

Biblical Literacy

Session 1 – A Basic Overview

The Bible:

- It was written over a period of nearly 1500 years by many different authors – including fishermen, a cup-bearer to the king, shepherds, farmers, rabbis, a tax collector, a doctor, poets, kings, preachers, and prisoners.
- Consists of 66 books: 39 in the Old Testament; 27 in the New. Although it is 66 separate books, it is also a single book
- The “Testaments” are better called *covenants* between God and His people.
- Christ is the centerpiece
- It contains endless cross references (*see the graphic*)
- There are numerous metanarratives, or over-arching stories
 - Love and Desire (we are loved and we love in response)
 - God with us (Immanuel & all the promises that "I will be with you")
 - The Presence of God
 - Vine/Vineyard
 - Sheep/Shepherd
 - The Breath of God
 - Heart/Internal Motivation
 - Brokenness Leading to Dependence
 - Unmerited Favor
 - A Light to the Nations
 - Hospitality
 - Creation → fall → redemption → restoration
 - Exodus → new Exodus
 - God’s Kingship
 - The City of God
 - Heaven & Earth as One (OR earth filled with heaven)
 - Bringing Life to the Lifeless

These metanarratives will be the subject of the conversation on Sept. 25

The Bible says many things about itself. In fact, check out these quotes from Josh Byers:

The Bible makes monumental claims about itself. It describes itself as light to guide the lost, medicine to revive the sick, wisdom to correct the foolish, inspiration to cheer the sorrowful, and balm to heal the blind. It insists that it is more valuable than gold and sweeter than honey. It declares that it is able to teach truth and correct error, that it will guide us away from unethical behavior and toward behavior that serves and blesses others.

It unveils the mind of God, reveals the will of God, describes the work of God, calls the reader to faith in God, invites the reader to redeem the world *with* God. ... The Bible tells us who we are, why we exist, why we are so messy, how we are to relate to God, and how everything will someday be made right. The Bible exists to impart true and sound wisdom from God to humanity. It is through the Bible that we come to a correct knowledge of God and of ourselves.

It points to the person behind the text — Spending time in the scriptures is more about building a relationship than fulfilling a duty. Just as in any loving relationship, the closer we get, the more we open up to others. God tells us that He confides in those who fear Him; He makes His covenant known to them (Psalm 25:14).

It is revelation — revelation of God, of God's character, of people responding to God.

It encourages us to commit itself to heart