

The Message About God in All '66'

ASSUMPTIONS

No single approach can deal with all the possible issues that one could raise about the Bible. In these study guides, we will not focus on the great philosophical issues that have led to so many “isms” down through the ages. While we may discuss some of the great philosophical issues briefly as we go along, they are not the primary focus of our studies. It is not that we do not think there are good answers to those questions, but rather that these studies are intended to deal with different issues. Thus, we will make certain assumptions at the outset that we believe are supported by the evidence of Scripture. Therefore, we will state our assumptions at the beginning so everyone will be clear about our position.

1. **There is an all-powerful God who created our world and still cares about us.**
2. **God has chosen to reveal Himself to us through the Judeo-Christian Scriptures.**
3. **The Bible is an “inspired,” reliable record of God’s revelation of Himself.** (See Luke 24:44; John 5:39-40; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 10:1-4; and 2 Peter 1:21.)
4. **We have the right words and the right books adequately translated into modern language.** There is a complete science known as *textual criticism* that backs this up. There are almost no variations of major theological significance among the oldest handwritten texts of the Scriptures that we have. For all practical purposes, we have the words of the original writers; and those words have been preserved, copied, and adequately translated into modern English.
5. **We can understand the meaning.** Despite the period of time that has elapsed since the writing of the books of the Bible, it is possible to understand the setting sufficiently to grasp the intended meaning. God Himself takes responsibility for revealing to us enough of the truth about His character and government that we are able to understand, appreciate, and love Him here and now. Much more will be revealed to us in the future life, but we have sufficient information now to begin our investigation of God and discover the truth. (See John 17:3-4 and John 8:32.)
6. **God is not limited in any way when trying to communicate with us except by the limitations of our humanity.** God can know the distant past as well as the distant future without limiting our freedom in any way.
7. **Since all God wants and all He asks of us is mutual love, trust, and trustworthiness (which implies friendship—Acts 16:31; John 15:15), God chooses to limit Himself rather than violate our freedom in any way.** God knows that He cannot establish a free universe of beings who will live together in harmony for eternity without these basic essentials.

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