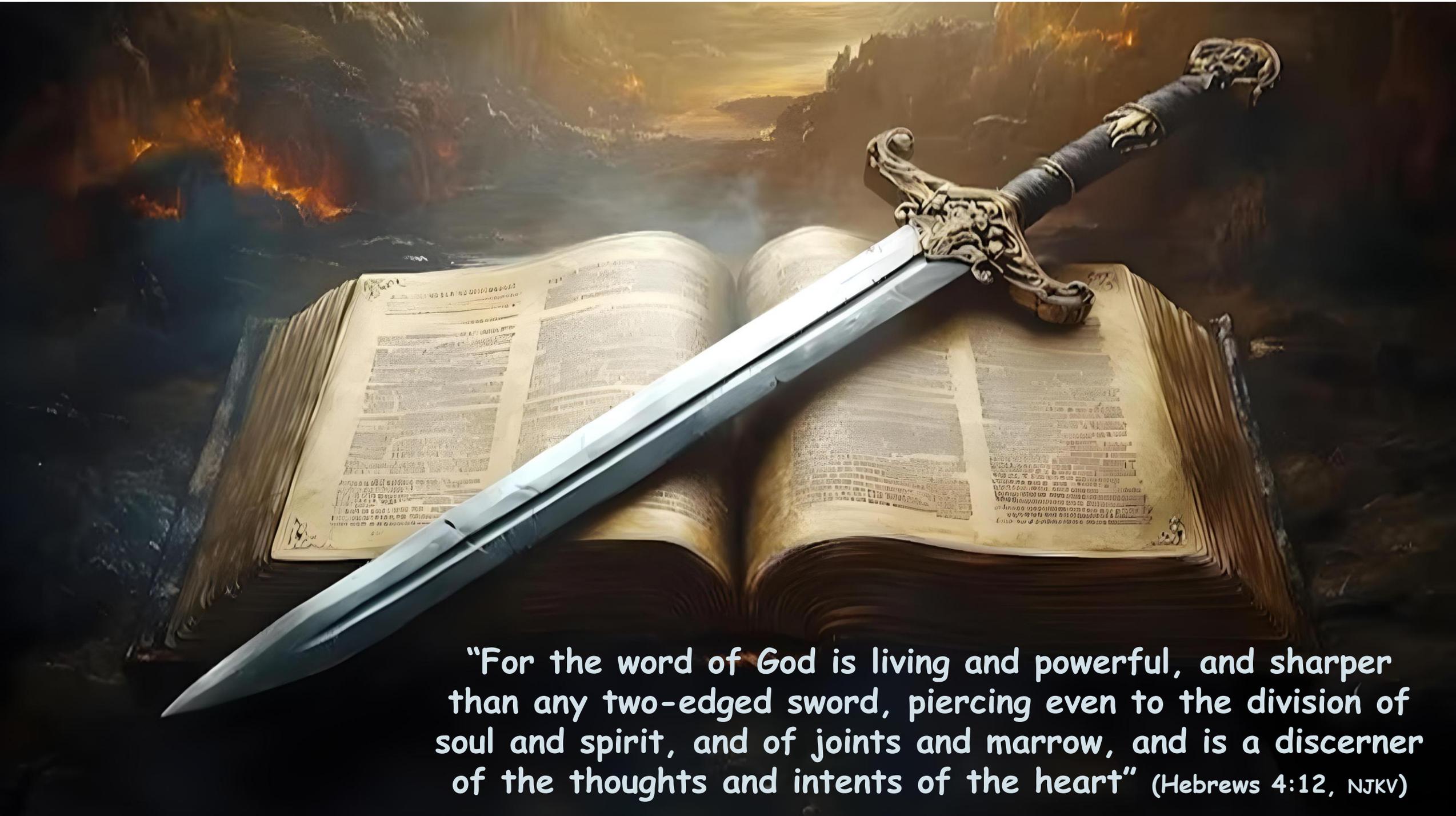




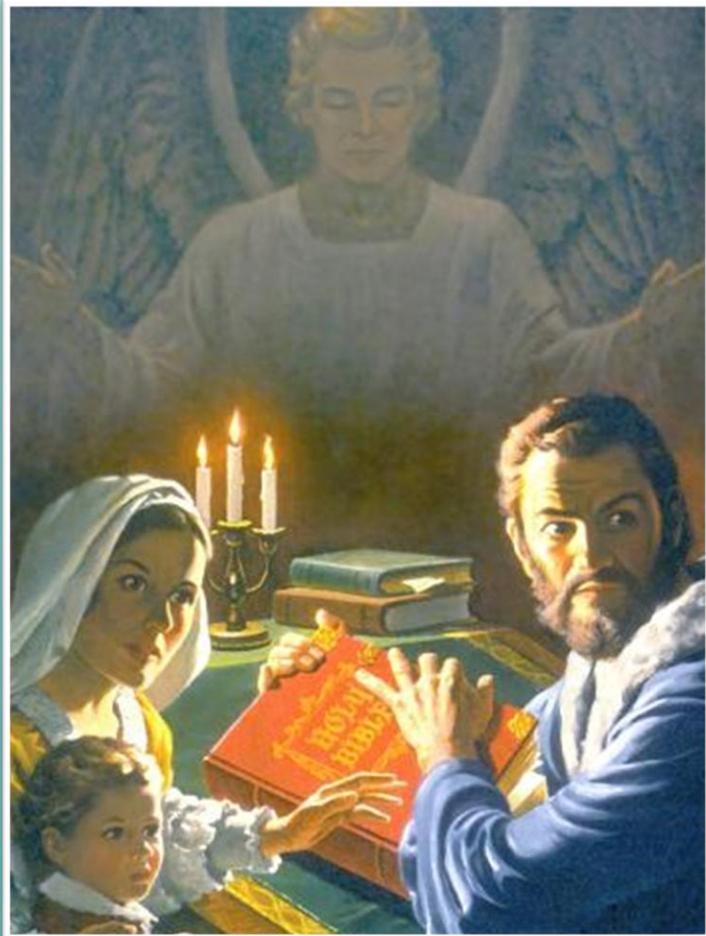
THE ROLE OF THE BIBLE



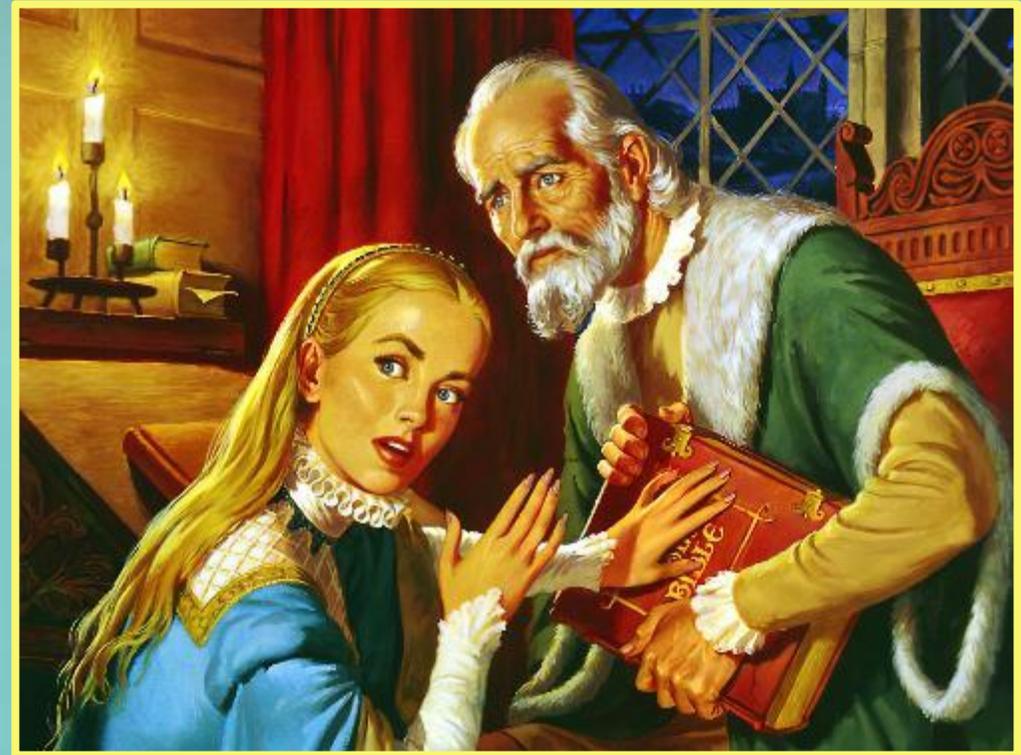
“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12, NJKV)

The Bible is the best-selling book in the world, outselling the second-ranked book five times. But this wasn't always the case.

