

STUDENT  
GUIDE

OVER ONE MILLION TRAINED

TRAINING  
*for*  
SERVICE

A BASIC BIBLE OVERVIEW  
FOR EVERY CHRISTIAN

26-SESSION CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

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**Standard**<sup>®</sup>  
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*Bringing The Word to Life*

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# FOREWORD

For over a century, *Training for Service* has equipped more than 1 million volunteers with this basic course and certification for Bible teaching. Ideal for those planning to teach Sunday school, serve as church leaders, or facilitate small groups, it is also recommended for anyone who just wants a Bible 101 course.

In the first edition of the book, author Herbert Moninger wrote:

*The studies composing this book were originally given before the members of the Northside Union Teacher-training Class in Cincinnati, O., 122 of whom passed a successful examination and received diplomas from the Ohio Sunday-school Association. If this book has any value, it will largely be because these lessons were tested before being printed* (preface, 1907 edition).

Educator and author C. J. Sharp revised Moninger's original *Training for Service* in 1934. Sharp followed the general outlines of the original and retained the book's practical, biblical goals. Sharp said:

*"New Training for Service" is offered to Bible-school teachers and workers as an answer to the widespread demand for a practical teacher-training book suited to the average teacher. . . . The teacher of the Bible should first have a good general knowledge of the Bible itself and the foundation principles of pedagogy as applied to the teaching of the Bible* (foreword, 1934 edition).

Orrin Root, an editor, writer, and Christian educator, authored the second major revision of *Training for Service*. He responded to requests for a shorter, more specialized study and explained:

*Moninger's original plan of Bible study has been retained, but has been distilled to 26 lessons filled with factual and illustrative materials, Scripture readings, and questions for discussion and review* (preface, 1964 edition).

Dr. Eleanor Daniel updated Mr. Root's revision. This respected seminary professor and Christian educator enhanced *Training for Service* with complete lesson plans, assignments, and classroom activities. She also:

*. . . updated the information on Bible translations, added a history of the period between the testaments, and [gave] the book a new look* (foreword, 1983 edition).

This current revision has been done with the understanding that we are but the proverbial "dwarfs standing on the shoulders of giants." The general structure of past revisions has been retained, but content has been revised to reflect the best current understanding of the Bible, education, and the questions being asked in the 21st century. Furthermore, computer technology has allowed us to provide even more features at [www.trainingforservice.com](http://www.trainingforservice.com). It is to the time-tested heritage of *Training for Service* and the goal of seeing more generations become competent Christian educators that this revision is dedicated.

—Jim Eichenberger, 2011

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# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

*Training for Service* has proved to be immensely popular among church leaders since its first publication in 1907. It appeals to thousands of Christians who are enthusiastic about the help it gives them in their Bible study.

What differentiates *Training for Service* from just another Sunday school or small group study is its distinctly academic approach. That is not to say that it is beyond the capabilities of the average adult believer. In fact, just the opposite is true. But while the study is not marked by its difficulty, there are expectations to be met by the participant.

## STUDENT PARTICIPATION

It is assumed that a *Training for Service* study will be taken seriously. The first requirement is regular attendance. Each session is built on another, so missing a lesson will leave the participant ill equipped for the following lesson. If a situation arises that makes it necessary for a student to miss a session, he or she is encouraged to contact the leader and make arrangements to find out what was missed.

Furthermore, pre-class preparation is a must. Each student is expected to study the lesson material before class and come to each session ready to participate in the discussion. At times, additional assignments may be given to some or all students before class.

## MEMORIZATION AND REVIEW

The place of memory work in education is much smaller than it used to be. Yet we know that it is still necessary to learn the alphabet, for example, for without it one can hardly use a dictionary or a telephone directory.

For similar reasons, you will learn the names of the books of the Bible, in order, so that you can quickly find a passage when you want it. When you have learned to name the leading Bible characters in order, you will ever after know that Moses comes later than Joseph and earlier than David. This book has other lists to be memorized. They are the ABCs of Bible study. It will not take long to learn them, and they will be a lifelong help in studying Scripture.

## TESTS AND CERTIFICATION

From its introduction a century ago, *Training for Service* has been used to ensure that church leaders and teachers have at least a baseline understanding of Scripture. Certificates stating that graduates have gained that knowledge have been available throughout the history of the book.

The basis for issuing certificates is testing. Therefore, 3 tests—1 on lessons 1–13, 1 on lessons 14–26, and a final exam—are a part of this course. The leader of the lessons is in charge of administering these tests.

