



BIBLE FOUNDATIONS

Bible Understanding Assessment

A gentle, Scripture-grounded guide to discovering what to study next

Simple • Clear • Scripture-grounded

Key Scripture

“Be doers of the word, and not only hearers, deluding your own selves.” — James 1:22 WEB

The Short Answer

The purpose of this assessment is not to determine whether someone is a “good Christian,” measure spiritual maturity, or compare one person with another. It is a learning-path tool designed to identify biblical foundations that are already understood, subjects that need clarification, reading skills that can be strengthened, and 3Nails resources that may provide a helpful next step.

Knowing every answer is not expected. Choosing “Not sure yet” is useful information. Partial knowledge is normal and valuable: a reader may recognize a term without being able to define it, know a familiar passage without understanding its context, or understand part of a doctrine while still learning how it fits the whole biblical story.

What This Assessment Can and Cannot Measure

The assessment can help identify understanding of the Bible’s structure, central story, Old Testament covenants and law, Jesus and the gospel, basic interpretation, biblical reliability, and the relationship between the Testaments.

It cannot measure the condition of a heart, the sincerity of faith, the work God is doing in someone’s life, a person’s value before God, or every form of biblical knowledge and spiritual wisdom.

Biblical knowledge matters, but knowledge alone is not the goal. Jesus warned that people could study Scripture and still refuse to come to Him for life (John 5:39–40). The goal is understanding that leads to faith, love, worship, humility, and obedience.

How to Use This Assessment

- Complete the beginner section first without outside resources.
- Select “Not sure yet” whenever an answer is uncertain.
- Place a question mark beside a correct answer that was partly guessed.
- Review the answer guide only after completing the questions.
- Record results by category rather than focusing only on a total score.
- Use the recommended study topics to choose the next resource.
- Return after several months of study to notice growth.

Bible Basics

1. What Are the Bible's Two Major Divisions?

- A. History and prophecy
- B. Law and grace
- C. Old Testament and New Testament
- D. Israel and the church
- E. Not sure yet

2. How Many Books Are Included in the Protestant Bible?

- A. 39
- B. 66
- C. 73
- D. 100
- E. Not sure yet

3. What Does “testament” Most Closely Mean in the Titles Old Testament and New Testament?

- A. A personal opinion
- B. A prediction
- C. A covenant or binding arrangement
- D. A historical timeline
- E. Not sure yet

4. Which Description Best Explains the Four Gospels?

- A. Four unrelated accounts
- B. Four identical biographies
- C. Four complementary witnesses presenting Jesus' life, death, and resurrection
- D. Four collections of Old Testament prophecy
- E. Not sure yet

5. Why Are Chapter and Verse Numbers Included in Modern Bibles?

- A. They were part of the original manuscripts.
- B. They were added later to help locate passages.
- C. They identify the most important sentences.

D. They show where a new author began.

E. Not sure yet

PART TWO

The Bible's Story and Jesus

6. Which Sequence Best Summarizes the Bible's Overall Story?

A. Creation, fall, redemption, and restoration

B. Law, monarchy, poetry, and philosophy

C. Israel, Rome, Europe, and America

D. Rules, failure, punishment, and self-improvement

E. Not sure yet

7. What Happened When Humanity Rebelled Against God?

A. Humanity immediately stopped existing.

B. Sin, guilt, corruption, suffering, and death entered human experience.

C. God abandoned creation permanently.

D. Human beings became divine.

E. Not sure yet

8. What Is a Biblical Covenant?

A. A temporary feeling of inspiration

B. A binding relationship established by God involving promises and responsibilities

C. A private interpretation of prophecy

D. A law applying only to kings

E. Not sure yet

9. How Does the Old Testament Point to Jesus?

A. By containing His name in every chapter

B. Through promises, covenants, patterns, offices, sacrifices, themes, and the redemptive story

C. By making each passage's original meaning unimportant

D. Only through predictions with exact dates

E. Not sure yet

10. What Is the New Testament's Central Claim About Jesus?

A. Jesus was merely a moral teacher.

B. Jesus was one of many equal paths to God.

- C. Jesus is the promised Messiah and divine Son who died for sins, rose, and reigns as Lord.
- D. Jesus came primarily to establish a political movement.
- E. Not sure yet

Old Testament Foundation Check

OT-A. Which books form the Torah or Pentateuch?

