

# What's in the Bible?



1 Thessalonians 2:13;  
2 Timothy 3:16-17



The Bible Bassline series starts with an introduction to the Bible. It gives the young people a chance to consider why this sacred book is so important to us as Christians. We'll look at how the Bible is constructed, consider what we believe as members of The Salvation Army and reflect on the role its words play in our lives. We'll also take a moment to think about what it would be like to live in a society where reading the Bible can get you into a lot of trouble.

## You will need:

- Books of the Bible handout - one set for each team



## Beat

### Say:

In this Bassline series, we will explore how the Bible is constructed, the different types of writing it contains and how it is relevant to our lives today. To get your brains thinking about this topic, we're going to start with a Bible quiz. Use the emojis to guess the Bible story. Some are trickier than others!

### Leader's notes:

There are 30 questions in this video. For each question, a timer shows in the top corner, and then the answer is revealed. The clip is nearly seven minutes long, but you do not need to use all the questions - or you could watch the video at double speed.

When the quiz is completed, discuss with the group how they did. What is their Bible knowledge like? Do they think it's important to know the stories in the Bible? If so, why? Would they like to know more?

### Watch:

Emoji Bible QUIZ Challenge - Guess the Bible Story! (6:58)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzDT6e\\_39-o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzDT6e_39-o)

 **Bridge****Ask:**

Which Bible story from the quiz had you never heard of before? See if you can find where it is in the Bible.

 **Amplify****Say:**

To discover more about how the Bible is constructed, we are going to use a clip from the Bible Project. If you would like to learn more about specific themes or books in the Bible, their website or YouTube account is a great place to explore.

The clip amplifies the story of God's people and helps us to understand how our Bible came to be.

**Leader's notes:**

Using the timings shown below, watch and discuss the clip with your group. As you discuss the content of the Bible, you might find it useful to write out the different sections so that the young people can visualise how it is constructed. Notes from the clip are included after each question for your reference during the discussion.

**Watch:**

What is the Bible? – Bible Project (5:47)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akO6MSETeo4>

**Watch 0:00-3:01**

**Ask:**

- What is the acronym used to describe the contents of the Hebrew Bible? *TaNak*
- What does the T stand for, and which books does it include? *The T stands for Torah, sometimes called the Law, and includes the following books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.*
- What does the N stand for, and which books does it include? *The N stands for Nevi'im, the Hebrew word for prophets, and contains the historical books of the Bible. These include Joshua, Samuel and Kings and the poetic books of the prophets.*
- What does the K stand for, and which books does it include? *Ketuvim is the Hebrew word for 'writings'. These include a diverse collection of poetic and wisdom books, including Psalms, Proverbs and Job.*



- What other Jewish writings were produced around this time and what was the main debate around their use? *Books like Maccabees, Tobit and Judith were all produced around this time or a little later and were sacred texts. There was a lot of debate about whether some of these books should be included as part of the Scriptures.*
- Why were these texts brought together and what story do they tell? *They tell an epic story of how God is working through his people to bring order out of the chaos of our world.*
- What does the story of the Old Testament build up to? *The Old Testament builds up to a hope for a new leader who would come and renew all creation. The TaNaK does not reveal who that leader is.*
- What did Jesus claim about the TaNaK story? *Jesus claimed that he was carrying the TaNaK story forward.*

**Say:**

At the start of the next section of the clip, there is the throw-away statement: 'A few centuries later...'. This period is called the Intertestamental Period and lasted around 400 years. It is also known as the 'Silent Years' as it is traditionally thought that no prophetic words, directly inspired by God, were written. It is after this span of time that we join the next part of the story in the New Testament.

**Watch 3:02-4:12****Ask:**

- Who did Jesus' followers claim he was? Jesus' followers claimed that he had risen from the dead. They said that Jesus was the long-awaited leader who would fulfil scriptural promises and restore the world.
- What literary works did Jesus' earliest followers, the apostles, produce? The apostles created the Gospels, which told the story of Jesus, and the Book of Acts, which shared the story of the Church. They also circulated letters to different Jesus communities all around the ancient world.

**Say:**

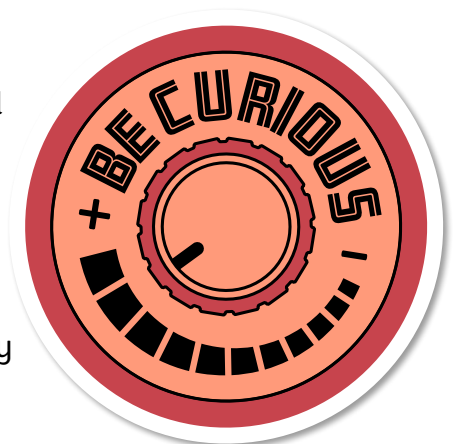
The apostles' writings fulfilled the prophecies of the TaNaK and continued the story of God's plan for the world.

**Ask:**

There were many other types of writing created during the Second Temple period. How were these viewed?

