



Purpose Statement

What is First Hand Truth?

First Hand Truth exists to equip people to study God's Word. We attempt to both **encourage** greater desire to study the Word and to **educate** people to raise their confidence to study the Word for themselves.

We do this through weekly local workshops in Battle Creek, MI, called Adventures in Bible study, and through **speaking** and **workshops** with individuals, families, churches, and schools both locally and distant.

Why is it important?

Studying scripture firsthand is important because...

It is listening to the most important voice we could possibly hear, not just our own opinions, or the opinions of those around us or our culture. We must learn to listen to God first. God has given his word so that we can make sense of our world.

If we give so much attention to other avenues of knowledge, why not more attention to God's very Words? We put vast effort into other areas of knowledge, why would we pay God's Word less attention than other less important things?

Scripture has many benefits for our very soul. It enables peace with God and peace with others. It provides wisdom when we are so lacking of it. It exposes our sin and helps us find the cure in Christ. It gives us joy even when we are in difficult situations. It helps us understand the purpose of life and endure its difficulties. It can bring us to the point where we learn to truly love God and then — somehow — love others as we ought. It can help us in our making of decisions, our life priorities, and our ethics as we learn to treat others with more respect. Its benefits are literally without limit (Psalm 1, Psalm 19, Psalm 119).

What is it going to do for people?

Studying scripture firsthand helps us to know God better and know truth. It helps us...

To help people fulfill their ultimate purpose / the Westminster Shorter Catechism reminds us that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. We cannot enjoy someone we do not know firsthand, and study of the Word helps us meet this great goal. If we are fulfilling our purpose, we will enjoy this life more and be a better person to those around us.

To help people become Jesus' Disciples / to connect people to Jesus as their Lord and Savior, their one **authority**, their one **guide**, and their one **teacher** is the ultimate outreach of the people of God (Matthew 28:16-20); in other words, to make disciples. We should not seek disciples after ourselves or after our churches or denominations (Acts 20:30). We primarily need a **teacher-student** relationship with Jesus, not a secondary **teacher-other teacher-student** relationship.

To help people become like Jesus, to grow / to develop in people the ability and desire to move into an intimate, Spirit-empowered, Word-driven relationship with God firsthand is necessary — it is this kind of relationship that little by little conforms us to His very image (Ephesians 4:13, 2 Corinthians 3:18). God does indeed help us grow through circumstances and trials, but we can exponentially improve that growth through desiring change, seeking the Word, applying that Word — through intentional growth by attention to scripture (2 Peter 1:3-15).

To help people be more apt to recognize error / one of the benefits of growing in the knowledge of God is being able to see the patterns of theological/spiritual error or misuse, both in our own lives and in the lives around us. We must deepen our relationship with God so that we will not be “tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness and deceitful schemes” and rather “speak truth in love” and “grow up in every way into Him who is the head, Christ (Ephesians 4:15-16).”

To help people to be better witnesses / the better we understand God's will and the truth, the better we can explain those things to those around us and teach them to believe and obey Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20).