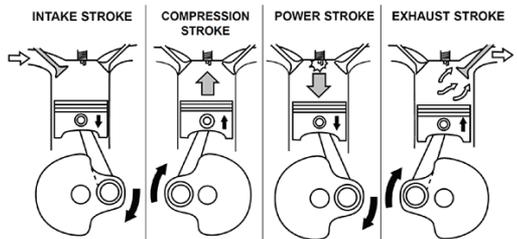


Part 1: Bible

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Based on the genealogies ([Gen. 5, 10](#)) and historical events recorded in the Bible, *we know God created the world about 6,000 years ago.* During those years there was certainly much development and advancement; however, over the last 150 years, *the internal combustion engine has transformed the world!* For example, imagine life over the past 150 years **WITHOUT** a gasoline-powered lawnmower or car!

Most lawnmowers and cars have four-stroke engines: **Intake**—draws in an air-gas mixture; **compression**—compresses that mixture;



Courtesy of Yamaha Motor Corporation, U.S.A.

power—ignites that mixture; and **exhaust**—pushes out what has been burned. The engine of an average car going 55 MPH is turning at 2,000 RPM (revolutions per minute), that means, *the engine is going through the four-stroke process 1,000 times every minute* (2 strokes, turns of the crankshaft per revolution).

1. **The Christian Engine**: As a four-stroke internal combustion engine must keep going through all four strokes to keep running, *so a Christian Engine must keep going through **Bible, Prayer, Worship, Fellowship, and Witnessing** to keep running and stay spiritually healthy.*

a. **Required order**:

i. **Four-stroke**: The order of intake, compression, power, and exhaust are critical; *no other order will work!*

ii. **Five-stroke**: The order of the Christian engine is logical and, *in many ways*, critical.

b. **Five-stroke operation**:

i. **Bible**—*God speaks to us.*

ii. **Prayer**—*we speak to God.*

iii. **Worship**—*we thank God and receive His gifts.*

iv. **Fellowship**—*we give and receive encouragement.*

v. **Witnessing**—*we confess what we believe in word and deed.*

c. **Five-stroke circle**: **Bible, prayer, worship, and fellowship** equip us for witnessing.

i. Witnessing sparks questions, *which drive us to the Bible!*

ii. Witnessing sparks concern, *which drives us to prayer!*

iii. Witnessing sparks an invite to worship!

iv. Witnessing sparks an invite to fellowship!

2. **Bible**:

a. What is it? The Bible IS God's word, so – *no matter how impossible it might seem* – let us be certain that it is

completely true! And don't just believe me, *there is much solid evidence!* Want more info? *Let me know.*

Some key passages:

- i. ^{NIV} **Proverbs 30:5** “Every word of God is flawless...”
- ii. ^{NIV} **2 Timothy 3:16** “All Scripture is God-breathed...”
- iii. ^{NIV} **2 Peter 1:21** “...prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”

b. Why should the Bible be so important to us?

- i. **God** ♠is most important, ♠made us, ♠loves us, ♠wants us to hear Him, and ♠wants to bless us now and forever – *so He has given us His written word!*
- ii. **Prosperity and success:** ^{NAS} **Joshua 1:8** “This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for **then** you will make your way **prosperous**, and then you will have **success**.”
- iii. **Let us gladly:**
 - 1. Make time for God!
 - 2. Desire to hear from God!
 - 3. Understand what God is saying!
 - 4. Be sorry for our sins!
 - 5. Rejoice in forgiveness through Jesus!
 - 6. Become equipped to tell others!
 - 7. Show our *trust in* and *love for* God by doing whatever He says!

c. How? (For more ideas, see the [Daily Devotion brochure](#).)

- i. **Hear**—*by faithfully attending Divine Service and Bible Class!*

- ii. **Read**—*by being open to God’s truth and daily reading in the Bible!*
- iii. **Mark**—*by underlining or writing in the margin to highlight significant things!*
- iv. **Learn**—*by applying God’s truth to daily life!*
- v. **Inwardly digest**—*making God’s word a part of who we are by continuing to rightly remember it (even memorize) and consistently do it in our daily lives!*

3. **Survey Results:** *Thanks to all who participated!*

- a. How much of the Bible true? **Everyone:** All☺
- b. Days per week? **Many:** 7☺; **some:** 5; **some:** 2; **some:** NA
- c. Why? **Many:** growth, life, and answers☺; **some:** 1 or 2 of those 3. *It’s important to approach the Bible looking for all three: Growth, daily living, and witness answers!*
- d. Bible references? **Some:** book, chapter, and verse; **some:** words w/o references; **some:** blank. *Suggested verses to memorize: Sin—Romans 3:23; salvation—John 3:16; anxiety—1 Peter 5:7; fear—Isaiah 41:10*

4. **Passages to Read:** Since we are in Year C of the three-year lectionary, we are focusing on the Gospel of Luke. As we continue through the season of Lent, let us use the “How” info noted above to read through *Holy Week according to Luke: 19:28 – 23:56*. Read ♦thoughtfully, ♦carefully, and ♦prayerfully; God will grow you, teach you, and equip you!

Let Us Pray: Dear Father, enable us today to marvel at the four-stroke engine, understand the Christian Engine, and keep moving through the five strokes continually!

Website: www.BLC7500.com; **YouTube and Podcast:** Benefit from the Bible
Facebook: Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma; **Pastor:** RevRLGreen@aol.com
 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230