

# SECRET CHURCH™

KNOW HIS WORD. KNOW HIS PERSECUTED.

For many believers around the world, following  
Christ is not simply unpopular or discouraged.  
It's dangerous.

KNOW HIS WORD.  
KNOW HIS PERSECUTED.

Each year's Secret Church gathering consists of  
over four hours of intense Bible study, as well as  
a concentrated time of prayer for our persecuted  
brothers and sisters in Christ around the world.

We encourage you not simply to receive the  
truths presented in this study, but to share them  
with others. The goal of Secret Church is to serve  
the church in making disciples of all nations,  
all for the glory of God.

**[secretchurch.org](http://secretchurch.org)**



## **Why is this Called Secret Church?**

The idea behind Secret Church comes from time David Platt spent teaching and ministering among underground Asian house-churches. Due to hostility from the government, from the surrounding community, and even from their own family, many of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world are forced to gather in secret, sometimes at the risk of their lives.

The plight of our persecuted brothers and sisters also explains why prayer for the persecuted church is a major part of every Secret Church gathering. We remember those who cannot meet openly, asking God to sustain their faith, to change the hearts and the actions of their persecutors, and to use their witness for the spread of the gospel.

## **Why So Much Teaching for One Night?**

We realize that each Secret Church study contains too much biblical teaching—over four hours worth!—to digest in one sitting. That’s one reason we make it available to study in bite-size segments at radical.net. However, this deluge of teaching is meant to remind us of the hunger for God’s Word that exists among many underground churches around the world.

With few opportunities to gather and little access to biblical teaching, our persecuted brothers and sisters may meet for eight to twelve hours at a time simply to sing, pray, and study God’s Word. This God-centered focus is a helpful corrective to the desire for entertainment that characterizes many church gatherings in the U.S.

## **What’s the Goal of this Study?**

We hope your faith will be strengthened as you encounter teaching from God’s Word in this study. However, the truths you hear are not meant to stop with you. You are encouraged to teach them to others as you meet one-on-one or as you gather in small groups and churches. Secret Church is intended to be a resource for making disciples both locally and globally.

We urge you to consider the role God may have for you and your church as you take the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ to those in your own communities and to unreached peoples among the nations. To learn more about Secret Church, go to [secrechurch.org](http://secrechurch.org).



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	7
<b>Is the Bible Divine?</b> .....	12
The Canon: Revealed by God .....	13
The Canon: Recognized by Man .....	49
<b>Is the Bible True?</b> .....	60
Three Foundations .....	60
God is true .....	60
The Bible is the Word of God .....	60
The Word of God is true .....	60
One Implication .....	60
The Bible is truthful and without error in all of its teachings .....	60
Affirmations and Denials (“Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy”) .....	61
<b>Is the Bible Clear?</b> .....	78
The Bible is a Unified Story .....	78
Tracing the Story of Scripture (Chart) .....	80
That is Clearly Understandable to All .....	82
Who Devote Themselves to Study It .....	83
In Dependence on the Holy Spirit .....	87
<b>Is the Bible Sufficient?</b> .....	94
The Bible is Sufficient for our Salvation .....	95
The Bible is Sufficient for our Sanctification .....	96
The Bible is Sufficient for our Satisfaction .....	103
<b>Is the Bible Good?</b> .....	109
What We Know .....	109
God is good .....	109
The Bible is God’s Word .....	110
The Bible is good .....	111
What This Means .....	113
Implications for studying and memorizing .....	113
Implications for preaching and listening .....	119
Implications for praying and working .....	126
Implications for sending and going .....	130
<b>Critical Conclusions</b> .....	134
Final Exhortations .....	135
<b>Recommended Reading</b> .....	138
<b>Pray For Iran</b> .....	139



# **SCRIPTURE AND AUTHORITY IN AN AGE OF SKEPTICISM**

## **Secret Church 2017**

*The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*

*Psalm 19:7-11*

### **The Word Before Us ...**

- What level of authority should the Bible have in my life?
- What level of authority should the Bible have in the church?
- What level of authority does the Bible have in the world?

