

# Is the Bible relevant to us today?



Luke 24:13-27



This week's Bassline session pulls together the themes of whole series and explores the question 'Is the Bible relevant to us today?' We'll think about the different ways we approach the Bible and consider how we sometimes make God's word about us, rather than focusing on Jesus.

## You will need:

- Paper and felt-tips



## Beat

### Leader's notes:

In the Beat activity, the group are going to discuss a range of literary quotes, explore what they are trying to say and think about how they are relevant to life today. Read out each quote and discuss, and then ask the group to guess the author, book and when it was published.

## Book Quotes

**'There is some good in this world, and it's worth fighting for.'**

- JRR Tolkien, *The Two Towers* - published in 1954

**'I am no bird; and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will, which I will now exert to leave you.'**

- Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre* - published in 1847

**'Beware; for I am fearless, and therefore powerful.'**

- Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* - published in 1818

**'I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship.'**

- Louisa May Alcott, *Little Women* - published in 1868

**'Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.'**

- George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-four* - published in 1949

**‘Nowadays people know the price of everything and the value of nothing.’**

– Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Grey* – published in 1890

**Ask:**

- Why do you think some of these quotes are still so relevant to our lives today?
- Do you have a favourite book or film quote? If so, share it with the group and explain why it is your favourite.

 **Bridge**

**Ask:**

Which of the book quotes resonates the most with you? Explain why.

 **Amplify**

**Say:**

We’ve spent the past three weeks considering the content, origin and writing styles of the Bible. Today we’re going to amplify the relevance of God’s word to our lives.

**Leader’s notes:**

To help the young people discuss the relevance of the Bible, sections of Joel Kim’s clip are used. The timings and discussion points are shown below.

**Watch:**

Joel Kim: Is the Bible Still Relevant? – Ligonier Ministries

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QbOISE9bbYw>

**Watch: 6:03–8:48**

**Ask:**

- What does it mean when we say that Scripture is inspired by God?
- Joel Kim believes that ‘the very fact that the Bible is written by God, the word of God, should remind us that the Bible is relevant for us, even today’. In what ways do you agree/disagree with his statement?
- In what ways do we make the Bible all about us?



**Leader's notes:**

Joel Kim discusses the way that we often make the Bible about ourselves. Explore this idea with the group while discussing the following three approaches to the Bible. Explain each approach and then discuss the following questions.

**Say:**

People think about and approach the Bible in different ways...

**A book of fables:** A fable is a short story, typically with animals as characters, conveying a moral. When we treat the Bible like a book of fables then we see each story as a lesson about how we should live our lives.

**A rule book:** If we approach the Bible in this way then we see the dos and don'ts of life and may strive to follow the rules carefully.

**An instruction book:** For this approach, we turn to the Bible when something goes wrong, or we need advice about how to fix something.

**Ask:**

- Have the group approached the Bible in any of these ways?
- What are the advantages/disadvantages of approaching the Bible in these ways?

**Say:**

Joel Kim notes that all these perceptions of the Bible make God's word about us. The Bible is not about us.

This isn't a new phenomenon. After his death and resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples. It would seem that, even then, they had forgotten the relevance of Scripture.

**Read:**

**<sup>13</sup> Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. <sup>15</sup> As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; <sup>16</sup> but they were kept from recognising him.**

**<sup>17</sup> He asked them, 'What are you discussing together as you walk along?'**

**They stood still, their faces downcast. <sup>18</sup> One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, 'Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?'**

**<sup>19</sup> 'What things?' he asked.**

**'About Jesus of Nazareth,' they replied. 'He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. <sup>20</sup> The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; <sup>21</sup> but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.**

**<sup>22</sup> In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning <sup>23</sup> but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who**

said he was alive. <sup>24</sup> Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.'

<sup>25</sup> He said to them, 'How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?'

<sup>27</sup> And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

(Luke 24:13-27)

**Ask:**

What does Jesus clearly state about Scripture in verses 25-26?

