

Mount Olive Baptist Church
Bible Study Series: *How We Got the Bible*
Session 1 – Introduction “Why the Bible Still Matters”

Introduction

The Bible shapes our faith, guides our lives, and anchors our hope—yet many have never explored how this sacred book came to be. This study is designed to strengthen confidence in Scripture by examining how God revealed His Word, how it was recognized as Scripture, and how it has been faithfully preserved through history.

Along the way, we will learn from faithful voices God used to guard and explain His Word, always pointing the church back to Scripture itself. Our prayer is that this journey deepens both our understanding of the Bible and our devotion to the God who speaks through it.

I. Opening Scripture

- **Psalm 119:105** – *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”*
- **2 Timothy 3:16–17** – *“All Scripture is God-breathed...”*
- **Isaiah 40:8** – *“The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.”*

II. Purpose of This Session

This first session is designed to frame the entire journey we are about to take together. This is a study about understanding how God revealed, recognized, and preserved the Bible.

III. Why Study *How We Got the Bible*?

Many believers love the Bible deeply—but have never been taught:

- Where it came from
- How it was written
- How it was canonized
- Why it can be trusted

In today’s world:

- The Bible is questioned
- Its authority is challenged
- Its relevance is debated

This series exists so our faith is not built on assumption, but on assurance. A faith that understands its foundation can stand when questions arise.

IV. What the Bible Says About Itself

1. The Bible Claims Divine Origin

2 Timothy 3:16

Scripture is described as *God-breathed*.

This means:

- God is the source
- God is the initiator
- God stands behind what is written

The Bible is not merely inspiring literature—it is **divinely inspired revelation**.

2. The Bible Was Written Through Human Hands

2 Peter 1:20–21

God used real people:

- With personalities
- With language styles
- In real historical situations

God did not erase the writers' humanity—He **worked through it**.

Inspiration does not deny humanity; it directs it.

3. The Bible Claims Endurance

Isaiah 40:8

Empires have risen and fallen.

Languages have changed.

Cultures have shifted, yet Scripture remains.

This points not to chance—but to **divine preservation**.

V. A Word About Canonization

One of the most common questions people ask is: “Who decided what books belong in the Bible?”

The word **canon** means “*measuring rod*” or “*standard*.”

Canonization was not the church *creating* Scripture—it was the church recognizing the Scripture God had already inspired.

Key truths about canonization:

- Books were recognized, not voted into existence
- Scripture proved itself through:
 - Apostolic authority

- Consistency with God’s revealed truth
- Widespread use among God’s people
- God guided the process over time—not overnight

The same God who inspired the Word also governed its recognition and canonization.

VI. Learning from Faithful Voices: The Role of Great Theologians

As we move through this series, we will also learn about faithful theologians, scholars, and church leaders whom God used throughout history to help preserve, explain, and defend the Scriptures.

We will encounter:

- Early church fathers who defended Scripture during persecution
- Scholars and scribes who preserved biblical texts with precision

These theologians did not replace Scripture. They pointed people back to Scripture.

VII. Expectations for Bible Study Participants

To get the most out of this series, participants are asked to commit to the following:

- Stay up with the assigned readings
- Expect some light homework
- Come engaged and prepared

Bring with you weekly:

- Your Bible
- The book “How We Got the Bible”
- A notebook or journal
- Your willingness to learn

This study works best when we show up curious, committed, and connected.

We begin this study with gratitude and expectation, celebrating the gift of God’s Word and the faithfulness of the God who has preserved it through every generation. As we grow in understanding, may our hearts rejoice and our lives be shaped by the truth that still speaks with power today.

“The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.”
— *Psalms 119:130*