### **The World Around Us ...**

- Significant Trends ...
  - Increasing \_\_\_\_\_ skepticism \_\_\_\_\_.
    - More people have more questions about the origins, relevance, and authority of the Scriptures.
  - A new moral code.
    - Rejection of external moral authority.
    - Reliance on internal moral autonomy.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Digital \_\_\_\_\_ access.
    - The Bible is more accessible than ever before.
    - Everything else is more accessible than ever before.
- Survey Results ...
  - Americans who believe the Bible is a holy book: 81%
    - Elders (born prior to 1946): 88%
    - \_\_\_\_\_ Millennials \_\_\_\_\_ (born 1984-2002, at least 18 years old): 71%

- Americans who have a Bible in their home: Almost 90%
  - Average number of Bibles in a home: 3
- Top 10 Bible-minded cities in America:
  - Chattanooga, Tennessee
  - Birmingham, Alabama
  - Roanoke/Lynchburg, Virginia
  - Shreveport, Louisiana
  - Tri-Cities, Tennessee
  - Charlotte, North Carolina
  - Little Rock/Pine Bluff, Arkansas
  - Knoxville, Tennessee
  - Greenville, South Carolina
  - Asheville, North Carolina
  - Lexington, Kentucky
- Bottom 10 Bible-minded cities in America:
  - Salt Lake City, Utah
  - Phoenix/Prescott, Arizona
  - Hartford/New Haven, Connecticut
  - San Francisco, California
  - Las Vegas, Nevada
  - Buffalo, New York
  - Cedar Rapids, Iowa
  - Providence, Rhode Island
  - Boston, Massachusetts
  - Albany/Schenectady/Troy, New York
- Americans who read the Bible at least once a week:
  - In 1991: 45%
  - In 2009: 46%
  - In 2016: 33%
    - Elders: 49%
    - Millennials: 24 %
- Americans who believe there is no God behind the Bible:
  - In 2011: 10%
  - In 2016: 22%
- Americans who strongly agree that the Bible is totally accurate in all of the principles it teaches:
  - In 1991: 46%
  - In 2016: 33%



- Americans who believe the Bible is sufficient for meaningful living:
  - Elders: 65%
  - Boomers: 56%
  - Gen Xers: 40%
  - Millennials: 27%
- Millennials' beliefs about the Bible:
  - Too little influence in society: 30%
  - Too much influence in society: 34%
- How non-Christian Millennials describe the Bible:
  - Story: 50%
  - Mythology: 38%
  - Symbolic: 36%
  - Fairy tale: 30%
  - Dangerous book of religious dogma: 27%
- Senior pastors' beliefs about Bible study:
  - Intentional, systematized study of the Bible is an essential element of spiritual formation: 64%
  - In-depth education about the Bible is essential to spiritual growth: 60%

(The trends and survey results above are from “The Bible in America: The Changing Landscape of Bible Perceptions and Engagement,” a 6-year Barna study produced in partnership with American Bible Society.)

### **Common Objections We Must Consider ...**

- The Bible is a \_\_\_\_\_ human \_\_\_\_\_ invention.

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness ...*

*2 Timothy 3:16*

- The Bible has dangerous implications.

*... since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the*

*gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.*

*2 Thessalonians 1:6-10*

- The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_ offensive \_\_\_\_\_.

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

*Genesis 1:1*

- The Bible is outdated.

*Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.*

*1 Corinthians 6:9-10*

- The Bible is full of \_\_\_\_\_ errors \_\_\_\_\_.

*And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to the king: in Israel there were 800,000 valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were 500,000.*

*2 Samuel 24:9*

*And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to David. In all Israel there were 1,100,000 men who drew the sword, and in Judah 470,000 who drew the sword.*

*1 Chronicles 21:5*

- The Bible is full of fiction.

*And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish ...*

*Jonah 1:17-2:1*

- The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_ insufficient \_\_\_\_\_ for the church.

“Many pastors can preach whole messages with little more than a tip of the hat to a clause or two taken from a biblical context that few, if any, recognize. Even more pastors have decided that using the Bible is a handicap for meeting the needs of the different generations; therefore, they have gone to drawing their sermons from the plethora of recovery and pop-psychology books that fill our Christian bookstores. The market-forces demand that we give them what they want to hear if we wish them to return and pay for the mega-sanctuaries that we have built.”

