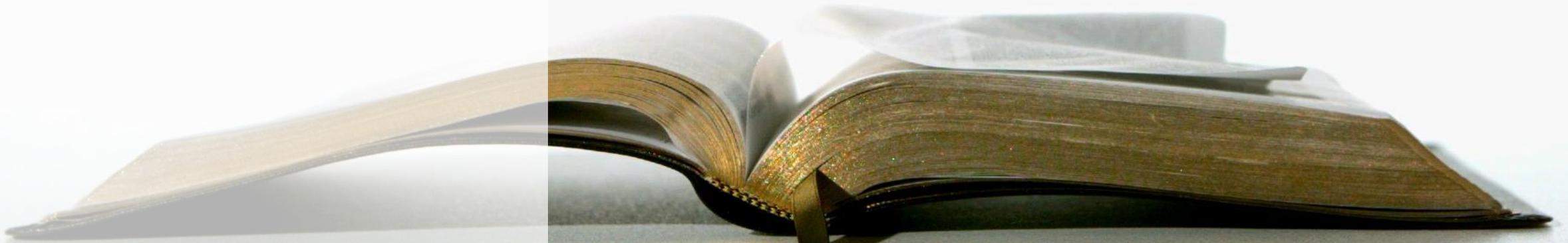


How to read the Bible

The Old and New Covenant (Testament)



Who were the
Scriptures
written to?

Them – Original
recipients.

Us – The Church

Me & You - Personally

Them, Us, and Me!



THEM (determined by US)
The People to whom the letter was written
to.

**US - The CHURCH,
BELIEVERS, PEOPLE OF
GOD.**

ME
What is God saying
to me/you personally
Through this text.

- **Dogma** 'a body of doctrines concerning faith or morals formally stated and authoritatively proclaimed by a church'.

The Essentials of Christianity

- **Doctrine** – Beliefs held by denominations – individual movements.
- **Tradition** – Established belief systems and practices often considered authoritative. (Creeds e.g)
- **Folk Theology** – Popular non-scholarly (even winds of doctrine *Eph 4:14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;*

ORAL
TRANSMISSION
(Before the
Gospels or the
New Testament
Letters were
written).

- Witnesses told and retold the stories (Narrative)

Community accountability

- Cannot leave out or change the narrative
- Like reading a story to children, they know if you leave something out or change the story in any way!

- I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
- I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
- I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.
- **that is, the true Christian church of all times and all places*

For us and for our salvation

He came down from heaven;

He became **incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human.**

(What about the 3 ½ years of earthly ministry)?

