

**Purpose:** This three-session workshop is designed to introduce participants to the history and background of the Bible, and to present basic principles of historical-critical and transformational methods of biblical interpretation. The goals include to:

- explore assumptions, misconceptions and misuses of Scripture
- alleviate anxiety about reading the Bible by identifying existing skills
- explore how the Bible came to us
- identify principles of biblical interpretation
- move from cognitive to transformative dimensions of Bible study

### Outline of the Study

Session I: The Bible and You

Session II: More about the Bible, Skills and Principles

Session III: Taking it to Heart

**Time Frame:** Each of the sessions will take 60–75 minutes.

### Materials

- Bibles
- pens or pencils
- blank paper
- copies of handouts
- Bible study tools: study Bibles, dictionaries, encyclopedia
- chalk board or newsprint

**Note:** Change in perspectives can be difficult because beliefs are held in place by emotions associated with important people and events. These beliefs are referred to as “meaning perspectives” in transformational education theory. Honoring the Bible requires honesty and a willingness to consider there may be more than we already know. It also requires the assurance that growth, even when it means change, honors those who laid the foundations of our beliefs. When presenting this study, therefore, it is important to take into consideration the complexity of beliefs and honor where people are while encouraging growth, keeping in mind that growth may mean changing views or re-affirming previously held views after exploring other options. There is value in reviewing assumptions and considering other possibilities as the end result is beliefs—whether they change or remain the same—that are held with greater integrity.

## Session I: The Bible and You

### Objectives—Participants will:

- Name their assumptions about the Bible
- Identify skills they already have that apply to reading the Bible

### I. Gathering (5 minutes)

Welcome everyone and express appreciation for their interest in learning more about the Bible.

- ▶ Review the topics for each of the three sessions then share the following:
  - The goal is to answer some questions, dispel some myths, and explore together some principles and skills that will help all of us read the Bible with integrity.
  - The hope is that we would encounter God through the study of Scripture in such a way that it we would grow together into more authentically biblical people.
  - Each session will begin with a devotional moment built around a verse in which the Bible speaks of itself.
  - In this session we will:
    - Review the preparatory assignment
    - Identify the study skills we already use regularly
    - Discuss the nature of the Bible

### II. Opening Devotion (10 minutes)

**Text:** 2 Timothy 3:16–17: *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

- ▶ Ask “Are you familiar with this verse?” If they respond affirmatively, invite them to take a few moments thinking about what it means to them; remembering who, when, or under what circumstances it has been shared with/taught to them.
- ▶ Use the following information to offer some thoughts:
  - **Context:** Paul bore news concerning his own imminent death. To ready Timothy for the impending challenges, he commends him to study carefully the sacred writings he has known since childhood. In addition to the oral tradition about Jesus and the letters from Paul (2 Peter 3:15–16), there were sacred texts (the Hebrew Bible) that he is encouraged to study to understand more fully what was revealed in Jesus.
  - **All Scripture:** properly refers to the Old Testament as the New Testament writings either were not yet written or not yet gathered and canonized, although, some letters of Paul as well as oral traditions of Jesus were already circulating as authoritative documents/traditions among the churches.

- **Inspired (*theopneustos*):** This is the only instance in the New Testament. It can mean God-breathed similar to the breath of life that is in humans and other living creatures. It can also mean to breathe in.
  - **And:** Does not actually appear in the text and there is no “is” in Greek, so a better translation is to take *theopneustos* as an adjective: *All inspired Scripture is useful . . .*
  - **Reproof:** a better translation is “convincing”
  - **Correcting** a better translation is “reforming”
  - **Righteousness:** righteousness and justice are the same concept in Hebrew and NT thought. There is no distinction between personal morality and social responsibility. Together, both make up a righteous life.
- ▶ Share the following devotional thoughts:
- The Old Testament is as important as the new and therefore presents the same loving God who was present in Jesus Christ.
  - The common tendency to speak of an “Old Testament God of anger and a New Testament God of love” suggests that there are two Gods or one God with a split personality. Such thinking violates our belief in Jesus as “God incarnate” and also violates the sacredness of all Scripture.
  - To say Scripture is inspired is to say that it is both imbued with the life-giving power of God and to say that as we breathe it in (inspire it), it comes to life.
  - The power of the Bible lies in its ability to communicate the presence of God so that those who encounter it experience grace and personal transformation.

- ▶ Offer a prayer of your choice or you use the following:

*God of life and grace,*

*We are filled with gratitude for those who have shown us your love and revealed to us Jesus, the word made flesh. We ask that you would help us to learn to be rightful handlers of your truth so that we might also walk as the word made real in a world that desperately needs to hear your voice and feel your presence. Amen.*

### III. Assumptions and Preconceptions (20 minutes)

#### A. Me and the Bible

- ▶ Write down “It’s biblical” on the board and ask: “What does this mean?” Record responses and note what role the Bible plays in each understanding (e.g. rule book, road map, devotional book).
- ▶ Explain:
- Significant people and experiences are often connected to our understandings of the Bible.

- Change can be hard because of emotions associated with those connections.
- Honoring the Bible—and honoring those important people and experiences—requires honesty and a willingness to risk new ideas and to believe there is always more to learn.

Distribute copies of handout 1A and ask them to spend some time before the next session thinking about the who, how, what and where associated with their understandings of experiences with the Bible. Assure them that this is a personal exercise and they will not be sharing their responses.

## **B. Bible Quiz (Handout 1)**

► Distribute page 1 of Handout 1, “Bible Quiz,” and explain that the goal is to explore some common misconceptions about Bible content. Once they have completed the quiz, distribute page 2 of Handout 1 and review it together. Discuss any surprises. Often someone will argue with the “spare the rod and spoil the child” quote more than any other. Very often someone will search and find another quote that reflects a similar sentiment, such as Proverbs 13:24. Such a discussion will provide the opportunity to address several issues including:

1) “Almost” quoting a text is not the same as quoting it.

2) Common sayings that are not from the Bible but held to be require that Christians be well-informed. The culture should not be teaching us what’s in the Bible; the Bible should.

3) Proverbs says many things, including: “He who blesses his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it will be counted a curse to him.” (27:14) It is important to understand the history and nature of each biblical book.