- A. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy
- B. Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, and Kings
- C. Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs
- D. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Hosea
- E. Not sure yet

OT-B. How should Old Testament laws be approached?

- A. Apply every law identically in every covenant.
- B. Treat every law as useless after Jesus.
- C. Understand each law within Israel's covenant, God's character, its purpose, and its fulfillment in Jesus before considering present application.
- D. Retain only laws that seem personally helpful.
- E. Not sure yet

PART THREE

Reading and Interpretation

11. What Is Biblical Context?

- A. Only the verse before a passage
- B. The literary, historical, cultural, covenant, and biblical setting
- C. A reader's emotional response
- D. A list of dictionary meanings
- E. Not sure yet

12. What Is the Safest First Step When One Verse Appears to Teach Something Surprising?

- A. Build a doctrine immediately.
- B. Ask social media.
- C. Read the surrounding paragraph, chapter, and book.
- D. Ignore the verse.
- E. Not sure yet

13. Why Does Literary Genre Matter?

- A. Genre determines whether a book is inspired.
- B. Different kinds of writing communicate truth in different ways.
- C. Poetry and prophecy are never factual.
- D. Narrative requires no interpretation.
- E. Not sure yet

14. Which Statement Best Describes a Biblical Proverb?

- A. A guarantee of the same outcome in every case
- B. A wise general principle about how life ordinarily works under God's order
- C. A command replacing Moses' law
- D. An end-times prediction
- E. Not sure yet

15. What Is the Difference Between Description and Command?

- A. A description reports what happened; a command directs what should be done.
- B. Description is symbolic; command is literal.
- C. Description appears only in the Old Testament.
- D. There is no difference.
- E. Not sure yet

PART FOUR

The Gospel and Christian Life

16. What Is the Gospel?

- A. Advice for becoming better
- B. The good news of what God accomplished through Jesus' death and resurrection
- C. A promise that Christians avoid suffering
- D. A system for earning acceptance
- E. Not sure yet

17. Why Is Jesus' Resurrection Essential?

- A. It confirms Jesus' identity and saving work and demonstrates victory over sin and death.
- B. It is an optional detail.
- C. It teaches that physical life is unimportant.
- D. It means the crucifixion was unnecessary.

E. Not sure yet

18. How Is Salvation Received?

A. By becoming good enough

B. By belonging to the correct culture

C. By God's grace through faith in Jesus

D. By learning enough facts

E. Not sure yet

19. What Is Repentance?

A. Feeling embarrassed without changing

B. Turning from sin toward God in response to truth and grace

C. Punishing oneself until forgiveness is earned

D. Becoming incapable of sinning

E. Not sure yet

20. What Does It Mean to Follow Jesus?

A. Agreeing with selected teachings without changing

B. Trusting Him as Savior and Lord and learning to obey Him

C. Withdrawing from everyone who disagrees

D. Earning salvation through activity

E. Not sure yet

PART FIVE

Bible Confidence

21. What Does Biblical Inspiration Mean?

A. The writers felt creative.

B. God worked through human authors so their writings communicated what He intended.

C. Every writer used the same style.

D. The completed Bible descended without human involvement.

E. Not sure yet

22. What Is a Manuscript?

A. An ancient handwritten copy of a text

B. A modern commentary

C. A statement of faith

D. A translation produced by one person

E. Not sure yet

23. What Is a Textual Variant?

A. Any difference among handwritten copies

B. A hidden religion inside the Bible

C. A modern disagreement about application

D. Proof that the wording cannot be investigated

E. Not sure yet

24. Why Are There Many English Bible Translations?

A. Each teaches a different religion.

B. The original languages have no reliable meaning.

C. Translation requires choices about wording, readability, and reproducing original form.

D. Churches may rewrite Scripture however they wish.

E. Not sure yet

25. Which Statement Best Describes Evidence and Faith?

A. Faith rejects all evidence.

B. Evidence answers every spiritual question with mathematical certainty.

C. Christian faith can examine evidence while ultimately resting in God and His revelation.

D. Evidence matters only to unbelievers.

E. Not sure yet

Want to Go Deeper?