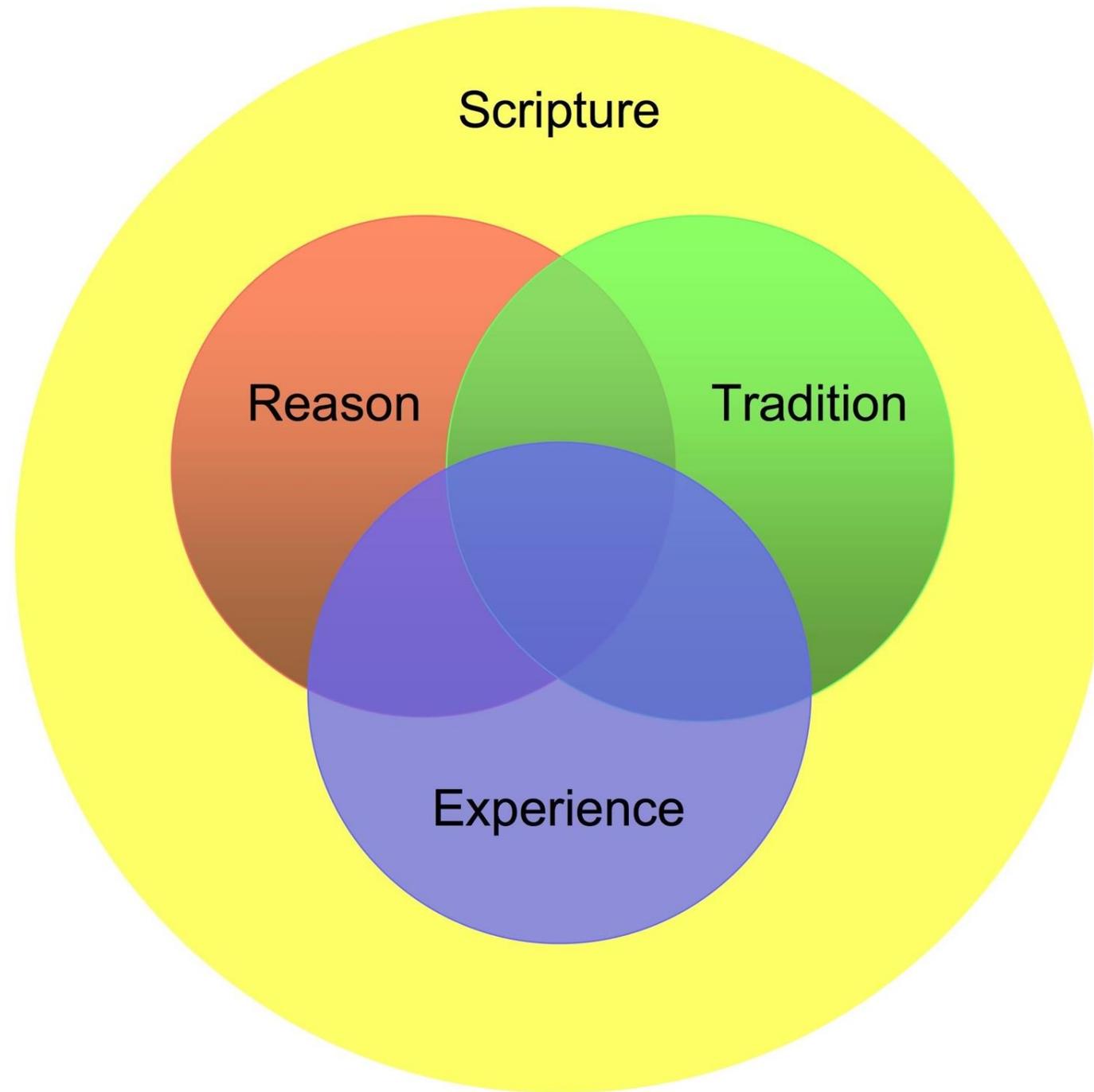
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;

He suffered and was buried.

The third day he rose again.

Incarnational Bible

- Since the Bible, like Jesus is 100% Divine and 100% Human it is God's word through (first-century) humans' words.
- Conservative Christians usually employ the Wesleyan Quadrilateral to determine positions and actions.



We inherited
from Christian
History

- **Sola Scriptura – Scripture alone (Reformers)**
- **Sola Fide – Faith alone**
- **Reason** is essentially the Hard (Genetics, Chemistry etc.) and Soft (Psychology, Sociology etc.) Sciences.
- **Experience** for a believer this is inclusive of Spirit encounters – leading of the Holy Spirit, the ‘abiding presence’, the gifts of.. etc.
- **Church Tradition** Modern Pentecostalism has little more than 100 years of Tradition, hence we usually include **Church Tradition** from a conservative perspective (e.g., Ecumenical Creeds such as Apostles, Nicaean’).

THE ESSENTIALS
THE
AUTHORITY
AND
AUTHENTICITY
OF SCRIPTURE.

