

A Simple Summary

Q. What does the Bible primarily teach?

A. The Bible primarily teaches what man must believe about God and what God requires of man.

(Westminster Shorter Catechism #3)

*“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments,
For this is man’s all.”*

(Ecclesiastes 12:13)

The Bible is a big book. Actually the Bible is a collection of sixty-six books written by about forty different authors over the course of approximately 1,500 years. It contains a whopping 1,189 chapters and a staggering 31,102 verses. Needless to say the Bible is probably the biggest book you will ever read in your entire life! Not only is the Bible massive in regards to its size, it is also immense in terms of the scope of what it contains. Perhaps no other book spans as many types of literature as the Bible. The Bible is comprised of books of law, history, poetry, prophecy, biography, gospels and epistles (*formal letters*). On top of all that, the Bible is divided into two sections (*or testaments*) referred to as the Old and New Testaments. The word “*Bible*” comes from the Greek word “βιβλος” (*biblion*) which simply means “*book*”. However, given the importance and the significance of the Bible, it may be more fitting to refer to the Bible as the “*book of all books*”!

You see, not only is the Bible the greatest work of literary achievement in all antiquity (*which it is*), but the most important fact about the Bible has to do with its primary author. The Bible is none other than the very words of God Himself. 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that, “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...*”. That word “*inspiration*” comes from the Greek word “θεόπνευστος” (*theopneustos*) which literally means “*God breathed*”. The Bible was essentially “*breathed out*” by God. The Scriptures are full of the very words and sentences of God. The Apostle Peter reaffirms this truth in his second epistle when he wrote, “*for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*” (2 Peter 1:21). The Bible is nothing less than the inspired (*God-Breathed*), infallible (*incapable of being wrong*) and inerrant (*completely without error*) Word of the living God.

As Christians we understand and confess this truth. Christians are those who believe, trust, defend, love and share the Scriptures. But for most of us, we are still left with one big question: What is the Bible all about? What is the big idea? What is the basic and essential message of the Bible? Perhaps you yourself have picked up the Bible with great intentions of reading the Bible from cover to cover, only to give up when you reached the book of Leviticus because you found yourself completely confused, unable to see the forest through the trees.

In anticipating this issue, the writers of the Westminster Shorter Catechism decided to tackle this issue right away as they wrote their catechism. They asked this question, *“What does the Bible primarily teach?”*. And they answer this question with clarity and simplicity by stating, *“The Bible primarily teaches what man must believe about God and what God requires of man.”* In this brilliant and succinct statement, we find an easy answer to a big question. What is the main purpose of the Bible? The main purpose of the Bible is to teach us what we need to BELIEVE and what we need to DO. Its purpose is to teach us what we need to BELIEVE about God, the world, humanity, our problem with sin and our only hope of salvation which is the person of Jesus Christ. And then after we have come to BELIEVE these doctrines, we are then led to what we need to DO. We are led by the scriptures as to how we can live our lives in such a way that is pleasing to God. Dig into the Book of all books today!

Dig Even Deeper into God’s Word!

John 5:39

John 20:31

Romans 10:17

Deuteronomy 10:12-13