There was a time when owning a Bible, reading it, or even talking about it could be grounds for imprisonment, torture, and even death.



If it weren't for God's special protection, the Bible would have disappeared long ago. Why? What is so special about this book that makes it both so loved and so hated?



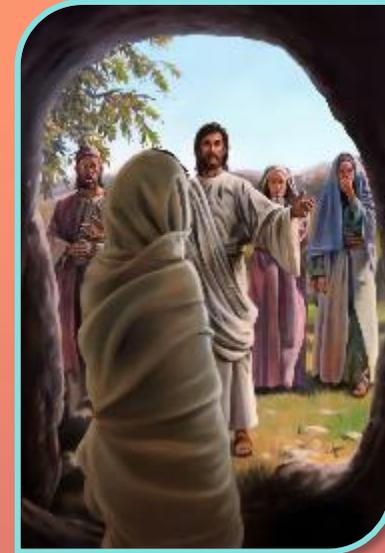
- The enemy of the Bible
- Correct and incorrect ways to read the Bible
- What is the Bible?
- Positive effects of reading the Bible
- Friends of the Bible

THE ENEMY OF THE BIBLE

"Take [...] the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17)

Think about what the *spoken* word of God is capable of doing: creating and giving life (Psalm 33:6), or raising the dead (John 5:28-29).

What can the Bible, the *written* word of God, do? It has the power to defend us (Eph. 6:17b) and transform us (Heb. 4:12). Jesus used the Bible to defend himself against temptation (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10).



Satan knows he is powerless against the power of the Bible. Therefore, he has tried to physically destroy it. He failed, as Bible societies began distributing thousands of copies. Then he tried to discredit it with higher criticism. Now he seeks to prevent us from reading it by occupying our time with other things.

Am I going to let him get away with it? Can't I find some time in my schedule to read the Bible? Reading it transforms us and makes us strong against our worst enemy: the devil.



CORRECT AND INCORRECT WAYS TO READ THE BIBLE

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)

Incorrect forms

Find something that aligns with our point of view

Choosing texts at random, without purpose

Choose the parts we like, and reject the parts we dislike.