Walter Kaiser

- The Bible is irrelevant in the world.

“In a society that venerates science and rationalism, it is an increasingly hard pill to swallow that an eclectic assortment of ancient stories, poems, sermons, prophecies and letters, written and compiled over the course of 3,000 years, is somehow the sacred ‘word of God.’”

Barna Study

### **Critical Questions We Must Answer ...**

- Is the Bible divine? (Or did humans create it?)
- Is the Bible true? (Can we trust it?)
- Is the Bible clear? (Can we understand it?)
- Is the Bible sufficient? (Is it the only book we need?)
- Is the Bible good? (Is it worth giving our lives for?)

## **Is the Bible Divine? (Or Did Humans Create It?)**

“Canon: an authoritative list of books accepted as Holy Scripture.”  
Merriam-Webster Dictionary

### **Did the Church Create the Canon?**

- Recognition of the Old Testament ...
  - Three divisions

“We have but twenty-two [books] containing the history of all time, books that are justly believed in; and of these, five are the books of Moses, which comprise the law and earliest traditions from the creation of mankind down to his death. From the death of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia, the successor of Xerxes, the prophets who succeeded Moses wrote the history of the events that occurred in their own time, in thirteen books. The remaining four documents comprise hymns to God and practical precepts to men.”

Josephus, First Century Jewish Historian

- Historic completion

“And how firmly we have given credit to those books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them or take anything from them, or to make any change in them, but it becomes natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem those books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be, willing to die for them. For it is no new thing for our captives, many of them in numbers, and frequently in time, to be seen to endure racks and deaths of all kinds upon the theatres, that they may not be obliged to say one word against our laws, and the records that contain them.”

Josephus, First Century Jewish Historian

- Recognition of the New Testament ...

“By gradual stages, the Church both in East and West arrived at a common mind as to its sacred books. The first official document which prescribes the twenty-seven books of our New Testament as alone canonical is Athanasius’s Easter letter for the year 367, but the process was not everywhere complete until at least a century and a half later.”

J. N. D. Kelly

“Again it is not tedious to speak of the books of the New Testament. These are, the four gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Afterwards, the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles (called Catholic), seven, viz. of James, one; of Peter, two; of John, three; after these, one of Jude. In addition, there are fourteen Epistles of Paul, written in this order. The first, to the Romans; then two to the Corinthians; after these, to the Galatians; next, to the Ephesians; then to the Philippians; then to the Colossians; after these, two to the Thessalonians, and that to the Hebrews; and again, two to Timothy; one to Titus; and lastly, that to Philemon.

And besides, the Revelation of John.”

Athanasius (367 A.D.)

## **Or Did the Canon Create the Church?**

“The Church no more gave us the New Testament canon than Sir Isaac Newton gave us the force of gravity. God gave us gravity, by His work of creation, and similarly He gave us the New Testament canon, by inspiring the individual books that make it up.”

J. I. Packer

- Canonicity was revealed by God.
- Canonicity was \_\_\_\_\_ recognized \_\_\_\_\_ by man.

## **The Canon: Revealed by God**

*John answered, “A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.”*

*John 3:27*

*But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”—these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.*

*1 Corinthians 2:9-11*

“All merely human affirmations about God curl into a question mark. We cannot spy out the secrets of God by obtrusive curiosity. Not even theologians of a technological era, not even Americans with their skill in probing the surface of the moon, have any special radar for penetrating the mysteries of God’s being and ways. Apart from God’s initiative, God’s act, God’s revelation, no confident basis exists for God-talk.”

Carl F. H. Henry

- Revelation is God’s communication to humans of truth they need to know in order to properly relate to him.

“The idea of God making Himself known is not so much a biblical idea, as it is the biblical idea.”