4) Our preconceptions and experiences influence our approach to Scripture. An intense response to something provides information about what we bring to the reading of the Bible. It is important to ask ourselves why we have a strong emotional reaction in such cases and use it as an opportunity to know ourselves better.

► Transition—explain: *Reading the Bible with integrity means trusting it to be all that it is; letting it speak to us; and not picking and choosing just the parts that we are comfortable with. In fact, the parts that challenge us can be most beneficial to us, if we use proper skills of biblical interpretation. You have most of those skills. The next activity is designed to help you see how many Bible study skills you already have.*

#### **IV. Explore Current Skills (20 minutes)**

- ▶ Distribute one excerpt to each person from Handout 2. If you have a large number of participants, assign excerpts to pairs or teams. Ask them to answer this one question about the excerpt they have: “What does it mean?”
- ▶ Give them a few minutes to answer the question and then reconvene and discuss the following:
  - Were you able to answer the question “What does it mean?”
  - If so, what steps did you take to get to that answer?
  - If not, what would have helped you in answering the question?
  - Is “What does it mean?” the right question for all your excerpts?
- ▶ Write down principles and skills they used as reflected in their answers. Provide Handout 2, Part 2 “Excerpt Information” and ask if the information helps them understand their excerpts. Add insights to the list of principles and skills.
- ▶ Review the list and explain that these are the same skills needed to study the Bible with integrity. They include:
  - 1) careful/close reading
  - 2) attention to type of material (letter, song, legal document)
  - 3) setting for material (who wrote it, who is the audience, when was it written)
  - 4) context (what comes before or after)
  - 5) meaning of words (dictionary, historical situation)
- ▶ Emphasize that they already have the necessary skills for good Bible study.
- ▶ Take a few minutes to show Bible study tools (dictionaries, encyclopedia, concordances, etc.)

#### **V. Formation of the Bible (5 minutes)**

- ▶ Explain that reading the Bible with integrity requires understanding its where and how it came to us, so next session you will take a closer look at the history and content of the Bible, but in the meantime, you would like them to ponder the following:  
*It took well over a thousand years for all the books of the Bible to be individually written down and hundreds of years passed before those books were brought together into what we know as our Bible. The content of the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament, which was written in Hebrew with some Aramaic sections, was transferred orally from generation to generation for thousands of years before it was written. The first written forms of the stories, songs, and prophecies that would become part of the Hebrew Scriptures were written around 1800 B.C.E., and the remainder were written and collected over a period of centuries. The first scrolls were probably*

*written beginning 400 years before the birth of Jesus. They were mnemonic devices to aid in recitation so they used only consonants. Vowels were added around 600 after Jesus' time.*

*The earliest written documents of our New Testament are the early letters of Paul, like Thessalonians. Ancient writers either spoke their thoughts to a scribe or spoke aloud as they wrote and everything was read aloud. These were oral cultures. The narratives about Jesus were preserved by the Jerusalem community—the earliest Christian community, which included Jesus' inner circle, including the apostles, Mary Magdalene, and family members, brother James and mother Mary. The sayings of Jesus were preserved by the rural Palestinian communities where Jesus did much of his teaching. These traditions became the foundation for early documents that then became the basis for our gospels. It was not until about the year 65 that the stories and sayings of Jesus began to be gathered and written down. The New Testament documents were written in common Greek with a few bits of Aramaic, which Jesus spoke. For three centuries, church leaders argued about which writings should be treated as Scripture before deciding on the canon that we now have.*

## **VI. Closing (5 minutes)**

► Reassure participants that you believe the Bible is sacred and has the potential to change not only our lives, but the world.

► Give the following optional assignment:

Read a favorite passage every day of the week. Before you read, ask God to clear your mind of anything that might block you from receiving the text.

Close with prayer.

## Session II: More about the Bible, Skills and Principles

### Objectives—participants will:

- explore the historical background of the Bible
- explore issues related to translation of the Bible
- consider common misuses of Scripture
- identify principles and steps for interpreting the Bible

### I. Gathering (5 minutes)

Welcome everyone and invite a few minutes of sharing thoughts and questions from the last session or reactions to the optional assignment.

- ▶ Review the goals of the session.

### II. Opening Devotion (10 minutes)

**Text:** 2 Peter 3: 14–1: *So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, [Lord's return], make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.*

#### ▶ Explain:

- Paul's letters were being circulated at this time in Pauline churches.
  - This letter presupposes writings and context lost to us. The best we can do is discern meaning from content (and the letter called "Jude").
  - This is late letter—a second generation general epistle, written *since the fathers fell asleep* (3:4) and reflects early institutional church/the rise of church structure.
  - The lapse of time and failure of return of Jesus creates a context for false teachers and destructive doctrines.
- ▶ Share the following devotional thought: Scripture was hard to understand, even for those much closer to the origin of its writings so we must approach it with humility.
  - ▶ Offer a prayer of your choice or you use the following:

*Loving God,*

*We are thankful that you came to us in human form. We are thankful that you have given us a legacy in human writing to guide us in your way. Keep us ever aware that, as the apostle said "For now we see through a glass, darkly." Help us to approach your word with both humility and confidence, leaning on your Holy Spirit for direction. Amen.*

### III. More about the Bible (15 minutes)

Distribute Handouts 3 and 4, “About the Bible” and “The Challenges of Translation.” Divide the participants into two groups and assign each group one of the handouts. Ask them to review and prepare: 1) a summary of the handout and 2) a list of implications that they find in the information. Give them 10 minutes to complete the task and 5 minutes each to report.

### IV. A Common Misuse of Scripture (20 minutes)

- ▶ Begin by asking what they think are common ways people misuse Scripture. Write down their responses and affirm each one (even if you disagree with it).
- ▶ Explain that you want to begin a discussion of one of the most common ways people approach Scripture that does not honor its integrity with an exercise that might feel a bit uncomfortable.

