

THE **50** MOST  
IMPORTANT

TEACHINGS  
*of* THE BIBLE

JIM GEORGE



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## THE 50 MOST IMPORTANT TEACHINGS OF THE BIBLE

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## Before You Begin

It's been said that what you believe is how you behave. That is, what you believe about God, His written revelation, the Bible, and His ultimate revelation, His Son, will define how you live your life. My goal for this book about what the Bible teaches is to help give you a better understanding of the key teachings that are critical for your growth as a Christian. While all of the teachings in the Bible are important because they all communicate what God wants us to know about Him, there are some teachings that are more foundational than others. The question, of course, is this: Where do you start?

I have written *The 50 Most Important Teachings in the Bible* to help provide you with a “starting point.” These 50 teachings will guide your initial study of major themes such as...

God as the Creator of the universe and His dealings  
with man

Jesus' relationship with the Father and the Holy Spirit

The nature of the Bible as the written revelation of God

God's solution to the problem of sin

The ministry of Jesus and the Holy Spirit

God's plans for the future, including the end of time

As you read along, keep in mind that the teachings presented in this book are not ranked in any particular order. And because the intent of this book is to provide the basic essentials, if you would like to dig deeper, then you'll want to seek other sources for additional information on a given topic.

It is my prayer that this volume, along with your personal reading and study of the Bible, will assist you in fulfilling God's desire that you "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen" (2 Peter 3:18).

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim George". The signature is written in black ink and is centered on the page.

## The Bible Is a Totally Unique Book

*The grass withers and the flowers fall, but  
the word of our God endures forever  
(Isaiah 40:8).*

*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching,  
rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness  
(2 Timothy 3:16).*

*The word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper  
than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between  
soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It  
exposes our innermost thoughts and desires  
(Hebrews 4:12 NLT).*

Several years ago my wife and I traveled to France. Instead of finding a hotel in Paris, we decided to stay outside of the city in a small country village so we could wind down after working hard to meet several book deadlines. I lasted about two days in the quiet village before I was ready for a road trip (or in our case, a train trip) into Paris. Our first stop, as you might guess, was a ride up to the top of the Eiffel Tower. Then we were off to the Louvre, one of the world's premiere museums of art. And even though I'm not an educated lover of art, my first thought was to locate the *Mona Lisa*, which is one of the most famous paintings of all time, painted by the famous Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci from about 1504 to 1519.

Even though the *Mona Lisa* is special, it pales in comparison to the uniqueness of the Bible! There are many masterpieces in the art world, but there is only one Bible. The Bible is unlike any other book because it was written by God. It is also the most widely read book in the world, having been translated into hundreds of languages. Consider these reasons why the Bible is unique:

*The Bible is a book of many books.* When you skim the pages of a Bible, what do you notice? As the pages fly by, you'll see right away that the Bible contains many different books made up of varying numbers of chapters. The 66 books of the Bible were written by more than 40 authors, who originally wrote it in Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. Their writing of this volume took place over the course of some 2000 years.

No other book can boast of this unique composition, and the most amazing thing about these 66 books by 40-plus authors is their one unified message describing and pointing toward Jesus Christ. The message that God, the Creator of the universe, wanted mankind to understand was the relationship He had with Jesus, and how that relationship affects all mankind both now and on into eternity.

*The Bible is the written Word of God.* Starting in the Old Testament, the authors of the Bible asserted more than 3800 times that what they were writing is the Word of God. In addition, the phrases "the word of God" or the "oracles of God" occur more than 40 times in the New Testament.

How could this be possible? How could the words that make up the Bible come from the hearts and minds of men, and at the same time, from the heart and mind of God? The apostle Peter explained it this way: "Prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21).

The phrase "carried along" means that even though the human authors were the ones who were writing Scripture, God, the Holy Spirit, "managed" them as they wrote. It would be like a manager in a store or in a corporate department at work. He or she doesn't



do the work, they just oversee and direct others toward finishing the work. In the same way, the writers of Scripture used their own vocabulary, personalities, and thought processes, to compose and record what God wanted written. God, the Holy Spirit, was watching over the authors of the 66 books of the Bible and managing them toward a final product whose content was made up of the exact words God intended, and without error. It couldn't be any other way because God, "who does not lie" (Titus 1:2), produced a book that was without error in the original.