H. D. McDonald

- Two categories of communication ...
  - General communication
    - In three primary spheres ...
      - Nature

*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.*

*Psalm 19:1*

*In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.*

*Acts 14:16-17*

- History

*He makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations,  
and leads them away.*

*Job 12:23*

*Woe to Assyria, the rod of my anger; the staff in their hands is my fury!  
Against a godless nation I send him, and against the people of my wrath I  
command him, to take spoil and seize plunder, and to tread them down like the  
mire of the streets. But he does not so intend, and his heart does not so think; but  
it is in his heart to destroy, and to cut off nations not a few; for he says: "Are not  
my commanders all kings? Is not Calno like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like  
Arpad? Is not Samaria like Damascus? As my hand has reached to the kingdoms  
of the idols, whose carved images were greater than those of Jerusalem and  
Samaria, shall I not do to Jerusalem and her idols as I have done to Samaria  
and her images?" When the Lord has finished all his work on Mount Zion  
and on Jerusalem, he will punish the speech of the arrogant heart of the king  
of Assyria and the boastful look in his eyes. For he says: "By the strength of my  
hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I have understanding; I remove the  
boundaries of peoples, and plunder their treasures; like a bull I bring down those  
who sit on thrones. My hand has found like a nest the wealth of the peoples; and  
as one gathers eggs that have been forsaken, so I have gathered all the earth; and  
there was none that moved a wing or opened the mouth or chirped."*

*Isaiah 10:5-14*

*He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives  
wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding;  
he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness,  
and the light dwells with him.*

*Daniel 2:21-22*

- Humanity
  - A spiritual impulse ...

*So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens,  
I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along  
and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this  
inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as  
unknown, this I proclaim to you."*

*Acts 17:22-23*

- A sense of \_\_\_\_\_ morality \_\_\_\_\_ ...

*For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.*

*Romans 2:14-16*

- In two primary senses ...

*For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

*Romans 1:19-21*

- The “what”: Universal \_\_\_\_\_ knowledge \_\_\_\_\_ about God.
  - His existence over us.
  - Our sinfulness before Him.
- To “whom”: Universal \_\_\_\_\_ accessibility \_\_\_\_\_ to all.
  - All people.
  - At all times.
  - In all places.
- With one primary effect ...
  - General revelation leads to overall \_\_\_\_\_ condemnation \_\_\_\_\_.

*Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*

*Romans 3:19-20*



o Special communication

*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.*

*Hebrews 1:1-2*

- In three primary spheres ...
  - History

*Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

*Genesis 12:1-3*

*Then the Lord said to Moses, "Tell the people of Israel to turn back and encamp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon; you shall encamp facing it, by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, 'They are wandering in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.' And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord." And they did so.*

*Exodus 14:1-4*

*For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.*

*1 Corinthians 15:3-5*

- Incarnation

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.*

*John 1:1*

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.*

*John 1:14-18*

*Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father?'"*

*John 14:9*

*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life ...*

*1 John 1:1*

*He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.*

*Revelation 19:13*

- Speech ...
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Verbal \_\_\_\_\_ speech

*And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.*

*Genesis 1:3*

*By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.*

*Psalms 33:6*

- Direct

*And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."*

*Genesis 2:16-17*

*To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you." And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

*Genesis 3:16-19*

*And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me."*

*Exodus 20:1-3*

*And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

*Matthew 3:16-17*

- Indirect

*I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.*

*Deuteronomy 18:18-20*

*Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."*

*Jeremiah 1:9-10*

*The word of the Lord came to me ... In the morning the word of the Lord came to me ... And the word of the Lord came to me ... And the word of the Lord came to me ... And the word of the Lord came to me ...*

*Ezekiel 12:1, 8, 17, 21, 26*

*The word of the Lord that came to Hosea, the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.*

*Hosea 1:1*

*The word of the Lord that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel ...*

*Joel 1:1*

*The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.*

*Amos 1:1*

○ \_\_\_\_\_ Written \_\_\_\_\_ form ...

*And he gave to Moses, when he had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.*

*Exodus 31:18*

*The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.*

*Exodus 32:16*

*And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the Lord.*

*Joshua 24:26*

*And now, go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever.*

*Isaiah 30:8*

*The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you."*

*Jeremiah 30:1-2*

*And he said to them, "Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt?"*

*Mark 9:12*

*And taking the twelve, he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished."*

*Luke 18:31*

*If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.*

*1 Corinthians 14:37*

- Enables ...

