

Search for Truth #2

Home Bible Study Course

Teacher's Manual

The original *Light for Living* Bible study written by Jerry Twentier and Marcella Willhoite has been revised by J. L. Hall, Kenneth Haney, Philip Dugas, and Nathaniel Haney, and has also been changed to *Search for Truth #2*.

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”

John 5:39

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LESSON ONE

An Introduction to the Bible

This lesson conveys the absolute authority of the Bible.

In these days of uncertainty and confusion, it is comforting to know that our confidence rests upon the very words spoken by God—the Bible!

Nor has He left us without proofs of the credibility of His Word. We can speak with authority about Christianity, knowing that there is an intellectual basis for our faith in Jesus Christ.

Without a solid scriptural foundation, we could not intelligently or convincingly present the “good news.” Therefore, we want to begin this series of lessons by clarifying that our faith rests upon the most substantial basis possible—the Word of God.

When completing this lesson, students should be aware of the following concepts:

1. There is complete harmony and agreement among Old Testament books.
2. The Scriptures have been proven to be authentic and accurate in these fields of learning: Science, Medicine, History, Archeology, Dead Sea Scrolls.

3. The greatest proof that the Bible is indeed a divine Book, inspired of God and without error, is the fulfillment of prophecy, both in Bible times and our present day.
4. We can place full confidence and trust in the Bible as the foundation for building our lives. We can be sure the Bible is true!

Books for additional reading:

1. Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, San Bernardino: Here's Life Publishers, 1979.
2. Arthur S. Maxwell, *Your Bible and You*, Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1959.
3. Ralph Earle, *How We Got Our Bible*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971.
4. F. F. Bruce, *The Books and the Parchments*, Rev. ed. Westwood: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1963.
5. F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* Downers Grove, IL 60515: InterVarsity Press, 1964.

Lesson 1 – Cover

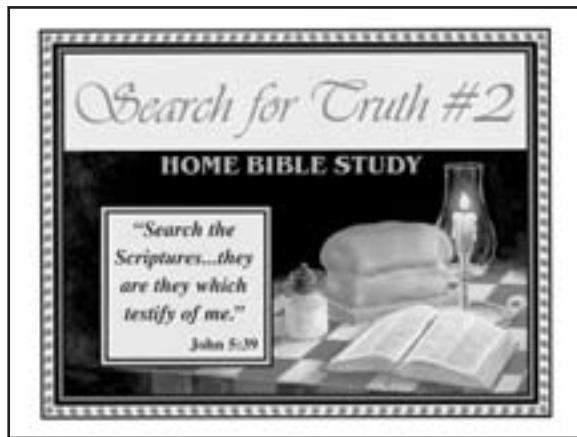


Chart Objective:

To explore the secrets of this ageless Book regarding an exceptionally rare kind of “living” that we mortals wish for, but never quite expect to attain. Its message will be especially appealing to those who feel trapped in the web of twenty-first-century pressures.

Chart Outline:

- A. *Search for Truth #2 Home Bible Study*
- B. Search the Scriptures

A. Search for Truth #2 Home Bible Study

Everybody has one. It’s a handy place to store the family records and press flowers between its pages. It makes an especially attractive centerpiece and is a necessary volume for every home library. It’s just another good Book that everyone should read . . . some day.

All would agree that the Bible is a useful Book. But generally, it merely collects dust and is rarely put to use.

Today, we will make a commitment to change. Let’s take it down, wipe away the dust and discover just how beneficial it can be! We will examine it, talk about it, and search its pages for answers.

In a world filled with trouble and turmoil, this Book offers some “good news”! We are here to share and to exchange some beautiful, enlightening truths.

These lessons are designed to reveal what a priceless Book our Bible really is . . . to show us how it is in many ways the most up-to-date Book in our library . . . and to disclose how it provides an endless source of benefit and inspiration.

Our goal in this study is to explore what the Bible says about our God, our homes, our families, our problems, and our future.

Admittedly, this study series—despite its twelve lessons—is but an introduction to the Bible. Innumerable additional lessons would be required to deal thoroughly with all the deep and wonderful themes contained in Scripture. We want to discover the fabulous gold mine of riches that can be continually probed and enjoyed the rest of our lives!