Correct forms

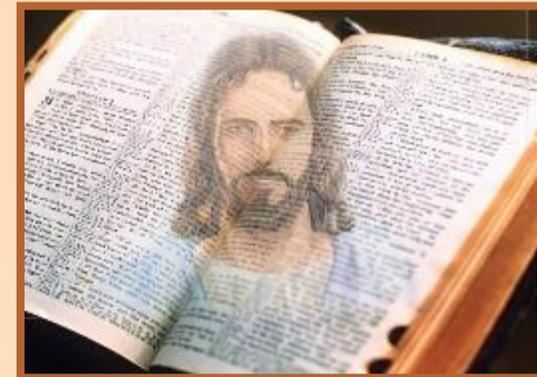
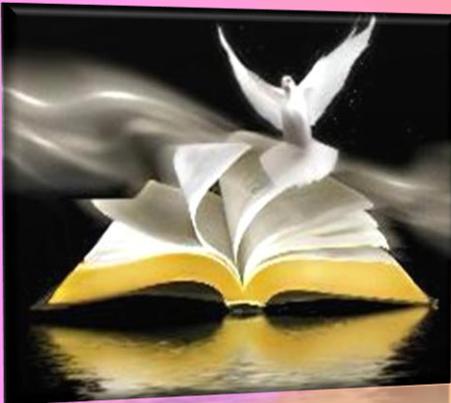
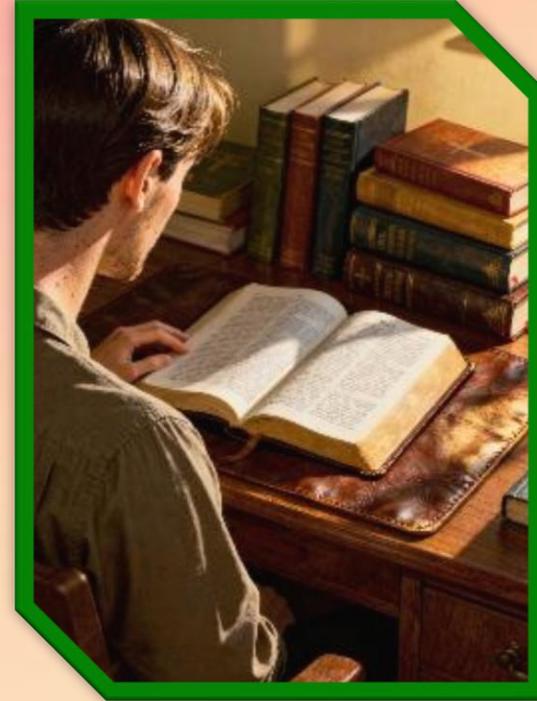
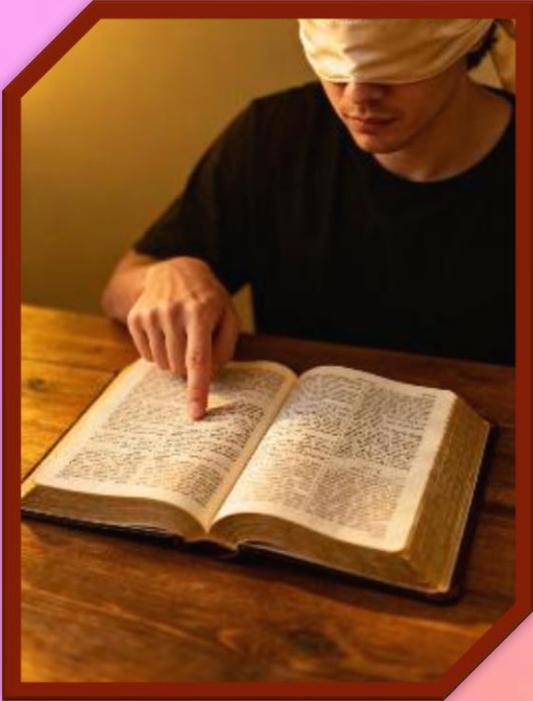
Seek to learn God's will

Conduct a systematic study

Do not reject any text, but analyze them all.

Our study of the Bible should be rational, but our reason must submit to the power of the Holy Spirit in order to correctly discern the biblical message.

Why? Because our reason is limited and not always reliable. That's why, when studying the Bible, we must seek the wisdom of its Author.



WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

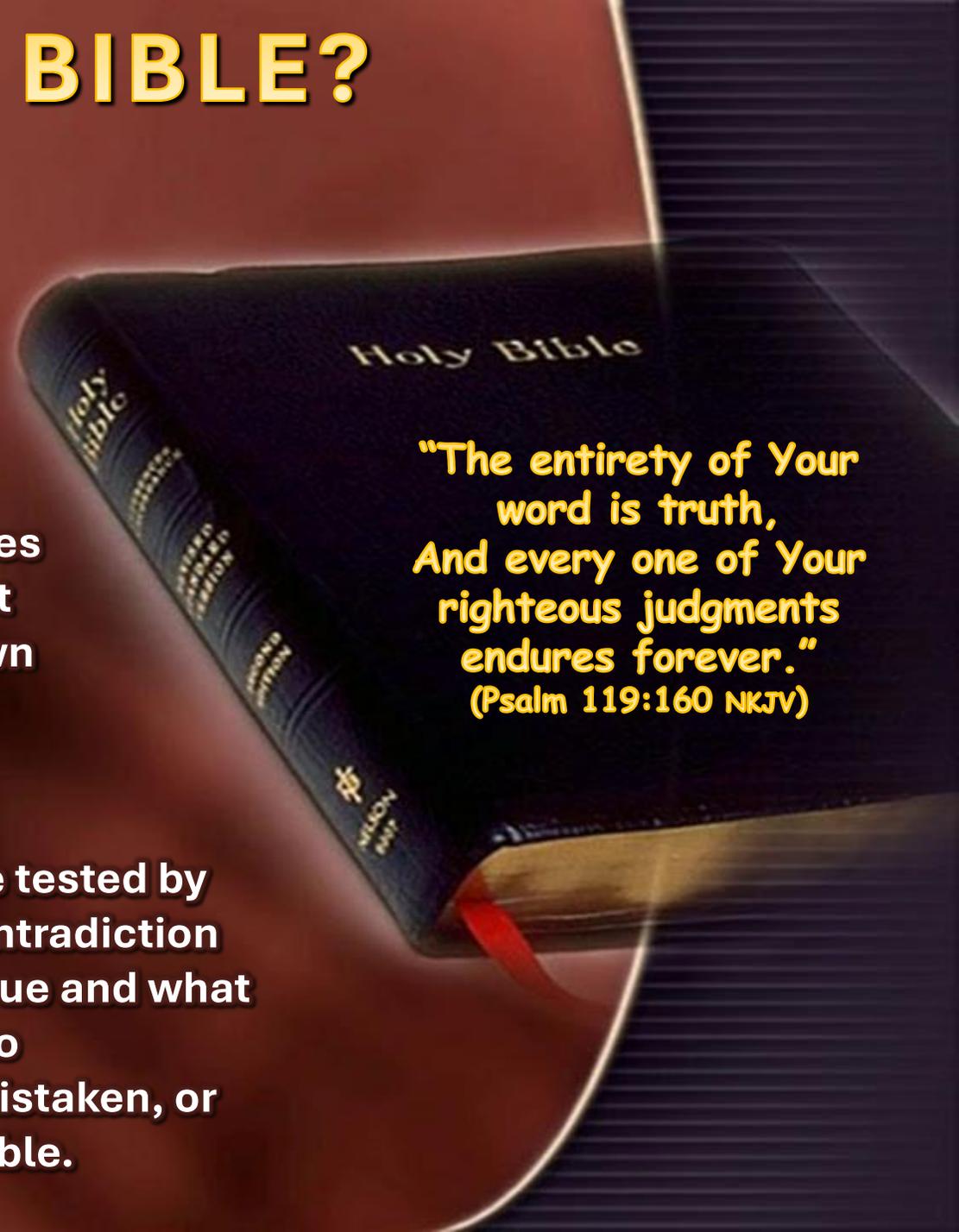


In our society, and even among Christian circles, there is a belief that truth is relative, that there is no truth that remains constant and unchanging over time.

However, the Bible—as the word of God—claims to possess **absolute truth** (Psalm 119:160; John 17:17; James 1:18). It claims to be **pure** and a **protective shield** against human sophistry (Proverbs 30:5). If we add any of our own “truths” to it, we may be considered liars before God (Proverbs 30:6).



Any claim, any truth, must be tested by the Bible. When there is a contradiction between what we consider true and what the Bible states, there are two possibilities: either we are mistaken, or we are misinterpreting the Bible.

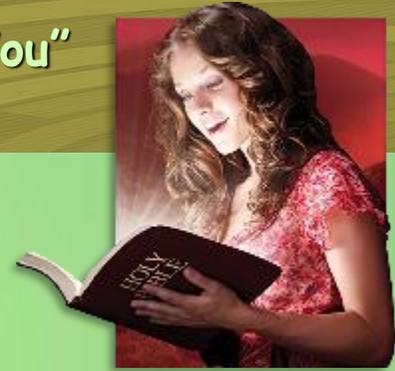
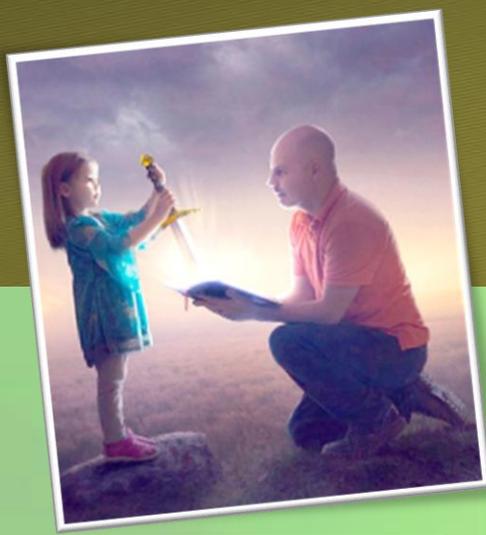


**“The entirety of Your word is truth,
And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.”
(Psalm 119:160 NKJV)**

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF READING THE BIBLE

"Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You"
(Psalm 119:11)

Something that even the most ardent enemies of the Bible cannot deny is its power to transform people. Paul compares it to a sword that possesses great power.



