

THINK  
INSIDE  
THE  
BOOK



# THINK INSIDE THE BOOK

*Dorothy Davis*

# *Dedicated* . . .

to Valerie Wilson with sincere gratitude for  
her ideas, excitement, and encouragement  
that resulted in this book.

*Think Inside the Book*

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## *Preface*

**L**ightning crackles. Thunder booms. Suddenly the lights go out! It's a power outage, and you're left in the blackness, trying to navigate your way around.

Finding yourself in total darkness can be a disconcerting experience. You feel your way uncertainly, fumble to find things, and bump into obstacles, fearing you'll fall. In a similar way, human beings must maneuver through life. Often, we are left feeling our way uncertainly into the future, fumbling to find the wisdom we need to make successful choices, and bumping into obstacles, fearing we'll fall. Life becomes a walk in the dark, and we look for help to get us through. If we will come to God, He will light our way and guide us.

The Bible declares that people who do not have a relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ, are lost and wandering in spiritual darkness (John 12:35–36, 45). In such a condition, a person doesn't have God's light to find direction in life. But being gracious and loving, God holds out an offer of hope to every person. First of all, we can know Him and have a relationship with Him. Then, He has given us a glorious book by which to live—the Bible, God's Word. Psalm 119:105 says, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” The Bible is God's resource to us for successful living. For centuries, the Bible has made a radical difference in the lives of millions of people. Can it make a difference in your life? Keep reading and find out!

## *How to Use This Book*

**E**ach of the eight lessons in this book is divided up into several assignments. Doing one assignment per day and one lesson per week works out evenly. However, some assignments may be too long for one study time (especially in lesson 5). Do the number of questions that enable you to “digest” the material presented. You might want to set a goal of covering one lesson every two weeks. As you work through the assignments, you will need a Bible. It will also be helpful to have a dictionary handy. Suggested answers are in the back of the book.

In some assignments, “for further study” verses are given. These present additional material for you to read or study for the topic under consideration.

Two appendices appear at the end of the book. Appendix A presents an overview of the content of the sixty-six books of the Bible. Appendix B demonstrates an additional sample inductive study that is presented in lesson 5, assignment 2.

Questions for discussion are also included in the back of this book for those desiring to teach this book in a group setting.



## *Hearing God in a Sea of Voices*

**K**ids like games. I remember blindman's bluff. The person who was "it" was blindfolded, and the other children would run this way and that, daring the blindfolded child to catch them. Not being able to see, the blindfolded child had to listen for voices to figure out where to go. But no sooner would she follow one voice, than another would yell out from a different direction. As I recall, this game was one in which it was much more amusing to be one of the "voices" than to be "it"!

Today, our world is full of voices shouting at us from all directions: be this, think that, do what I say. People seem overwhelmed by their problems and the circumstances of life. In a way, they're blindfolded and listening for a voice, any voice, to tell them which way to go. "Experts" and opinions abound: radio and television talk shows, self-help books, magazine articles. All try to speak with authority on topics from A to Z. To what voices are you listening?

## ■ ASSIGNMENT I

### WHOM CAN YOU TRUST?

WELL, what voices should you follow? Some speak truth; some deceive. How can a person tell the difference? Thankfully, there is a way.

God always speaks the truth, of course, so the book God has given us, the Bible, tells us what is true. As we come to know what God says is right and good, we'll be able to detect false, harmful voices.

Your first assignment will help you understand whom you can trust. Answer the questions by reading the Scripture verses indicated and jotting down your findings.

(Additional verses are listed for your own further study.)

#### 1. In the spiritual realm, why must we be careful to whom we listen?

(a) Proverbs 14:12

(b) 2 Peter 2:1

(c) 1 John 4:1–3

(d) Jude 4

*For further study*

*Romans 10:3*

#### 2. With regard to human advice and opinions, why must we be discerning about believing everything people claim is “wisdom”?

(a) Proverbs 14:15

(b) 1 Corinthians 3:19–20

(c) Colossians 2:8

*For further study*

*1 Thessalonians 5:21–22*

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## ■ ASSIGNMENT 2

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### **HAS GOD REALLY SPOKEN?**

THROUGH the cacophony of voices clamoring for our attention, there comes one voice that has spoken and is still speaking today. It is the voice of God. But God does not scream at us in order to force us to do His will. He speaks with absolute authority through His Word, and we must quiet ourselves and listen to what He says. Then we should believe Him and obey Him.

Is the Bible really God's Word? Has God actually spoken to people? The Scriptures claim to be "inspired" (in Greek, the language in which the New Testament was written, that word means "God-breathed"), the very words coming from God.

This assignment will show you what the Bible claims about itself. (In the Bible, the Word of God is also called "the Scriptures," "the Word," and "the law and the prophets.")

**1. What phrases are used in the following verses to indicate that we are reading God's words?**

(a) Numbers 10:1

(b) Jeremiah 16:1

(c) Ezekiel 34:9–10

*For further study*

*Isaiah 66:1; Amos 9:1; Malachi 1:1–2*

2. What do these verses claim about the Scriptures?

(a) 2 Timothy 3:16

(b) 2 Peter 1:20–21

*For further study*

*Psalms 119:89; Proverbs 30:5; 1 Peter 1:25*

3. What did Christ claim about the Scriptures?

(a) Matthew 4:4

(b) Matthew 5:17–19

(c) John 17:17

*For further study*

*Luke 16:17*

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## ■ ASSIGNMENT 3

### WHO SAYS SO?

EVEN if God did author the Bible, why can't reading it and obeying it be optional? The answer to this question takes us back to the beginning of this wondrous book, back to Genesis chapters 1 and 2.