## INDEPENDENT STUDY

*Training for Service* is designed for a classroom setting. The course counts on the interaction of students with the leader and with one another for optimum learning.

Nevertheless, church volunteers are busy people, so flexibility is necessary. If a *Training for*

*Service* class is not available, an individual may complete this course as an independent study. That person may choose a teacher, minister, or other qualified person to administer the final exam and grade it. The person selected will sign and present a certificate to the student who has received a grade of 70 percent or more on the final exam. The final exam, answers for the exam, and a certificate master are included in *Training for Service Leader Guide*.

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

You will need a Bible and your own copy of *Training for Service Student Guide*. In addition, some other resources will help you in this study.

1. *Multiple translations.* *Training for Service* is designed so that it may be used with the teacher's and students' preferred Bible translation. But since the Bible was not written in English, comparing a Scripture passage in a variety of translations can help in understanding.

2. *Concordance.* A Bible concordance is similar to an index in a book. By looking up a word in a concordance, the places in the Bible where the word is used may be found. Many Bibles include an abridged concordance that shows some uses of each word listed. A complete concordance can be purchased as a separate volume. There are also analytical concordances that show places where a particular word of the original language is used, even if it has multiple meanings in English.

3. *Bible atlas, Bible dictionary, Bible encyclopedia.* These Bible references serve a similar function to their secular counterparts and will give further insight into the geography, history, and customs of Bible times. The classic *Halley's Bible Handbook* is probably the most familiar. Standard Publishing offers 2 ideal, inexpensive resources in this category:

- *Standard Bible Atlas* (ISBN 978-0-7847-1872-8) has 31 full-color maps, 14 charts, and 5 reproducible map masters.
- *Standard Bible Dictionary* (ISBN 978-0-7847-1873-5) is a concise pronunciation guide of more than 2,000 Bible words, with easy-to-understand definitions.

4. *Online resources.* Many Web sites are dedicated to providing Bible study resources. Some of the most helpful are:

- Bible Gateway—[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)
- Biblos—[www.biblos.com](http://www.biblos.com)
- Bible Study Tools—[www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com)



# HOW WE GOT OUR BIBLE

## — ORIGIN OF THE BIBLE —

### A. DIVINE SOURCE

You would not be participating in this course unless you have come to believe that the Bible is a unique book that comes from God. It is reasonable to assume that a loving God would communicate to humankind and that He would place this communication in an objective form that could be handed down and preserved from generation to generation. It is also reasonable to believe that by examining purported holy books, a book truly from God would stand out from among them. Other books make these cases, but through this study you will most likely be strengthened in the conviction that the Bible is divine in its source and is unlike any other book.

### B. HUMAN WRITERS

1. *Who and when?* Today we often use the word *prophet* to refer to someone who tells the future. But in the biblical sense, a prophet is someone who speaks or writes a message from God. God used about 40 such prophets in writing the Bible over a period from approximately 1400 BC to AD 100.

2. *Source of the content.* Some of the writers simply passed on what God had told them, as when Moses wrote the law (Deuteronomy 31:24) or when preaching prophets proclaimed their messages (Nahum 1:1; Habakkuk 1:1; Zephaniah 1:1, to name a few). Some of them wrote what they had seen, as when disciples of Jesus recorded what was done in their presence (2 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:1-3). Some sought out trustworthy, historical accounts. Moses wrote centuries after the events found in the book of Genesis, so he certainly may have used sources dating from those days. Luke was not an eyewitness to the ministry of Jesus, but wrote only after careful research (Luke 1:1-4). Paul included words commonly recited or sung in the early church (1 Corinthians 15:3-5; 2 Timothy 2:11-13). But in every case, all of them were guided by a single mind—the mind of God (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:21).

3. *Incidental content.* Just as authors do today, these human writers made references to other writings and sayings of the day (2 Samuel 1:18; Jude 14, 15). That does *not* mean that everything in those sources is inspired and is equal to Scripture. Jesus, for example, quoted a children's song (Matthew 11:17) and proverbs about predicting the weather (Matthew 16:2, 3). Paul even quoted an inscription from an idol and the words of pagan poets to make his point (Acts 17:23, 28). Cultural references show that the books were written at the time the events occurred, not centuries later.

## C. PRESERVED THROUGH CENTURIES

1. This lesson is a study of how the Bible has been *transmitted* to us after it was written. How do we know the Bible we have today is the Word as originally written?