It makes us see ourselves as we truly are
(Heb. 4:12)

It keeps us from sin
(Psalm 119:11)

It is food for our soul (Jer. 15:16)

It makes us grow spiritually
(1 Peter 2:2)

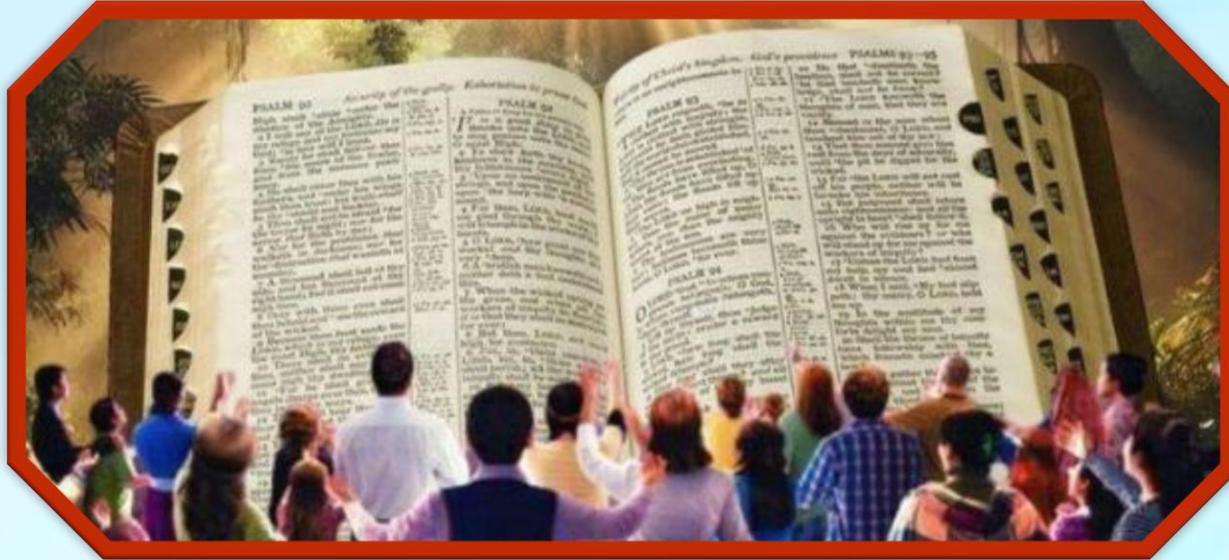
He gives us life
(John 6:63)

No other book can impact us like the Bible. When we are willing to incorporate its teachings into our lives, we change for the better.

When we read it with an open heart and ask God for the illumination of the Holy Spirit, our life is transformed.



"For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe." (1 Thessalonians 2:13)



Friends of the Bible approach it with the awareness that it is the Living Word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13). But how can I reach that conviction?

Paul tells us that, for this, we need spiritual discernment, that is, the ability to understand spiritual things (1 Corinthians 2:14). Therefore, discerning the divine message in the Bible is the work of the Holy Spirit acting within us.

FRIENDS OF THE BIBLE

When we receive the Bible in this way...

It shows us the state of our relationship with God

It tells us how to strengthen that relationship

We are experiencing a gradual transformation

We draw near to Jesus

It makes us wise for salvation

We are growing in the knowledge of the truth

Our faith grows and strengthens

We have hope

We are aware that a better, eternal, wonderful life awaits us

“The Bible unfolds truth with a simplicity and a perfect adaptation to the needs and longings of the human heart, that has astonished and charmed the most highly cultivated minds, while it enables the humblest and uncultured to discern the way of salvation. And yet these simply stated truths lay hold upon subjects so elevated, so far-reaching, so infinitely beyond the power of human comprehension, that we can accept them only because God has declared them. [...] The more he searches the Bible, the deeper is his conviction that it is the word of the living God, and human reason bows before the majesty of divine revelation.”

EGW (Steps to Christ, p. 107)