#### A) Disorienting Dilemma

- ▶ Explain the concept of disorienting dilemma and its role in education as follows:  
*An important part of transformational learning is reflecting on assumptions and beliefs. The result is greater integrity in beliefs—whether or not we change them. Assumptions and beliefs are often held unconsciously and we sometimes need help surfacing them. That process can be encouraged by experiencing disorienting dilemmas. A disorienting dilemma is an experience that surprises us and opens our minds to new thinking. We all experience disorienting dilemmas in life. Extreme examples are loss of jobs, illnesses, or other crises. Smaller things can also be disorienting dilemmas. These can help us to grow. In this session, we will explore a potential disorienting dilemma to help identify assumptions we bring to Scripture and consciously decide if those are perspectives we wish to hold onto or change. Either way, we grow in the integrity with which we read the Bible.*
- ▶ Randomly assign each person EITHER 2 Samuel 24:1 or 1 Chronicles 21:1 and then ask: “Who incited David to take a census?” The participants will have 2 different answers, depending on which texts they were given:
  - 2 Samuel 24:1: *Again the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, “Go and take a census of Israel and Judah.”*
  - 1 Chronicles 21:1: *Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel. [Some translations will read “an adversary” or “a heavenly adversary.”]*
- ▶ Ask them to respond to the following based on the text they have:
  - Was it right or wrong for David to take the census?
  - Is it accurate to say “The Bible says God wanted David to take the census?”



- ▶ Define proof-texting as:
  - taking an idea to the text to prove it, making the authority my idea not Scripture
  - using texts in isolation and ignoring the textual, historical, theological context
- ▶ Explain that proof-texting is one of the most common misuses of Scripture and invite discussion of their experiences with their own or others' proof-texting. Listen to struggles or resistance without arguing. Honor that for some, proof-texting may be the primary way they or people they respect have approached Scripture.

## **B) Possible Explanations**

Distribute Handout 5, "Samuel vs. Chronicles on the Census" and review it together. Assure the participants that such issues do not challenge the authority of the Bible, but rather help us honor its authority on its own terms as a divine-human product.

## **V. Principles and Steps for Biblical Interpretation (20 minutes)**

### **A) B.R.A.G. for studying the Bible:**

- ▶ Present the following guiding principles:
  - 1) **Beware** any assumptions, agenda or previous understandings you bring to the text. Very often what we see in the Bible reflects what we bring to it. The Bible comes to life when we open ourselves to the possibility that it will surprise us. We can trust the spirit to guide us to new understandings or reinforce our previous ones.
  - 2) **Remember** the Bible was not written *to* us but *for* us. It is crucial to keep in mind that the stories of the Bible are ancient and were told for generations in cultures very different from our own before being written down and that the letters were written to specific people in particular circumstances. We must understand the who, to whom, what, where and why of the documents that became our sacred texts.
  - 3) **Apply** general principles instead context-specific rules. The Bible is not a list of rules or instructions. It is a living and life-giving collection of stories, letters and thoughts. If we want answers from it, it is best to seek the central message of a passage, look for the principles that come from it, and apply those to our current situations.
  - 4) **Go** for the story. Whenever a verse or section seems confusing, it is helpful to remember that the Bible tells the story of God's interaction with humans through multiple layers of story. The best way to get at its message is to look for the story, whether it be small (Jesus' encounter with a woman at a well) or large (the story of a wandering shepherd and his family whose descendants became a large nation).

## **B) Key Steps and Guiding Questions for Understanding the Bible**

- ▶ Present the following steps for studying the Bible:
  1. Bracket assumptions and identify personal agenda.
  2. Read it carefully.
  3. Explore concepts using Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias.
  4. Compare translations using books with several translations side by side or online ([www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)).
  5. Check different manuscript versions by looking at the notes at the bottom of the page that read “Other ancient authorities read . . .”
  6. Let the Bible inform itself reading other sections that might shed light on a passage. And always read in light of the principle of God’s love as revealed in Jesus.
  7. Seek to know the writer, audience, purpose and historical context of each book.
  8. Identify the type of literature you are reading—a letter, a story, a parable...
  9. Explore the verses before and after a particular text.
  10. Inspire it: breathe the word in, trusting the Holy Spirit to bring it to life in you.
- ▶ Present the following list of questions that flow from these principles.
  1. Who: Originated or wrote it? First heard or read it?
  2. What: Does it communicate? Is the context? Kind of literature is it?
  3. When was it written or said or both?
  4. Where was the speaker, the writer, there hearer, the reader?
  5. How: Was the message received and understood then? How does it apply now?

### **V Closing (5 minutes)**

- ▶ Remind participants that God’s word is always communicated through human vehicles—otherwise, we could not receive it. To treat the Bible as solely divine is to be idolatrous. To treat it as solely human is to deny its uniqueness.
- ▶ Present this optional assignment: apply the principles, steps and questions to the favorite passage you have been reading or another text.
- ▶ Mention that so far you have looked at studying the Bible primarily as an intellectual endeavor. While studying the Bible is an activity of the mind, it is also an endeavor of the heart and of life itself, so next session, you will explore ways to embrace the life-changing and world-changing power of Scripture.

Close in prayer.

## Session 3: Taking it to Heart

### I. Gathering (10 minutes)

Welcome participants and allow time for questions or comments regarding the workshop so far and for sharing by those who completed the optional assignment.

► Explain:

- There is no such thing as reading the Bible without interpretation. We all interpret Scripture the moment we take the words from the page and into our thoughts.
- So far we have focused on aspects of the historical–critical method of interpretation. This approach helps us correctly handle the word of truth by:
  - providing standards for interpretation and parameters for meaning
  - honoring Scripture as complex volume with a long and complex history
  - serving as a corrective to centuries of pressing Scripture into service of established, and often self–serving or agenda–driven, theologies
- But there’s more to it, isn’t there? Today we will experiment with an approach to biblical interpretation that seeks to tap into the power of the Bible to transform lives and change the world.

### II. Opening Devotion (10 minutes)

**Texts:**

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

Psalms 119:105: *Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.*

► Use the following information to offer some thoughts:

- 2 Timothy 2:15 suggests that interpreting and applying Scripture is not an easy task, but rather is an endeavor that requires effort and training to do it properly.
- Sacred tradition is a treasure and as such, deserves to be handled with care.
- Psalm 119 praises God's word in twenty–two stanzas, each of which is denoted by one of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

► Share this devotional thought: In the risky business of walking outside in ancient times, a lamp would not illuminate the entire path but only the next step or two. As we walk in faith God may illuminate our path only one step at a time.