2. God inspired the original writers so that they could not make mistakes. But both copyists and translators *could* and *did* make errors. Since many ancient manuscripts and translations have been preserved, we can find when these mistakes have been made.

## — ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS — AND VERSIONS

While we have no part of the Bible in the handwriting of the original authors, we have 2 kinds of sources from which we can learn what they wrote. These are manuscripts and versions.

### A. DEFINITIONS

1. *Manuscripts* are documents written by hand. Before printing was invented, this was the only way of producing books. We have no Bible manuscripts written by the original authors, but we have thousands of copies written by hand in the same language they used.

2. A *version* is a translation of any document into another language. Some ancient versions were translated from manuscripts older than any we now have. Therefore, they help us to know just what the original writers wrote.

### B. OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

1. *Manuscripts*. The Old Testament books were written in the Hebrew language between 1400 BC and 400 BC. They were collected and preserved by the Jewish priesthood. After the last Old Testament prophet (Malachi), a group of priests we call the scribes painstakingly copied, preserved, and studied these manuscripts

Until the middle of the 20th century, the oldest Old Testament manuscripts available were the Masoretic texts, copies made by a group of Jews known as the Masoretes between the 7th and 10th centuries AD. But in 1947, scrolls written around 100 BC were discovered. These Dead Sea Scrolls agree with the Masoretic texts, showing the remarkable accuracy with which they were preserved and copied.

2. *Versions*. The oldest version of the Old Testament is a Greek version called the Septuagint (pronounced Sep-*too*-ih-jent). From the Latin word for 70, this name was given because the translation was made by about 70 Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt, around 250 BC. Ancient versions in Syriac, Egyptian, Ethiopic, Armenian, and other languages also exist.

### C. NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

1. *Manuscripts*. All the books of the New Testament were written in Greek during the first century after Christ. Shortly after they were written, churches began to collect manuscripts of Paul's letters and other writings that they recognized (through the Holy Spirit working within them) to be inspired. Early church councils would later confirm which books and letters were part of the New Testament, but they were *not* creating the New Testament canon (collection). They were simply affirming what was known as the books were written.

Manuscripts were written on papyrus (pressed pulp of reeds) and later on animal skins. Because of the delicate nature of papyrus, only fragments of the earliest manuscripts exist today. A fragment of papyrus known as Rylands Library Papyrus P52 was discovered in 1920. P52

contains portions from the Gospel of John and is the oldest New Testament portion known today. It was copied around AD 125, less than 40 years after John wrote his Gospel!

Parchment (animal skin) manuscripts were collected and bound into books called codices. The earliest manuscript collections are Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus and are both from around AD 350. In all, over 5,000 complete or fragmented Greek manuscripts exist, a testimony to how well the New Testament has been preserved and accurately copied.

2. *Versions*. The Bible was translated into Syriac and called the Peshitta, meaning “simple version.” This probably occurred in the first half of the 2nd century. Shortly thereafter, the Greek was translated into the Latin. A more careful Latin version was completed about AD 400. Translated by Jerome and called the Vulgate (which means “common,” or “popular”), this version became the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church and of western Europe. Probably in the 3rd and 4th centuries, versions were made also in Coptic (Egyptian), Gothic, Ethiopic, and Armenian. Made from very ancient manuscripts, all of these help us to be sure the Bible we have is essentially the same as the original writings. It also shows the desire of the church from the earliest days to have a translation of the Bible that is easily understood by all.

## ENGLISH VERSIONS

### A. OLD ENGLISH VERSIONS

There were people in the British Isles in the early days of the church, but the English language developed later. There was an early need for God’s Word in the native tongue.

1. *Anglo-Saxon*. In 735, Bede, then at the point of death, finished his translation of John’s Gospel into Anglo-Saxon, 1 of the languages from which English developed.

2. *Middle English*. In the 11th century, William of Normandy conquered England. In the course of time, the Norman-French language blended with the Anglo-Saxon to become what is sometimes called Middle English. About 1380, Wycliffe and his coworkers translated the Bible into Middle English from the Latin Vulgate, which was the official Bible of the church in that time. The Roman Catholic Church denounced Wycliffe as a heretic.

3. *Early Modern English*. In 1525, William Tyndale became the first to translate directly from the original Greek and Hebrew. Myles Coverdale translated the Scriptures in 1535 from the Vulgate and Luther’s German translation, using Tyndale’s work to guide him. Other translations followed, all strongly influenced by Tyndale. Because the printing press was in use, the Scriptures were distributed more widely than ever before, and opposition grew from those demanding that the Vulgate be the only acceptable translation. The Roman Catholic Church executed Tyndale as a heretic.

