



The Owl

(Open Learning News)



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Overview



Since Open Learning started to update and revise its courses in 2012, it continues to go from strength to strength with an ever increasing number of students enrolling and completing courses.

The brochure now contains 53 courses at all levels from single bite size lessons to full courses of 5 or 6 lessons. The range of subjects on offer has diversified and does not just concentrate on the obvious—Books of the Bible but now covers Christian Life, Ethics and World Faiths.

Have you looked at the brochure recently?
Why not enrol on something different.

Special points of interest:

- ✓ New Courses
- ✓ Students' Stories
- ✓ Tutor Reflects

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New Courses

Want to make a difference to the lives of people around you, or improve life in the community, then why not try the following courses:

'Learning from Andrew, A follower of Jesus' is a new starter course that introduces you to the story of Andrew, a man who was not famous but who made a real difference to the lives of some of the people around him. As you think about Andrew, this course will encourage you to think about how you can make a difference to the lives of some of the people around you too.

'Working together with God in our Communities' is a single lesson, bite size course which is designed to help you to think about how you can work together with God and with others to improve life in the community or communities to which you belong.



" I am always ready to learn although I do not always like being taught"

Winston Churchill

A Tutor looks back—Grayson



As I write, I am taken back to Africa in my mind. It's a baking hot day where we live, made more intense by the humidity, but nothing like a dry season day in Sub-Saharan Africa where temperatures hit 40C regularly. As many of us know, dry heat is far more bearable than the sticky, oppressive heat we experience here in the UK, but that doesn't make it any less dangerous, in fact it makes it more so.

As a family, we spent three happy years ministering in Zimbabwe, making new friends among our largely indigenous congregation. Apart from making many new soldiers (members) and junior soldiers it was a privilege to conduct over thirty marriages for the local church and community. These occasions were well planned but never, ever started on time. If I had £10 for every wedding where I arrived in good time only to wait, sometimes on a hot day, for all the important participants to arrive I would be able to afford a weekend break. The venue became more like a television studio than a place of quiet wonder. And then there were the funerals, 80 of them, sometimes at a church or crematorium, but others in the open air at a graveside, shaded by a gazebo or umbrellas where the cameramen straddled the grave to get last shots of the departed. Some funerals took us out into the bush because families insisted that their loved ones should return to the family homestead to be laid to rest, and there, amongst the heat and dust, we sang songs and choruses of faith in Jesus, accompanied by drums and hoshos (gourds with dried seeds inside) and beautiful harmonised African voices. Happy memories under the sun.

Our children have never forgotten their African experience and still keep in touch with friends there, and every time we get the opportunity to join in worship with anyone from Africa we are instantly converted into honorary Africans, enjoying the rhythms and harmonies and heat of a place very close to our hearts.

Bite Size

You may have noticed a number of bite size courses advertised in the Open Learning brochure issued in September 2016.

A bite size is a single lesson course that helps you to explore a subject that interests you at a level that suits you. This could be right for you if you do not have a lot of time, if you want to begin studying or get back into study.

If you wish, you can put your own course together by doing a number of different bite sizes that interest you.

As with the other Open Learning study guides, you can simply use these bite sizes for personal interest or for Bible study alone or with others. There is no charge if you do not want to have your work marked.

Throughout The Owl you will see the titles of all the new bite size courses written since the last brochure was issued.

We hope you enjoy these courses and would be interested to hear what you think about them.

Please let us know!

Foundation Bite Size Courses—Being Prepared

Deborah: a woman who made a difference

This single lesson bite size course is designed to introduce you to the story of Deborah and the role she played in God's plans for his people. This story is told in the book of Judges. The stories in that book are challenging to read.

You will also be encouraged to think about any way in which your study of this story has encouraged or challenged you in your thinking about faith and life today.



Rahab : a woman who made a difference

This single lesson bite size course is designed to introduce you to the story of Rahab and the surprising role she played in God's plans for his people.

You will also be encouraged to think about any way in which your study of this story has encouraged or challenged you about your own life today.



A baby drawn out of the water: exploring a short Old Testament story about women who made a difference

This single lesson bite size course is designed to help you to explore the story of how Moses' mother and sister and the Pharaoh of Egypt's daughter played an important part in God's plans to help his suffering people.

It will also encourage you to think about how what you have learned gives you challenge or encouragement in your own life today.



The midwives in Egypt: women who made a difference

This single lesson bite size course is designed to help you to understand the background to the story of Moses and the Israelites' escape from slavery in Egypt.