PART SIX

Intermediate Assessment

26. Matthew Applies Hosea 11:1 to Jesus, Although Hosea Originally Referred to Israel's Exodus. Which Explanation Is Best?

- A. Matthew misunderstood Hosea.
- B. Hosea's original context is unimportant.
- C. Jesus relives and fulfills Israel's pattern as God's faithful Son.
- D. Egypt secretly means Bethlehem.
- E. Not sure yet

27. What Is Typology?

- A. Finding a secret code in every detail
- B. Recognizing God-established patterns in people, events, offices, or institutions that are fulfilled later
- C. Treating Old Testament events as fictional
- D. Replacing original meaning with modern application
- E. Not sure yet

28. Why Should Clear Passages Help Interpret Difficult Passages?

- A. Scripture should be understood coherently rather than through isolated wording.
- B. Difficult passages can be deleted.
- C. Only simple passages are inspired.
- D. Clear passages make context unnecessary.
- E. Not sure yet

29. a Narrative Reports That a Biblical Character Practiced Polygamy. What Is the Safest Initial Conclusion?

- A. The practice must be approved.
- B. The account describes what occurred but does not necessarily command or approve it.
- C. Every action by a major character should be copied.
- D. Narrative contains no moral teaching.
- E. Not sure yet

30. How Should an Apparent Contradiction Be Investigated?

- A. Assume one passage is false.
- B. Assume every difficulty has an obvious answer.
- C. Compare context, wording, genre, chronology, translation, and each passage's actual claim.
- D. Choose the preferred passage.
- E. Not sure yet

31. What Is Progressive Revelation?

- A. Earlier revelation was false.
- B. God revealed His purposes over time, adding clarity and reaching fulfillment in Jesus.
- C. Every generation replaces Scripture.
- D. The New Testament makes the Old Testament worthless.
- E. Not sure yet

32. What Is the Difference Between Inspiration and Illumination?

- A. Inspiration concerns God giving Scripture; illumination concerns the Spirit helping readers understand and respond.
- B. Inspiration applies to the Old Testament only.
- C. Inspiration is emotional; illumination is academic.
- D. There is no difference.
- E. Not sure yet

33. Why May a Gospel Quotation Differ from an Old Testament Passage in a Modern Translation?

- A. The Gospel writers were careless.
- B. Ancient quotation practices, translation, the Septuagint, summary, or adaptation may explain wording differences.
- C. The Old Testament did not yet exist.
- D. Every difference changes the central meaning.
- E. Not sure yet

34. What Does It Mean That Jesus Fulfills the Law and Prophets?

- A. Jesus proved the Old Testament mistaken.
- B. Jesus brought Scripture's promises, patterns, covenants, institutions, and purposes to their intended completion.
- C. Jesus required Gentiles to become citizens of ancient Israel.
- D. Jesus made God's moral character irrelevant.

E. Not sure yet

35. What Safeguards Against Imagined Connections Between an Old Testament Passage and Jesus?

A. Reject every connection without Jesus' name.

B. Accept every resemblance as prophecy.

C. Look for support in Scripture's wording, covenant structure, themes, storyline, or explicit New Testament use.

D. Depend on personal impressions.

E. Not sure yet

Answer Guide

Part One — Bible Basics

1. C — the Christian Bible Is Organized into the Old and New Testaments.

2. B — the Protestant Bible Contains 39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament Books. Catholic and Orthodox Old Testament Collections Contain Additional Books.

3. C — “testament” Is Connected with Covenant.

4. C — the Four Gospels Are Complementary Witnesses to the Same Jesus.

5. B — Chapter and Verse Numbers Were Added Later to Help Locate Passages.

Recommended studies: Old Testament Overview by Book; New Testament Overview by Book; Four Gospels, One Jesus; Understanding Chapters, Verses, Cross-References, and Footnotes.

Part Two — the Bible's Story and Jesus

6. a — God Creates, Humanity Falls, God Redeems, and God Promises Restoration.