THE HUMANITY
AND DIVINITY OF
JESUS (I AM)

CROSS – DEALT
WITH ALL SIN FOR
ALL TIME

RESURRECTION –
PROCURED NEW
LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

PENTECOST –
PARTNERSHIP WITH
GOD IN THE
ESTABLISHING OF THE
CHURCH – THE
KINGDOM OF GOD –
AND THE NEW
CREATION

The Essentials

- **The essentials of the Christian faith centre on the Gospel and the person of Jesus Christ.** At the heart of Christianity is the belief in Jesus as the Son of God, who came to earth, lived a sinless life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again to offer us eternal life (John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4). This message of grace assures believers that they are forgiven and made righteous through faith in Christ, not by their own works (Ephesians 2:8-9).

•The Essentials

- Another essential aspect is **the believer's new identity in Christ**. When someone places their faith in Jesus, they become a new creation, with a new heart and spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ezekiel 36:26). This transformation means that Christians are no longer defined by their past sins but are now seen as holy and blameless in God's sight (Colossians 1:22).

The Essentials

- **The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is also crucial.**

The Spirit lives within believers, guiding them and empowering them to live out their new identity in Christ (Romans 8:9-11). This relationship with God is personal and intimate, characterized by love and grace, rather than adherence to a set of rules or rituals (Galatians 5:18).

The Essentials

- **Finally, the Christian faith emphasizes the importance of love**—loving God and loving others. This love is not a command to be fulfilled under the law but a natural expression of the believer's new nature in Christ (1 John 4:7-8; 1 John 3:23). Through this love, Christians are called to reflect the character of Jesus in their daily lives.

Hebrews 8:6-13 *A New Covenant*

7 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.

8 For finding fault with them, He says,

“Behold, days are coming, says the Lord,

When I will effect a new covenant

With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah;

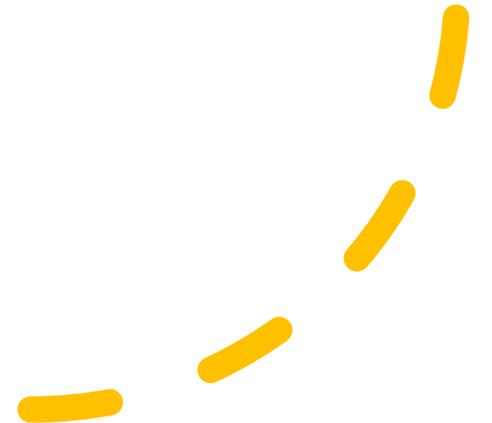
9 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers

On the day when I took them by the hand

To lead them out of the land of Egypt;

For they did not continue in My covenant,

And I did not care for them, says the Lord.



10 “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
After those days, says the Lord:

I will put My laws into their minds,
And I will write them on their hearts.
And I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.

11 “And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen,
And everyone his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’
For all will know Me,
From the least to the greatest of them.

12 “For I will be merciful to their iniquities,
And I will remember their sins no more.”

13 When He said, “A new *covenant*,” He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who **are sanctified.**

15 And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying,

16 “This is the covenant that I will make with them

After those days, says the Lord:

I will put My laws upon their heart,

And on their mind I will write them,”

He then says,

17 “And their sins and their lawless deeds

I will remember no more.”

18 Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer *any* offering for sin.

A new heart, a new spirit

- In Ezekiel 36:26-27, God promises,

"I will give you a **new heart** and put a **new spirit** in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."

- This prophecy points to the transformation that occurs in a believer's life through faith in Jesus Christ.

Dead to sin, Alive to God.

- When someone becomes a believer, they undergo a spiritual transformation.

The old self, which was dead in sin, is crucified with Christ, and they are raised to new life with Him (Romans 6:6-7).

- This means that the believer receives a new heart, one that is aligned with God's desires and is obedient to Him (Romans 6:17).
- The new heart is not deceitful or wicked, as was the case before salvation, but is now a heart that desires to love and follow God.

Romans 6:6-7

- We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6:17

And God is pleased with you, for in the past you were servants of sin, but now your obedience is heart deep, and your life is being moulded by truth through the teaching you are devoted to. ¹⁸ And now you celebrate your freedom from your former master—sin. You've left its bondage, and now God's perfect righteousness holds power over you as his loving servants.