It also helps you to think about how God was at work fulfilling his plans through ordinary women who made an important difference in a dangerous and difficult situation.



The woman of Zarapheth: a woman who made a difference

This single lesson bite size course introduces you to the story of an unnamed woman who quite unexpectedly supported the prophet Elijah in his ministry and was helped by God in return.



'God is here – and I didn't know!': Exploring the Old Testament story about Jacob, a most unlikely person, meeting God in the most unexpected places

This single lesson bite size course is designed to help you to explore part of the story of Jacob as it is told in the book of Genesis in the Old Testament.



Student's Report—Julie

My name is Julie and I have been studying with the Salvation Army for 27 years. Many courses have either changed names or are not there anymore since I started, but I still enjoy doing them. One of my most remembered certificates that came through the door was my Diploma in Biblical and Religious Studies (1993). It was lovely to think that all that hard work came to something. Since then I have done many more courses.

The latest one I have just finished was Women in the Story of God's People (F10), it was interesting to learn more about some of the women in the Bible. We started with Eve and went through to Dorcas. Each woman we studied made me think about my life and how I should live. I may not be worshipping at the Salvation Army now—joined a Methodist Chapel—but I still feel the Lord wants me to continue studying with the Salvation Army and learn more with each lesson. One thing I have learned is do not give up, even when things are getting hard or the devil tells you to stop doing the courses. I have had this and it did not stop me.

Finally, I would like to thank all the tutors who mark the papers etc. Thanks to everyone who does anything to keep the courses up to date, prepare them and all else that has to be done.

Award Bite Size Courses

Stories Jesus Told: 'There was once a man who had two sons'

This single lesson bite size course is designed to explore the story of the father and his two sons as told by Jesus in Luke chapter 15: 11 – 32. You will also be encouraged to think about what this story means for you today.

The Reformation

This year marks the celebration of the Reformation that took place 500 years ago. Whether we realise it or not, this event has affected all of us

This new single lesson bite size course is designed to help you learn about what the Reformation was, why it happened, and what it means for us now.

On completion of the course you should be able to explain what we mean by the Reformation; explain at least three causes of the Reformation and explain how it has shaped our lives today.



Without God

Our week would be

SINDAY

MOURNDAY

TEARSDAY

WASTEDAY

THIRSTDAY

FIGHTDAY

SHATTERSDAY

7 days without God makes ONE WEAK

JUST FOR FUN

Jesus met many people while he was teaching and some of these encounters are recorded in the Bible. Can you identify the people that Jesus met.

1. He baptized Jesus in the River Jordan (Luke 3: 15-22)
2. They debated with the boy Jesus in the Temple at Jerusalem (Luke 2: 41-51)
3. He went away sad, unable to sell all he had and gave the money to the poor as Jesus said he should (Matthew 9: 16-22)
4. He told Jesus that he was not worthy that Jesus should enter his house (Matthew 8: 5-13)
5. He owned the house in which Jesus had his feet washed by a woman's tears (Luke 7: 36-50)
6. She had seven demons cast out of her and became one of Jesus' closest followers (Luke 8: 1-2)
7. He climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus (Luke 19: 1-10)
8. They were the friends of Jesus and the sisters of Lazarus (John 11: 1-3)
9. He washed his hands of Jesus (Matthew 27: 24)
10. He carried the cross for Jesus (Matthew 27: 32)
11. He said, 'This man was really the Son of God' (Mark 15:39)
12. She was the first to see the empty tomb, and the first to see the resurrected Jesus (John 20: 1, 11-18)

Answers can be found on Page 9

Tips for Study from a student

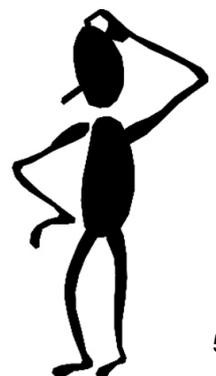
- Set small blocks of time aside each day to study
- The time set aside should be at least 45 minutes
- Plan what you will do at the beginning and stick to it
- Do not allow yourself to use email or social media during the study
- Take a 5 minute break for a snack, stretch your legs or go to the toilet for every hour of study
- Don't get distracted

- Studying for 30-50 minutes at a time (with 10 minute breaks in between is the most effective way to retain information

- Take notes from the text , but write them in your own words

Please send in the tips that help you in your studies.

We would love to hear from you – and you will be helping other students too!



Courses

Lessons from the following courses can be done singly as Bite Size courses if you prefer:

Award Level

‘Listening to God’s Word’

This study guide builds on the Open Learning course ‘How to study the Bible: an introduction for new students’ and covers six Bible passages, three from the Old Testament and three from the New Testament.