*The Bible is indestructible.* No other book in all of history has survived as many attempts to destroy it. The Old and New Testaments have stood the test of time, with some of the texts dating back to 3000 years ago. Even though the original manuscripts of each of the books of the Bible have been lost, thousands of copies have been produced down through the centuries and have survived. With the thousands of early copies of all or parts of the Bible, scholars believe they have reclaimed close to 99.9 percent of the original text that was without error. Note God's promise concerning His Word in Isaiah 40:8: "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever."

## **What Does This Mean for You?**

As you can gather from my story about viewing the *Mona Lisa*, I made quite an effort and paid a significant price to see this well-known painting. It took a day to fly to Europe, and another day to travel by train to get to Paris, but now I can say, "I've seen the *Mona Lisa!*"

Then I have to ask myself, "So what?" My life hasn't changed as a result of viewing that work of art. I cannot say I'm a better person as a result of that visit. In fact, there's a sense in which I'm now worse off because of the expense of making that trip!

But what about the Bible? History and God Himself have attested that the Bible is the greatest and most unique book ever written. Its message is of greatest importance and can change a

life. You can read it, memorize its truths, and learn something new every time you open it. By contrast, the *Mona Lisa* resides behind a glass and can only be admired from a distance of about 20 feet. And it has no power to bring about change in your life.

So it makes sense that the Bible is the most popular book ever written. After all, it is God's personal message to mankind—and to you. In it, He offers you words of encouragement, direction for your life, and wisdom for daily living and decision making. Most important of all, He lets you know how you can experience eternal life with Him!

Because all that is true about the Bible, don't you think you should spend some time—or more time—reading it? When you do, you will continue to discover all that this amazing book has to offer. *And* your life will be changed!

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“I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated to us through this book.”

ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
*16th President of the United States*

## The Universe Didn't Just Come into Existence by Chance

*In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands  
(Psalm 102:25).*

*The heavens are yours, and yours also the earth;  
you founded the world and all that is in it  
(Psalm 89:11).*

*By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,  
their starry host by the breath of his mouth  
(Psalm 33:6).*

Have you ever met anyone who wanted to relive their high school years? Well, I certainly haven't! Maybe that's because when I was in high school, I had no idea where life would eventually take me. But as I look back now, one thing I do know is that where I am today didn't just happen by chance. Take, for instance, how I became a pharmacist. A local pharmacist in the small town where I grew up attended my church. One Sunday he asked me if I would like a job working in his pharmacy.

He said he had observed my conduct and watched my involvement with the youth group at church, and thought I would be a hard worker and would interact well with the customers.

Was this a chance action on his part? No, not at all. It was by design. This man made a decision to offer me a job based on his observations of me and my character. This was a case of cause-and-effect. Chance had nothing to do with my ultimately becoming a pharmacist.

Think about it—very few things in life, if any, happen by chance. Have you ever thought about how life began? If you are a Christian, you accept what the Bible says about the origin of life: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). From the very first verse in the Bible to the last book, Revelation, we see repeated declarations that God created the universe and everything in it. “You are worthy, our Lord and God...for you created all things” (Revelation 4:11).

How did the world come into existence? People through the ages have offered many different explanations, but Christians believe that God created the universe.

So what are the options for those who don't believe God made the Earth? What explanations are there for those who cannot or will not believe the biblical account of creation? The primary response from those who say creation didn't come about by design is that it happened through evolution—by chance.

Those who hold to evolution claim their view is supported by science. But ultimately, they still have to say that everything we see around us somehow came about by chance, by random processes that occurred without the help of any outside forces. And how did it all get started? There are many points at which the theory of evolution cannot be backed by science because certain things cannot be verified or tested. So people fall back on different explanations about what might have happened, such as the Big Bang theory, which speculates that our expanding universe goes back to a single originating point of some sort.

While there are elements of the theory of evolution which cannot be tested scientifically, there are also elements of creation that are supported by scientific evidence. To explore this more is beyond the scope of this book, and there are many good books available that explain how the Bible and science both affirm our universe was created by a Designer.