Mary Tudor came to the throne and brought England again under the power of the Roman Church, persecuting Protestants so strongly as to earn the name Bloody Mary. Some of the best English scholars fled to continental Europe. In Geneva in 1560, William Whittington and others completed the *Geneva Bible*, based largely on earlier English versions. It was dedicated to Mary’s more tolerant successor, Elizabeth I. Some of the *Geneva Bible* offended the bishops of the Church of England. They responded by publishing the *Bishops’ Bible* in 1568.

Through the rest of the 16th century, the clergymen used the *Bishops’ Bible*; but the *Geneva Bible* was preferred by many of the people, especially the Puritans, who were intent on reforming the church. The *Geneva Bible* was the first English translation used in colonial America.

The rise in popularity of English translations helped convince the Catholic Church to prepare a translation. The *Douay-Rheims Bible* was translated from the Vulgate and completed in 1610.

It is still considered the English Bible of choice by traditional Catholics.

4. The *King James Version*. In 1604, King James appointed a committee of 54 scholars to prepare a new version. They followed the *Bishops' Bible* except where they thought changes were needed; but they consulted other English translations, the German translation, the Greek and Hebrew texts, the Syriac, the Septuagint, and several Latin versions. The result of their labors was the *King James Version*, published in 1611 and still the most-used Bible in the English language.

## B. REVISED VERSIONS

1. Any living language is constantly changing. Many words used in the *King James Version* (such as *neesings*, *besom*, and *wist*) are now almost unknown. Other words have changed their meanings. For example, *let* (Romans 1:13) formerly meant “to hinder,” but now it means “to permit.” *Conversation* now means “talk,” but to the English people of King James’s day it meant “behavior.” Also, older and presumably more reliable Greek manuscripts not available to *King James Version* translators had since been discovered.

2. In the course of centuries, therefore, scholars began to see a need to revise the *King James Version*. In 1885, a committee of 51 British scholars, assisted by 32 Americans, produced the *Revised Version*. In 1901, the American members of the committee brought out the *American Standard Version*, introducing some variations more in accord with American usage of English.

## C. MODERN ENGLISH VERSIONS

Translation of ancient languages is more than substituting each word for another. First of all, a language no longer in use has to be learned by comparing ancient manuscripts in that language. In that way scholars learn multiple meanings of words and figures of speech. Also, different languages use different word order in sentences.

An interlinear translation (which places the Greek or Hebrew text on a line with the English equivalent right below it) shows the differences in sentence structure between languages. An interlinear translation would render the familiar first words of John 3:16 as: “So for loved the God the world that the Son only begotten gave.” It is obvious that true translation is more than “decoding”! But there are differing ideas as to what makes the best Bible translation. (A chart showing popular translations and the type of translation each is can be found on page 13.)

1. *Formal equivalence*. This type of translation attempts to substitute English words for their Hebrew or Greek counterparts as much as possible, while placing the words in a readable English sentence structure.

2. *Dynamic equivalence*. Other scholars believe that the best translations are not word for word, but rather thought for thought. A dynamic equivalence translation will try to keep the paragraph order the same, but will not show concern for a 1-to-1 correspondence of words. A dynamic equivalence translation that may group verses together and use modern idioms is generally called a paraphrase.

3. *Optimal equivalence*. Both of the above ideas have merits and drawbacks. Optimal equivalence describes a translation that tries to balance between both theories of translation in order to most accurately convey the meaning of the text without taking liberties with the original languages.

## MAIN IDEAS OF THIS LESSON

The Bible is unique because it alone is authored by \_\_\_\_\_.

About \_\_\_\_\_ human authors wrote the Bible over a period of roughly \_\_\_\_\_ years.

Most of the Old Testament was written in \_\_\_\_\_, while most of the New Testament was written in \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ is the name of a Latin translation that became the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church.

Three theories of Bible translations are:

\_\_\_\_\_ equivalence

\_\_\_\_\_ equivalence

\_\_\_\_\_ equivalence

## QUESTIONS FOR DEEPER CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION

1. Both Islam and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints offer so-called holy books that claim to be more accurate than the Bible. In each case, the book was delivered by 1 man who lived centuries after many of the events described in the book. From what you have learned about the human authors of the Bible, how would you respond to such claims?
2. We have no Bible books in the handwriting of their authors. What 2 kinds of documents do we have? Distinguish between them and explain how they help us know what was in the books as they were originally written.
3. Why was the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947 so significant? What are some of the earliest New Testament manuscripts in existence? How do these discoveries make us even more confident that the Bible has been accurately copied throughout the centuries?
4. Why is translating from ancient languages more complicated than simply substituting each word for another? Briefly describe the 3 basic theories of modern Bible translation. What are some strengths and weaknesses of each theory? Do you think it is best to use a single translation of the Bible when studying? Why or why not?