- Furthermore, the Holy Spirit dwells within us, guiding and empowering us to live in accordance with God's will (Romans 8:9-11). This new heart and spirit mean that we are aligned with God's desires, and we can trust our new heart because it is in union with the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17 *But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him*).
- This transformation is not just a change in behaviour but a fundamental change in who we are at the core.

Romans 8:9-11

- You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you. ESV

- Additionally, believers receive a new spirit, which refers to their human spirit being made alive to God.
This new spirit is distinct from the Holy Spirit, who also comes to dwell within believers.
The Holy Spirit empowers and guides believers, helping them to live out their new identity in Christ (Romans 8:9-11).
- This transformation is a key aspect of the believer's identity.
As new creations in Christ, believers are no longer defined by their past sins or failures but are now defined by their union with Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17). This new identity is characterized by righteousness, holiness, and a deep connection with God, made possible through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

- In contrast, (to the Old Testament) the New Testament reveals that Jesus Christ offered Himself as the perfect and final sacrifice for sin. His sacrifice was once for all, meaning it was sufficient to take away sins permanently (Hebrews 9:26-28).
- Because of Jesus' sacrifice, there is no longer any need for additional offerings for sin. His blood was shed once, and it has perfected for all time those who are sanctified (Hebrews 10:14). This means that believers are completely forgiven and cleansed, and there is no longer any offering required for sin (Hebrews 10:18).

The nature of Scripture

The Bible is both Divine and Human, with an Author (the Holy Spirit) and authors (those who wrote the Bible books).

In its humanity (authors), it is written by persons other than me, at a time not my own, in a language different from my native tongue, within a world view not familiar, to persons who are now reading, with problems we may not share.

Yet in its Divinity (Author), the Bible is as applicable, authoritative now, as when it was first written.

The Beginning - Abraham Genesis 12

1 Now the Lord said to Abram,

“Go forth from your country,

And from your relatives

And from your father’s house,

To the land which I will show you;

2 And I will make you a great nation,

And I will bless you,

And make your name great;

And so ^cyou shall be a blessing;

3 And I will bless those who bless you,

And the one who curses you I will curse.

And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

Genesis 15

1 After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great.”

2 Abram said, “O Lord God, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?”

3 And Abram said, “Since You have given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir.”

4 Then behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, “This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir.”

5 And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”

6 Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Galations 3:23

- New Living Translation And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God's promise to Abraham belongs to you.

English Standard Version And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Berean Literal Bible Now if you *are* of Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to *the* promise.

King James Bible And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 3:16

Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed.
He does not say, “And to seeds,” as *referring* to many, but
rather to one, “And to your seed,” that is, Christ

The following chart will help us to understand the seeds of Abraham.

The Four Different Seeds of Abraham			
1. Natural seed	2. Special nat- ural seed	3. Spir- itual seed	4. Uniqu e seed
Includes all physical children, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Jews and Arabs.	The na- tion, or chil- dren, of Is- rael, all of the phys- ical seed of Jacob and	All be- lievers of all ages, David and Paul, Jewish and Gentile be- lievers, you and me.	Christ the Mes- siah



The reason that this is important is because of what we find in [Galatians 3:16](#),

“Now to

Abraham and his seed ([σπέρματι](#)(sperma))^{G4690} Dative Singular Neuter) were the promises made. He saith not, And to

seeds ([σπέρμασιν](#)(sperma))^{G4690} Dative Plural Neuter), as of many; but as of one,

And to thy seed [σπέρματί](#) (sperma))^{G4690} Dative Singular Neuter), which is Christ.”

This is also consistent with what Paul wrote regarding that same promise by God to

Abraham in [Romans 4:18](#), ***“Who against hope believed in hope, that he might***

become the father of many nations, according to that which was

spoken, So shall thy seed ([σπέρμα](#) (sperma))^{G4690} Nominative Singular Neuter) be.”