



What does the **BIBLE** say about...?

What does the Bible really say ...?

Fall 2021 Sermon / Study Series



What does the Bible really say about that???

Greetings Saints

It is a documented fact that there are hundreds of common sayings that originate in the Bible. As it should be! God's Word should permeate culture and our everyday lives.

Sayings like "*the blind leading the blind*" or "*by the skin of my teeth*" are near direct quotes from Scripture that mean virtually the same as they did when originally spoken.

On the other hand, there are other *old sayings* and *cultural idioms* that people say were originally in the Bible but aren't. They could be from another source or have some biblical basis, but culture and human tendencies to corrupt have altered their original meaning.

Our assignment in this series is to reflect on the later. We will take eight common sayings or ideas that people attribute to the Bible and see if they are right. If available, we will search the history of these sayings and evaluate whether they are consistent with Bible doctrine.

What does the Bible say about that??? Eve's Apple and original sin. God helps those who help themselves. To thine own self be true. Noah's Arc. In all things, moderation; and more...

I hope that you enjoy the series and hope that you learn new Bible truth about what it contains. Equally important I hope you develop the ability to search Scripture for yourself; it will be a wonderful time of study and fellowship. I hope you plan to attend.

We have prepared this study guide for personal devotion and study. It won't necessarily follow the sermons or Bible studies. It's designed to deliver background and scripture from which you may form your own opinions to determine what you believe. Further, there is space dedicated for notetaking so at the end of the series you will have all of your work in one place.

How ever you use these tools is up to you. Make them your own. Our prayer is God will speak to you through His Word and that you will develop tools that you can apply to other subjects.

Finally, as we go through this series, you will undoubtedly come across other questions or ideas for new topics. Write them down and send them in, this won't be the last time we study such things, so let's start forming a list for the next series.

Blessings, and see you Sunday

Pastor Dave

What does the Bible really say about?

Jonah and the Whale

Scripture Reference: Jonah 1 – 4.

Common Assumption: The Bible says that Jonah was swallowed by a whale, and everyone knows that a whale cannot swallow a human, so the story about Jonah must be a metaphor or fable.

Scripture Background – Jonah chapter 1: Jonah was a prophet of the Lord during the reign of Jeroboam II, king of Israel (in the divided kingdom era). The Bible tells us in chapter 1: the Word of the Lord came to Jonah telling him to go and preach to the people of Nineveh.

He didn't want to obey so he ran away. "Run" isn't the best way to describe what Jonah did. To get away from God, he boarded a ship headed for the most distant destination he could think of.

The reason he didn't want to obey God was because Nineveh was an Assyrian city. The Assyrians were the most ruthless, evil empire in the world, and a constant threat to Israel, so Jonah didn't want to preach to his nation's enemy.

Jonah got on a ship in Joppa and headed out to sea. God showed up and showed His displeasure by cooking up a serious storm...so serious that the experienced sailors were frightened.

It soon became apparent that God was unhappy, and Jonah confessed he was the cause of the storm because he was running away from Yahweh. Grudgingly, the sailors threw Jonah in the ocean and God sent a huge fish to bring him back to shore so he could finish his assignment.

Study Guide Questions: With your Bible open to **Jonah 1**, find the answer to these questions and reflect on the scene that the Bible presents.

1. Why does the Bible say God call Jonah to preach to Nineveh?

2. Where did Jonah try to run? _____ (extra credit: where was that?)

3. With the storm raging outside, where did the captain find Jonah, and what was he doing?

4. What did Jonah say was the solution to the sailor's problem? _____

5. Did they take Jonah's advice immediately? ____ Why or why not? _____

6. How does the Bible say Jonah got back to shore? _____

Myth-Busting Bible verse: Jonah 1:17 Now the Lord provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

It was a fish, not a whale...but the question remains, can a large fish swallow a person?

Dateline: July 18, 2018, Florida, USA: 500-pound grouper swallows a whole shark being reeled in by a group on a privately chartered fishing excursion.

If a grouper can swallow a whole shark (Fox News July 18, 2018) then God should be able to arrange for a fish large enough to swallow a man. There's no question about its possibility.

What is more astonishing is that the evil city of Nineveh repented of their sin and God spared them the judgment that He threatened.

Additional Scripture Content: Matthew 12:38-41

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees told Jesus, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you."

