Read Through the Bible Introduction

I. Important Facts About the Bible as a Whole:

1. The Bible is God's written revelation of His will to man (2 Tim. 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:21)

2. The central theme of the Bible is Jesus Christ. (1 Tim. 3:16)

3. The Bible (which literally means a collection of books) contains 66 books, written by 40 authors covering approximately 1600 years. It was written by more than 40 authors from all walks of life – shepherds, farmers, tentmakers, physicians, fishermen, philosophers, and kings. These authors lived hundreds of miles apart and many were separated by centuries. Yet, the Bible has a close-fitting unity, as if one author wrote it, which is indeed the case.

The Bible has been translated into more than 1100 languages while the works of Shakespeare, the greatest author of secular literature have been translated into less than 50 languages. More than 30 million copies of the Bible are sold each year.

4. The Old Testament was written mostly in Hebrew (a few short passages in Aramaic). The New Testament was written in Greek. Our Bible is a translation from these languages.

5. The word "Testament" means covenant or agreement. The Old Testament is the Covenant God made with man about his relationship before Christ came. The New Testament is the agreement God made with man about his relationship with the Father after Christ came. In the OT we have the Covenant of the Law. In the NT, we have the covenant of Grace through Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:13-25).

II. The Old Testament

The Old Testament consists of 39 books falling into 4 general categories:

A. The First 5 books are Law

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy are called the Pentateuch (which means 5) and were written by Moses (John 1:45 & 7:19).

B. The Second 12 Books are Historical

Joshua	1 Samuel	2 Kings	Ezra
Judges	2 Samuel	1Chronicles	Nehemiah
Ruth	1 Kings	2 Chronicles	Esther

These books show us how the Lord brings the chosen people into the Promised Land and how the Law cannot bring salvation. They deal with the continual apostasy of Israel, and they tell us the stories of the great leaders and kings of Israel.

C. The Next 5 Books are the Books of Poetry

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon

This wisdom literature is experiential in nature and is written in a poetical form. They are very emotional, personal, and deal with human problems.

D. The Final 17 books of the Old Testament are called Prophetical Books.

These then are subdivided into the Major and Minor Prophets. They are not called major and minor because some are more important than others, but because of the amount of material contained in each book. In other words, the major prophets are larger than the minor prophets.

Major Prophets – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel

Minor Prophets - Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

<u>III. The New Testament</u>

The New Testament consists of 5 foundational books that provide the groundwork on which to build the 21 Epistles of instruction ending in the glorious reappearing of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Revelation.

A. The 5 Foundational Books

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts of the Apostles

The 4 Gospels in the NT are biographical in that they tell us about the life and the teachings of Jesus Christ, as well as His crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. The book of Acts is the only historical book in the NT and deals with the origin and the growth of the early church

B. The Pauline Epistles

The Apostle Paul wrote almost half of the NT. His fourteen epistles are broken into two categories

9 Church Epistles - Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians

5 Personal Epistles -1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews

C. Seven General Epistles - Each book carries the name of its author

James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1,2,3 John, Jude

D. The Apocalypse – The Revelation of Jesus Christ penned by John

<u>IV. Personal Application:</u>

God's Word is……

Food — It provides our nourishment (See Jeremiah 15:16 and Matthew 4:4)
Light –It gives us illumination so that we might see the way to go (Psalm 119:105)
Hammer –It breaks away the unnecessary and solidifies our life (Jeremiah 23:29
Sword –It is a dangerous weapon against our enemy (Ephesians 6:17)