*And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

*Deuteronomy 6:6-9*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Personal \_\_\_\_\_ study.

*Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a book." And Shaphan read from it before the king. And when the king heard the words of the Law, he tore his clothes.*

*2 Chronicles 34:18-19*

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.*

*2 Timothy 2:15*

- Public study.

*Then the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the king went up to the house of the Lord, with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the Levites, all the people both great and small. And he read in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this book. Then he made all who were present in Jerusalem and in Benjamin join in it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.*

*2 Chronicles 34:29-32*

- Continual examination.

*Then Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, "At the end of every seven years, at the set time in the year of release, at the Feast of Booths, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place that he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law, and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as you live in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess."*

*Deuteronomy 31:9-13*

- Clear \_\_\_\_\_ explanation \_\_\_\_\_.

*And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel. So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law. And Ezra the scribe stood on a*

*wooden platform that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand, and Pedaiah, Mishaal, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.*

*Nehemiah 8:1-8*

- Ongoing \_\_\_\_\_ edification \_\_\_\_\_.

*For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

*Romans 15:4*

- Ensures ...

*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.*

*Matthew 24:35*

- Precision.

*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*

*Matthew 5:17-18*

- Propagation.

*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven*

*churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”*

*Revelation 1:10-11*

- Preservation.

*I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*

*Revelation 22:18-19*

- In two primary senses ...

- The “what”: Specific knowledge about God.

- How He has provided \_\_\_\_\_ redemption \_\_\_\_\_ for us.

*And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, “I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.” When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Then the Lord said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.”*

*Exodus 3:2-8*

*God spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the Lord I did not make myself known to them. I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and*



*I have remembered my covenant. Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am the Lord.'*"

*Exodus 6:2-8*

- How we can be reconciled to Him.

*All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

*2 Corinthians 5:18-20*

- How we can enjoy \_\_\_\_\_ relationship \_\_\_\_\_ with Him.

*I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*

*John 15:5-11*

- To "whom": Special \_\_\_\_\_ blessing \_\_\_\_\_ from God.

*The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord*

*lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them.”*

*Numbers 6:22-27*

- Particular persons.

*The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord ...*

*Jeremiah 18:1*

- At particular times.

*You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.” But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you ...*

*Matthew 5:43-44*

*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.*

*Galatians 4:4-5*

- In particular places.

*For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

*Romans 10:13-17*

- With one primary effect ...
  - Special revelation leads to the opportunity for  
\_\_\_\_\_ salvation \_\_\_\_\_.

*But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of*

*God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ...*

*Romans 3:21-24*

- The bottom line: We cannot know God unless God \_\_\_\_\_ reveals Himself to us.
  - God is infinite; we are finite.

*Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.*

*Psalm 145:3*

*Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.*

*Psalm 147:5*

*Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!*

*Romans 11:33*

- God is \_\_\_\_\_ holy \_\_\_\_\_; we are sinners.

*Moses said, "Please show me your glory." And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The Lord.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live." And the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. Then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back, but my face shall not be seen."*

*Exodus 33:18-23*

*Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.*

*Hebrews 12:14*

- We need ...
  - A divine Word.

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness ...*

*2 Timothy 3:16*

- A divine Spirit.

*... these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

*1 Corinthians 2:10-14*

- God's revelation is clear.

“Divine revelation palpitates with human surprise. Like a fiery bolt of lightning that unexpectedly zooms toward us and scores a direct hit, like an earthquake that suddenly shakes and engulfs us, it somersaults our private thoughts to abrupt awareness of ultimate destiny. By the unannounced intrusion of its omnipotent actuality, divine revelation lifts the present into the eternal and unmasks our pretensions of human omniscience. As if an invisible Concorde had burst the sound barrier overhead, it drives us to ponder whether the Other World has finally pinned us to the ground for a life-and-death response. Confronting us with a sense of cosmic arrest, it makes us ask whether the end of our world is at hand and propels us unmasked before the Judge and Lord of the universe. Like some piercing air-raided siren it sends us scurrying from life's preoccupations and warns us that no escape remains if we neglect the only sure sanctuary.”

Carl F. H. Henry

- Our reception is \_\_\_\_\_ clouded \_\_\_\_\_.