Whatever your view, when you consider the vast expanses of all that exists around us, we cannot help but consider the following:

*The world around us teaches you how finite you really are.* The scope of our universe exceeds the grasp of the human mind. Modern astronomers, through research done with satellites and the Hubble telescope, have estimated there are 100 billion solar systems, each one of them like ours—having its own sun and billions of stars. You may not be able to explain the universe, but you have to admit that its scope is beyond your ability to fully understand. That should make you wonder: Did this all come about by random chance, or by intelligent design? A universe of this magnitude and complexity had to have some greater force that brought it into existence.

So why not accept the Bible's account that the most powerful force—God!—created those 100 billion solar systems? It seems unreasonable for us, as finite beings, not to look to the infinite for answers for how we got here and what our purpose is. Don't let your finite mind try to overrule the infinite. "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Psalm 14:1).

*The world around us points to God's existence and your responsibility.* Does anyone have an excuse for not believing in God? The Bible says no. God has revealed Himself through creation. "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands" (Psalm 19:1). As Creator, God assumes a place of pre-eminence. "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth" (Acts 17:24). Every person as a created being must either accept or reject God's place of authority and man's responsibility to God. There is no middle ground, no place for a wait-and-see mentality. The day is coming when God will judge every person's response to Him. At that point there will be no excuse for rejecting God (Revelation 20:13).

Do this. The next time there is a clear night sky in your area, find a dark place outdoors and look up. Look for the infinite God in His infinite creation, and hear His call: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands" (Psalm 19:1).

*The world around us teaches about your relationship to God.* The Bible declares that God is the Creator, and as such is distinct from you, His creation. God is eternal and in control of the universe. Yet out of the millions of stars and the great expanse of the heavens, He chose to focus His creative efforts on making man in His own image. God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness” (Genesis 1:26).

Can you believe it? As the great Creator of all things, God set apart mankind—that includes you—as special in His eyes. Just as a father loves his children, God loves you and wants what is best for you. By contrast, chance cannot offer you this kind of personal relationship. Chance can only offer you a purposeless, impersonal existence in this life and an eternity without hope.

*The world around us teaches about the worth of man.* The fact you and all mankind are created by God, not as mere animals but in God’s image, should tell you something about your worth. Human worth is not based on possessions, achievements, physical characteristics, or nationality. Instead, it’s based on being made in God’s image. Those who can’t or won’t believe in creation also reject the God of creation. As a result, they view their fellow man as just another evolved creature with no special worth. But knowing that you bear God’s image should cause you to ask the question, How should I properly relate to God, whose image I bear, and to my fellow man, who also bears God’s image? Jesus was asked a similar question and this is the answer He gave: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matthew 22:37-39).

## **What Does This Mean for You?**

God, your Creator, wants the best for you and has authored a book, the Bible, to guide you through life. The Bible contains everything you need to know about how you can have a relationship with God, and how that relationship moves you from being merely a creation to being a beloved son or daughter to God.

The question every person needs to answer is this: Why not choose the biblical option of creation by God rather than by chance? It has so much more to offer you! Moses admonished the people of his day to make a choice: “This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life” (Deuteronomy 30:19).





## God Is Both Three...and One

*You were shown these things so that you might know that the LORD is God; besides him there is no other (Deuteronomy 4:35).*

*As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:16-17).*

*Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).*

Is there anything you don't know? All you have to do is look at your old report cards, right? Or play a game of Scrabble or Trivial Pursuit. The answer is painfully clear: Of course you don't know everything. There are always new things to learn.

But just because we don't know or understand something doesn't mean we cannot benefit from it. For example, I don't have a clue as to how my computer works. But that doesn't keep me from using it. The same principle is true when it comes to certain

truths in God's Word. Just because you or I don't understand something affirmed by Scripture doesn't mean we cannot benefit from it.

One good example of this is the Trinity, or the truth that God is three-in-one. Our finite minds have a difficult time grasping this truth, but that doesn't mean we should ignore it. For some people, the truth of the Godhead is a problem, to the point they deny it simply because the word *Trinity* isn't in the Bible. But if we read Scripture carefully, we can definitely see affirmation of the fact there is only one God who is of three eternal Persons who are the same in substance or essence, but distinct in their roles as follows:

God exists as the *invisible Father*, from whom all revelation proceeds and who sent...

*the Son*, who mediates between God and man, and historically manifested that revelation as a human, God in flesh, and

*the Holy Spirit*, who was sent by the Father and, as God, divinely applies the revelation of God to men.