► Offer a prayer of your choice or you use the following:

*God of light,*

*Guide us on our way and on The Way. Help us to open not only our minds, but also our hearts to your word. Amen.*

### III. Two Alternative Approaches to the Bible (30 minutes)

#### A) Liberationist

► Offer the following summary:

A liberationist approach to Scripture arose from within the context of poverty and oppression. It seeks to lift up the Bible's often-overlooked message of freedom and justice by:

- taking new look at familiar and commonly used texts, especially those that have been interpreted in ways that marginalize groups of persons; Handout 7, which will be distributed at the end of the session, provides one example of a liberationist reading of the story of the woman at the well (John 4:1-42).
- raising up neglected texts; Handout 8, which will be distributed at the end of the session, gives a summary of some of neglected information and texts related to the Bible and poverty and oppression.

#### B) Walter Wink's Transformational Bible Study

► Share the following:

- Walter Wink expressed appreciation for the historical-critical method of Bible study because it addressed the problem of misuse of Scripture by church hierarchy to support theologies that controlled people and kept the faith in the hands of leaders. But he also responded to the failure of the method to interpret the Scriptures in such a way that the past becomes alive and illumines our present with new possibilities for personal and social transformation.
- Wink's Approach both draws on historical method and reflects aspects of a liberationist approach. Additionally, it strives to intentionally touch our personal lives and our world.

► Explain: We are going to experiment with Wink's approach with a well-known text from the Sermon on the Mount:

*You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, 'Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also.'* (Matt. 5:38-39).

► Review the following steps:

1. Explore historic interpretations.

The church has generally interpreted Jesus' teaching as "niceness." "Turn the other cheek" has become a cultural platitude, taken to mean be a doormat for Jesus. The classical interpretation flows from the assumption that there are only two possibilities for action in the face of evil: resist or not resist. While expecting certain individuals and groups to be passive in the face of societal evil, Christians have, on the whole, simply ignored the teaching and resorted to societally sanctioned

violence. A few non-mainstream groups who have tried to follow Jesus' words have understood it to mean total non-resistance.

## 2. Consider important background information.

- Jesus' listeners were the most oppressed victims of the Roman occupation. People of rural Galilean countryside experienced poverty, taxation, crucifixion, and the confiscation of their belongings and their daughters. They dreamt for generations of the one who would come and free them by conquering the Empire.
- Jesus' listeners are not those who strike. They are the powerless victims of those who do, namely the Roman occupiers.
- The word translated "resist" (*antistena*) implies "counteractive aggression"—a violent response to hostilities initiated by someone else.
- The text explicitly says ". . . on the *right* cheek, turn the other also." In this right-handed culture, the left hand was reserved for unclean tasks. Simply gesturing with the left hand carried the penalty. A blow by the right fist would land on the left cheek of the opponent as would an open-handed slap. To hit the right cheek with a fist would require using the left hand—something that would not have been done. The only way one could naturally strike the right cheek with the right hand would be with the back of the hand—an insult, designed to put someone in his or her place. A backhand slap was the usual way of admonishing inferiors. Masters backhanded slaves; husbands backhanded wives; and Romans backhanded Jews.

## 3) Consider alternative interpretations.

### ► Share the following:

Wink suggests there is another possibility—Jesus, in short, abhors both passivity and violence. He is cautioning against being made over into the very evil we oppose by adopting its methods and spirit. When an oppressed person offered the other cheek, he or she would rob the oppressor of the power to humiliate. He or she is saying, in effect, "I deny you the power to humiliate me. I am a human being just like you." Such a response would create enormous difficulties for the striker. How would he hit the other cheek? He cannot backhand it with his right hand. If he hits with a fist, he makes the other his equal, acknowledging him as a peer. In that culture with their elaborate rules of honor, shame and place, the oppressor is stripped of his power to instill shame in a subordinate when the other cheek is turned. This story presents a third option to passivity and violence.

### ► Distribute and review Handout 6, "Jesus' Third Way."

## 4. Find Yourself in the Story.

- Present one of the following ways of identifying with the story and discuss the experience afterwards.

◎ **Meditation: As the Oppressed**

▶ Guide participants through the following meditation.

Close your eyes and take a slow deep breath. As you exhale, open your mind and allow a memory to come in of a time when you felt powerless or shamed by another. Imagine the situation in detail. Who is there? Where are you? What does it look like? How does smell? What sounds do you hear? What do you feel?

Now imagine Jesus coming to you. He sits beside you and places his hand on your shoulder. He whispers something into your ear. What does he say? You feel yourself relax. You feel safe now. He gently takes your hand and leads you away. His touch says, "I am here. You are valuable. You are loved. You are safe."

Now take a deep breath and slowly exhale. Become aware of your surroundings. Feel your feet on the floor, the seat beneath you. When you are ready, open your eyes.

◎ **Personal Reflection: As an Observer**

▶ Pass out paper and writing and drawing implements. Ask participants to think of situation they consider oppressive. Invite them brain storm ways in which they might respond that are neither violent nor passive. They may write or draw expressions of their ideas.

◎ **Discussion: As a Member of a Privileged Group**

▶ Invite small groups to discuss situations in which others are treated unequally, and in which they are part of the "in group" or at risk of participating in the structural evil. For example, they might consider the child labor or unfair labor practices that provide inexpensive products in our country; or the legacy of the destruction of indigenous peoples that was part of settling the new world. How might they respond as a Christian and stand with those on the margins as Jesus did?

**V. Closing (10 minutes)**

Set out Handout 9 "Evaluation" and invite them to take one and complete it when they can. Distribute Handouts 7, "A Liberationist Consideration of John 4:1-42," and 8 "The Bible and Poverty and Oppression" for them to review on their own. Invite comments and discussion as time allows. Thank the participants for being a part of the workshop.

Close with prayer.

# Appendix: Handouts

Many of our beliefs and understandings function unconsciously, but they are powerful none the less. Significant people and experiences are often connected to our beliefs, understandings, and feelings about the Bible. These questions are designed to help bring to consciousness your assumptions and preconceptions about Scripture and also to identify the relationships and experiences that helped from those ideas. Spontaneous responses are likely to reveal the most accurate information.

1a) When you say or hear someone say “It’s biblical” or “It’s not biblical,” what does that mean to you?