This course aims to introduce students to resources that will help them to explore what each study passage intended to say to its original readers; to hear how it continues to speak today and to reflect on an appropriate personal response.

Foundation Level

‘This is what the Lord says....Messages from the Old Testament Prophets’

This course contains six Old Testament studies.

You will be introduced to the messages of seven Old Testament prophets. You will also be encouraged to explore their meaning for life today and for your own relationship with God and others.

‘Is this your life’

This course contains six Old Testament studies. Each of them teaches something different about living and growing in relationship with God.

You will be introduced to five Old Testament characters and to one example of praise and thanksgiving in the Book of Psalms. The course also encourages you to reflect on your own relationship with God in light of your study of the Bible passages set for each lesson.

‘Women in the story of God’s People’

You will be introduced to six women, three of whom appear in the Old Testament and three in the New. You will be encouraged to think about how God cared for them and how they all played a part in his plans for the world. You will also be encouraged to explore the meaning of their stories for life today and for your own relationship with God and other people.

Starter Level

‘Women in the story of God’s People: Learning from the lives of five women in the Bible’

This course introduces you to some of the women who are part of the Bible’s story of God and his people.

Going Down

As a storm raged, the captain realized his ship was sinking fast. He called out, "Anyone here know how to pray?" One man stepped forward. "Aye, Captain, I know how to pray."

"Good," said the captain, "you pray, while the rest of us put on our life jackets - we're one short."



Starter Bite Size Courses—Being Prepared



Not worth noticing? : The widow in the Temple

This single lesson bite size course is designed to introduce you to the story about a widow, someone most people would not even notice. The lesson will help you to explore how her actions affected Jesus.

'She'll be remembered...'

This single lesson bite size course is designed to introduce you to the story about a woman whose name we do not know, but who, out of great love for him, did something for Jesus that he said would always be remembered.



The woman who would not give up

This single lesson bite size course is designed to introduce you to the story about the Canaanite woman who challenged Jesus to answer her request, showing her faith in him by refusing to give up.



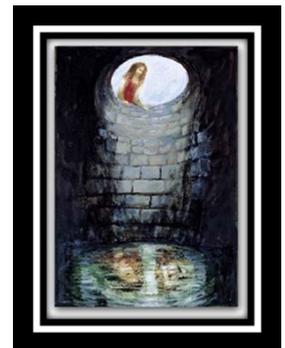
Alone in the crowd

This single lesson bite size course is designed to introduce you to the story about a woman who had great faith in Jesus and the way that this changed her life.



They met at a well

This single lesson bite size course is designed to introduce you to the story about the meeting between Jesus and a Samaritan woman that changed her life and the lives of people in her community.



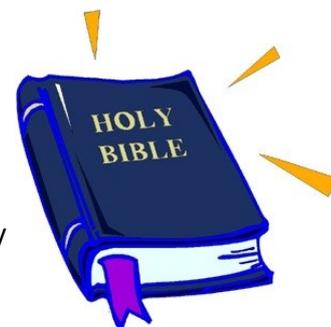
You can give without loving but you cannot love without giving.

Seven days without prayer makes one weak.

People are like tea bags....you have to put them in hot water before you know how strong they are.

Age is a matter of mind; If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.

A Walk Through the Bible



Many years ago I entered the wonderful temple of God's revelation. I entered the portico of Genesis and walked down through the Old Testament Art Gallery where the pictures of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, and Daniel hung on the wall.

I entered the Music Room of the Psalms where the Spirit swept the keyboard of nature, and brought forth the dirge-like wail of the weeping prophet Jeremiah; to the grand, impassioned strains of Isaiah, until it seemed that every reed and harp in God's organ of nature responded to the tuneful touch of David, the sweet singer of Israel.

I entered the chapel of Ecclesiastes where the voice of the preacher was heard, and I passed into the conservatory of Sharon where the lily of the valley's sweet-scented spices filled and perfumed my life.

I entered the business room of the Proverbs and passed into the observatory room of the prophets where I saw many telescopes of various sizes, some pointing to far off events, but all concentrated upon the Bright Morning Star, which was soon to rise over the moon-lit hills of Judea, for our salvation and redemption.