*This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. Indeed, in their case the*

*prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: "You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive." For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.*

*Matthew 13:13-15*

- Our eyes are blind.

*In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

*2 Corinthians 4:4*

*I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints ...*

*Ephesians 1:16-18*

- Our hearts are \_\_\_\_\_ hard \_\_\_\_\_.

*For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

*Romans 1:21*

*What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day."*

*Romans 11:7-8*

*But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.*

*2 Corinthians 3:14-16*

- So do we have the Word of God inspired by the Spirit of God?

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness ...*

*2 Timothy 3:16*

- Inspiration is the mysterious \_\_\_\_\_ supernatural \_\_\_\_\_ process by which God worked through human instruments to reveal divine truth in written form.

*And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

*2 Peter 1:19-21*

- Revelation is vertical: God to man.
- Inspiration is horizontal: God through man to man.
- The reality of inspiration ...
  - Proclaimed by the \_\_\_\_\_ prophets \_\_\_\_\_.

*Balaam said to Balak, "Behold, I have come to you! Have I now any power of my own to speak anything? The word that God puts in my mouth, that must I speak."*

*Numbers 22:38*

*And the Lord said to me: "The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I did not send them, nor did I command them or speak to them. They are prophesying to you a lying vision, worthless divination, and the deceit of their own minds. Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who prophesy in my name although I did not send them, and who say, 'Sword and famine shall not come upon this land': By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed."*

*Jeremiah 14:14-15*

*And you shall speak my words to them, whether they hear or refuse to hear, for they are a rebellious house.*

*Ezekiel 2:7*

- “Thus says the Lord” (over 3,000 occurrences in the Bible).

*And you shall say to him, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Have you killed and also taken possession?’” And you shall say to him, “Thus says the Lord: ‘In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick your own blood.’”*

*1 Kings 21:19*

*Jehu said to Bidkar his aide, “Take him up and throw him on the plot of ground belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. For remember, when you and I rode side by side behind Ahab his father, how the Lord made this pronouncement against him: ‘As surely as I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons—declares the Lord—I will repay you on this plot of ground.’*

*Now therefore take him up and throw him on the plot of ground, in accordance with the word of the Lord.”*

*2 Kings 9:25-26*

- Demonstrated by fulfilled prophecy.

*Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”*

*Isaiah 7:10-14*

*“She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).*

*Matthew 1:21-23*

- Other books that claim divine inspiration (the Qur’an, parts of the Vedas, the Book of Mormon, etc.) do not contain predictive prophecy.
- The Bible contains numerous instances of prophecy  
fulfilled in history.
  - The destruction of empires ...
    - Edom

*The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord God concerning Edom: We have heard a report from the Lord, and a messenger has been sent among the nations: "Rise up! Let us rise against her for battle!" Behold, I will make you small among the nations; you shall be utterly despised.*

*Obadiah 1:1-2*

◦ Babylon

*The oracle concerning Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw. On a bare hill raise a signal; cry aloud to them; wave the hand for them to enter the gates of the nobles. I myself have commanded my consecrated ones, and have summoned my mighty men to execute my anger, my proudly exulting ones.*

*Isaiah 13:1-3*

◦ Tyre

*In the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me: "Son of man, because Tyre said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gate of the peoples is broken; it has swung open to me. I shall be replenished, now that she is laid waste,' therefore thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves."*

*Ezekiel 26:1-3*

◦ Nineveh

*An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh.*

*Nahum 1:1*

*The Lord has given commandment about you: "No more shall your name be perpetuated; from the house of your gods I will cut off the carved image and the metal image. I will make your grave, for you are vile."*

*Nahum 1:14*

• The exile and return of Israel ...

*Then the word of the Lord came to me: "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Like these good figs, so I will regard as good the exiles from Judah, whom I have sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans. I will set my eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up,*



*and not tear them down; I will plant them, and not pluck them up. I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart.”*

*Jeremiah 24:4-7*

*After all this, when Josiah had prepared the temple, Neco king of Egypt went up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out to meet him. But he sent envoys to him, saying, “What have we to do with each other, king of Judah? I am not coming against you this day, but against the house with which I am at war. And God has commanded me to hurry. Cease opposing God, who is with me, lest he destroy you.”*

*2 Chronicles 35:20-21*

*In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea. He will raise a signal for the nations and will assemble the banished of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.*

*Isaiah 11:11-12*

- The Bible contains 300 specific prophecies that are fulfilled in the coming of \_\_\_\_\_ Christ \_\_\_\_\_.

