

Without the Bible

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The Bible is a gift from God that is often taken for granted in our nation. Bibles are readily available for anyone who desires to own one. Many nations are not so blessed. In our country the complete Bible can still be purchased for one dollar at most of our dollar stores, and the Bible is now accessible through all kinds of media sources, including cell phones, handheld computers, the Internet, PC software, cassette tapes, audio CDROM's, and DVD's. Perhaps the Bible has become so commonly seen that it is now considered to be of only common value to many people. People often have a tendency to think that the most valuable things are the most difficult to find. One may wonder if we have lost sight of how blessed we are! The truth is that no matter what the price tag says on the Bible in the dollar store, the Bible is surely the most valuable physical object on the face of the earth! No matter how easily accessible the Word of God becomes, it is still the most precious and unique literature that man has ever known! It is the only book in the world that came to us by the inspiration of God, and the only book which shows us the way to Heaven! There was a period of time when the Bible was not available to the public at all. We should be thankful that we are moving to the opposite end of that spectrum. There are so many subjects about which we would not have a clue if God had not revealed them to us in His Word! Please consider a few things we would not know without the Bible:

We would not know how the universe was created. By merely observing our surroundings in nature we should deduce that we have a Creator: *"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork"* (Psalm 19:1). Just as a person knows that a house does not randomly pop into existence, we know that this universe, with all its order, complexity, vastness, and beauty, did not merely pop into existence: *"For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God"* (Hebrews 3:4). God has told us that if we deny His existence, we are without excuse: *"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse"* (Romans 1:20). However, even though we know that we have been created by a Creator, without the Word of God, we would neither know how this took place, or how long the process took. The Bible reveals that God spoke the universe into existence: *"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light"* (Genesis 1:3); *"For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast"* (Psalm 33:9). This entire process took six days: *"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day..."* (Exodus 20:11). Without the Bible, we would have no idea how the universe came into existence!

We would not know the age of the universe. The Word of God was not meant to be a science textbook, but the scientific facts found therein are always accurate. Even if the "popular science" of the day teaches something that contradicts what the Bible says, the Bible will always be proven true. This is the case with the age of the universe. The theory of evolution rests upon the assumption that the universe is billions of years old – not because there is sufficient evidence for this, but because evolutionists foolishly believe that the impossible can become possible if given enough time. However, the Bible reveals that the universe is only a few thousand years old. Jesus taught that Adam and Eve existed at the beginning of the creation: *"But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female"* (Mark 10:6). Luke gave us a genealogical record that goes all the way from Jesus back to Adam (Luke 3:23-38). The Bible reveals the ages of many of those people, and if we plug those ages in with estimated

ages for the others, we arrive at a universe that is about 6,000 to 10,000 years old! Without the Bible, we might fall for the evolutionists' lie regarding the age of the universe!

We would not know the history of God's people and plan. Not long after the global flood, there was one man who stood out as being different from others. His name was Abram, and God chose him to help accomplish His mission to save men from their sins. God promised Abram a special land, a great nation, and that the Messiah would come through his lineage: *"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed"* (Genesis 12:1-3). The Old Testament reveals how God constantly took care of his "peculiar" people (Exodus 19:5, 6) to bring the Savior into the world, and the New Testament reveals how God brought the Messianic promises to fruition in Jesus Christ. Now those who have obeyed the Gospel of Christ are God's "peculiar people," (1 Peter 2:9), and they are Abraham's seed according to the promise that God made to Abraham thousands of years ago! *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"* (Galatians 3:26-29). Without the Bible, we would not be able to see how God brought His plan to fruition for our salvation!

We would not know the nature of God. By merely looking at the creation, we can know God exists, but how could we know the nature of God without His Word? We know from the Bible that God is love (1 John 4:8), and He desires to have His love reciprocated! When Jesus was asked, *"Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment"* (Matthew 22:36-38). Christians are the children of God, and our loving Father takes care of us: *"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"* (Matthew 6:30-33). The love of God has been shown countless times throughout history, but the greatest display of God's love was the sending of His only begotten Son to die for our salvation: *"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins"* (1 John 4:9, 10). We also know from the Word of God that God is holy (1 Peter 1:16), faithful to His Word (Hebrews 10:23), merciful (Psalm 106:1), eternal (Romans 16:26), omnipotent (Revelation 19:6), omniscient (Jeremiah 1:5), impartial (1 Peter 1:17), longsuffering (2 Peter 3:9), and He is both good and severe (Romans 11:22). There are many other ways to describe God's nature, and we rely on the Bible for this precious information!

We would not know who Jesus Christ is. Because we have the Word of God, we know that Jesus is the Messiah, who fulfilled hundreds of prophecies: *"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow"* (1 Peter 1:9-11). We know that *"...he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep*

have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isaiah 53:5-7). Jesus, the sinless Lamb of God, shed His blood for the remission of our sins (Hebrews 4:15; John 1:29; Matthew 26:28). He was raised from the dead and ascended up to Heaven, thus giving faithful children of God the guarantee of being raised up to Heaven (1 Corinthians 15:1ff). We could not have faith in Jesus without the Word, and we also would not be warned about His second coming! (Romans 10:17; Matthew 24:36-44).

We would not know what sin is. John revealed to us that *"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law"* (1 John 3:4). If we did not know God's Law, we would not know what a violation of that Law would be! We also would not know what the punishment for sin would be: *"For the wages of sin is death..."* (Romans 6:23); *"...when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death"* (James 1:14, 15). We would therefore be unaware of our need for salvation from God's wrath because of our sins: *"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him"* (Romans 5:9).

We would not know how to be saved from our sins through Christ. By merely observing God's creation, one would never conclude that he should be immersed in water for the remission of his sins! The Gospel of Christ is *"...the power of God unto salvation..."* (Romans 1:16), and the Bible reveals that there are certain commands we must obey to be saved through Christ: We must hear the Gospel of Christ (Romans 10:17); believe in Christ (John 8:24); repent of our sins (Acts 17:30); confess faith in Christ as the Son of God (Matthew 10:32); be baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3-5); and be faithful in Christ (Revelation 2:10).

We would not know the will of God on any subject. The only way to know God's will for our lives is to know God's Word. For example, how would we know the *"true"* way to worship God if He had not told us? (John 4:23, 24). The Jews had been blessed to know God's will because they had God's law: *"Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law"* (Romans 2:17, 18). We now rely on the New Testament Scriptures to learn what God would have us to do: *"For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God..."* (1 Thessalonians 4:2, 3).

We would not know what happens when we die. The dictionary may simply tell us that death is "the end of life." If we did not have the Bible, that is the only thing we would know about death! Secular education can tell us nothing about what happens when we die. We rely on God for that information – we rely on the Bible. Our Lord gave us a priceless look into the realm of Hades when he spoke of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). He told us what happens to a righteous person when he dies (comfort), and what happens to an unrighteous person (torment). We also have passages like Revelation 20:12-15, which warns us about the impending judgment of all men. Because we have the Bible, we know about the glorious treasures of eternal Heaven for the faithful, and the horrific torment of eternal Hell for those outside of Christ (Revelation 14:11, 13).

Where would we be without the Bible? We would be uninformed, misinformed, confused, hopeless, miserable, and lost! That is the state in which the Ephesians had been: *"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world"* (Ephesians 2:12). After they had received and obeyed the Gospel, Paul could then say, *"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ"* (Ephesians 2:13). May we never take the Bible for granted, and may we remember how important it is to spread the Truth to those who are without it!