39 But he replied to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves a sign. Yet no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah, 40 because just as Jonah was in the stomach of the sea creature for three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. 41 The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment and condemn the people living today, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah."

7. Who is speaking in this passage? _____

8. What should Jesus' affirmation of Jonah's experience cause us to think about it?

9. What does Jesus mean by his words recorded in verse 41?

Last Word:

Secular historians are quick to point out when they believe their findings disprove the Bible. We know, of course, that cannot happen. However, we don't hear as loudly about times when researchers find facts that are consistent with the biblical record.

In Jonah's case, we have a '*coincidence*' discovered by secular historians that fits nicely into the biblical narrative.

During the reigns of King Jeroboam II (of Israel) and King Uzziah (of Judah) they enjoyed fantastic economic and social success.

What makes this unusual is it occurred at the time when Assyrian ruled the region. Normally Assyria would use their military superiority keep other nations poor and themselves in prosperity. It was a ruthless time when you were either the recipient of tribute or you paid it to others.

Along came Jonah and eventually God *persuaded* him to preach to Nineveh where the Assyrian king and the population of the city repented, and God spared them. The *coincidental* part is that during this time, Assyria was uncharacteristically quiet and surrounding nations flourished.

We have a name to attach to this theory (or names). From 782 to 745 BC three Assyrian kings led conspicuously quiet lives that I think reflects their response to Jonah's preaching. Not everyone agrees, but those in disagreement cannot give a better theory as to why this period was quiet.

Salmaneser IV, Ashur-davan II, and Ashur-nirari were sons of Adad-narari who ruled at this time. Of course the Assyrian-press core was not kind to these kings who didn't pillage and kill on behalf of the Empire. Still, their silence (in my opinion) speaks loudly of biblical accuracy.

This lull was short lived, and Nineveh was back to its former evil self under Tiglath-Pileser. But for a short time, the effects of a reluctant prophet, can be viewed in secular history.

Notes and Questions for further study regarding Jonah:

What does the Bible really say about?

God helps those who help themselves

Background: If I could pick a phrase that popular culture most confidently believes is in the Bible, this would be it. Ironically, the phrase is just as incorrect as it is popular. Not only does it convey a sentiment far removed from Scriptural philosophy, but it directly contradicts Bible truth.

There are different beliefs about its origin. Some say ancient Greek literature, others cite the Quran. Still others credit Benjamin Franklin and Poor Richard's Almanac. A brief survey from a good search engine will reveal that Aesop may have been the first to record this proverb that may have existed centuries before. Aesop lived about the time of King Josiah.

Although the Bible does teach a form of affirmative obedience, proactive righteousness and God-sourced wisdom, the self-reliance that exudes from this sentiment is in opposition to God's Word.

Scripture Reference: The message of Romans 5:8 is the opposite. While we were still sinners and unable to help ourselves, Christ died for us—proving how much God loves us, how amazing grace is, and how incapable of helping ourselves we truly are...did I hear someone say, *drop the mic*?

Other references you may like to reflect upon in personal devotion: Psalms 118:8-9; Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalms 146:3-4; Isaiah 2:22; 2 Chronicles 32:8. For our study we will focus on these three.

Romans 5:6, 8 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.... But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

1. What does this verse say about our capability to help ourselves?

2. Were you alive when Christ died? _____ So, what does it mean? _____

3. What is our greatest need? Is that something you would *naturally* seek on our own?

Proverbs 28:26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But he who walks wisely will be delivered.

4. Proverbs 28:26 seems harsh, do you think it is an overstatement? Why or why not?

5. What does it mean to you to *“walk wisely”*? Does Proverbs 1:7 fit into your answer?

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus says the LORD, "Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind And makes flesh his strength, And whose heart turns away from the LORD."

6. Can you re-write this verse in modern English? _____

7. Can you identify the context from which Jeremiah was writing in chapter 17?

(Hint 2 Chronicles 36, 2 Kings 25, Daniel 9)

Last Word:

It is our nature to rely on self. That is perhaps the greatest human struggle in relation to God. Consider in your own life what self-reliant factors you face, and then take a moment to write a prayer to God that you can say to Him whenever the struggle gets particularly hard.

My Prayer: _____

Notes and Questions for further study about trusting God:

What does the Bible really say about?

