

Don Preiser

What's Better Than the Bible?

The Key to Unlock Your
Spiritual Growth

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PART 1

THE BIBLE

Chapter 1

What the Bible Is Not

So let's begin by identifying the problem. It is my contention that we are using the Bible for things and in ways for which it was never created. As we begin to look at these issues, let me say again categorically that I am not denying the inspiration, inerrancy, truthfulness, or value of the Bible. But I do think we are missing a critical piece of our relationship with God because the Bible has been made into something it was never intended to be and consequently has distracted us from the magnificent power and connectedness that has already been provided. I will begin by describing things the Bible was not designed to be but has become part of contemporary religious practice.

1. The Bible is Not A Manual for Behavior

The Bible was never intended to be a manual for behavior; that was the Law and it wasn't effective in regulating behavior. Actually the purpose of the Law was to prove to man that no amount of human effort,

So that was the plan as described by Jesus. Internal heart change that is motivated and actualized by an internal spirit. But here's the catch. **Jesus did not say that his influence was going to be replaced by a book!** And that is essentially what has happened in modern Christianity. The Bible has become the go-to source for everything related to God and all direction, guidance, hope, encouragement, support, inspiration, and devotion are obtained there.

And I am convinced that the Holy Spirit is grieved by our lack of attention to the internal direction that He is designed to provide. We have replaced Him with a book and I find that troubling, maybe even bordering on idolatry. Israel worshipped a physical gold calf instead of the Spirit of God and I fear we are worshipping a physical book instead of the Spirit of God Himself.

I know that's a strong statement and I don't make it lightly but when you replace God's Spirit with a physical object, even one authored by God, I think we're headed in the wrong direction and we are substituting our plan for God's. It was His intent that we be guided by His indwelling Spirit, not another substitute written code. So it is the thesis of this book that we are misusing the Bible in ways it was never intended to be used and have substituted it for the internal guidance of the Spirit. And for that reason I hope that we will soon see the end of the Bible as it is currently being used.

Just understand that the first 3 chapters are going to sound negative and critical of the way the Bible is being used. But don't throw your Bible away just yet. I will provide a solution after we look at the problem.

if we can come to a better understanding of what the Bible is and how it applies to our lives.

It starts with Jesus' conversation with his disciples. Here's what he said:

But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you...But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. John 16:7,13 NIV

So Jesus is saying that it is better for Him to leave than to stay with them. How could that be true? How could anything be better than Jesus' physical presence?

The answer is that as long as He is in a human body, His presence and proximity is limited to people who are literally with him. However, if he leaves and sends His Spirit into every believer, then He is omnipresent and accessible to everybody at all times. No limitations of time and space. Rather than relying on physical contact to offer limited guidance to people, His indwelling Spirit provides non-stop connection to everybody, whenever and wherever they need Him.

So what is God's plan to change how He relates to mankind? Rather than man conforming externally to a written code, man now has internal guidance in his spirit to provide unlimited connection directly to his Creator. That indwelling Spirit changes one's identity so that they now manifest the influence of that Spirit by the way they live. No more rules and regulations. No more guilt, shame, and condemnation.

The Bible is considered to be the best selling book of all time. And perhaps it may also be the most controversial book of all time. Think of all the denominations and religious divisions that exist, primarily because of different interpretations of the Bible. Why is that?

What exactly is the role of the Bible in God's plan? Did He intend for it to be the ultimate source of truth?

If so, in Jesus' predictions about life after His resurrection, why would He never even hint at such a significant development as a forthcoming manual to be the guideline for the rest of human history? If the Bible was to be God's final revelation, why no mention of it or prophecy predicting it?

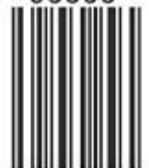
Or could it be that we have made it something it was never intended to be? What if there's something better than the Bible?

In this daring challenge to conventional wisdom about the Bible, Don Preiser suggests that there is a better way to live, a way Jesus predicted and promised to be our ultimate guide for living. In these pages you will find how the Bible has been misused, misapplied, and misunderstood. And you will also find how to use it correctly within the context of Jesus' promise of a better way. And you might discover what's really better than the Bible!

ISBN 9798249463472



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