**Say:**

Jesus' comments were about the ancient Jewish Scriptures. We now have detailed portraits of the life of Jesus in four different Gospels. The whole of the Bible is centred around God and what he has done for us through his son, Jesus Christ.

**Watch: 13:25-15:02**

 **Bridge****Leader's notes:****Ask:**

- What is your response to the following quote?

**'Now, some people think the Bible is a book of rules, telling you what you should and shouldn't do. The Bible certainly does have some rules in it. They show you how life works best. But the Bible isn't mainly about you and what you should be doing. It's about God and what he has done.'**

- Sally Lloyd-Jones

 **Sound Check****Leader's notes:**

The playwright Alan Bennett said the following:

**'The best moments in reading are when you come across something - a thought, a feeling, a way of looking at things - which you had thought special and particular to you. And now, here it is, set down by someone else, a person you have never met, someone even who is long dead. And it is as if a hand has come out, and taken yours.'**

- Alan Bennett, English playwright

**Ask:**

What do you think Alan Bennett is trying to say about literature?

**Say:**

As time moves on, each generation thinks their experience is unique, but it's not. The setting may have changed, along with the technology, but we still experience life from a human perspective. The Bible has its own way of describing Alan Bennett's sentiment.

**Read:**

**<sup>9</sup> What has been will be again,  
what has been done will be done again;  
there is nothing new under the sun.**

(Ecclesiastes 1:9)

**Say:**

Our Sound Check activity today will help you see Bible stories in a new light, bringing them into today's world.

**Leader's notes:**

The Sound Check activity today will enable the young people to choose stories from the Bible and bring them into the modern context. This is an opportunity for them to get creative. Working in small groups, they will need paper and felt-tips to jot down their ideas. First, they need to choose a Bible story, and then they can decide how they are going to depict it in today's world. It might be a mini-series for a streaming giant, a feature film or a podcast series. They will need to decide the location and setting of their modern-day interpretation. They can also take some time to cast the main characters. The main aim of the activity is to explore how these ancient stories are relevant to our lives today. Encourage the group to choose a story they are very familiar with.

Here are some suggestions for Bible stories the group could use for this activity, but they can also suggest their own.

- David and Goliath – 1 Samuel 17
- Samson and Delilah – Judges 16
- Ruth and Naomi – Ruth 1-4
- Daniel and the fiery furnace – Daniel 3
- Jonah – Jonah 1-4
- The parable of the prodigal son – Luke 15:11-32
- The resurrection of Jesus – Matthew 28:1-15
- The conversion of Saul – Acts 9:1-19
- Paul is shipwrecked – Acts 27:1-28:15

When the group has completed the activity, share your ideas together.

**Ask:**

Where is the message of Jesus in this story?

 **Bridge****Say:**

Write a mini film/TV review for one of the ideas presented by a different group and share them together.

 **Selah****Say:**

We've spent four sessions exploring the different aspects of the Bible, and now we're going to pause and look at the whole story of Scripture. As you watch the clip, jot down anything you would like to share with God about his word. It might be a thank you, a question, or a recognition that you have so much more to learn. You may want to ask forgiveness for ignoring what God has to say or make a new commitment to read the Bible. Whatever it may be, jot it down, and we'll share it together when the clip has finished.

**Watch:**

The Story of the Bible – What It's About From Beginning to End (stop at 4:54)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7\\_CGP-12AE0&s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_CGP-12AE0&s)

**Leader's notes:**

Share the group's ideas together and turn them into a moment of group prayer. Commit to praying for each other as the group continues to discover more about the Bible.

**Say:**

As you move forward in your study of God's word, keep in mind what we have discussed today. Rather than making the Bible about you, focus on discovering more about Jesus.

 **Coda****Say:**

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music.

**Ask:**

As you reflect on everything you have learned today, what is your coda?

What is the one thing you will take away from this session that has deepened your understanding of the Bible?

**Leader's notes:**

Give the young people a moment to think about your question and briefly share their coda with the group before the session comes to an end.