I entered the audience room of the King of Kings and caught a vision from the standpoint of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

I entered the Acts of the Apostles where the Holy Spirit was doing his office work in the forming of the early church. I passed into the Correspondence Room where sat Paul, Peter, James, Jude, and John penning their epistles. I stepped into the Throne of Revelation, where all towered into glittering peaks. I got a vision of the King seated upon his throne in all His glory, and I cried:

All hail the power of Jesus name!
Let angels' prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown Him Lord of all.

Have your Say

Students View's –Susan

I signed up for my first Open Learning course last year whilst at WBC Summer College. I had thought about it previously but had never been too sure about the commitment required. However, I'm glad I made the decision to go ahead. The material provided is very comprehensive and I soon got to grips with the ways of setting work out in the correct way. For anyone unsure about this way of studying, I would say "try it". I have been able to study at my own pace; the reading is not too onerous; and the tutor feedback is excellent. I have really enjoyed learning more about the lives and purpose of different women in the Bible - and have proved to myself that I can still write assignments, even in retirement! Thank you to the Open Learning team.

Can you hear me?



Articles required.

Send your study tips and any questions you have about studying to the Open Learning Office.

Remember this is your Newsletter.

Book Review

Those Incredible Booths by John Larson

ISBN: 978-0-85412-932-4

I have enjoyed reading this book very much. It is about William and Catherine Booth as parents and the lives of their eight children.

The book starts with when William and Catherine met, their marriage and also their family background and parents.

It moves on to their travelling ministry with William as a minister in the Methodist New Connexion. They travelled extensively throughout the country and their children were born in many different places, with the exception of their last two children, Eva and Lucy, who were born in London after the family settled there.

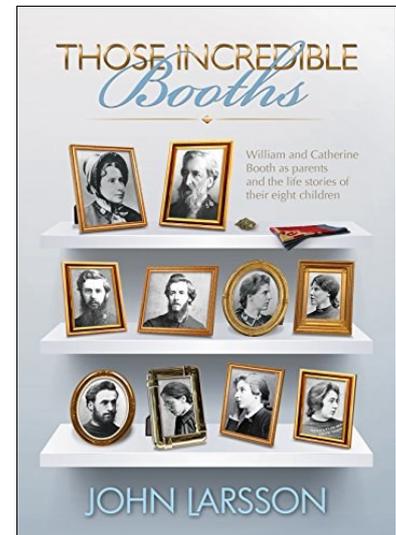
I liked the way the author told us how each of the children were given their names.

When William resigned from the Methodist New Connexion the family travelled throughout the country and crowds of people gathered wherever they preached. They did not belong to any denomination at this stage.

The family eventually moved to London where William joined The Christian Mission which became the Salvation Army. I was very interested to learn about their family life, schooling, religion, meal times and play times. Also the book contained many family photographs.

The book gives very detailed accounts of each of the children's lives and I learned such a lot about the children and also the early days of the Salvation Army and how it spread across the world.

I would highly recommend this book to students, particularly those interested in early Salvation Army history.



JUST FOR FUN (The Answers)

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. John the Baptist | 7. Zacchaeus |
| 2. The Temple Elders | 8. Mary and Martha |
| 3. The rich young man | 9. Pontius Pilate |
| 4. A Roman Officer | 10. Simon of Cyrene |
| 5. Simon the Pharisee | 11. The Roman army officer, in charge of the crucifixion |
| 6. Mary Magdalene | 12. Mary Magdalene |

P.U.S.H

A man was sleeping one night in his home when suddenly his room filled with light, and God appeared. The Lord told the man he had work for him to do, and showed him a large rock in front of his house.

The Lord explained that the man was to push against the rock with all his might.

So, this the man did, day after day. For many years he toiled from sun-up to sun-down, his shoulders set squarely against the cold, massive surface of the unmoving rock, pushing with all of his might. Each night the man returned to his home sore and worn out, feeling that his whole day had been spent in vain. As the man showed signs of discouragement, the Adversary (Satan) decided to enter the picture by placing thoughts into the weary mind:

"You have been pushing against that rock for a long time and it hasn't moved." He gave the man the impression that the task was impossible and that he was a failure. These thoughts discouraged and disheartened the man. Satan said, "Why kill yourself over this? Just put in your time, giving just the minimum effort; and that will be good enough."

That's what the weary man planned to do, but decided to make it a matter of prayer and to take his troubled thoughts to the Lord. "Lord," he said, "I have laboured long and hard in your service, putting all my strength to do that which you have asked. Yet, after all this time, I have not even budged that rock by half an inch. What is wrong? Why am I failing?"

The Lord responded compassionately, "My friend, when I asked you to serve Me and you accepted, I told you that your task was to push against the rock with all of your strength, which you have done.