**Say:**

In the Sound Check section, we will think about what our Bible is and how the original Scriptures are presented. For now, take a moment to reflect on what you have discovered during the Amplify section.



**Ask:**

- What one fact about the Bible is new to you today?
- What interests you about it?
- What else would you like to find out?

 **Bridge****Ask:**

Do we need to read the Old Testament today?

**Leader's notes:**

Discuss the question together and then watch the clip that explains why it is important for Christians to study the Old and New Testaments together.

**Watch:**

Why should Christians study the Old Testament? (2:03)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WR4h6DMn6M>

 **Sound Check****Say:**

As we move into our Sound Check section, we're going to make things a little more personal. We're going to think about what The Salvation Army believes about the Bible and consider why diving into Scripture is important.

**Watch: 4:09-5:00**

**Watch:**

What is in the Bible? (Bible Project)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak06MSETeo4> - Return to the YouTube video from earlier and watch the next part.

**Ask:**

Do you know which Christian tradition The Salvation Army is part of?

**Say:**

We come from the Protestant tradition of the Christian Church, and our Bible consists of the Old and New Testaments. The Doctrines of The Salvation Army outline what we believe. Here's what our first Doctrine says about the Bible.

**‘We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.’**

**Ask:**

How does the Bible form the foundation of our Christian faith?

**Say:**

*The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* says the following about the Bible.

**‘The Bible is a book written by many writers: it is a human document. But we believe that it is also God’s word (1 Thessalonians 2:13). It carries God’s authority, is the revealer of truth and the guide for Christian living (2 Timothy 3:16-17). In its pages we encounter the living God of history and from its teachings we learn to live in relationship with him.’**

*(The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine p1)*

**Leader’s notes:**

Discuss the above quote from *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* and encourage the young people to find the Bible verses referenced. They are shown below.

**<sup>13</sup> And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.**

(1 Thessalonians 2:13)

**<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

**Leader’s notes:**

As an additional discussion point, you may want to refer back to the early point made about the importance of reading the Old Testament. As the author of 2 Timothy, the apostle Paul refers to all Scripture as ‘God-breathed’. When he was writing his letter, he was of course talking about the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

Explain to the group that the next activity is going to help them familiarise themselves with the content and structure of the Bible. You will need the ‘Books of the Bible’ handout for this activity and will need to cut out a set for each group. Divide the group into small teams and see if they can put the books of the Bible in order. They may want to start the process by separating the books of the Old and the New Testament.

When they have had time to sort the books of the Bible, display the correct order (either on the screen, print out a list, or in the front of a Bible) and see how many books are in the correct place. During this activity, encourage discussion about which books they’ve read the most and which they would like to explore in more detail.

 **Bridge****Ask:**

What is your response to the following quote?

**'Once we truly grasp the message of the New Testament, it is impossible to read the Old Testament again without seeing Christ on every page, in every story, foreshadowed or anticipated in every event and narrative.'**

– Michael Horton

 **Selah****Ask:**

- How big a part does the Bible play in your life?
- How would you feel if someone tried to take your Bible away or you were forbidden to read it? Would it make much difference to your life?

**Say:**

In the UK, we can often take for granted the freedom we have to openly read our Bible, buy copies online or share our favourite verse on social media. There are places in the world where this kind of activity is closely monitored and can have legal implications.

Our Selah today gives us an opportunity to pause and recognise how fortunate we are while praying for those who face persecution for cherishing and sharing God's word.

**Leader's notes:**

Watch and discuss the clip together as a group. What are the main issues facing Christians in countries like China? Take a moment to respond as the clip suggests and pray for those who are trying to share the Bible with others.

**Watch:**

Dodging police and smuggling Bibles: everyday life for Ming in China – Open Doors UK & Ireland (1:52)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZoIU6lh92Bk>

 **Coda****Say:**

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and

bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music.

**Ask:**

As you reflect on everything you have learned today, what is your coda?

What is the one thing you will take away from this session regarding the importance of the Bible to Christians?

**Leader's notes:**

Give the young people a moment to think about your question and briefly share their coda with the group before the session comes to an end.





# Old Testament

Genesis

2 Chronicles

Daniel

Exodus

Ezra

Hosea

Leviticus

Nehemiah

Joel

Numbers

Esther

Amos

Deuteronomy

Job

Obadiah

Joshua

Psalms

Jonah

Judges

Proverbs

Micah

Ruth

Ecclesiastes

Nahum

1 Samuel

Song of Songs

Habakkuk

2 Samuel

Isaiah

Zephaniah

1 Kings

Jeremiah

Haggai

2 Kings

Lamentations

Zechariah

1 Chronicles

Ezekiel

Malachi



# New Testament

Matthew

Ephesians

Hebrews

Mark

Philippians

James

Luke

Colossians

1 Peter

John

1 Thessalonians

2 Peter

Acts

2 Thessalonians

1 John

Romans

1 Timothy

2 John

1 Corinthians

2 Timothy

3 John

2 Corinthians

Titus

Jude

Galatians

Philemon

Revelation