *Old Testament* is made up of 39 books. It contains the promises made by God, originally to the nation of Israel.

He promised that one day, through the Jewish nation, he would send a Saviour who would take the punishment for the sin of the whole world. His title was MESSIAH.

Then Jesus came. He is the only one who has ever fitted, to the smallest detail, the description of the Messiah, made by God through his prophets in the Old Testament.

▶ The New Testament

After he died, Jesus defeated death, came alive again and for some weeks was seen by hundreds of people on many occasions. Then he returned to heaven. His followers wrote books, telling all they knew about Jesus. These books were the gospels. They also wrote about what happened to Jesus' followers in the next 50 or 60 years.

All these, together with the gospels, formed *The New Testament*. This section of the Bible is all about a new promise, agreement or testament, that God had made with the whole world, not only the Jews.

▶ [Scroll with Eph. 3:6] We know this because of what the Bible says in Ephesians 3:6.

"Both Gentiles and Jews who believe the Good News share equally in the riches inherited by God's children. Both are part of the same body, and both enjoy the promise of blessings because they belong to Christ Jesus" (Eph. 3:6 - New Living Translation).

▶ [from Old to New]

The Old Testament agreement meant that salvation depended on the people keeping God's Law perfectly or, if they did wrong...

▶ [Animal sacrifices] ...making animal sacrifices to gain forgiveness from God.

The new promise in the New Testament was clear.

▶ [No animal sacrifices] Animal sacrifices are no longer required, because Jesus has died to take the punishment for sin.

▶ [Repeated sacrifices] Because no one could keep all the Law perfectly, repeated sacrifices were necessary.

▶ [Only one sacrifice, not repeated] But Christ died once – and that one death was sufficient to pay the penalty for the sin of the world.

When a person repents of their sin, and asks Jesus to forgive them, they are forgiven.

▶ [Repent ...turn to God verse] The New Testament tells about this new promise and agreement between God and us. For example:

'Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out' (Acts 3:19).

The promises in the Old Testament which speak of Messiah coming to bring forgiveness, are all fulfilled in the New Testament, through the coming of Jesus Christ.

▶ [teal coloured background and quote]

Speaking of both testaments the old quote says: “The New is in the Old Concealed; the Old is in the New Revealed”.

This is because the promises and “pictures” in the Old Testament are more fully understood when we see their fulfillment in the New Testament.

Example:

▶ [Abraham sacrificing Isaac]

In the OT record of how God asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, there is a “picture” which foreshadows and illustrates something of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Abraham’s son was not killed, because God supplied a ram to be sacrificed instead.

▶ [Cross]

In the same way, we deserve to be punished, but Jesus Christ died in our place. he was the sacrifice that God provided for us.

▶ [Bible library - summary chart with point number 1 - Bible a library]

▶ [Point number 2 - THERE ARE DIFFERENT SUBJECTS]

DIFFERENT SUBJECTS

Within these two main sections, or Testaments, there are several other divisions, according to the subjects covered by the individual books.

▶ [OT bookshelves]

OLD TESTAMENT

- ▶ 5 Books of Law
- ▶ 12 Books of History
- ▶ 5 Books of Poetry
- ▶ 5 Books by Major Prophets (Longer)
- ▶ 12 Books by Minor Prophets (Shorter)

▶ [NT Books]

NEW TESTAMENT

- ▶ 5 Books of History
- ▶ 9 Epistles (Letters) to named churches
- ▶ 4 letters to named individuals
- ▶ 8 Epistles to general readers
- ▶ 1 Book of Prophecy.

▶ [Green bible picture]

▶ [laws, songs, poetry, letters]

In the Bible there are LAWS to help us live right.

There are beautiful SONGS, POETRY and LETTERS . All help us understand about God.

▶ [farmers, bandits, shepherds, kings]

There are accounts of farmers and bandits . . . poor shepherds and fabulously rich kings. . .

▶ [battles, parties, shipwrecks, etc...]

fierce battles and joyful parties . . . shipwrecks and survival . . . adventurous journeys and awesome miracles.

The Bible is totally honest about the people it speaks of. Even when they are heroes, their flaws, human failings and sins are also seen. But God loved them.

▶ [real people...problems, etc]

They were real people, with real problems, to which God offered real solutions.

Today is no different.

.....