Eve and the Apple

Memory Verses: Genesis 2:17 *"...but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die."*

Genesis 3:6 *Then the woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*

Popular Perspective: Throughout history we have speculated on what the 'forbidden fruit' was. Guesses range from **pomegranate** to **grape**. In early literature a **tamarin** was proposed. Later in Western Europe a play-on-words from Hebrew to Greek to Latin gave us **apples** and that stuck! The result was a marginalization of the Word, saying it's lessons are good; but "we know" there was no Adam or Eve, original sin or Garden of Eden. The Bible has been relegated to a fable.

Bible Truth: The biblical record doesn't specify a fruit; God chose **not** to focus on the mechanism of original sin but on its effects. Simply stated, the apple isn't the problem, man's sin is. Genesis 1-3 are historic facts given to us by the only living eyewitness. The following Scriptures record what the Bible really says about the original sin event.

Truth about the Fall:

Genesis 2:15 *The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to work it and watch over it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die."*

Genesis 3:6 *Then the woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.*

Truth about Creation:

Genesis 1:31-2:3 *31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.*

2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. 2 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Some have tried to conform the Bible record with old-earth evolution. Here, God says He rested on the 7th day. Next see Exodus 20, where God says it again...

Exodus 20:11 *For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the 7th day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

1. Combining both of God's statements, is there any question whether God is saying that He created everything in six literal-solar days? Explain.

2. What reason would someone have to discount the obvious literal meaning of these words?

Jesus Affirms the Biblical Record: Jesus repeatedly mentions God's Creation and the Word of God in general as being true and accurate. Regardless of how little you believe ancient people knew about science, the Resurrection proves Jesus' claim as the divine Son of God who was present with God when He created everything.

Reflect on these things Jesus said and record for yourself exactly what He is affirming as truth!

Mark 10:6: *But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. 7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; 8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.*

Luke 11:50-51: *50 so that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, 51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary.*

Mark 13:19: *19 For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, and never will be.*

John 5:46-47: *46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"*

Matthew 6:30: *If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?*

Matthew 5:18: *18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*

3. In your own words list Jesus' statements-of-fact contained in these quotes: _____

Other Scriptures on this topic: Romans 1:20; Hebrews 3:4; Psalms 139:13; Ephesians 2:10; Isaiah 40:28; Amos 9:6; Ecclesiastes 3:11; Job 12:7-10

The Bible says God created everything in 6 solar days in Genesis 1 and repeated in Exodus 20
Jesus affirms every 'jot and tittle' of the Bible as written
Science fails continually to support their evolutionary claims
More than an apple, the fact of creation is under attack

Last Word: I don't know how to say this more simply. Old-Earth science is discredited. Biogenesis through random accidents, entirely unsupportable. The emergence of complex life from genetic mutation is endorsed by no one (except 3rd grade science teachers – sadly).

The more *science* discovers the more it supports the Bible narrative. We were sold a bill-of-goods by an atheistic science-culture that is more bent on obstructing truth than finding it. Now they retain their opposition to God and the Bible despite having no credible alternatives to offer.

The Bible says that God created everything in 6-solar days (Genesis 1 and Exodus 20).
Jesus says that every minor detail of the Bible is true (Matthew 6)
Jesus' status as the divine Son of God and God is undeniable – so who do you believe?

Notes and Questions for further study about trusting God:

What does the Bible really say about?

To Thine Own Self Be True

Memory Verse: Jeremiah 17:9 *"The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick..."*

Background: When prompting people to follow their conscience on matters, the often quoted *"To thine own self be true"* is occasionally cited as a Biblical recommendation. In truth, this saying originates in the Shakespearean tragedy Hamlet. Or in other words, it is fictional advice given by fictional characters from a 16th Century playwright who we are not sure actually lived.

What the Bible really says about whose advice we should take: There are many Scriptures that answer this question but these three summarize some of my favorite categories. Reflect on these before we check out the *real question behind the question*.

Psalm 23:1-3 *1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

Proverbs 3:5-6 *5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;*

6 in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

Luke 12:4-5 *4 "I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. 5 But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.*

1. What does David say (in Psalms 23) is the reason God leads us on the right path?

2. Solomon (in Proverbs) advises us against what? _____

3. Jesus makes a strong statement in Luke about what we should allow influence our behavior and thinking. Reflecting on these three, how might you summarize these truths?