Tertullian, a third-century theologian, was the first to coin the term *Trinity*. He stated that the Trinity was divinely revealed because, from a human standpoint, it seems so absurd that no one could have invented it!

God's name itself implies plurality. The Bible states in no uncertain terms that there is but one God. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4). But throughout the Old Testament, the Hebrew name for God—"Elohim"—is in the plural, indicating more than one. Genesis, the first book of the Bible, make three references to God with the pronoun *us*: God said, "Let us make man" (1:26); "the LORD God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil'" (3:22); and "Come, let us go down and there confuse their language" (11:7).

What does the Bible say about each member of the Trinity?

*The Father is God.* As the Creator of the universe and of man, God is often spoken of as the Father. Just as a human father has a

special relationship with his children, so too God as Creator also has a special relationship with His creation. Jesus said when you pray, you should begin your prayers with, “Our Father in heaven” (Matthew 6:9). Here are a few of the Father’s characteristics:

Omniscient—He has infinite awareness, understanding, and insight.

Omnipotent—He has unlimited authority, power, and influence.

Omnipresent—He is present in all places at all times.

Immutable—He is not capable of or susceptible to change. He has been and will always be the same.

Eternal—He is infinite. He has no beginning and will have no end.

Next, let’s look at some facts about Jesus and the Holy Spirit and their attributes. You will notice they possess the same attributes as God the Father.

*Jesus is co-equal with God the Father.* The apostle Paul is considered to be the architect of orthodox theology. He made the fact of Jesus being co-equal to God very clear when he wrote that “we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13). Other passages in the Bible also speak of Jesus as God and ascribe God’s attributes to Jesus:

—Jesus showed omniscience—“Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said...” (Matthew 9:4).

—Jesus showed omnipresence—He said, “I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

—Jesus showed eternity—“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us” (John 1:1,14).

- Jesus was ascribed holiness—Peter wrote, “We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God” (John 6:69).
- Jesus was ascribed the works of God—We see in Scripture that Jesus was involved in creation (John 1:3), He is a sovereign ruler (Matthew 25:31), and He sustains the universe (Colossians 1:17).
- Jesus is worthy of worship and honor—Note what Thomas declared about Jesus—he called Him “my Lord and my God” (John 20:28).
- Jesus’ name is associated equally with that of God the Father—“In the name of the Father and of the Son...” (Matthew 28:19).

What other conclusion can we come to, other than that Jesus is God and is co-equal with Him?

*The Holy Spirit is co-equal with God the Father and God the Son—* He too is a person, and not a force, as some people mistakenly assume. Writers of both the Old and New Testaments help us understand the nature of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit is directly connected to God—In Acts 5:3-4, the apostle Peter told Ananias, “You have lied to the Holy Spirit... You have not lied just to human beings but to God.”

The Holy Spirit’s names speak of divinity—For example, Scripture speaks of the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 6:11), “Spirit of Christ” (Romans 8:9), and “Spirit of truth” (John 14:17).

The Holy Spirit possesses these (as well as all the other) divine attributes of God:

- Omniscience: “The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God... no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:10-11).

- Omnipresence: “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?” (Psalm 139:7).
- Omnipotence: “The Spirit of God was hovering over the waters” (Genesis 1:2). He was “hovering” in the sense of participating in and protecting the work of creation.

## **What Does This Mean for You?**

The Trinity is an important concept even though you may never fully understand it. Here’s how the Trinity relates to your life: God who is spirit and cannot die, sent His Son to be born into the world as a physical human. His Son lived a perfect life, and the fact He was without sin qualified Him to be the perfect sacrifice necessary to pay for our sin. Three days after Jesus died on the cross, He rose from the dead, making salvation possible for all who believe in Him for eternal life. At the moment of salvation, the Spirit of God and of Jesus is sent to indwell us. The Holy Spirit’s ministry is to lead, guide, protect, and equip us to live godly lives in an ungodly world.

If you are a Christian, the teaching of the Trinity is a key element of your faith. By keeping in mind the work each member of the Trinity does, you can direct petitions and prayers of thanks and worship to them. Furthermore, the perfect love and unity within the Godhead models for you the oneness and affection that should characterize your relationship with other believers within the body of Christ.