[PERSONAL STORY BREAK]

This is a good place to put a personal example of a problem to which God gave a solution. It could be the need of salvation, guidance, protection, supplying a need, etc. You could use something from your own life, or have another team member of one of your youth group tell their story. This time will show that the God who worked in the Bible still works today.

.....

Hold up a copy of the Bible and ask the question...

▶ WHY ARE THESE PARTICULAR BOOKS IN THE BIBLE?

▶ [The Canon of Scripture - title]

The books which make up the Bible are known as the **Canon of Scripture**.

▶ [Greek “kanwn”]

The word “canon” comes from Greek word *kanwn* (pronounced kan-óhn) which means a measuring reed. A cane that grew in the Jordan Valley was very straight, light, and was cut and used for measuring rods. In Bible days builders used them.

▶ [measuring tape]

They were of a standard length, usually about 10ft long.

In Rev 11:1 John, in vision, is given “a measuring rod like a staff”.

▶ [rule or standard]

The word *kanwn* later came to refer to any standard – something right and true.

This is why the word *kanwn*, or in English “canon”, was chosen to refer to the Books of the Bible—those which met the standard of the New Testament Church.

The Canon of Scripture was formed for several reasons.

▶ [false teaching]

Books were being produced which claimed to be Scripture, although their message was not in line with that of the teachings of the Apostles.

▶ [biased teaching]

Some people were forming lists of books which were biased in favour of their own doctrine which did not meet the criteria set by the church.

▶ WHO DECIDED WHAT BOOKS WENT INTO THE CANON?

▶ [Old Testament Canon and Hebrew Manuscript]

There was no formal agreement about the Old Testament canon, because there didn’t need to be. Everyone accepted the books in the Old Testament as we have them now. But there came a time when the canon was “closed”. The Jews accepted that no other books would be added to the Hebrew Bible.

They had two main rules for selecting books for the canon.

▶ 1) They must be written by prophets known to be inspired and accurate. This included books written between the time of Moses and the reign of King Artaxerxes. After that era, there were no prophets to bring God’s message to the people.

▶ 2) They must not contradict each other (and we have seen in Part 1 of The Bible that there is great unity across all the writers and books of thge Old Testament).

▶ [New Testament Canon and Greek Manuscript]

There was no committee or council who sat down at a conference and sorted it all out. It took a long time to gradually select the library of books that we have today in the Bible. When various Councils did sit to discuss the canon, all they did was recognize what had already been the long-standing acceptance and practice of the church. The Holy Spirit had been drawing the Christians to regularly read certain books and benefit from them.

To be included in the New Testament Canon of Scripture a book had to meet **three standards**:

- ▶ The book must have been inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ Its author must either be an Apostle or a person with very close links to the Apostles.
- ▶ The message of the book must be in line with the known teachings of Jesus and of the Apostles.

▶ WHERE DID CHAPTERS AND VERSES COME FROM?

▶ [Late addition to manuscripts and manuscript]

There were no chapters and verses in the original manuscripts. They did not appear in an English language Bible until the 16th century, when the Geneva Bible was printed. From then on these chapter and verse divisions became standard.

▶ [Helpful and open Bible] Though they are very helpful in referring to parts of the Scriptures, they are not divinely inspired. Occasionally a chapter division may break the flow of a story, or a reasoned argument. This shows that chapters and verses are usually just a human device.

▶ [Psalms quote] One exception is the Book of Psalms. They were mostly individual units from the beginning. It is also interesting to note that the little introductory remarks that appear before the first verse in a Psalm are generally thought to have been part of the original and therefore authoritative. In the example on screen we can see:

- Who the Psalm was for—the director of music
- What type it was – a maskil (we are not sure what that was, but it is supposed that it was a musical term)
- and who wrote it – David
- What occasion inspired it – Doeg the Edomite had gone to Saul and told him where he was.

▶ [Black Bible]

The Bible is a unique book. God has used the early church, and his miracle-working power to preserve this book and keep it from error.

The Bible is for everyone.

▶ [Young couple]

It doesn't matter who we are

▶ [Prisoner]

What we have done

▶ [Group of children]

It doesn't matter if we are happy

▶ [Teen in her room]

Or troubled

▶ [Dad and son]

Whether we read with our a family

▶ [Girl alone]

Or alone

▶ [Empty chair and Bible]

The Bible is available for us all. It is God's personal message to each one of us.