1b) In your response to 1a, what role does the Bible play (e.g. rule book, guidebook, story book)?

2) Who do you associate with introducing you to the Bible and/or forming your understanding of the Bible? What was the nature of your relationship with that person and how might that relationship affect your approach to Scripture?

3) Think about some notable events or experiences in your life that involved the Bible. What happened? Who was involved? What was the situation or nature of the experience?



## Bible Quiz

## Handout 1 p. 1, C901, Session 1

**Part One:** *Put a ✓ in the box of those quotes that are from the Bible.*

- Charity begins at home.
- Children should be seen and not heard.
- Children are our future.
- Cleanliness is next to godliness.
- Confession is good for the soul.
- God helps those who help themselves.
- God is in heaven, and all is right with the world.
- God moves in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform.
- Honesty is the best policy.
- An idle mind is the devil's workshop.
- Neither a borrower nor a lender be.
- Spare the rod and spoil the child.

**Part Two:** *Answer the following questions*

- 1) How many wise men visited Jesus?
- 2) Did Goliath have a brother?
- 3) What was the sin of Sodom?
- 4) Who wrote 1 and 2 Samuel?
- 5) Who was Mary Magdalene?

**Part One:** None are from the Bible.

**Charity begins at home.:** Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844, ch. 27); “Charity begins at home, and justice begins next door.”

**Children should be seen and not heard.:** 15<sup>th</sup> Century English proverb, which was first applied specifically to young women.

**The children are our future.:** “Greatest Love of All,” by Masser and Creed (1977)

**Cleanliness is next to godliness.:** Quoted by John Wesley (1703-1791) in “On Visiting the Sick,” and in “On Dress.” *may be drawn from a 2nd century Hebrew proverb.*

**Confession is good for the soul.:** Scottish proverb, “Open confession is good for the soul.” Possible adaptation of Augustine of Hippo (354-430), “The confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works.”

**God helps those who help themselves.:** Benjamin Franklin in Poor Richard's Almanack (1736). Possibly from Erasmus' *Collection of Adages* (1500), which, in turn, reflects a popular adaptation of one of Aesop's *Fables*.

**God is in heaven, and all is right with the world.:** “Pippa's Song” by Robert Browning (*The Oxford Book of English Verse: 1250–1900*, Arthur Quiller-Couch, ed. 1919)

**God moves in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform.:** Hymn “God Moves in Mysterious Ways,” by William Cowper (1731-1800)

**Honesty is the best policy.:** *Don Quixote*, Miguel de Cervantes, part ii, Chapter xxxiii (1615)

**Idle hands are the devil's workshop.:** Geoffrey Chaucer (1342–1400) “Tale of Melibee” from *The Canterbury Tales*

**Neither a borrower nor a lender be.:** Shakespeare, *Hamlet* 1603

**Spare the rod and spoil the child.:** Samuel Butler (1820–1905) in the burlesque poem, *Hudibras*, on quelling romantic feelings

**Part Two Answers**

**1)** We don't know. Matthew 2:1-12 says the Magi brought 3 gifts, but does not specify the number of visitors.

**2)** 1 Samuel 17 records the story of David killing Goliath. 2 Samuel 21:19: *Then there was another battle with the Philistines at Gob; and Elhanan son of Jaare-oregim, the Bethlehemite, killed Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was alike a weaver's beam.*

1 Chronicles 20:5: *Again, there was war with the Philistines; and Elhanan son of Jair killed Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear was like a weaver's beam.*

Some commentators suggest that there were two traditions, a northern kingdom version and a southern kingdom one, with different heroes and that Chronicles, as a later version of Israelite history harmonizes the two by saying that Elhanan killed Goliath's brother. One commentator concluded that Goliath had four brothers and David picked up five stones (1 Sam. 17:40) to fight them all. What do you think—is it stretching the text?

**3)** Ezekiel 16:49-50: *This was the sin of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy. They were haughty and did abominable things before me; therefore I removed them when I saw it.*

**4)** Unknown. Not Samuel since he died before it was written (1 Samuel 25:2-11). Possibly Nathan and Gad (1 Chron. 29:29)

**5)** Not a prostitute or adulterous woman, Mary Magdalene was:

- a disciple of Jesus and part of his traveling entourage
- a woman who had been healed by Jesus
- a woman of means who supported Jesus' ministry
- among the first to witness and proclaim Jesus' resurrection

References: Matthew 27:55-56; Matthew 28.1-8; Mark 16:1-8; Mark 40-41; Luke 8:1-3; Luke 23:55; Luke 24.1-12; John 20:1-10, 17)

1)

From childhood's hour I have not been  
As others were; I have not seen  
As others saw; I could not bring  
My passions from a common spring.  
From the same source I have not taken  
My sorrow; I could not awaken  
My heart to joy at the same tone;  
And all I loved, I loved alone.

2)

The weak imperial line received a fatal blow to its power in 1156, when Emperor Toba died without a clear successor. His sons, Sutoku and Go-Shirakawa, fought for control in a civil war called the Hogen Rebellion. In the end, both would-be emperors lost; the imperial office lost all its remaining power. During this civil war, the Minamoto and Taira samurai clans rose to prominence. They fought one another in the Heiji Rebellion of 1160. After their victory, the Taira established the first samurai-led government, or shogunate, with the emperor as a figurehead.

3)

One Universal Creator God.  
Where is That Door of Yours, and where is That Home, in which You sit and take care of all? The Sound-current of the Naad vibrates there for You, and countless musicians play all sorts of instruments there for You. There are so many Ragas and musical harmonies to You; so many minstrels sing hymns of You. Wind, water and fire sing of You.

4)

I, Henry, by the grace of God having been crowned the King of England, shall not take or sell any property from a Church upon the death of a bishop or abbot, until a successor has been named to that Church property. I shall end all the oppressive practices which have been an evil presence in England.

5)

'What news? What news?' said bold Robin Hood;  
'What news, fain wouldest thou know?  
'Our king hath provided a shooting-match:  
'And I'm ready with my bow.'  
'We hold it in scorn,' then said the foresters,  
That ever a boy so young  
Should bear a bow before our king,  
That's not able to draw one string.'

