**Bible 101- Week One**

“What do Christians Believe about the Bible?”

***What is the Bible?***

* It is actually a ***collection of books***/writings… histories, letters, stories, testimonies… that have been inspired by the Holy Spirit to help us to better understand God and His plan for the world… Some have called it a ***Christian’s Instruction Manual***.
  + Have you ever thought of the Bible as an “Instruction Manual”?
    - How is it the same and how might it be different?
  + Have you ever tried to do something without first going through the instruction manual?
    - How did it turn out?

***What do Christians believe about the Bible?***

* We believe the Bible is the ***inspired*** word of God… It’s not just another book… it is “The Book”.
  + What does it mean to say the Bible is inspired?
  + How does that make it different from other books?
* The Bible is a “living document”…
  + What do you think that means?
    - Have you ever read a passage at one point in your life and had it speak to you in a particular way, and then read it again later and it spoke to you in a completely different ways?
      * Why is that?
    - The fact that it is “living”, does not mean it changes! It changes us!
* Upon it’s teachings we are called to build our lives.
  + Do you try to govern your life by what the Bible says?
  + Are there any examples you can think of where you don’t, or don’t want to?
    - Typical examples; Tithing, Controversial social issues; abortion, homosexuality, pre-marital sex
    - Other examples?
* We do not have the freedom to pick and choose which parts we want to live by, but we are called to understand; **Language, Context, History**
  + ***Language***- The bible was written in three primary languages: Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic.
    - Translating from language to another requires us to consider the nuances of those translations.
* ***Context***- Knowing what is going on before and after the passage. Understand, the bible is meant to be seen as a whole, even those it’s a collection of different books. It will never contradict itself.
  + - Do you think there are instances where what is talked about in the Bible is NOT meant to be applied to today?
      * Examples? Wearing head coverings in the church?
  + There are parts of the Bible that ***may*** not ***need*** to be taken literally, but instead might been viewed as metaphors?
    - Examples… Jonah in the belly of the whale?
      * Would viewing any of these as metaphors change things for you?
  + ***History-*** Knowing what was going on in history, during the time the passage was written can be helpful when trying to understand what the passage is trying to teach.