*And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim goodness to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”*

*Luke 4:17-21*

“We are told the exact time of [the King of Israel’s] manifestation to his people, the exact place of his birth, the family of which he should be born, the condition of the family at the time of his birth (a condition entirely different from that existing at the time the prophecy was written, and contrary to all the probabilities in the case), the manner of his reception by his people (a reception entirely different from that which would naturally

be expected), the fact, method, and details regarding his death, with the specific circumstances regarding his burial, his resurrection subsequent to his burial, and his victory subsequent to his resurrection. These predictions were fulfilled with the most minute precision in Jesus of Nazareth.”

R. A. Torrey

- Concerning His birth ...

*But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.*

*Micah 5:2*

*When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: ‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’”*

*Matthew 2:3-6*

- Concerning His death ...

“More than twenty Old Testament predictions relating to events that would surround the death of Christ, words written centuries before his first advent, were fulfilled with precision within a twenty-four-hour period at the time of his crucifixion [alone].”

E. Schuyler English

*... they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.*

*Psalms 22:18*

*And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots.*

*Matthew 27:35*

- Taught by the \_\_\_\_\_ apostles \_\_\_\_\_ ...
  - Their understanding of Old Testament writings.

*Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

*Genesis 12:1-3*

*And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."*

*Galatians 3:8*

*But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.*

*Exodus 9:16*

*For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth."*

*Romans 9:17*

*Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?*

*Psalm 2:1*

*And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed..."*

*Acts 4:24-26*

*For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire." But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved*

*righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”*

*Hebrews 1:5-9*

- Their understanding of their own writings.

*If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.*

*1 Corinthians 14:37*

*And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*

*2 Peter 3:15-16*

- Declared by \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ ...

*I said, “You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you ...”*

*Psalms 82:6*

*Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods?’ If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken—do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God?’”*

*John 10:34-36*

*And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.*

*Deuteronomy 8:3*

*But he answered, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”*

*Matthew 4:4*

*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*

*Matthew 5:17-18*

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

*Genesis 2:24*

*And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."*

*Matthew 19:3-6*

- In order to deny the inspiration of Scripture, one must reject the \_\_\_\_\_ integrity \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.

*And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*

*Luke 24:25-27*

*Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures ...*

*Luke 24:44-45*

- Authenticated by the \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ ...

*And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural*

*person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

*1 Corinthians 2:13-14*

◦ Affirmed throughout history ...

“We must not suppose that the language proceeds from men who were inspired, but from the Divine Word which moves them.”

Justin Martyr (100–165 A.D.)

“The Law and the Prophets were from God, who in giving them compelled his messenger to speak by the Holy Spirit, that receiving the inspiration of the Father’s power they may announce the Father’s counsel and will. In these men therefore the Word found a fitting abode and spoke of Himself; for even then He came as His own herald, shewing the Word who was about to appear in the world.”

Hippolytus (170–236 A.D.)

“These blessed men ... having been perfected by the Spirit of Prophecy, and worthily honoured by the Word Himself, were brought to an inner harmony like instruments, and having the Word within them, as it were to strike the notes, by Him they were moved, and announced that which God wished. For they did not speak of their own power (be well assured), nor proclaim that which they wished themselves, but first they were rightly endowed with wisdom by the Word, and afterwards well foretaught of the future by visions, and then, when thus assured, they spake that which was [revealed] to them alone by God.”

Hippolytus (170–236 A.D.)

“The Scriptures were written by the Spirit of God, and have a meaning ... not known to all, but to those only on whom the grace of the Holy Spirit is bestowed in the words of wisdom and knowledge.”

Origen (185–254 A.D.)