Other thoughts or questions on this topic: _____

Depravity Of Man: Central to this question about whose advice we should take is a doctrine called *depravity of man* (meaning all humans, not just males). On its face it seems harsh, but the point it makes is important. People cannot **be good** or **righteous** on our own. God is the only Good in the universe and we rely on Him as our sole source of goodness.

Any direction that we receive that is not originally from God and the Holy Spirit, is suspect and probably dangerous. Here are Scriptures that describe this important doctrine. Reflect on these and consider how they relate to human goodness and our capacity for doing good.

Romans 3:23 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

Psalms 51:5 *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.*

Galatians 5:17 *For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.*

Ephesians 5:8 *you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light*

4. What truth can we gain from these verses about man's ultimate capacity for good?

5. Do those truths influence how you perceive and receive advice, however well intended?

6. In your own words, describe this doctrine and try to do it in an affirmative fashion.

Consider adding these Bible passages to your devotional study on this topic: Mark 7:21; Jeremiah 17:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Genesis 6:5; Romans 3:9-19; Romans 9:5; Jeremiah 17:23; 2 Peter 2:14; John 3:19; Titus 1:15-16.

Other thoughts or questions on this topic: _____

Last Word: the doctrine of *the depravity of man* is not given to make you feel bad or feel guilty. It is a straightforward reality, a tragic reality, for which God took extreme measures to correct. It is also not a doctrine that focuses on humans. The **fact** of sin and the **feat** of sin, lead to the **features** of sin that are all under God's sovereign control.

- ❖ Man did not 'ruin' Creation by sin...God cursed it because His justice requires it.
- ❖ We are not 'sinners' because we have all sinned, but we all sin because we are 'sinners'.
- ❖ God took extreme measures to correct sin because His Holiness requires it.
- ❖ God loves us, not because we deserve it but because His nature deserves it.

Sin is a horrible and rotten thing that ruined God's perfect Creation. As we leave the topic (for the time being) let us reflect on those extreme measures that God took to overcome the problem and consider what our response needs to be in light of God's generosity.

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Romans 5:8 *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

How must we respond?

To be conformed to the image of Christ is not a small adjustment or behavioral modification. It is nothing less than a major renovation from the inside. We need regeneration, to be made over again, to be quickened by the power of the Spirit. The only way this can be done is by the Holy Spirit's changing our core, the heart. However, even that change does not instantly vanquish sin. The complete elimination of sin awaits our glorification in heaven.

Notes and Questions for further study about Original Sin:

What does the Bible really say about?

God won't give you more than you can handle

Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*

Popular Perspective: This is a common saying that has a measure of truth and a wonderful heritage. It is great encouragement to know that God is with us in the person of the Holy Spirit and that we do not face daily challenges alone.

However, where this colloquialism breaks down is when we read it as if God never gives us overwhelming challenges or that we are empowered to handle things in our own strength. Both misconceptions can be harmful and hurtful if taken too far.

What the Bible really says about temptation and testing:

First consider our Memory Verse: Scripture holds many examples of someone facing something they couldn't handle—*but God could and did!* That's the point, including Paul's words to the Corinthians where he tells them God will provide a way of escape from temptation.

If we could handle everything that came our way, we could take care of our sin problem. But we cannot. That's why we continually need provision and intercession from Jesus.

More accurately stated, there isn't anything that **God cannot handle**, so our reliance on Him is the prerequisite that makes everything work.

The critical factor in this Scripture, therefore, is not *our strength* or *ability to handle anything* it is that God does the heavy lifting and whenever we're facing stuff, His power is sufficient and available to get us through the trial (note: not always in the fashion that I may prefer)

Reflect on Scripture: Consider the following verses and what they say about overcoming temptation. First from the book of James where, the brother of our Lord had a lot to say about temptation and testing. Then we will present passages from other authors.

James 1:2-4 *2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

1. Does it appear that our trials serve God's purposes? How? _____

James 1:13 *When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.*

James 4:7 *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

James 1:14 *but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.*

2. Yet, temptation is something to be avoided and is harmful. What is the difference?

James 4:17 *If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.*

3. Is all sin a result from temptation, and does all temptation come from the satan?

1 John 4:4 *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

Matthew 26:41 *"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."*

Psalms 119:11 *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.*

Ephesians 6:10-11 *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.*

Notes and Questions for further study about Trials and Temptations:

What does the Bible really say about?