6)

7. Whenever the Confederate Lords shall assemble for the purpose of holding a council, the Onondaga Lords shall open it by expressing their gratitude to their cousin Lords and greeting them, and they shall make an address and offer thanks to the earth where men dwell, to the streams of water, the pools, the springs and the lakes, to the maize and the fruits, to the medicinal herbs and trees, to the forest trees for their usefulness, to the animals that serve as food and give their pelts for clothing, to the great winds and the lesser winds, to the Thunderers, to the Sun, the mighty warrior, to the moon, to the messengers of the Creator who reveal his wishes and to the Great Creator who dwells in the heavens above, who gives all the things useful to men, and who is the source and the ruler of health and life. Then shall the Onondaga Lords declare the council open.

17. A bunch of a certain number of shell (wampum) strings each two spans in length shall be given to each of the female families in which the Lordship titles are vested. The right of bestowing the title shall be hereditary in the family of the females legally possessing the bunch of shell strings and the strings shall be the token that the females of the family have the proprietary right to the Lordship title for all time to come, subject to certain restrictions hereinafter mentioned.

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7)

Mr. Hume:

I've just read your lousy review of Margaret's concert. I've come to the conclusion that you are an "eight ulcer man on four ulcer pay." It seems to me that you are a frustrated old man who wishes he could have been successful. When you write such poppy-cock as was in the back section of the paper you work for it shows conclusively that you're off the beam and at least four of your ulcers are at work. Some day I hope to meet you. When that happens you'll need a new nose, a lot of beefsteak for black eyes, and perhaps a supporter below! Pegler, a gutter snipe, is a gentleman alongside you. I hope you'll accept that statement as a worse insult than a reflection on your ancestry.

H.S.T.

=====

8) 4 cups strained pumpkin, 4 cups milk, 2 eggs, 1 1/2 tsp salt, 1 tsp ginger, 1/2 cup molasses, 1/2 cup sugar, pastry. Combine ingredients for filling. Pour into pastry-lined pie plates and baked in moderately hot oven til firm. Bake 5 minutes at 400 and 40 minutes at 350.

=====

9)

1. Do an inventory of all the parts.
2. Put all the loose parts into a plastic container.
3. Read the directions through.
4. Locate the front wheel and tighten any screws or bolts that need to be tightened.
5. Align the handlebars.
6. Attach the seat.
7. Attach the pedals using the spanne.
8. Do a final check before taking a spin.

=====

10)

This device complies with Part 15 of FCC Rules. Operation of this product is subject to the following two/conditions: 1) this device may not cause harmful interference, and 2) this device must acceptance interference received, including interference that may cause undesired operation.

=====

11)

And after this I saw another dream, and I will show the whole dream to thee, my son. And Enoch lifted up (his voice) and spake to his son Methuselah: To thee, my son, will I speak: hear my words-incline thine ear to the dream-vision of thy father. Before I took thy mother Edna, I saw in a vision on my bed, and behold a bull came forth from the earth, and that bull was white; and after it came forth a heifer, and along with this (latter) came forth two bulls, one of them black and the other red. And that black bull gored the red one and pursued him over the earth, and thereupon I could no longer see that red bull. But that black bull grew and that heifer went with him, and I saw that many oxen proceeded from him which resembled and followed him. And that cow, that first one, went from the presence of that first bull in order to seek that red one, but found him not, and lamented with a great lamentation over him and sought him. And I looked till that first bull came to her and quieted her, and from that time onward she cried no more. And after that she bore another white bull, and after him she bore many bulls and black cows. And I saw in my sleep that white bull likewise grow and become a great white bull, and from Him proceedeth many white bulls, and they resembled him. And they began to beget many white bulls, which resembled them, one following the other, (even) many.

- 1) Portion of *Alone* by Edgar Allen Poe, 1875
- 2) From a history of Samurai, who were the military nobility of pre-industrial Japan
- 3) Excerpt from So Dar, a 15<sup>th</sup> sacred text of Sikh religion
- 4) From the Charter of Liberties, which Henry I of England, issued upon his accession to the throne in 1100
- 5) Portion of ballad/ legend of *Robin Hood's Progress to Nottingham* (1663)
- 6) Excerpts from the Gayanashogowa (the Great Law of Peace) of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois League), established between 1450 and 1600. Helpful background: Iroquois society was matrilineal and women were the keepers of culture, responsible for defining the political, social, spiritual and economic norms clan. The Tree of peace is an important symbol in Iroquois tradition— weapons would be buried under a tree to seal a peace agreement. The supernatural world of the Iroquois included numerous deities, the most important of which was Great Spirit (Great Mysterious), who was responsible for the creation of human beings, the plants and animals, and the forces of good in nature.
- 7) Letter from Harry Truman wrote in response to Washington Post December 6, 1950, review of his daughter's singing performance at Constitution Hall.
- 8) Recipe for Colony Pumpkin Pie from *Pine City Baptist Church 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* cookbook (2004).
- 9) Instructions for putting together a bicycle.
- 10) From a legal notice in APEX digital TV converter box user's manual.
- 11) Chapter 85 of the Book of Enoch, an ancient apocalyptic Jewish religious work ascribed to Enoch, grandfather of Noah, not included in the Bible.

**“Holy Bible”:** The word Bible is from Koine Greek, *ta biblia* (τὰ βιβλία), which means “the books” reminding us that the Bible is a collection of texts given special status by Jews (Hebrew Bible) and Christians (Hebrew Bible and New Testament writings). The Hebrew word *qadosh* (קֹדֶשׁ), which we translate as “holy,” means “to be set apart for a special purpose,” “consecrated,” or simply “other.” To say God is holy is to say that God is completely other, a mystery beyond human understanding. Israel was *qadosh* because they were set apart as a servant nation whose purpose was to reveal God to the world. The tabernacle furnishings were *qadosh*—set apart to be used for the worship in Israel. To say the Bible is holy is to say its writings are set apart for the purpose of communicating God’s presence.

**Manuscripts:** The earliest manuscripts of the Bible have been lost to history. The oldest surviving complete Christian Bibles are Greek manuscripts from the fourth century CE. It is supposed that the Hebrew Scriptures were being collected as early as 400 B.C.E., however, the official contents of the Hebrew Scriptures was not determined until nearly 100 years after Jesus at the Council of Jamnia.