Also, *Search for Truth #2 Home Bible Study* has been designed as a friendly study—warm with the love of God. It is not intended to be a profound theological treatise. The purpose is to simply present Bible principles on certain vital subjects. Not argumentative, but more like gathering around the kitchen table for a friendly chat.

We will criticize or condemn no one. Rather, we seek to release the flood tide of divine wisdom, guidance and love inherent within the sacred pages of this wonderful Book!

1. We will not discuss the teachings of any church or denomination. Our main concern is, “What does the Bible say?”
2. We will not ask you to join a church.
3. We will not argue about any issue covered in the study.
4. The Bible study is given in homes free of any charge.

B. Search the Scriptures – John 5:39

We are living in the most crucial era of man’s existence. It is a time of rapid change. Human thought and progress, which for centuries advanced like a slow moving glacier, have thawed into torrents of intense activity, plunging rapidly toward a frightening tomorrow.

Darkness seems to engulf our world. Oh yes, this generation is acclaimed to be the most enlightened ever. Yet world leaders are plagued with thoughts of universal destruction. This menace threatens our lives, civilization, and world. Little hope is offered for the future.

When pills numbering in tons are required to put Americans to sleep at night, the question looms: where is that precious, quiet repose called “peace”?

Faced with insurmountable problems, fears, and loneliness, this world gropes for answers to modern dilemmas. All mankind needs help from a higher power to provide peace of mind, courage, hope, and guidance.

But where is such help found? In a local

discussion group or seminar? At a political forum? On a psychiatrist's couch?

There is a better place. Look in the Bible!

So remarkably does our Bible anticipate the present world situation, it seems to have been written especially for our generation. Although centuries old, the Bible is amazingly current. It deals with matters of universal interest. It offers hope and solutions for current perplexities.

Our Bible also describes a lifestyle totally opposite from the gloomy despair surrounding us. It talks about life versus light. It portrays "abundant" life—a superior

kind of life flowing from deep within. Jesus said,

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

By obeying the principles and concepts taught in this wonderful Book, we can experience the exhilarating, abundant life God intended!

Open it now. See how wonderfully it offers words of comfort, hope, challenge and direction. It is the Book for you for NOW!

Lesson 1 – Chart 1 The Old Testament: What Is It?

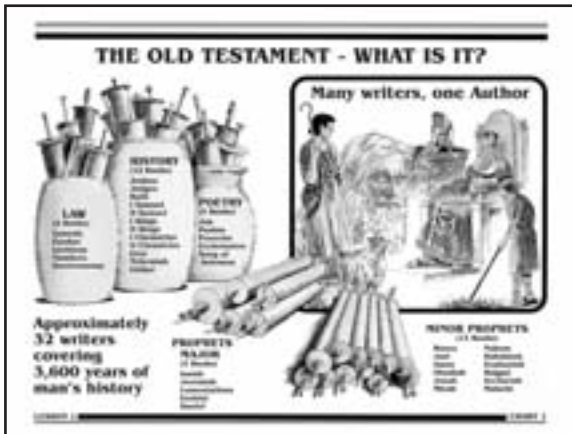


Chart Objective:

To explore Old Testament writings composed by many writers from various backgrounds and occupations. Although these men lived in different ages, every book perfectly agrees and harmonizes with all the others.

Chart Outline:

- The Old Testament: What Is It?
- Many writers, One Author

A. The Old Testament: What Is It?

As you hold the Bible and thumb through its pages, you may wonder what distinguishes it from other books.

Yes, it is different. At first glance, the story line appears to be incomplete. Its many short chapters and numbered verses lend themselves to rigid reading. Its language, although a literary masterpiece, is not easy to understand upon first reading.

But let's look closer. This isn't a single

Book, but rather is a collection of books and letters—more like a library. Some messages are so brief, they could be copied on a single page of paper—while others are so expansive that they require volumes of commentary.

Why is your Bible labeled "Old" and "New" Testament, when all of it is very old? The word "testament" refers to a document disclosing the will of a departed person. It is a covenant or agreement between two contracting persons.

Thus, the "Old" Testament is the covenant or agreement God made with man about salvation before Christ came. The "New" Testament is God's covenant with man about salvation after Christ came.