Noah and the Ark

Memory Verse: Genesis 6:11-14 *The earth was corrupt and was full of violence...So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So, make yourself an ark...*

Popular Perspective: If children's coloring books are any indication, the Ark of Noah was impossible! The boat usually pictured has animals bulging out of the top and is far too small to guard and feed the number of animals necessary for a year-long Flood.

The net result is Bible history being disparaged as parable or folklore. This sad condition sets the stage for students who, as they get older, more easily dismiss the Bible, and eventually walk away from their faith; because they have grown accustomed to letting others to discount God's work.

Further popular belief has contrived an *old-earth* theory of evolution. Ignoring God's eyewitness reports on the basis of their assertions that geological evidence "*prove*" their opinions. They fail to mention the hundreds of factors that make their assumptions impossible, yet they cleave to their preferences because of a philosophical worldview that rejects God's personal engagement.

While we are saddened by any who reject God. Those who perversely and unscientifically present impossible assertions as fact, and teach them to children as truth, are deceitful and blasphemous.

There is more to be said about these issues, but for the purposes of our study, we will focus on what the Bible really says and allow others (including the Holy Spirit) address related matters.

The Bible Record: Genesis 6-9

Read Genesis 6:9-22 and reflect on these eyewitness accounts

Genesis 6:9-22 – a summary

Noah was uniquely qualified, yet he lived in a world that had become intolerably evil. God decided to restart humanity, destroy everything that breathes, and start fresh with Noah. Sharing His plan with Noah, God told him to build a huge barge called an Ark. God commissioned Noah with the plans for the ark (sharing its size dimensions with us) He instructed Noah to assemble animals and food onto the ark. Then God told Noah that He would use a flood to execute His judgment.

Not a word from Noah is reported, just (v.22) ***Noah did everything just as God commanded him.***

1. Summarizing the buildout; are there any elements of the story that you hadn't heard before?

Important Details within the Biblical Record:

v.13 God says that the world had become corrupt because of evil people and that he had to destroy both people and the earth.

vv.14-16 God told Noah to build a huge barge: 510 feet long over 50 feet tall and 80 feet wide. A boat with a roof large enough to carry 450 semi-trailers loaded with food and supplies.

v.17 God said “every living thing that breaths will perish” the Flood was not a regional event.

vv. 19-21 God would bring the animals, Noah would bring the food and supplies and when the time came, he and his family would enter the ark with the animals and survive the flood.

2. Do you have any doubt that the Flood was global. That the ark was capable. Or, that the events were supernatural? Many detractors challenge these factors...what do you think?

Genesis 7:6-12 *6 Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. 7 And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood. 8 Pairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground, 9 male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, as God had commanded Noah. 10 And after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth.*

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, on the seventeenth day of the second month—on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. 12 And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.

Genesis 7:20 *The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than fifteen cubits. 21 Every living thing that moved on land perished—birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. 22 Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died. 23 Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; people and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark.*

3. It is important to God that we know what He is saying: the Flood was global and catastrophic!

Do you have questions or other observations from these verses? _____

Luke 17:26 *“Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.*

4. Review the context of Luke 17. Who is speaking and what does He affirm about the Flood?

5. In light of His affirmation, how must that deepen our resolve for Bible accuracy?

Final Word

Genesis 9:12-17 *12 God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: 13 I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 When I bring clouds over the earth, the rainbow appears in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. 16 Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.”*

17 So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

6. Who are the parties of this covenant? _____

7. Are there conditions? If so, what? _____

Notes and Questions for further study about Noah and the Flood:

Extra Credit:

Read Isaiah 54

To whom is this verse spoken (9) *“To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again.”* What does it say about God’s relationship with Israel?

What does the Bible really say about?

Jesus of Nazareth was an Excellent Teacher

Memory Verse: Luke 4:14-15 *14 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. 15 He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.*

Luke 4:17-21 *17 the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:*

18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

Popular Perspective: Without question Jesus was a remarkable teacher. The gospels are filled with instances when Jesus taught with authority no one else possessed.

Too often, when people say that "*Jesus was a great teacher*" they say it to preface a follow-up comment, eventually intended to diminish His divine qualities and downgrade His ministry to a level parallel with other human accomplishments. That is shamefully false.