The oldest Hebrew Bible manuscript that we have dates to the tenth century CE. There was a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible called the Septuagint, made some time between 300 B.C.E. and 100 C.E., and a 4th copy is in existence. The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered by a shepherd boy in Qumran in 1946 includes the earliest known surviving copies of individual books of the Hebrew Bible. The King James Bible and earlier versions are based on the Septuagint rather than on the Hebrew version. Our current Bible translations rest on copies of copies of copies. Ancient scribes copied earlier manuscripts and while doing so, wrote notes on the margins of the pages. Sometimes later scribes inserted those notes as they copied, so over time, different regions (Alexandrian, Byzantine, Western) evolved different versions of the text. That’s why at the bottom of a page, there may be notes like “other ancient manuscripts read . . .” The Bible was divided into chapters in the thirteenth century by Stephen Langton and into verses in the sixteenth century by French printer Robert Estienne.

Jesus died under Pontius Pilate, which puts the date of his death somewhere between 26 and 36 CE. Paul’s conversion follows 1–3 years later. The earliest known Christian writings are Paul’s letters to the Galatians and 1 Thessalonians, written c. 48–50 CE. The Gospels cannot really be dated, nor the real authors known. Their names were assigned early, but not early enough for us to be confident they were accurately known. It is speculated that Mark was the earliest, written around 60 CE.

#### Ancient Hebrew Bible Remnant Ancient New Testament Portion



ΠΑΤΕΡΑΓΙΑΣΘΗΤ-  
 ΤΟΥΝΟΜΑΘΟΥ-  
 ΕΛΘΑΤΩΗΚΑΣΙΛΙ-  
 ΑΘΟΥΓΕΝΗΘΗΤ-  
 ΤΟΘΕΛΗΜΑΘΟΥΩ-  
 ΕΝΟΥΡΑΝΩΟΥΤ-  
 ΚΑΙΕΠΙΓΗΣΤΟΝ

**Content:** The Protestant Bible has 39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books. Different lists of authoritative works (canon) developed throughout antiquity. In the 4th century a series of synods produced a list of texts similar to the Old Testament and New Testament that is in use today. During the Protestant Reformation, different lists were proposed and debated. A definitive list was not established until the Council of Trent (1545–63). Texts in the Septuagint not included in the Jewish canon were removed by Protestants so the Catholic Bible has additional books. According to Luke 1:1-4, there were many gospels written. Writings such as the Acts of Peter, Acts of Pilate, and the Gospels of James and Thomas, were rejected by both Catholics and Protestants.

The books of the Bible were written in Hebrew, Greek and some Aramaic. The earliest Greek manuscripts of the New Testament available to translators were all handwritten in capital letters, with no spaces between the words, no paragraphs or chapter breaks, and no punctuation. Below are two New Testament texts with the Greek transliterated and English word equivalents below.

### 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

17. *Hoste ei tis hen Christo kaiey ktisis a archaia pareylthen idou gegonen kaina.*  
So as if anyone in Christ, a new creation, the old passed away, behold they have become new.
18. *ta de panta ek tou Theo tou katallaksantos hemas*  
And all things (are) of -- God the (one) having reconciled us  
*heatow dia Christo kai dontos heymin teyn diakonian teys katallageys,*  
to himself through Christ and having given to us the ministry of reconciliation,
19. *hos hoti Theos heyn en Christo kosmos katallassown heatow mey logidzomenos autois*  
as that God was in Christ world reconciling to himself not reckoning to them  
*ta paraptowmata autown kai themenos en heymin ton logon teys katallageys.*  
the trespasses of them and placing them in us the word of reconciliation.
20. *Huper Christo houn presbeuomen hows tou Theo parakalountos*  
On behalf of Christ therefore we are ambassadors as -- God beseeching  
*di hemown. Deometha huper Christo, katallageyte tow Theow.*  
through us. We beg on behalf of Christ be reconciled to -- God.
21. *Ton mey gnonta amartian huper hemown hamartian epoieysen, hina heymeis genowmetha dikaiosuney Theo en autow.*  
The (one) not knowing sin on behalf of us sin he became, in order that we might become  
righteous of God in him.

### Luke 8:19-21

19. *Paregeneto de pros hey meyteyr kai hoi adelphoi autou,*  
And there came to him the mother and the brothers of him,  
*kai out eyduvanto suntuxeiv autow dia ton ochlon.*  
and not were able to come up to him because of the crowd.
20. *Apeyggeley de autow. he meyteyr sou kai hoi adelphoi sou.*  
It was reported to him. The mother of you and the brothers of you  
*hesteykasin eksow idein theolontes se.*  
are standing outside to see wishing you.
21. *Ho de apokritheis eipen pros autos, meyteyr mou kai adelphou mou*  
But he answering said to them, mother of me and brothers of me  
*outoi eisin hoi tov logon tou Theo akouontes kai poiountes.*  
these are they doing the word of -- God hearing and doing.

**Samuel vs. Chronicles on the Census: How an honest question can expose the richness of God's Word**

**What are these books?** Both Chronicles and Samuel should be read as *theological*, rather than *historical*, presentations of the monarchy prior to Solomon. They serve different purposes as they were written at different times, while telling the same history.

**What is the Historical Story?** Israel is settled in the Promised Land. After a period of being ruled by Judges, they have moved into a monarchy, which Samuel was instrumental in setting up, although he resisted at first as God was to be Israel's King. A human kingdom was a concession made after the people felt threatened by the Philistines. King David (the 2<sup>nd</sup> king) struggles to protect and extend the nation's boundaries.

**What is the Historical Context of the Writing of the Books?**

- Samuel based in part on early traditions of the last Judge, Samuel, and later prophets, written sometime after the kingdom split but before the exile and return (931–722 BC).
- There was always tension between the temple and the palace/the prophetic and royal perspectives in Israel.
- Chronicles was written after the return of the exiles and restoration of Jerusalem (c. 445 BC). The temple is restored but the kingdom is not. It is written from a priestly perspective for the benefit of the second or third post-exilic generation to address questions such as: What is Israel's place among the nations? What happened to the promises to Abraham and David? and Will we ever be a monarchy again?