Therefore, the entire Bible is composed of two major covenants between God and man. Our responsibility is to explore their wonderful terms and provisions.

There is very fascinating information about these agreements. You will not want to miss a single lesson as the secrets unfold regarding the amazing covenant privileges.

Each Testament is divided into five sections. The Old Testament begins with the **Law**. This includes the first five books of the Bible written by Moses. These books contain the story of Creation, the Flood, and the origin of the Jewish people. Also included are a detailed list of God's laws and the Ten Commandments to govern His people.

Next come the twelve books of **History** of the Jewish people, their trials, division, captivity, and finally, restoration to their home in the Promised Land. These books cover eight hundred years from the thirteenth to the fifth century B.C.

Positioned near the heart of the Old Testament are five **Poetry** books. These are not short, rhymed verses, but are written in free verse. Among these are the well-known Psalms, extolling and praising the God of the Jewish people. These five are volumes of praises, promises, prayers, prophecies, and commandments.

Next come the **Major Prophets**. Five books are devoted to events in Israel, both present and future, such as: the coming Messiah, the church age, the end of time, and kingdom age.

Last are the writings of the twelve Minor Prophets. They are termed “minor” not because their work is any less significant but because they are short. Some are less than one full page. The **Minor Prophets** declared God’s message of warning and instruction.

Briefly, that is a synopsis of thirty-nine Old Testament books. Remember the total number like this: The word “old” contains three letters. The word “testament” has nine letters. Place the two digits side by side and you have 39—the number of Old Testament books.

B. Many writers, One Author

The Old Testament was written over a period of 1,400 years by thirty-two writers and covers approximately 3,600 years. Although the writers came from all backgrounds, each perfectly harmonizes with the others.

Amos was a country preacher. Isaiah was a brilliant court preacher. Moses was heir to the Egyptian throne. David was a king and composer. Solomon was the wisest man who ever

lived. Still there are no contradictions in their writings because there was really just one Author of all thirty-nine books—the Holy Ghost:

“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (II Peter 1:21).

Words were penned in different ages, different countries and by different men—some who never saw each other or knew that others had written on the same subjects. Yet when their writings became one Book, not one contradiction exists.

What do you suppose might happen if forty medical doctors from different countries and ages would write a book on the treatment for a certain disease? How much unity would prevail among their writings?

Each would be asserting the others wrong and why his own theory is right. Generally, there is little unity of thought between the books of men on any subject. Yet there is perfect unity among the books of the Bible! This proves that although there are many writers, there is but one divine Author for all sixty-six books. Who but God could produce such a work!

Most of the Bible was written under difficult conditions. It was produced in pastures, prisons, or other unlikely writing situations. The writers had no typewriters, pens or smooth white paper. With quill or bone pens on parchment or skins, often with only a candle or a primitive oil lamp, they penned God’s message to the human race.

Lesson 1 – Chart 2 From God’s Hand to Ours!

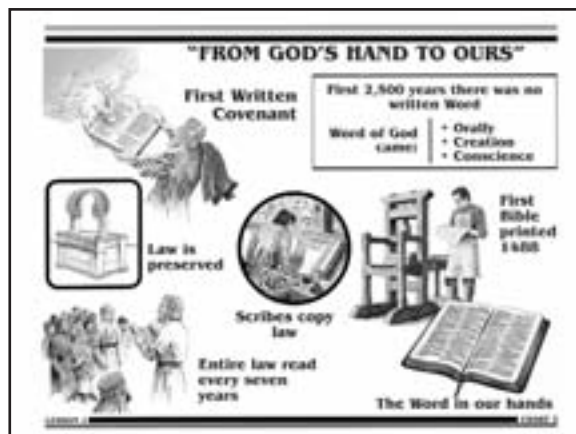


Chart Objective:

To prove how the Bible came directly from God to us, passing en route through many hands. This collected group of writings is recognized today as the Old Testament. Because of the meticulous care in copying and preserving Scripture, we can be certain that it is completely accurate and authentic.

Chart Outline:

- Before the Bible
- First Written Covenant
- Law is preserved
- Entire law read every seven years
- Scribes copy law