7. B — Human Rebellion Brought Guilt, Alienation, Suffering, and Death.

8. B — Biblical Covenants Establish Relationships Involving Divine Promises and Responsibilities.

9. B — the Old Testament Points to Jesus Through Promises, Patterns, Covenants, Offices, Sacrifices, and Themes.

10. C — Jesus Is the Promised Messiah and Divine Son Who Died, Rose, Reigns, and Will Return.

OT-A. A — Genesis through Deuteronomy form the Torah or Pentateuch.

OT-B. C — Old Testament law must be understood within Israel's covenant and Jesus' fulfillment before present application.

Recommended studies: The One Story of Scripture; The Covenants of Scripture; How the Whole Bible Points to Jesus; Understanding Old Testament Law; The Life and Ministry of Jesus.

Part Three — Reading and Interpretation

11. B — Context Includes Literary, Historical, Cultural, Covenant, and Biblical Setting.

12. C — Read the Surrounding Paragraph, Chapter, and Book First.

13. B — Different Literary Forms Communicate in Different Ways.

14. B — Proverbs Communicate Wise General Principles, Not Mechanical Guarantees.

15. a — Description Is Not Automatic Approval or Command.

Recommended studies: From Reading to Understanding; A Beginner's Guide to Biblical Context; Understanding the Different Types of Biblical Writing; Beginner-Friendly Bible Study Methods.

Part Four — the Gospel and Christian Life

16. B — the Gospel Is Good News About What God Has Done Through Jesus.

17. a — the Resurrection Confirms Jesus' Saving Work and Victory.

18. C — Salvation Is God's Gift Received Through Faith, Not Earned by Works.

19. B — Repentance Turns from Sin Toward God.

20. B — Discipleship Is Lifelong Trust and Obedience to Jesus.

Recommended studies: What Is the Gospel?; The Crucifixion and Resurrection; What Is Salvation?; What It Means to Follow Jesus.

Part Five — Bible Confidence

21. B — God Worked Through Genuine Human Authors to Communicate What He Intended.

22. a — Manuscripts Are Handwritten Copies of Ancient Texts.

23. a — Textual Variants Are Differences Among Manuscript Copies; Most Are Minor and Can Be Investigated.

24. C — Translation Involves Responsible Choices About Form and Readability.

25. C — Evidence Contributes to a Cumulative Case Centered on Jesus.

Recommended studies: Is the Bible Really God's Word?; How Did We Get the Bible?; Has the Bible Been Changed?; Investigating the Bible.

Intermediate Answers

26. C — Jesus Fulfills Israel’s Story as God’s Faithful Son.

27. B — Typology Recognizes God-established Patterns Fulfilled More Fully Later.

28. a — Scripture’s Teaching Should Be Interpreted Coherently.

29. B — a Narrative Can Report Sin Without Approving It.

30. C — Apparent Contradictions Require Careful Comparison of the Actual Claims.

31. B — God’s Revelation Unfolds Toward Its Climax in Jesus.

32. a — Inspiration Concerns the Giving of Scripture; Illumination Concerns Understanding It.

33. B — Language, Translation, the Septuagint, and Ancient Quotation Practices May Explain Differences.

34. B — Jesus Brings God’s Earlier Promises and Purposes to Completion.

35. C — Responsible Connections Require Scriptural Support.

Recommended studies: How the New Testament Uses the Old Testament; Promise or Pattern?; Does the Bible Contradict Itself?; What Did Jesus Believe About Scripture?; What Does “Fulfilled” Mean?

Understanding Results

Do not use only a total score. Category results reveal where the next learning step may be found. A correct answer marked with a question mark represents developing knowledge. The foundation is present, but review may turn recognition into clearer understanding. An incorrect answer accompanied by thoughtful reasoning is also valuable because it reveals the assumption needing examination.

For each five-question category:

- 4–5 correct — The foundation is familiar; consider a deeper related resource.
- 2–3 correct — Some understanding is present; review uncertain topics.
- 0–1 correct — Begin with a welcoming orientation resource and learn gradually.

For the intermediate section:

- 8–10 correct — Strong intermediate foundations are present.
- 5–7 correct — Review uncertain questions and related studies.
- 0–4 correct — No concern is necessary. These concepts are often unfamiliar even to experienced readers.

