

How Can the Bible Help Me?

Me? Isn't the Bible about God and Jesus and Religious Stuff?

Start the Conversation

It's true that the Bible is about "God and Jesus and Religious Stuff," but it's also true that the Bible is about you—very much about you—and all humans. Check it out. In Genesis, the first book of the Bible, God chooses two ordinary people, Abraham and Sarah, and tells them they will be a source of blessing for all the families on the earth. What does who they are have to do with who you are? And in Revelation, the last book of the Bible, it says that God's home will be with humans and that there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. What does a promise like that mean for you and the people you love? The Bible is definitely about God and Jesus, but since God and Jesus claim you as part of their family, the Bible is also very much about you!



Quotables



Many people have made claims about the Bible—some of them provocative. Here are two to talk about.

Mark Twain was the pen name of Samuel L. Clemens, an American writer and humorist who died in 1910.

"[The Bible] has noble poetry in it; and some clever fables; and some blood-drenched history; and some good morals; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies." Mark Twain (*Twain in Letters from the Earth, "Letter III"*)

"The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy." Southern Baptist Convention Web site.

The Southern Baptist Convention is a denomination of Christians with 16 million members. They have been in existence since 1845.

Talk It Over

If you've dug around in the Bible you know it's a very complicated book. Can you agree with something in either or both of these quotes?

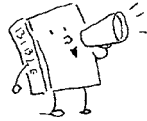
Biblical Perspectives

What Does Matthew Say about Jesus' Role in God's Plan?

Matthew's Gospel says a lot about the Bible and you. In verses 1-17 of the first chapter, Matthew names all the people in Jesus' family tree. Abraham is the first name on this list and Jesus' name is the last. Matthew's point with this long genealogy is that Jesus is the descendent of Abraham and Sarah through whom the whole earth (including you!) will be blessed.

Talk It Over

Why would God send Jesus to bless an ordinary person like you? Do you believe it?



What Does a Radical Preacher-Man and Miracle Worker Have to Do with You?

The Bible is about what God is up to in the world through the person of Jesus. That's huge! No wonder understanding the Bible feels overwhelming. The *whole* world, through *one* person? But Jesus seemed kind of casual about how he'd make it happen.

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.” Immediately they left their nets and followed him. Matthew 4:18-20

Jesus' behavior in this story was radical too. The preacher-man didn't go to the best seminaries to find people to help him spread the news about God's activities in the world. He went to the lake and asked fishermen. Jesus, a rabbi, who taught in the temple when he was twelve, called ordinary people, who were simply at work doing what they did every day—to help with his mission in the world. What was Jesus thinking? How could such *very* ordinary people be the ones to spread the news about God and God's love? The fishermen followed Jesus immediately. What were they thinking? They simply left their nets—didn't even hang them up to dry—and followed Jesus. Radical, risky behavior on Jesus' part invited radical, risky behavior on the part of the fishermen.

Talk It Over

So, what does this story have to do with you? Is following Jesus still radical and risky? What does it mean for you to “leave your nets” and follow Jesus? What are your “nets”?

My Life

What Does the Bible Do for Me?

New Testament writers had a lot to say about what the Bible would do for the people who read it. In the writers' opinion, scriptures provide hope and encouragement, instruction and training, and an introduction to Jesus, God's Son. Read these Bible verses aloud, several times if you want. What does each one mean? Do they have any meaning for you and your life? What does the Bible do for you?

"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope." Romans 15:4

"Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name." John 20:30-31



Talk It Over

What do you need from the Bible? Does the Bible matter to you? Is it just a book written a couple thousand years ago? Is it still relevant? Why or why not?

Challenge

Read around in your Bible and find one verse that seems to be directed specifically at you. Proverbs might be a good place to start! It is filled with interesting statements and advice to ponder.

GOD,
SOMETIMES I
DON'T UNDER-
STAND WHAT
THE BIBLE HAS
TO DO WITH ME.
HELP ME TO SEE.
AMEN.