Jesus is *not* the same as Buddha or Mohammad or any other human-made religious leader.

Jesus a good teacher, yes. He also **healed**, turned **water into wine**, **walked on water**, **cast out demons**, **knew what people thought**, **predicted the future**, **forgave sin**, and **raised others and Himself from the dead!** - - - This is where I drop the mic... - - -

What the Bible really says about the Divinity of Jesus Christ:

Our discussion will not need to focus on the fact that Jesus taught well...

Our study will focus on Scriptures where Jesus and others said that He is the divine Son of God, member of the Trinity with the identical nature of Yahweh. This is important!

Please give this careful consideration because it is essential for all who claim relationship with God to understand and acknowledge the divinity of Christ.

Jesus' testimony about Himself:

We will first consider the biblical evidence that Jesus said He is the divine Son of God.

John 8:54-58 *Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. 55 Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and obey his word. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."*

58 "Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" 59 At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

Matt. 11:27 *"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.*

John 20:28-29 *28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"*

29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

John 10:30 *I and the Father are one.*

John 14:9 *Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.*

John 5:18 *For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.*

1. What does Jesus claim about Himself in these Scriptures?

2. How should we receive these Word's from Jesus?

Others' testimony about Jesus

In addition to Jesus' personal testimony, these scriptures are a representative sampling of what His apostles thought, said and wrote about their Lord Jesus.

John 1:1-3 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

John 1:18 *No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.*

Matthew 16:16 *Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."*

John 20:28 *Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"*

Colossians 1:15 *The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.*

Philippians 2:5-8 *...have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the nature of a servant in human likeness. 8 And ... humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!*

Romans 9:5 *Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.*

1 John 1:1-2 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. 2 The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.*

1 Cor. 15:3-4 *3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance[a]: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,*

3. What did the apostles believe about Jesus' relationship with God? _____

4. Given the eventual fate of all of the apostles, do you doubt their testimony? Why or why not?

God's Testimony Regarding His Son:

God Himself testified of His Son.

Isaiah 4:14 *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*

Matt. 4:17 *And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*

Matt. 17:5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

Luke 2:9-11 *9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.*

Heb. 1:1-3 *1 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

Hebrews 1:8 (Quoting Ps. 45) *But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.*

Hebrews 1:10 (quoting Ps. 102) *10 He also says, "In the beginning, Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.*

Isaiah 9:6-7 *6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.*

5. What new revelations did you discover from God's own testimony about Jesus?

6. Do you have a favorite verse we didn't include? _____

Final Word:

Knowing truth about Jesus is of paramount importance. Salvation depends upon believing in Jesus Christ (John 3:16) which includes believing the right things.

Jesus is the divine Son of God. The full nature of God. Member of the Trinity, creator and sustainer of all things that were created.

Essential to redemption are the facts that Jesus' sacrifice was freely given, that he was fully human as well as fully God. And, although He was tempted in every way as any human, He lived a perfect life completely free from sin.

He fulfilled perfectly every prophecy spoken about Messiah, and will do it again in fulfillment of every prophecy concerning His Second Coming.

I conclude with a few more observations and then a question:

Jesus said He was the Son of God and God Himself.

Jesus said He was the only source of the *mercy-gift* called salvation.

Jesus was executed by Rome and became alive 3-days later as affirmed by hundreds.

Jesus's apostles all professed these truths up to their individuals deaths by martyrdom.

As did hundreds of other disciples.

If Jesus is a fraud, I can't imagine how to counterfeit all of these factors.

If Jesus is truthful, how do you intend to respond?

Notes and Questions for further study about the deity of Jesus Christ:

What does the Bible really say about?

In All Things, Moderation

Memory Verse: 1 Corinthians 9:25 *“And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.”*

Introduction:

If you knew my family growing up it wouldn't surprise you if I admit we didn't use this saying much around our home. So, it was a surprise to me when I realized how common of a saying it is.

In addition (despite the comical emails many of you have sent) I will not concede any clandestine intentions for scheduling this subject the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

Nevertheless, *“In All Things, Moderation”* is a common saying that many people, including many Christians, believe if it is not specifically recorded in the Bible, it is principally presented as a hard-and-fast doctrinal position.

We will see what the Bible says.