Choosing the Next Study

Selected category: _____

First study to complete: _____

Starting date: _____

One question the study should help answer:

Reusable Progress Journal

Date: _____

Study or Passage: _____

What Was Already Familiar?

What New Truth Was Learned?

What Assumption Was Corrected?

How Does This Relate to Jesus or the Gospel?

What Question Remains?

What Is the Next Step?

Using the Assessment in a Group

- Explain that this is a learning tool, not a test of faith.
- Allow private completion and do not require total scores to be revealed.
- Discuss selected questions rather than comparing results.
- Welcome honest questions without embarrassment.
- Distinguish central Christian beliefs from secondary issues.
- Select a shared study when several participants identify the same need.
- End by identifying how the truth points to Jesus and calls for faithful response.

When Christian Traditions Differ

Historic Christianity shares central convictions about the triune God, Jesus' identity, His death and resurrection, human sin, salvation through Christ, and Scripture's authority. Christians may differ on secondary matters such as Old Testament canon size, baptism, Communion, church government, spiritual gifts, Israel and the church, election, the millennium, the rapture, and the application of some Old Testament laws.

Each view should be tested through careful study. A secondary disagreement should not automatically be treated as denial of the gospel. Read passages in context, distinguish clear teaching from inference, examine responsible interpretations, and keep Jesus central.

Signs of Healthy Growth

- Greater desire to open Scripture
- Increased recognition of context
- Willingness to revise assumptions
- Growing ability to explain the gospel
- Greater familiarity with the Old Testament
- Greater recognition of Jesus throughout Scripture
- Less dependence on isolated verses
- More patience with difficult questions
- Increasing discernment
- Greater humility, love, and obedience

Final Reflection Questions

1. Which category feels strongest?
2. Which category needs attention?
3. Which correct answers were partly guesses?
4. Which answer was most surprising?
5. Which question created curiosity?
6. Is any belief based more on tradition than direct study?
7. Which Old Testament subject needs greater attention?
8. Which resource provides the clearest next step?
9. What study rhythm can be maintained?
10. How can knowledge lead to love and obedience?

Glossary

CANON — The recognized collection of books received as Scripture.

CONTEXT — The setting surrounding a passage.

COVENANT — A binding relationship established by God involving promises and responsibilities.

GENRE — A type of literature such as narrative, law, poetry, prophecy, wisdom, Gospel, letter, or apocalypse.

GOSPEL — The good news of what God accomplished through Jesus, especially His death and resurrection.

ILLUMINATION — The Holy Spirit's work helping people understand and respond to Scripture.

INSPIRATION — God's work through human authors so their writings communicate what He intended.

MANUSCRIPT — A handwritten copy of an ancient text.

PENTATEUCH — Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

PROGRESSIVE REVELATION — God's unfolding disclosure of His purposes, reaching its climax in Jesus.

TEXTUAL VARIANT — A difference among manuscript copies.

TYPOLOGY — God-established patterns fulfilled more fully later.

Conclusion

The Bible Understanding Assessment is not a final examination. It is a starting point. Every reader begins with gaps and partial knowledge. Even experienced students continue discovering questions, correcting assumptions, and seeing new connections.

The goal is not to know everything before opening the Bible. The goal is to keep opening Scripture with humility, prayer, care, and confidence.

Biblical knowledge should lead toward Jesus. Scripture reveals who He is, why humanity needs Him, what He accomplished through His death and resurrection, and what it means to follow Him.

Choose one next step. Open the relevant passages. Ask honest questions. Remain teachable. Keep going.

A Closing Prayer

Lord God, thank You for making Yourself known through Scripture. Give understanding without pride, confidence without carelessness, and humility without fear. Reveal areas needing study, correct false assumptions, and strengthen what is true. Use every question to create a deeper desire for Your Word. Keep Jesus at the center of every study and conclusion. Amen.

A Note About Sharing

This assessment may be shared freely for personal study, discipleship, small groups, and church use. Scores should never be used to embarrass, rank, exclude, or judge another person's faith.

The Goal of This Assessment

The goal is not to prove how much a person already knows. The goal is to identify the next faithful step toward understanding God's Word, recognizing Jesus throughout Scripture, and becoming a lifelong student of the Bible.