



EXPLORING GOD'S WORD

An Introduction to the Bible

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*Please note that
this teaching text has
not been proofed.*

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NOTE TO THE TEACHER

Charles Caldwell Ryrie was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and spent his early years in Alton, Illinois. In 1946, he received his A.B. degree from Haverford College. He was graduated with high honors by Dallas Theological Seminary, receiving both the Th.M. (1947) and Th.D. (1949) degrees. In 1954, he received his Ph.D. from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

In 1962, Dr. Ryrie became Dean of the Graduate School of Dallas Theological Seminary. Previous to this he taught at Midwest Bible and Missionary Institute in 1947, then at Westmont College from 1948 to 1953. He was visiting teacher in Systematic Theology, Assistant Professor and then Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Dallas Theological Seminary, 1953-1958. He then became President of Philadelphia College of Bible until returning to Dallas, where he was Professor of Systematic Theology.

The publishers of this volume owe an incalculable debt to Dr. Ryrie. Along with all his other duties, he serves on our Council of Reference. In this capacity, he checks, corrects (where necessary), and amends all Bible teaching material which we publish.

Display each illustration where indicated in text, laying volume aside when the story line continues beyond the picture.

Chapter 1

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

Do you remember the first letter you ever received? Perhaps you have not yet had that exciting experience of hearing Mother call out, "Here's a letter that came in the mail for you today!"

"For me?" you cry, running quickly to take it from her.

"Yes, for you. Here it is."

Excitedly you open it, read what it says, reread it, then put it where it will be safe until you want to look at it again. And you will read it again, especially if it is from a favorite grandparent or aunt or uncle.



Show Illustration #1

Every day the United States Postal Service handles more than 230,000,000 pieces of mail. Think of the piles and stacks and mounds of mail that many letters and parcels would make! But only that one letter which has your name on it matters to you. That's the important one, because it has a message just for you.



Show Illustration #2

How many books do you suppose there are in this world? Think of all the story books, school books, encyclopedias, comic books, travel books, picture books, and library books. You couldn't even begin to count all the books, let alone read them. And you wouldn't need to, for many of them are not even written for you. But there is one book which is for you, and that is God's Word, the Holy Bible.



Show Illustration #3

The Bible is like a letter to you from a very special person, the God of this great universe in which you live. In it He tells you a lot of things about yourself, about Himself, about the world in which you live, about things that happened in the past and about things which will yet happen in the future. But more important, in the Bible God tells you about His love for the people of this world. So in a very genuine sense the Bible is God's love letter to you. It is always an exciting experience to open God's letter to you and read what He has to say. You'll want to read it again and again and see everything God says, because His Book, like no other book, is especially for you.



Show Illustration #4

The Bible is a Book of books—66 of them in fact. Actually the word "Bible" comes from a plural word meaning *books*. Part of the Bible is called the *Old Testament* and part the *New Testament*. The Old Testament (39 books) contains the Jewish writings. The New Testament (27 books) contains the Christian writings. And yet the 66 books form one single book. So it is a Book of books.

The word "Testament" means *covenant*. Therefore, the Old Testament means those writings of the Jewish people with whom God made a covenant (or agreement) when He