

*One of the principles of M28 is long-term thinking, praying that, down the road, each student will become a disciple-maker. Coming into the study as teacher rather than coach, can get in the way of that goal, because our students tend to take a passive, academic approach, rather than thinking about the Bible as a message that is for them. However it is sometimes helpful for the coach to give a short introduction during the first session. Below is the introduction I often use (some ideas taken from Voddie Baucham as well as ISI materials). Feel free to borrow some of this or create your own introduction to fit your group. I do not recommend reading it to your students; instead, speak from your heart.*

I'm so glad that we could be together today. Since I started studying the Bible, I've found many principles that impact my life every single day. My hope is that as you explore the Bible, you will also find treasures that will impact your life.

Before we start to explore, let me briefly explain some of the reasons the Bible is such a unique book.

First, it is unique in its historical value. The Bible is a reliable collection of historical documents about real people and real places that you can visit today. These documents were written by eyewitnesses, which means the writers watched the events happen. The accounts were written down early during the lifetime of other eyewitnesses. What would the other eyewitnesses have said if the writers got the information wrong? [It didn't happen that way... I was there!] And yet we see support, not contradiction from eyewitnesses and even from ancient Non-Christian historians. Thousands of archaeological digs have also verified the people and places of the Bible.

The Bible is unique in its claims. It claims that God inspired the writers, such that the content is God's Word given to humans. If you received a letter from the president of your country, you would be very interested to find out what it says because of who the sender is. In the same way, many people are interested to find out what the Bible says because it claims to be a message from the Creator, himself.

The Bible is unique in its circulation. The Bible is the best-selling book every year, every month, every week, and every day. It is not included on bestseller list, because that would be boring... it would always be number one. The Bible has been translated into more languages than any other book in history. Does anyone know the original languages the Bible is written in? [Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic]. If you are fluent in two or more languages, you can even be extra sure of what the original is saying. The more you read different translations of the Bible, the more you realize that the meaning of each translation is the same, since they are all based on the same original sources.

The Bible is unique in its survival. We have more ancient copies of the Bible than all the other famous ancient works of literature combined. So we can be very sure that what we are reading today is the same as what was originally written down.

The Bible is unique in its continuity. the Bible was written on three different continents by 40 different men. Kings, fishermen, an accountant, a physician, and others from very different backgrounds. It was written during times of war, times of peace, times of joy, times of sorrow,

and yet the Bible forms one coherent story and message from God that does not contradict itself.

So let's have some fun and start to explore together!