Common Perceptions:

There is not consistent agreement among social commentators about what this phrase means or where it's western/modern heritage originates.

I have seen unsupported guesses that range from Victorian England to the Prohibition or The Great Depression. Other surmise it stems from war-shortages during WWI or II; or an emerging environmental movement that seeks encourage conservation. Any could be a source.

Besides these guesses, there are a variety of documented possibilities.

Background:

Moderation in all things, is derived from **Aristotle's Doctrine of the Mean**, which advises finding the mean, or middle ground, between excess and deficiency. For example: courage is the *“mean”* between rash action and cowardice, in respect to a person's possible responses to danger.

Ref: **Oxford University**: Mid 19th century saying; a modern version could be *there is measure in all things*. The work of Greek poet Hesiod (c.700 bc), *‘observe due measure; moderation is best in all things’*, and Roman writer Plautus (c. 250–184 bc), *‘moderation in all things is the best policy.’*

Ref: **Climber replies** (oneclimbs.com): Basically we have an idea popularized by pagans and used loosely by Christians. The closest thing we have in scripture to this idea is **1 Corinthians 9:25**:

“And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.”

The word temperate here is from the Greek “egkrateuomai” and means to “exercise self-restraint (in diet and chastity)”. Inherent in the idea of Christianity’s self-restraint includes certain things that you must completely restrain yourself from; there’s no middle ground for moderation.

While Paul could be loosely quoting Aristotle, it is more likely that the verse should be rendered as *“wholly self-controlled”* or *“entirely self-disciplined.”*

What the Bible Really Says:

There are many Scriptures that speak to this or similar ideas. Read these and go into the Bible context surrounding these passages if necessary.

Galatians 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

Philippians 4:5 *Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*

Proverbs 25:28 *Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls.*

Ephesians 5:18 *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;*

Proverbs 23:21 *For the drunkard and the glutton will come to poverty.*

1. Considering these Scriptures, what do you think the Bible says about moderation?

2. In your estimations, are there any differences between common understanding and the Bible?

Yet, Scripture also commands us to make an extreme commitment and devotion. Read these and reflect on how they must coordinate in our lives as fully functioning followers of Christ.

Luke 9:23 *And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

Luke 14:26 *"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.*

Luke 14:33 *So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.*

James 1:22 *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

Luke 6:46 *"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?"*

Matthew 7:21 *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*

1 Peter 1:14 *As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance*

Last Word:

There are some actions for which *a moderate amount* isn't a sin but taken in excess it would become sinful. Examples of these could be drinking eating, several leisure activities... and the like.

On the other hand, a moderate amount of sin is still sin! You cannot commit a moderate amount of theft or adultery or murder and it be excused by this colloquialism. While a blinding flash of the obvious to many, be careful because the sentiment that says 'a little bit can't hurt' is never far from our thinking or *rationalizing minds*.

Finally, there are some activities for which *moderation* is not appropriate. In some of these cases moderation is used as a euphemism for compromise. As we saw in Scripture, Jesus said we must be wholly committed to Him even at the price of family relationships.

Additionally, the Bible tells us to flee from sin; not to compromise our testimony or our heavenly rewards. The harshness with which Jesus spoke to the religious elite of His time, gave no quarter for compromise or moderation. Christianity is a fully integrated and fully committed form of life.

Notes and Questions for further study about the deity of Jesus Christ:

What does the Bible really say about?

Closing Comments

I hope that you have enjoyed our time in this series.

As I prepared for the lessons we used; I discovered that there were many more than we could cover in a short series. And many of these unused colloquialisms might even be more interesting or personally meaningful than the ones we chose...

What this says to me is that my personal study and our collective study needs to do this again!

For that reason, I hope that you have and will continue to share popular sayings and ideas that you discover are (or may be) part of the Bible. We will collect a new list and next time God gives us leave to conduct a similar study, we will be ready.

For your inspiration and to prime the pump...below I've begun a list of *honorable mentions*. Phrases and cultural proverbs that may (or may not) have roots in God's Holy Word.

Enjoy!

Honorable mentions:

This too shall pass
Once saved, always saved
Do unto others as you would have them do unto you
The blind leading the blind
By the skin of your teeth
Eat, drink and be merry
A millstone around your neck
Writing on the wall

Phrases you want to add to the list: