

The Truth May Impact Your Opinion

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The Truth May Impact Your Opinion

o·pin·ion [uh-pin-yuhn]

–noun

1. a belief or judgment that rests on grounds insufficient to produce complete certainty.
2. a personal view, attitude, or appraisal.

truth [trooth]

–noun, plural truths [troothz, trooths]

1. the [true](#) or actual state of a matter: He tried to find out [the](#) truth.
2. conformity with fact or reality; verity: the truth of a statement.

Definitions from Dictionary.com

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Introduction

We are of the "opinion", pardon the pun; that the culture and the world at large has bought, wholesale, into the idea that one's opinion makes something true. This however, has never been nor can ever be true. We believe that people commonly state their opinions as truth because they believe they are the same as truth and that truth is relative to one's opinion. However, truth is objective and opinion is subjective. We believe if an individual would honestly and logically, reason about the difference between truth and opinion that he would come to the same conclusion. For example, any Dallas Cowboy fan could have the opinion that the 2009 team was a better team than the 2010 team. That would be subject to his own opinion. However, he could not have the opinion that the new Cowboy stadium resides in Irving, Texas. Why? Because the Dallas Cowboy stadium was moved to Arlington, Texas a few years ago. This is a fact. This is an

objective truth and one's opinion cannot change or even affect that reality.

Consider another example. Who is the 44th president of the United States of America? There are six and a half billion people in the world. But there is only one right answer to this question. It may be your opinion that this person should not have been elected but that does not change the fact that he was elected. The 44th president is Barack Obama. We have election results, the electoral college results and evidence that he was sworn in as president. So whether you believe that he is the 44th president or not, your opinion on the matter does not change the facts.

There is a human phenomenon where just believing something makes it so for them. Consider the debate between Coke and Pepsi. Which is better? It's a personal preference. But there is no set standard to indicate one is actually better than the other. On the other hand, consider which team is the best professional football team in a given year. Each fan

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may have their favorite. In fact we could look at ticket sales or merchandise sales to determine which team is the most popular. However those sales do not confirm or deny which team is actually the best. No, the best team is determined by a playoff system that leads to the Super Bowl with one team being crowned World Champion. So regardless if you believe the winner is the best, they have proven it on the field by a set of rules.

On a simple level if you say you don't believe in trucks, what happens when you stand in the road and the next truck comes along? Splat! Basic logic applies also in mathematics. Two plus two is always four (in base 10). No matter how much you believe the answer is five, it does not change the fact that $2+2=4$.

So what about in the spiritual realm? Do these same basic rules apply? Could there be one truth about God, eternity and what happens when you die? A website on the internet categorizes over 4,300 different religions. Is it good enough to just believe

something? Anything? Or does it actually matter what you believe? Yes, it absolutely matters; you must believe the truth. As a matter of fact, your eternal destination will be determined by what and whom you believe. Just like the president is the president, the Super Bowl champion is the Super Bowl champion and $2+2$ is 4, there must be one right answer when it comes to spiritual truth.

Furthermore, neither religious majority, rapid growth, massive attendance nor popular opinion make one's belief true. No! To the contrary, the Bible indicates that the vast majority of mankind will be wrong if they use these variables to determine truth. Dead wrong!

Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. (Matthew 7:13-14)

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Did you catch that? The Bible says that many will find the way to destruction and only a few will find the way to life. Some say there is no God. Others say there is. Some say there is reincarnation. Some say there is not. Some say there is a day of judgment. Others say everyone will go to Heaven. With sobering sincerity, one's opinion on these matters is truly irrelevant.

There is a **way** that **seems right** to a **man**, but its end is the **way** to death. (Proverbs 14:12)

What matters most is the truth! Some say there is no absolute truth. Are they absolutely sure? If so, then they are wrong that there is no absolute truth because their statement is absolute. Just like when we can prove who the president is, we automatically eliminate all of the other options. Therefore, if we can prove one religion or one God is true then all the others are false. Period! End of discussion. Before you move on, please pause and consider what has been

said. God has given you the ability to apply basic logic and reasoning to sincerely consider what is being said, in regards to there being one truth, God or religion that eliminates all others. Please consider Jesus' words on the issue:

I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me.
(John 14:6)

It is our hope and prayer that the truth will impact your opinion on these matters.

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Part 1: What does the Bible say

Everyone has an opinion about what happens when they die. Some form their opinion from what they have learned in the classroom. More often, their opinion is formed from their religious beliefs. Some people believe that nothing happens when they die. Others believe in reincarnation. It is reasonable to say that whatever happens to one person must happen to all. It is like gravity. No matter how much you believe you can fly, every person will see the same results if they jump off of a skyscraper. There must be a truth about what happens when a person dies. Either one of the beliefs could be right or they could all be wrong. But it is simply not possible for multiple, mutually exclusive beliefs to be true at the same time.

Let's consider the Bible. The Bible is the most widely printed book in history. The Bible claims to be the word of God. Furthermore, in the Bible, Jesus claims to be God. It makes these bold claims. So let's take a

look at what the Bible says happens when you die. Consider these verses:

It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment (Hebrews 9:27)

For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. (Romans 2:12)

In other words, what the Bible says is that when you die, you'll be judged by God's standard, The Ten Commandments. Many people have learned the Ten Commandments sometime in their life. The Ten Commandments are in the news all the time. There are court cases about removing the Ten Commandments from public buildings. But, what do the Ten Commandments actually say? And more importantly, what do they mean to you, today?

The ninth commandment says you shall not lie. Have you ever told a lie? If so, God sees you as a liar. Revelation 21:8 says that all liars will have their place

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in the lake of fire, which is Hell. Some people will say that they have only told small white lies. Others will say that their lies did not hurt anyone. Yet, even in these cases, God sees you as a liar.

The eighth commandment says you shall not steal. Have you ever stolen anything, regardless of how small the value? Did you ever take a pen or a pencil when you were a child? Did you steal a piece of candy? When you were in school did you cheat on a test and take an answer that did not belong to you? Have you broken the speed limit while driving your car, in essence, stealing speed? If so, God sees you as a thief.

The sixth commandment says you shall not murder. Perhaps you are saying to yourself, "I've never killed anyone". Jesus took this to an even higher standard, even judging the thought life, saying, "everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment" and "whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire" (Matthew 5:22). Ever hated someone or called

them a fool? Consider driving your car in a major city at rush hour, then answer again! Then God sees you as a murderer at heart. Not just a murderer, but a lying, thieving, murderer at heart!

That's just three of the Ten Commandments. Need we go on?

The third commandment says you shall not use God's name in vain. Have you ever used God's name or Jesus' name carelessly or as a curse word? That is called blasphemy. Even something many people consider very innocent like text messaging "OMG" is using God's name carelessly. In Exodus 20:7 God says that he will not hold anyone guiltless that uses his name in vain. You don't swear on your mother's name or your dog's name or even on Adolf Hitler's name or on the name of the president, do you? Neither should you carelessly use the name of the creator of the universe who even gave you life. It's called blasphemy and it is a very serious offense.

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The fifth commandment says that you shall honor your mother and father. Have you always done that? Perfectly? Your entire life? Who could honestly say that for their entire life they always obeyed mom and dad perfectly when asked to do something or even honored them in all that they do? Most parents have to count “one, two, two and a half, two and three quarters” in order for little Johnny to do what he was told. As adults, the command to honor your mother and father may include helping to take care of them, and even living an honorable life to show them respect and honor that they deserve. Have you ever dishonored your mother or father?

The tenth commandment says that you shall not covet. Have you ever desired something that belonged to someone else? Maybe you wanted their car or house. Maybe you even wanted their family or their wife. God says that desiring what is not yours is coveting. Answer quietly to yourself. Have you done that?

The seventh commandment says that you shall not commit adultery. Listen to Jesus' words in Matthew 5:27-28, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Looking at another person with sexual desire is the same thing as committing the physical act in God's sight. Have you done that?

The fourth commandment says to remember the sabbath day and keep it Holy. God created the heavens and the earth in six days. On the seventh day he rested. In the same way, he has set apart one day as holy. Have you ever worked on Saturday? If so, you have broken the Sabbath. In the Bible, the Jews took this very seriously. Even carrying a mat was considered work. In this regard, no one can claim that they have kept this commandment their entire life.

The first and second commandments say you shall not have any gods before me and you shall not bow

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down to idols. These can be looked at like putting anything in your life that is more important than God. The God of the Bible, that is. You see, every man-made religion will cause a person to break this commandment, if their religion is not following the one true God of the Bible.

At this point you may be thinking that you have not broken all of these commandments. Maybe you have broken just one or two of them a couple of times in your life.

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. (James 2:10)

What this verse is saying is that even if you were perfect your entire life, and then told just one little white lie, God will still see you as guilty on judgment day!

How will you do on judgment day? Does God see you (by your own admission) as a liar, a thief, a murderer and a blasphemer at heart? Does he see you as a

dishonorer of mom and dad, a coveter and an adulterer at heart? Does he see you as one who has broken the Sabbath? Have you made a god to suit yourself, even putting that god before the one true God of the Bible?

all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

If you honestly look into the Ten Commandments as a mirror the only conclusion you can reach is that you are guilty of breaking them all!

Will you be innocent or guilty?

Should God reward you with eternity in Heaven or punish you with an eternity in Hell?

“For You *are* not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, Nor shall evil dwell with You.”
(Psalm 5:4 NKJV)

Because God is Holy, righteous and good, He cannot be in the presence of any sin. In addition, God is perfectly just. He must punish sin! What each and

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every person rightly deserves is an eternity in Hell. Now you might be saying to yourself that you don't mind going to Hell because all of your friends will be there. But please consider how the Bible describes Hell. Hell is a horrific eternal destination!. The Bible describes it this way:

- A place of torment (Luke 16:23, 33)
- place where wickedness dwells (Psalm 55:15)
- A place of unquenchable fire. It is better to lose your hand, foot or eye. (Mark 9:43-48)
- A lake that burns with fire and brimstone (Revelation 21:8)
- A bottomless pit (Revelation 20:1)
- A horrible tempest (Psalm 11:6)
- A place of everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46)

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- A place where people cry for mercy (Luke 16:24)
 - A place where people wail (Matthew 13:42)
 - A place where people have no rest (Revelation 14:11)
 - A place where the smoke of torment ascends forever (Revelation 14:11)
 - In the lower parts of the earth (Ephesians 4:7-9)

Does it concern you that because you have sinned against God, that you deserve to go to Hell for all eternity? It should and it greatly concerns us. There is hope. Listen to what the Bible says:

The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)

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For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:3-4)

You see, God does not want you to go to Hell. However, he must punish sin. Therefore, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to earth. Jesus being fully God and fully man lived a perfect life and then willingly went to the cross to die in the place of sinners. Jesus had no sin nor did he ever break God's law. He claimed to be equal with God, and to have power to forgive sin. He claimed to know all things. He said of Himself, "I have power to lay down My life (crucified), and power to take it up again (resurrected)." Jesus died in your place, and was raised to life on the third day. It was not the price that was paid that satisfies God, but the worth of the One who paid the price: Jesus Christ, the Son of God. God commands you to repent, and to place your faith in the indescribable gift of Jesus alone, that you may not be condemned, but have eternal life. Jesus said, "The

time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). In Acts 17:30-31, the apostle Paul wrote, "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

Finally, in perhaps the most quoted scripture verse of all time, John 3:16 states, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Each and every person has broken God's law. Each one deserves to be punished in Hell. But, God himself has paid the fine. Jesus died to pay for your sin. Eternal life can be yours if you will repent and believe in Christ for your eternal life.

What will you do? How will you respond?

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Just as Jesus asked the Jews, His disciples and Pontius Pilate; He asks the same question of everyone. “Who do you say that I Am ?”

Ultimately, every person needs to answer the question of who is Jesus to them.

The Gospel message just presented seems simple enough. Man has sinned against a Holy God. Man deserves eternal punishment. You can take the punishment yourself and spend eternity in Hell or you can repent of your sin and put your trust in Jesus and have eternal life. Yet, even in this simple message many people object. At this point you may be objecting to the simple message of the Gospel. Addressing the most common objections is the subject of part 2 of this booklet.

Part 2: Objections to the Gospel

In part 2 of this book we examine six common objections to the Gospel. These are:

Objection #1: I have my Religion

Objection #2: The Bible isn't true

Objection #3: Jesus is just a man

Objection #4: I'm a Good person

Objection #5: There is no God

Objection #6: I don't believe that

Let's get started!

Objection #1: I have my Religion

Many times in the course of sharing the gospel, a person responding to the good news will say, "I have

my own religion." The problem with the common and universal idea of religion in any form is that the vast majority of what is called "religion", is merely man's works and efforts in an attempt to appeal to a holy God. With all due respect, man's religion is arrogant and offensive to a holy God. Why? Because God's only remedy for man's sin problem in contrast to God's holiness has never been nor ever could be the "religion" of man. How can a wretched sinner approach a perfectly, holy and righteous God? He cannot! He has no right to! In the book of Exodus a very well respected and humble man named Moses asked to see the face of God. In other words, he wanted to see and experience the fullness and presence of God almighty. God's response to Moses is that no man can look at me and live. In other words, God was saying, you cannot access me in the fullness of My glory.

Now wait a minute!

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Wasn't Moses the guy whom God said He spoke with on a regular basis with plain, concise instructions and not in parables. Yes, that was Moses. However, not even Moses could enter into the presence of and fullness of God. King David wrote a similar thing in Psalm 5:4 "You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness nor will evil dwell with you". Why is it then that man would be so arrogant to assume that he could appeal to a holy God by his own means (religion) and on his own terms? Answer, in a word, sin. Yes, sin is the culprit. We were born with a sin nature and all of the sins that mankind commits, readily flow out of our sin nature. Religion is merely a way that man has devised to cover his sins and sin nature. Man's "religion" is like a mask that he hides behind so that he can continue to practice sin. Deceptively convenient, wouldn't you say! That's right, very deceptive indeed. However, the only one being deceived is the man who would be convinced that his "religion" could make him acceptable to a holy God. Listen to what the Lord says about the

condition of man's heart in Jeremiah 17:9, with regards to sin and being deceived, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked". Furthermore, if anyone is trusting in his religion to make himself acceptable to God, we can only conclude that he has no idea of the meaning of holiness, nor does he understand God's hatred for sin. Otherwise, he would never assume that his man made "religion" could do anything for him, much less, save, redeem or justify him.

So what is God's answer for man's sin problem in contrast to God's holiness. In a name, Jesus. Notice how God's remedy for salvation is not a religion, concept, ideology, or philosophy. No, God's answer for man's sin that has caused separation from Himself is a person and His name is Jesus. Yes, only God can provide the means for man's salvation. In Isaiah 43:10, the Lord declares that He alone is the only Savior. Therefore, if He is the only Savior, why would anyone think his religion could save him? We answered this question earlier. Can you understand how arrogant it

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would be to say to God, "I would like to offer my own solution for salvation?" It would be like a person trying to buy a 10 million dollar airplane by offering 10 cents to the owner. Moreover, if God is the only Savior, then how does He save us? The answer is by the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ and furthermore, Jesus must be God! Jesus is declared to be God many times in scripture. He also proved to be God, by fulfillment of prophecy, miracles, the resurrection and so on. Through logic and reasoning, He must be God because if Jesus was just a man, He would not be sinless and only God is sinless. Only a perfect sinless sacrifice could bear the penalty for man's sin and simultaneously meet the perfect standard of a holy God. In the gospel of John, chapter 6, Jesus asks His disciples if they wanted to leave him just after a group of unbelievers had departed from Him. The apostle Peter responds by saying to whom shall we go (John 6:68)? Please notice, Peter does not say; to where shall we go as if to suggest that salvation could be found in a religious denomination,

even a Christian denomination. Nor does he say, to what shall we go as if salvation could be found in any "religion" of man. No, Peter says to whom shall we go? That whom is none other than Jesus the Christ.

Objection #2: The Bible isn't true

Another common objection to the Gospel message in the Bible is the belief that the Bible is not true. The argument might be expressed as "I don't believe the Bible" or "wasn't the Bible just written by men?" or "the Bible has been changed" or "the Bible contradicts itself." Perhaps you have even thought or said these things. There is considerable evidence for the truth of the Bible. Let's examine some of the evidence.

Scientific Evidence

First, there is scientific evidence. Thousands of years before scientists learned certain truths, the Bible documented these truths in its writings. How could men have written down these truths before they were

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known by the scientific community unless the book was divinely inspired? Let's look at a few examples of scientific truths written in the Bible thousands of years before scientists figured these things out:

1. The earth is a sphere (Isaiah 40:22)
2. Innumerable stars (Jeremiah 33:22)
3. Free float of earth in space (Job 26:7)
4. Creation made of invisible elements (Hebrews 11:3)
5. Each star is different (1 Corinthians 15:41)
6. Light moves (Job 38:19-20)
7. Air has weight (Job 28:25)
8. Winds blow in cyclones (Ecclesiastes 1:6)

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9. Blood is the source of life and health (Leviticus 17:11)
 10. Ocean floor contains deep valleys and mountains (2 Samuel 22:16, Jonah 2:6)
 11. Ocean contains springs (Job 38:16)
 12. When dealing with disease, hands should be washed under running water (Leviticus 15:13)

Prophetic Evidence

Second, there is prophetic evidence. Starting in the book of Genesis and proceeding throughout the Old Testament there is prophecy of God sending a Savior. Throughout the course of the Bible, this prophecy becomes more and more clear. In the New Testament of the Bible it is revealed that Jesus is the prophesied Messiah. In fact, it is not possible for any other person to fulfill these prophecies. Some of the prophecies of Christ include:

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- ⤴ God's promises of a Savior to Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:15)
- ⤴ God promises a sign (Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6)
- ⤴ Prophecy of the death of Christ (Isaiah 53)
- ⤴ Christ's birth is fulfilled (Luke 2:9, 11)
- ⤴ God's timing was perfect (Galatians 4:4-5)
- ⤴ They pierced my hands and feet and cast lots for my clothing (Psalm 22:16)

There is also other prophecy in the Bible besides just that of Christ. The thing about the prophecy in the Bible is that it has come true. Therefore, we can trust that the remaining things in the Bible are true. Specifically, we can know that God is real, Heaven and Hell exist and that all men will go to Hell unless they repent of their sins and put their trust in the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Historical Evidence

There is also historical evidence that the Bible is true. In ancient days, there was no printing press, or copy machine. Instead copies were made by hand and handed down from person to person. By comparing the remaining copies we can determine the historical accuracy of the original documents. Consider ancient manuscripts like the Homer's Illiad and Ceasar's Gallic Wars. The oldest copies of these manuscripts were written 500 to 1,000 years after the original and there is a mere few hundred copies to verify the text is accurate. Now consider the New Testament. Copies exist from just 25 years after the original was written. And over 24,000 copies of those manuscripts exist today to verify what the originals say., (source Josh McDowell, Evidence that Demands a Verdict). In the table below we have listed some of the most well known ancient manuscripts along with how long after the original the oldest manuscript we have today is along with the number of early manuscripts that we have today. As you can see, the New Testament has

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far more early manuscripts available. And the oldest manuscript is from much closer to the original work than any of the other ancient works.

Ancient Work	Oldest Manuscript	Number of early Manuscripts
Homer's Illiad	500 years	643
Julius Ceasar's		
Gallic Wars	1,000 years	10
Pliney's History	750 years	7
Thucydides's History	1,300 years	8
Herodotus's History	1,300 years	8

New Testament	25 years	>24,000
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The New Testament is too embarrassing to be false

Author Frank Turek states, “if there is something embarrassing written about the authors then it is probably true.” People tend to present themselves in the best possible light. So when writing a historical record, people do not tend to make things up that make them look bad. Yet in the New Testament, time after time the authors make themselves look bad. Men fall asleep when they were supposed to stand watch. Men report that women found the empty tomb. And other things of this magnitude that simply could not have been made up.

Continuity of the Bible

The Bible is like no other writing in terms of its continuity; providing a continuous and connected message. All of the authors of the Bible; from cover to

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cover, convey a common theme and message. This is an amazing reality!

A May 4, 2011 article in the USA Today reports the release of "a revised version of how the world's most notorious terrorist was killed." The original reports, from the day before, of bin Laden's death said that bin Laden "engaged in a firefight". In the updated report, bin Laden "was not armed." Here we see a news report less than one day later conflicts with the previous report.

Now consider the Bible. The Bible is actually a collection of 66 books, written by over 40 authors, in several different languages over a span of more than 1,000 years. Yet, it does not contradict itself, even once.

Take this one step further. The Bible claims to be the actual word of God.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for

correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Now you might be saying, hold on a second, you just said there were over 40 different authors. So isn't the Bible just a book written by men? Yes and No! What the Bible says about itself is that it was written by men who were inspired by God. Let's say you write a letter to your mother. Did you write the letter, or did the pen, pencil or computer that you used write the letter? Of course, you wrote it. The pen, pencil or computer was merely the instrument used to write the letter. In the same way, God used men as his instruments to write the text of the Bible.

The consequence is too great!

At the end of the day, what does this all mean? If the consequence is Hell, it is only reasonable that God would make it explicitly clear what it takes to escape Hell and get to Heaven. The Bible stands alone among

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religious manuscripts in this regard. As we have already observed, other religions cannot offer the same assurance of salvation that the Bible offers. The message of the Bible is “Repent and believe the Gospel” (Mark 1:15). The Bible assures a person that has trusted in Jesus to have eternal life and all others to face God's wrath for all eternity (John 3:36). Since the consequences are as great as an eternity in Hell, it is extremely comforting to know that God has provided a way out! Or should we say the way out, Jesus!

Have you read the Bible?

We hope and pray that all of these facts about the Bible is a compelling reason to read it. According to Wikipedia.org there are five books that have sold over 100 million copies. “A Tale of Two Cities” tops that list indicating that it has sold more than 200 million copies. Many people may choose to read that book simply because it has sold the most copies. The Bible is not included in this list according to Wikipedia

because when factoring in the number of copies of the Bible that are given away it is impossible to determine the exact number of Bibles ever printed. Our research indicates that it is estimated that well over six billion copies of the Bible have been printed in more than one thousand languages. This makes the Bible by far the most published book in the history of the world. That alone should be a compelling reason to read the Bible. We invite and encourage you to get a Bible. Please see the Appendix for a suggested reading plan.

Objection #3: Jesus was just a man

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either

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be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the [Son of God](#), or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God." (C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*)

Some say that Jesus was just a man. Others say he was a teacher or a prophet. Some religions will go as far as

to say that Jesus was the “Son of God”, but will deny that He was and is God. Why are those who trust in their own way to God, when confronted with the fact that Jesus is God, quickly reject His deity as God? The answer is obvious. For the non-Christian who is trusting in his or her own works, Jesus cannot be God. Why? Because a works based ideology or false religion has no room for an authentic Savior. The idea flies in the face of one's self proclaimed righteousness, works and belief in any false religion. Is it any wonder why people who are trusting in themselves or false religion to be made right with God, not only deny the deity of Jesus Christ but are antagonistic towards the thought of Him being God? This is why in so many cases throughout the New Testament, the scripture says that the religious leaders and His countrymen wanted to destroy Him.

Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.
(Matthew 12:14 NKJV)

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Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him. (Mark 3:6 NKJV)

So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. (Luke 4:28,29 NKJV)

In John 7:7, Jesus says, "the world cannot hate you but it hates me because I testify that it's deeds are evil." Is there any wonder why He is called "a stumbling stone and a rock of offense" (Isaiah 8:14)? Have you ever had a rock leap out at you? This One does! This rock, Jesus gets right in every man's face. And every man knows in his heart, at some point he will have to face Jesus Christ. Thus, the truth that He is not only the unique Son of God but God the Son becomes very

offensive to one who desires to be justified by his own means and on his own terms. Once again, what is at the root of the problem for denying that Jesus is God? In a word, sin. An unbeliever knows in his heart that if he were to acknowledge his sin, repent and trust in Jesus; God incarnate, then he will have to forsake his sin. This however, is contrary to everything that man is. This strikes right at the very heart of man's depraved nature. The truth is, if one acknowledges that Jesus is God and Savior, then he can no longer act as if he is god. As mankind, we innately don't want to give up our fictitious throne as god!

Nevertheless, Jesus is in fact God, and through deductive reasoning one must conclude that by necessity He must be God! As we have mentioned earlier, there are many scriptures and eyewitness testimonies that declare Him to be God. Here are a few references in the Old and New Testaments:

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To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:1)

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel (Matthew 1:23)

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David (Luke 1:32)

And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (Luke 1:43)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory

as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." (John 8:58)

Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28)

But to the Son He says, your throne O' God is forever and ever (Hebrews 1:8)

Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28)

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his

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shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. (Isaiah 44:6)

These verses and many others clearly claim that Jesus is God but just in case you are skeptical and like so many people, deny the validity of the Bible; lets reason together as to why Jesus must be God. If God is Holy, then Jesus must be God. Why? Because for man to be saved from God's wrath a perfect, sinless, substitutionary sacrifice is necessary. God requires that the penalty for man's sin be satisfied or paid for.

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will

of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the labor of His soul and be satisfied. (Isaiah 53:10)

Please understand, a holy God will not compromise when it comes to justice. Otherwise, He would not be holy. Because God is holy and man is completely unholy, God has to provide His own sacrifice so that sinful man can be justified and this sacrifice must meet the perfect standard of a holy God. Only God is without sin, thus Jesus by necessity must be God. Furthermore, Jesus cannot merely be just a man. If He was born by human means through the seed of man, he would have a sin nature. He would have been born as an offspring of Adam and would have inherited the sin of Adam just as you and me.

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man(Adam), and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned (Romans 5:12)

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If that were the case, He could in no way help us. He could not be the provision for man's salvation. This is why the Bible makes it so clear that He was born of a virgin and conceived by the Holy Spirit.

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:20)

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy— the Son of God. Luke 1:35

Let us reiterate the point. He (Jesus) must be God, otherwise there is absolutely no provision for man's justification, salvation or redemption.

Objection #4: I'm a Good person

A common objection to the Gospel is that someone may say "I'm a good person". In essence what a person is saying is that they are good enough to have favor with God on their own merit. Remember in the discussion of the Ten Commandments there has to be a payment for sin. God's only acceptable payment is either your death and eternity in Hell, or the death of His Son Jesus Christ. When a man repents and puts his trust in Jesus, that payment is credited to the man as payment for his sin.

The reality of the Bible is that none of us are good. Certainly not good enough to go to Heaven. Romans 3:23 declares that, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God".

Maybe you are thinking, that one little white lie is not that bad. Or, you are thinking that all the good things that you have done in your life that should make up for the bad things you have done. Perhaps you believe that there is something you can do to make up for

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your sin. If that is the case, then how much good must someone do to make up for a lie? How much good must someone do to make up for stealing something? What about murdering someone? How much good works should someone do to make up for that?

Surely if God wanted man to earn his way to Heaven by doing good things to make up for the bad then there would be a document someplace that would describe how much good is needed to make up for bad. The fact is, no such document exists.

The other possibility is that when a person says they are good, they are not using God's standard, but rather their own standard of goodness. Perhaps you are comparing yourself to your neighbor and saying, "at least I am not like him." Or else you consider the lies you tell or the things you steal and just say, "Well, everyone does it, so I am no worse than them."

Let's try that in a court of law. The dictionary defines a misdemeanor as "A criminal offense that is less serious than a felony and generally punishable by a

fine, a jail term of up to a year, or both." By comparison, a felony is defined as "One of several grave crimes, such as murder, rape, or burglary, punishable by a more stringent sentence than that given for a misdemeanor."

Someone who has never even had a speeding ticket could say to themselves, "I am good, at least I've never been convicted of a misdemeanor!" The guy who has been convicted of a misdemeanor can say, "At least, I did not have to go to jail." The one who went to jail can say, "At least I was not convicted of a felony." And the felon can still say, "At least I don't have multiple murders against my name." Even the most despicable man on death row could say, "At least I am not Adolf Hitler."

Notice that in all of these cases the comparison is to another person but that other person has also done things wrong. Let's consider instead a white sheet of paper. Now put one drop of red ink on it. The eye will instantly be drawn to the red spot. Why? Because it

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stands out. Consider a white lamb. It looks pretty white when standing in the green grass. But put that same lamb in the snow and suddenly it looks pretty dirty. You see our goodness is relative to a standard. God's standard is perfection. Let's look at how the Bible describes the human condition:

But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousness is like filthy rags; (Isaiah 64:6 NKJV)

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5)

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9)

They have all fallen away; together they have become corrupt; there is

none who does good, not even one. (Psalm 53:3)

Why is this so important? It is because God is perfectly good and Holy.

For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. (Psalm 5:4)

You see, God cannot be in the presence of any evil. All sin must be removed. Only Jesus offers the payment to remove your sin. Repent and trust in Jesus alone and you will have eternal life.

Objection #5: There is no God

Another common objection is that there is no God. Some say that they do not believe that God exists. Maybe it is because they cannot see him with their eyes. Does God really exist? Isn't he just something that kids or the weak minded believe in? Let's take a

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quick look at how we know that the creator, the God of the Bible exists.

Look around you, starting with your own body. The eye that you use to see is made of millions of cells that did not just happen by accident. Your heart pumps blood through veins. They all work perfectly together. We live on this giant ball called earth that free floats in space and orbits the sun with seven other planets. All of these bodies are in perfect alignment with each other. We can look out into space and see more and more of creation. Science can help explain how it operates. However, science cannot explain where it came from. If you walk into a building, you know there was a builder. You don't have to know his name or meet him personally. The fact that the building exists is proof that the builder does too. In this way, creation is proof that there must be a creator!

“The heavens declare the glory of God; The skies proclaim the work of his hands.”
(Psalm 19:1)

Furthermore, the Bible goes on to say that every person knows that God exists. However, men choose to ignore God and pretend that His judgment is not coming.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal

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man and birds and animals and creeping things. (Romans 1:18-23 ESV)

The logical conclusion is that God exists. Therefore, we must prepare for the day of our death when God will judge us based on the Ten Commandments. The only way to be reconciled to God is through the gospel message of faith in Jesus Christ!

Creation is one evidence of God's existence. Another is the conscience. The conscience was given to each of us by God as a way of knowing right and wrong. In fact, conscience comes from combining the word "con" which means "with" and the word "science" which means "knowledge"; thus, "with knowledge". In essence, the conscience is an indicator to each one of us that every time we do something wrong it is done "with knowledge" that it is wrong. This is why a person knows that certain things are wrong.

I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart. (Psalm 40:5)

Let's say your rotten neighbor and your favorite dog are both in the middle of the road when a bus comes speeding down the street. You can only save one of them. Your conscience tells you that the right thing to do is to save the rotten neighbor. Why? Because human life intrinsically has more value than that of an animal. Your conscience tells you so.

Go back to the discussion of the Ten Commandments. Because God has written His Law on your heart, you actually know that breaking his law is wrong. When you lie, steal, hate and look with lust, it is done with the full knowledge that it is wrong. Not only is it wrong, it is a sin against God. All sin is against God!

So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." (2 Samuel 12:13 NKJV)

Against You, You only, have I sinned, And
done this evil in Your sight.
(Psalm 51:4)

It is because all sin is against God that makes it so wrong. That is why God must punish sin. Fortunately,

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He chose to punish His Son in your place. If you will repent and trust Jesus Christ you can have eternal life. Remember, it does not matter if you believe these things to be true that is important. What is truly important is if they are true.

Objection #6: I don't believe that

What does two plus two equal? Obviously the answer is four. No matter how much you want to believe the answer is five, you'd be wrong. The truth is that $2+2=4$.

Remember when you were in school? Let's say you take a multiple choice test. You believe the answer is A, mark it and turn the test in. The teacher marks the answer wrong, because the correct answer was, in fact, B. Unless the teacher made a mistake in grading, the wrong answer will not be marked correct, "just because you believe it is true."

Truth is truth regardless of what you believe!

Well it appears that we have circled back to the opening argument and yet in most cases a non-Christian's best defense for why he or she has never trusted in God's only provision for eternal life, Jesus Christ, is that he simply does not believe what God has revealed about Himself and His only means for salvation. It is amazing that absolute truth always applies to every aspect of life and yet when it comes to the most important issue of life, ones eternal destiny, absolute truth about God is simply tossed aside and replaced with opinion. This is a phenomenon that denies God's overwhelming evidence of Himself and His plan to redeem sinful man by His only provision and one's belief in His Son Jesus Christ. It also denies the law that God has written on every man's heart (conscience), and one's rejection of the truth through basic logic and reasoning. We know that in every area of life, there are absolute truths that affect our lives. We also know that regardless of our opinions about these truths our opinions can in no way change, alter or even affect

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these truths. There are absolute truths in mathematics, physics, biology, economics, sociology and every other aspect of life; yet when it comes to the truth about there being only one God and one mediator between God and men, suddenly truth becomes relative to one's opinion. Because of His grace (unmerited, undeserved favor) God pleads with and appeals to mankind to utilize his reasoning abilities and discover the only true God and His Savior Jesus Christ! Listen to the Lord's heart as He appeals to mankind!

Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. (Isaiah 1:18, underline added)

Furthermore, please consider this point. What does it mean that there is only one God? Why do people have such a hard time understanding that. There is only one "you" and you are completely unique from

any other person in history! Even if you are an identical twin, sharing the same DNA with your sibling, you still have unique fingerprints and characteristics that are uniquely you! God is the same way. In fact, He is the essence and the epitome of uniqueness. There is only one God and there is only one mediator between God and men!

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, (1 Timothy 2:5)

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Yet, many people try to come to God on their own terms, through their own means and efforts or by their own “religion”. Once again, our own way, works, false religions and ideologies are an offense to God! Why? Because there is only one way to access this Holy God; that is through Jesus, and He requires our sole allegiance. Just like when one commits to a spouse in marriage. You would never tolerate them fooling around with other people. No, you expect complete faithfulness. If your spouse was intimate with others, while in a committed relationship with you, you would call that adultery! You would not tolerate the behavior for one second! Do you think the God of creation is any different? Absolutely not! As a matter of fact, He is the one who gave us the conscience to recognize and understand how painful the sin of adultery is, and a sense of right and wrong. Nevertheless, when one accepts all religions or any god as being equal to the only true God; that person is in effect an idolater and commits spiritual adultery. When God and His word says He is the only God and

there is no other and Christ is His only provision for salvation, the self righteous, religious and those who do not know God say that God is not being very tolerant. And for those who claim to be so tolerant and concerned with everyone's rights, why will you not tolerate what you are demanding for the God of holiness to tolerate? Why will you not accept the pain and unfaithfulness of adultery but demand a holy God to do so? He is a God who will not and cannot compromise, and yet you have no problem in committing spiritual adultery against Him. If you are in this camp then you have denied your Creator and judge. If you are tolerant of any religion and any god, then you are a hypocrite and liar and have been deceived by Satan and your own sinful heart!

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the World is enmity against God? James 4:4

The fact that there is only one God and one mediator between God and men should be so obvious and yet

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this truth is obscured by man's sinful nature. When Jesus was delivered by the Jews to Pilate to be sentenced, little did Pilate know that he was being put on trial by the Lord of creation. In John 18:33-38, Pilate asked Jesus if He was the King of the Jews. Jesus responds by asking, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?" Jesus wanted to know if Pilate personally believed in Him. Pilate later asked Him if He was a king? Jesus responded by saying, "You say rightly, that I am a king. For this cause I was born and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness of the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice." Pilate responds by saying, "What is truth?"

Jesus asks every man and woman this same personal question. Are you going to believe the truth about God or will you deny Him? Are you going to respond to the voice of truth or like Pilate, will you deny Him? Jesus claimed to be the truth. He is the incarnate truth, John 14:6. He said , when speaking of His

Father that eternal life was only possible through believing and knowing the only true God. "

And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (John 17:3)

By claiming that eternal life is in the only true God and that Jesus Christ, alone is the way, the truth and the life, He effectually eliminates any other way to God. These statements of truth leave no wiggle room for opinion. In fact, with all due respect, one's opinion about who he believes God to be is irrelevant. God doesn't need for you to determine who He is. He has so clearly revealed Himself in so many ways that if any man denies Him and His only means for salvation; namely Jesus, that person will be totally without excuse on the day of judgment!

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For

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what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (Romans 1:18-20)

Part 3: Summary

In this booklet we have defined truth and opinion. We have stated that multiple beliefs that are in conflict with each other cannot be true at the same time. Just like there is only one answer to the simple question of $2+2=4$, there can only be one truth about what happens when you die. We asserted that if we can prove one way to be true, then the rest are false. We have presented evidence for the truth of the Bible and the Gospel message. We have provided answers to a number of common objections to the Gospel of faith in Jesus Christ. Please note, these explanations, in and of themselves, cannot save you. Only the Gospel of faith in Jesus Christ can!

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Romans 1:16 NKJV)

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But we pray that they will give you a better understanding of what the Bible is all about. We pray that your opinion will be impacted by the truth of the Bible. We pray that you will repent and believe the Gospel!

As we conclude, we would like you to consider again, Jesus said that more people will go to Hell than to Heaven:

Jesus is the only way to Heaven:

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6 ESV)

Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done. (Luke 22:42)

So what keeps people from Heaven? Read for yourself from the Gospel of John:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, **and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.** For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. (John 3:16-20 ESV, emphasis added)

So what keeps people from going to Heaven? According to Jesus, "People loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil" (John 3:19).

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Jesus is the light. God sent him into the world. He is a gift to you. Yet according to verse 19, people love their sin more than they love the Savior, Jesus Christ. That is ultimately why people will go to Hell. God has provided you with the Way of escape, Jesus. A free gift. Eternal life. But few will find it because they love their sin.

“Repent and Believe the Gospel” (Mark 1:15)

So ask yourself. Which of your sins is worth spending eternity in Hell? All of the objections that we have listed come down to this common denominator: sin which comes from man's sinful nature. If you breathe your last breath and never repent and believe in the one and only true God and His mediator Jesus Christ, then you will die in your sins and the reason will be because you, like so many others, chose your sin and your own opinion over God and His truth. Will you remain in your sin and face God's wrath for all of eternity or are you willing to trade your opinion, the by-product of a sinful corrupted heart, for eternal life?

Believe in the truth and the God of truth so that for the first time you may have life and life eternal in Jesus Christ!

By faith Moses, when He became of age refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. For he looked to the reward. (Hebrews 11:24)

Turn away from the passing pleasures of sin in repentance and trust in Jesus Christ to give you eternal life. We pray that this truth will not only affect your opinion, but your eternal destiny!

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Appendix A – Reading the Bible

Romans 10:17 says, “faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ”. We recommend that you get a Bible and then read it each day. Here is a suggested reading plan:

- ▲ Start by reading a chapter of the Gospel of John per day
- ▲ Then read a chapter of the Book of Romans per day
- ▲ Follow the Essential 100 (one per day) to read highlights from the entire Bible.
Download the planner:
http://site.e100challenge.biz/downloads/e100_planner.pdf
- ▲ Follow a reading plan to read through the entire New Testament

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- ▲ Follow a reading plan to read through the entire Bible

You can access the Bible for free online at

- ▲ www.biblegateway.com

- ▲ www.youversion.com

You can obtain your own electronic copy of the Bible at:

1. For Kindle at: <http://tinyurl.com/amazon-esv>
2. For Nook at:
<http://tinyurl.com/barnesandnoble-esv>