Never once did I mention to you that I expected you to move it. Your task was to push. And now you come to Me with your strength spent, thinking that you have failed. But, is that really so? Look at yourself. Your arms are strong and muscled, your back sinewy and brown; your hands are callused from constant pressure, your legs have become massive and hard.

Through opposition you have grown much, and your abilities now surpass that which you used to have. True, you haven't moved the rock. But your calling was to be obedient, to push and exercise your faith and trust in My wisdom. That you have done.

Now, I, my friend, will move the rock."

At times, when we hear a word from God, we tend to use our own intellect to decipher what He wants, When actually what God wants is just simple obedience and faith in Him. By all means, exercise the faith that moves mountains, but know that it is still God who moves the mountains.

When everything seems to go wrong ... just P.U.S.H.!
When the job gets you down ... just P.U.S.H.!
When people don't do as you think they should... just P.U.S.H.!
When you can't find the right work just P.U.S.H.!
When your money is "gone" and the bills are due... just P.U.S.H.!
When people just don't understand you... just P.U.S.H.!

P= Pray
U= Until
S= Something
H= Happens



Prayer Corner

Oh God, enlighten my mind with truth
Inflame my heart with love
Inspire my will with courage
Enrich my life with service
Pardon what I have been
Sanctify what I am, order what I shall be
And thine shall be the glory
And mine the eternal salvation
Through Jesus Christ my Lord

Lord God, Creator of light
at the rising of your sun each morning,
let the greatest of all lights—your love -
rise, like the sun, within my heart.

Living God,
deliver us from a world without justice
and a future without mercy;
in your mercy, establish justice,
and in your justice, remember the mercy
revealed to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lord Jesus,
we ask you to bring your healing touch
to those whom we know
to be sick, afraid or worried
Bring them your peace and healing

The Serenity Prayer

God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time:
Enjoying one moment at a time:
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world
as it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
if I surrender to His will;
That I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with Him
Forever in the next.

The Obstacle in our Path

In ancient times, a King placed a boulder on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if the huge rock would be removed by anyone. Some of the King's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many loudly blamed the King for not keeping the roads clear, but none did anything about getting the stone out of the way.

Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. Upon approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded. After the peasant had picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the King indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway.



The peasant learned what many of us never understand!

Every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve our condition.

“One of the greatest diseases is to be nobody to anybody.”

Mother Teresa



Organization

The Salvation Army

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William Booth College has been at the heart of Salvation Army training since it was opened in 1929, and is now in the forefront of delivering education and learning for The Salvation Army's United Kingdom Territory – and further afield.

The college specialises in training people of all ages to become officers in The Salvation Army and also it offers quality training and education courses through its School for In-Service Training and Development and its Open Learning Unit.

The School for In-Service Training and Development presents a wide variety of courses and skill enhancing programmes for officers and employees. Each academic year more than 1,000 people take advantage of the learning and development opportunities presented to them through SISTAD. This includes everything from one-day courses on supervision and appraisal to diploma and degree courses.

**William Booth College
Vision Statement**
We will be a Spirit filled, inspiring
and progressive Christian learning
community.

**William Booth College
Mission Statement**
Resourcing, empowering and
developing people for effective
participation in God's mission.

Course Levels

Starter

These are mainly in workbook form, with worksheets for each lesson to complete. They are basic studies that are suitable for those students who don't have a comprehensive knowledge of the Bible or who are not used to doing written studies.

Students who are new Christians and who wish to learn about the Christian faith will find these courses helpful.

Subject available:

- The Story of Jesus by Mark
- You are my God (Psalms)
- First Steps in the Christian Faith
- How to Study the Bible
- Jesus in the Gospels
- Walking with God
- Women in the Bible
- Discovering The Salvation Army
- Learning from Andrew

Foundation

A step up from the Starter these courses help the student to develop study skills as the chosen subject is explored. Study guides provide basic information and suggest other reading so that the student can work at their own level.

Subjects available:

- Study skills
- This is what the Lord says
- Is this your Life
- The Birth of the Church
- Women in the Bible
- We Believe
- Belief in Action
- Heart to God and Hand to Man

Award

These courses offer opportunity for in-depth study in a variety of learning styles. Some previous experience of essay writing is required for this level

Subjects available:

- Old Testament
- A Journey of Faith (Psalms)
- Listening to God's Word (Bible Study)
- Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels
- New Testament
- Salvation Army History
- Salvation Story
- Salvationist Life & Faith
- History of the Early Church



Tree of knowledge