The Bible relates that God created man and woman to reflect His image and to glorify Him. He is the Creator, and we are the

creatures. Since He made us, He knows all about us, and He knows what is best for us. He determines how we should live. All of this He has revealed to us in His Word. As the One Who formed us, He has the right to expect us to heed His words. When God speaks, we are obligated to listen. When God instructs, we must hear what He says.

This assignment will show you why you must give heed to God's Word.

**1. According to these verses, what does God expect His people to do when He speaks?**

**(a) Deuteronomy 15:5**

**(b) Joshua 3:9**

**(c) Jeremiah 7:23**

*For further study*

*Isaiah 30:8–9*

**2. What will be the consequences for those who choose to continually disregard God's Word?**

**(a) Mark 8:38**

**(b) Romans 2:8–9**

**(c) 2 Thessalonians 1:7–9**

*For further study*

*Luke 21:26; Romans 1:16–19; 2 Chronicles 36:16*

## ■ ASSIGNMENT 4

### ARE YOU LISTENING?

WORDS bombard us! Every day we are the targets of thousands of words. For the sake of sanity, we become skilled at ignoring some voices while listening to others. How often can a mother pick out her baby's cry from among many others!

But in this practice of "tuning out" voices, we must be careful. As previously noted, God's voice will not scream at us over the roar of the world. In fact, we will only hear God's voice if we are actively listening for it. To do this we must quiet ourselves, open His Book, and pray, asking Him to speak to us. His voice is ready to instruct us if we are prepared to listen.

This assignment will encourage you to "hear" God's voice.

#### 1. What is true of those who hear the Lord's voice?

(a) John 10:27 (Christ is speaking)

(b) John 18:37

(c) Revelation 3:20

*For further study*

*Luke 11:28*

#### 2. What warnings are given in Scripture about not listening to His Word?

(a) Jeremiah 8:9

(b) Zechariah 7:11–13

(c) Hebrews 12:25

*For further study*

*Psalm 81:11–13*

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## ■ A S S I G N M E N T 5

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### I HEAR AND I OBEY

GOD could have made us like robots, automatically obeying His every command. But He wanted us to love Him freely and to do His will out of a desire to please Him. Obedience to God is commanded in Scripture, but the Lord would rather we obey Him because we desire to. As we choose to obey, we will experience beneficial results because God tells us to do only what is good for us.

Unfortunately, many Christians feel that obedience to God's Word—to all of God's Word—is optional. If they *feel like* obeying the Lord's commands, if the Bible's teaching fits their lifestyle, then they'll obey. But if God's directives interfere with what they want to do, they'll ignore the Scriptures. As a result, we observe many redeemed people who live ungodly lives and have worldly problems. As our congregations are filled with anemic believers, our churches are ineffective in doing God's work.

God never indicated that obedience to His Word was a choice. This assignment points out the necessity of your complete submission and obedience to God's Word.

1. What response does God expect from believers when they are confronted with His Word?

(a) Deuteronomy 26:16

(b) John 14:21, 23

(c) 1 John 5:3

*For further study*

*Deuteronomy 31:7–13*

2. One writer of Scripture wrote an entire psalm just about his love for God's Word. Read the following verses and describe his attitude of obedience.

(a) Psalm 119:10

(b) Psalm 119:33

(c) Psalm 119:59–60

*For further study*

*Psalm 119:12, 24*

## **WRONG THINKING!**

Over the centuries, critics have attacked the Bible and have tried to disprove its credibility. As time has gone by, their efforts have been like shooting foam darts at an army tank. The Word of God had proven itself to be accurate and trustworthy in all ways. It has the power to change lives, just as it claims. No one is going to destroy God's Word: "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isaiah 40:8).

Since the Bible cannot be destroyed, religious teachers and thinkers (through Satan's influence) have sought to weaken its influence by claiming that it is not inspired, or not all inspired, by God. What results from this idea is a view that a person can pick and choose the parts of Scripture he or she wants to believe or obey. To

hold such an opinion is to trample the authority of God's Word underfoot.

Second Timothy 3:16 claims, "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God.*" Proverbs 30:5 declares, "*Every word of God is pure.*" The Lord Jesus Himself proclaimed, "*The scripture cannot be broken*" (John 10:35).

God has spoken. People can try to avoid His voice or make excuses for not obeying it. But there is a definite danger in these actions toward His words.

### **RIGHT THINKING!**

We have seen in this lesson that God has chosen to communicate with man; He has spoken to us through His Word, the Bible. He expects us to listen and obey. Our response should be to wholeheartedly desire to learn of Him and to please Him by reading His words and putting them into practice.

What a privilege—to hear the God of the universe speak to us! What a gift—to learn of all the wonderful provisions and promises He has for us! How then can we ignore His voice? Are you listening to voices that are speaking empty words? Hear what God has to say to you. It will change your life!

### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

- ✦ Do you regard the Bible, the entire Bible, as the inspired (God-given) and inerrant (without mistakes) Word of God?
- ✦ Do you regularly take time to read and consider God's words to you?
- ✦ Do you believe that you are responsible to submit to the Bible's authority and to obey its instruction?