## POPULAR ENGLISH BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

Version	Date	Grade Level*	Translation Type**	Comments
<i>King James Version</i>	Began 1604, completed 1611	12th	Formal equivalence	The most commonly used text of the <i>King James Version</i> is Standard Text of 1769.
<i>Douay-Rheims Bible</i>	NT, 1609 OT, 1610	10th	Formal equivalence	English translation from the Vulgate by the Catholic Church
<i>American Standard Version</i>	1901	12th	Formal equivalence	Essentially a revision of the <i>King James Version</i>
<i>Revised Standard Version</i>	NT, 1946 OT, 1952	7th	Formal equivalence with some dynamic equivalence	A revision of the <i>American Standard Version</i> ; first version to refer to the Dead Sea Scrolls in translating the Old Testament
<i>The Living Bible</i>	NT, 1962 OT, 1971	8th	Dynamic equivalence/ paraphrase	Kenneth Taylor attempted to paraphrase the <i>American Standard Version</i> in a language suitable for children
<i>New American Standard Bible</i>	NT, 1963 OT, 1971	11th	Formal equivalence	Generally thought of as being the closest to a word-for-word translation
<i>Good News Translation (Today's English Version)</i>	NT, 1966 OT, 1974	7th	Dynamic equivalence	Limited-vocabulary translation originally for those who spoke English as a second language
<i>New International Version</i>	NT, 1973 OT, 1978	7th	Optimal equivalence	Often considered the middle ground between formal and dynamic versions
<i>New King James Version</i>	1982	8th	Formal equivalence	Uses the same manuscripts as the <i>King James Version</i>
<i>The Message</i>	NT, 1993 OT, 2002	7th	Dynamic equivalence/ paraphrase	Eugene Peterson attempted to retain the flavor of the original languages in everyday English
<i>New Living Translation</i>	1996	6th–7th	Dynamic equivalence	Beginning as a revision to <i>The Living Bible</i> , scholars went to the original languages to produce a true translation
<i>English Standard Version</i>	2001	8th	Formal equivalence	Rivals the <i>New American Standard Bible</i> as a literal translation, but more readable

\* Estimated from different samples of the translations. Estimates may differ in other summaries and charts.

\*\* Evaluation made from translators' notes, using definitions on page 11 of this book.

For over 100 years *Training for Service* has equipped more than 1 million volunteers with this basic course and certification for Bible teaching. Ideal for those planning to teach Sunday school or facilitate small groups, it is also recommended for anyone who just wants a Bible 101 course. It can be completed with a group or as a self-study. The *Training for Service Student Guide* includes:

- 26 sessions that survey the Bible
- Questions at the end of each lesson
- Bible-word pronunciation guide
- Maps, charts, and diagrams

*Training for Service* is divided into 5 units that provide a better understanding of the Bible and its message:



#### THE BIBLE

*its origins, translations, divisions, and contents*



#### OLD TESTAMENT GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

*the people, places, and events found in the first 39 books of the Bible*



#### OLD TESTAMENT INSTITUTIONS

*the elements of Jewish worship designed to point to the coming fulfillment of God's plan in Jesus*



#### THE CHRIST

*the account of the ultimate revelation: God in the flesh*



#### THE CHURCH

*the mission given to the first followers of Jesus, which we are called to continue until our Savior returns*

Christian educators have continued to keep *Training for Service* relevant for new generations of Bible students. This latest revision is updated with the best available Bible information and educational methodology and remains true to the heritage of this ever-popular study.

**HERBERT MONINGER** wrote the original *Training for Service* in 1907, summarizing the content of his popular teacher-training seminars.

**CECIL JAMES (C. J.) SHARP**, minister and high school principal, revised Moninger's work in 1934.

**ORRIN ROOT**, a former editor at Standard Publishing, revised the book in the 1960s, reducing the original 40-lesson format to the current 26 sessions.

**ELEANOR DANIEL**, seminary professor and Christian education expert, revised the book in the 1980s.

**JIM EICHENBERGER**, a former schoolteacher and principal, and currently a writer and editor at Standard Publishing, authored this revision.

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