**► Key Political Events**

- 1250: conquest of Canaan by Hebrews; loose federation of tribes led by Judges
- 1030 rise of kingdom (united)
- 931 Kingdom splits
- 721 N.K., Israel, falls to Assyria S.K (deportation)
- 597 S.K., Judah falls to Babylon (deportation)
- 539 Babylon falls to Persia
- 538 Edict of Cyrus and return (last event in Chronicles)

**► Socio-religious Changes**

- No temple
- Exposure to Canaanite and Persian religion
- Trying to make sense of disaster while in exile
- Worship without temple during exile
- Temple rebuilt after return, but not the monarchy is not reestablished

**► Some possible explanations:**

1) The Chronicler was uncomfortable attributing the census to God because it was wrong (see the rest of 2 Sam. 24) and so adopted a Persian view of two powers, one good and one evil, for this version of the story.

2) Chronicles reflects the Hebrew concept of *ha satan* as instrument of God. This word is from verb to provoke/obstruct [stn (יִצְרָן)]. The satan (pronounced sahtan) does God's bidding in some stories (Job), but it is not the personal evil entity. The concept of Satan as an evil entity developed much later in Jewish thought. Some translations will say "adversary" or "heavenly adversary."

3) There is an Ancient Hebrew way of expressing or understanding events, which says "God did" but means something happened and God used it or responded to it (eg. God hardened Pharaoh's heart). The Chronicler may want to clarify for a later generation who do not share this way of expressing things.

4) Two different people at two different times with two different perspectives tell the same story with some small differences and that's okay! The stories provide us a reminder that where we stand in history has an impact on how we view our story and God's role in it.



**An Interpretation of Matthew 5:38–43.**

Jesus' alternative to both fight and flight can be graphically presented by the following:

- Seize the moral initiative.
- Find a creative alternative to violence.
- Assert your own humanity and dignity as a person.
- Meet force with ridicule or humor.
- Break the cycle of humiliation.
- Refuse to submit or to accept the inferior position.
- Expose the injustice of the system.
- Take control of the power dynamic.
- Shame the oppressor into repentance.
- Stand your ground.
- Make the Powers make decisions for which they are not prepared.
- Recognize your own power.
- Be willing to suffer rather than retaliate.
- Force the oppressor to see you in a new light.
- Deprive the oppressor of a situation where a show of force is effective.
- Be willing to undergo the penalty of breaking unjust laws.
- Die to fear of the old order and its rules.
- Seek the oppressor's transformation.

For centuries the story of the woman at the well (John 4:1-42) has been interpreted to suggest that she was a shameful woman who went to the well at off-hours to avoid others. However, there is another way of looking at the story. Consider:

- The emphasis on noon-time may be a literary technique, foreshadowing the impending crucifixion of Jesus.
- The fact that she'd been married 5 times and the man she was currently living with has been interpreted as the source of shame for the woman. However, for her to marry again, each of the preceding marriages must have ended properly. The proper end of a marriage meant either death of the husband or by divorce, which was entirely the man's prerogative. The 5 marriages suggest only that she was unlucky in relationships.
- One of three possibilities can explain why the man she was living with was not her husband:
  1. She was a widow living with her nearest male relative.
  2. She was a widow with no child by her husband and so lives in fulfillment of Levirate marriage, which means her husband's brother was required to marry her to provide a progeny for his brother. Levirate marriage placed women in the nebulous status of belonging to her brother-in-law in a wife-like role, but the brother-in-law is not formally her husband.
  3. She was a widow or a woman discharged by her husband without formal divorce (therefore not free to marry) and living with a man as if they are married. This option, while the one most commonly supposed, is the least likely. Such an arrangement was a capital offense for the woman. It is unlikely if the situation were known, she would be alive to speak with Jesus.
- Jesus doesn't mention sin or repentance in his conversation with her. She acts unashamed and is bold enough to engage Jesus directly in theological discussion.
- Whatever the situation, the woman is largely without choices.
  - Divorce was a male prerogative; had her husband(s) chosen to divorce her, she would have no recourse.
  - All marriages were arranged by others for women.
  - Women could not hold property, so without a male, she would become homeless.
  - Her choices were to find someone to take care of her—a son, brother-in-law, or other man—or become a beggar or prostitute to survive.
- ▶ By speaking with the woman, Jesus raises her status. He is a Jew speaking with a Samaritan, a group despised by Jews as ethnically and religiously impure. He is a man speaking with a woman in a culture in which women were forbidden to speak in public to any man, including their husbands. And as a result of their conversation, she returns to her town, empowered to tell the story of Jesus to publicly to men who respond to her information.

Those who looked to Scripture in the context of oppression and poverty have noted that the Bible contains more than 300 verses that speak about the poor and social justice. They remind us that, according to Ezekiel, the sin of Sodom was the abomination of neglecting those in need. They point out that Jesus talked about money more than he did heaven and hell combined and that 1 out of every 7 verses in the Gospel of Luke talk about money. Below are just a few of the texts that speak to treatment of the poor and promotion of social justice.

**Deut. 15:7.** *If there is a poor man among you, one of your brothers, in any of the towns of the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand to your poor brother; but you shall freely open your hand to him, and generously lend him sufficient for his need in whatever he lacks.*

**Deut. 26:12.** *When you have finished paying the complete tithe of your increase in the third year, the year of tithing, then you shall give it to the Levite, to the stranger, to the orphan and the widow, that they may eat in your towns, and be satisfied.*

**Is. 58:10.** *"And if you give yourself to the hungry, and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then your light will rise in darkness, and your gloom will become like midday. And the LORD will continually guide you, and satisfy your desire in scorched places, and give strength to your bones; and you will be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters do not fail."*

**Jer. 22:3.** *Do justice and righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the power of his oppressor. Also do not mistreat or do violence to the stranger, the orphan, or the widow; and do not shed innocent blood in this place.*

**Ezek. 16:49ff.** *"Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food, and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy. Thus they were haughty and committed abominations before me."*

**Mt. 19:20ff.** *The young man said to Him, "All these commands I have kept; what am I still lacking?" Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."*

**Mt. 25: 43.** *Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.'*

1) Rate the workshop over all on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

2) What aspects of the workshop were most helpful?

3) Which were least helpful?

4) What was most surprising or interesting?

5) What suggestions do you have to improve the workshop?

6) Other Comments