



ENTER God's presence

Psalm 103: 1-5, 8-12

Praise the Lord, my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

² Praise the Lord, my soul,
and forget not all his benefits—

³ who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases,

⁴ who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion,

⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger, abounding in love.

⁹ He will not always accuse,
nor will he harbor his anger forever;

¹⁰ he does not treat us as our sins deserve
or repay us according to our iniquities.

¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his love for those who fear him;

¹² as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We come before you with grateful hearts, awed by your mercy that reaches as high as the heavens. Thank you for forgiving our sin, healing our brokenness, and crowning us with your steadfast love. *Lord, quiet our hearts and sharpen our minds, so that we may trust your faithfulness, rest in your grace, and proclaim your goodness to others. May this time draw us closer to you, our rescuer and redeemer. In Jesus' name, Amen*

Week beginning:
Sunday 12th October 2020

Worship series:
**Since You Asked:
#week 5 Is the Bible Reliable?**



VERSE for the week

"We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ." -1 John 1:3

Full Reading: 1 John 1:1-10



REMEMBER this week

"Come and see the Bible, where the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit show up reliably!"



SHARE life together

1. How has God revealed His faithfulness to you in the past week?
2. *Can you share a time when a Bible story or verse gave you unexpected clarity, comfort, or 'aha' insight in your daily life?*
3. *Why do you think some people struggle to view the Bible as a reliable source of truth today, especially when considering its ancient origins, cultural differences, or passages that challenge modern values?*

Can a 2,000-year-old book—filled with stories of ancient wars, miraculous healings, and a resurrected Messiah—still hold weight in an age of science, scepticism, and scandal? Critics dismiss the Bible as outdated, contradictory, or even oppressive, pointing to its complex history and challenging passages. Yet billions across time have staked their lives on its claim to reveal a God who *'so loved the world'* (John 3:16) that he entered human chaos to offer redemption. But the question remains: Is Scripture reliable? As we shall explore, the answer hinges not on cultural trends or human perfection, but on the unshakable person of Christ—the living word who fulfils its promises, transforms its readers, even when our questions linger.



LISTEN attentively

Read 1 John 1:1-10 and John 21:24-25, [Here](#) or in your Bibles.

4. What central idea or thread links these passages?
5. John writes, "We have heard... seen... touched" (v.1). How do these sensory details invite you to trust the Bible's claims about Jesus? What might sceptics find compelling—or challenging—about this emphasis on physical witness?"
6. How does linking 'fellowship with one another' (v.7) to 'walking in the light' connect the reliability of Scripture to the health of Christian community?

While robust intellectual arguments for the Bible's reliability, its historical coherence, and transformative power are helpful in engage the Bible's critics and to give Christian's confidence, the Bibles ultimate purpose is not merely to prove itself to win debate, but to unveil the heart of the Triune God. The same word that withstands scrutiny *'so that you may believe'* (John 21:24) is also an invitation: the Father's call to reconciliation, the Son's revelation of sacrificial love, and the Spirit's whisper drawing us into fellowship (1 John 1:3). Truth, in Scripture, is not a cold proposition—it's a person (John 14:6), and the Bible's reliability finds its fullest meaning when its pages lead us to kneel before Christ, the living word, who opens the way to eternal communion with God.



Consider the following:

7. *How does trusting the Bible's historical reliability (e.g., eyewitness testimony in 1 John 1:1-3) deepen your willingness to encounter God personally through its pages?*
8. *1 John 1:3 ties the apostles' testimony to 'fellowship with the Father and His Son.' How might intellectual confidence in Scripture's truthfulness open hearts to deeper communion with God?*
9. *How can defending the Bible's reliability ultimately point others to our Triune God's desire for fellowship, not just intellectual agreement?*



The Bible's trustworthiness—grounded in firsthand accounts, historical consistency, and life-changing power—matters deeply when addressing those who are doubting the Bible. Yet the Bible's greater purpose isn't just to prove facts, but to fulfil God's mission of drawing us into '*communion with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ*' (1 John 1:3). Scripture's reliability isn't a standalone argument; it's the foundation for meeting Jesus, who called himself '*the truth*' (John 14:6) and the bridge to eternal relationship. To ask, '*Can you trust the Bible?*' is to stand at the edge of an invitation—where evidence meets encounter. This encounter, centres on *sola Scriptura*: Christ, not human wisdom, is Scripture's purpose and heart, and its authority flows from his resurrection-backed promise to '*be near*' all who seek him. The Bible's truth, then, is both a legitimate defence against scepticism, but more importantly a pathway to knowing the God who '*loved us first*' (1 John 4:19) and brings us into fellowship with him (1 John 1:3).

10. *If the Bible's reliability is an 'invitation,' how might you gently guide sceptics toward encountering Christ—not just arguments?*
11. *1 John 1:3 ties Scripture's testimony to 'communion' with God. How could living in that truth inspire you to pursue deeper fellowship with others—especially those who doubt or feel distant from Him?*
12. *The Bible emphasizes sola gratia (grace alone). How does trusting Scripture's reliability free you to live purposefully—not to earn God's love, but to respond to it?*



PRAY intentionally

- Praise God for his *unchanging truth of the bible and the solid witness to Jesus, the Way, Truth, and Life (John 14:6)*. Praise God for inviting us into fellowship, not as people far from him, but as *beloved children*.
- Ask God to strengthen our trust in the Bible's reliability. When doubts arise, we ask him to remind us of the apostles' eyewitness testimony (John 21:24) and his faithfulness through the ages.
- We thank God for the gift of his word—sufficient to save, sustain, and make us his chosen people. We thank God for his heart to draw all people into fellowship with himself and others.



BLESS one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross in the air as you say...

[Name], May Christ, the Living word, illuminate your path and draw you deeper into fellowship with the Father.