“When they write that He has taught and said, it should not be asserted that he did not write it, since the members only put down what they had come to know at the dictation [dictis] of the Head. Therefore, whatever He wanted us to read concerning His words and deeds, He commanded His disciples, His hands, to write. Hence, one cannot but receive what he

reads in the Gospels, though written by the disciples, as though it were written by the very hand of the Lord Himself.”

Augustine (354–430 A.D.)

“We must make a great difference between God’s Word and the word of man. A man’s word is a little sound, that flies into the air, and soon vanishes; but the Word of God is greater than heaven and earth, yea, greater than death and hell, for it forms part of the power of God, and endures everlastingly.”

Martin Luther (1483–1546 A.D.)

“This is the principle that distinguishes our religion from all others, that we know that God hath spoken to us and are fully convinced that the prophets did not speak of themselves, but as organs of the Holy Spirit uttered only that which they had been commissioned from heaven to declare. All those who wish to profit from the Scriptures must first accept this as a settled principle, that the Law and the prophets are not teachings handed on at the pleasure of men, or produced by men’s minds as their source, but are dictated by the Holy Spirit.”

John Calvin (1509–1564 A.D.)

- Is using Scripture to assert the inspiration of Scripture a circular argument?
  - The argument ...
    - We believe Scripture is divine because Scripture claims to be divine.
    - We believe Scripture’s claims to be divine because Scripture is divine.
  - The reality ...
    - Any argument for absolute authority will ultimately appeal to its own authority.
    - Examples ...
      - My reason is my ultimate authority.
        - Why?
        - Because that is reasonable to me.
      - Logical consistency is my ultimate authority.
        - Why?
        - Because that is logical to me.
      - I know there is no ultimate authority.

- How?
  - Because I don't know of any ultimate authority.
- Our responsibility ...
  - Listen to the Bible's testimony to itself.

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

2 Timothy 3:14-17

- Look for \_\_\_\_\_ validation \_\_\_\_\_ of that testimony.
  - Externally

“The very dimension of the sheer fulfillment of prophecy of the Old Testament Scriptures should be enough to convince anyone that we are dealing with a supernatural piece of literature. ... God has himself planted within the scriptures an internal consistency that bears witness that this is his Word.”

R. C. Sproul

- Internally

“Now this power which is peculiar to Scripture is clear from the fact that of human writings, however artfully polished, there is none capable of affecting us at all comparably. Read Demosthenes or Cicero; read Plato, Aristotle, and others of that tribe. They will, I admit, allure you, delight you, move you, enrapture you in wonderful measure. But betake yourself from them to this sacred reading. Then, in spite of yourself, so deeply will it affect you, so penetrate your heart, so fix itself in your very marrow, that compared with its deep impression, such vigor as the orators and philosophers have will nearly vanish. Consequently, it is easy to see that the Sacred Scriptures, which so far surpass all gifts and graces of human endeavor, breathe something divine.”

John Calvin



- That God inspired Scripture is \_\_\_\_\_ certain \_\_\_\_\_; how God inspired Scripture is mysterious.
  - A wide variety of \_\_\_\_\_ authors \_\_\_\_\_ ...
    - A lawgiver

*And the Lord said to Moses, "Write these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel."*  
*Exodus 34:27*

*Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?*  
*John 7:19*

- A general

*And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the Lord.*  
*Joshua 24:26*

- Prophets

*The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken: "Children have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me. The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand."*  
*Isaiah 1:1-3*

*The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiyah, one of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.*  
*Jeremiah 1:1-2*

- Kings

*To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Have mercy on me, O God,*

*according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!*

*Psalm 51:1-2*

*The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel: To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity ...*

*Proverbs 1:1-3*

- A musician

*A Psalm of Asaph. The Mighty One, God the Lord, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.*

*Psalm 50:1-2*

- A herdsman

*The words of Amos, who was among the shepherds of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.*

*Amos 1:1*

- A prince and statesman

*... in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.*

*Daniel 9:2*

- A priest

*This is a copy of the letter that King Artaxerxes gave to Ezra the priest, the scribe, a man learned in matters of the commandments of the Lord and his statutes for Israel ...*

*Ezra 7:11*

*“And you, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God that is in your hand, appoint magistrates and judges who may judge all the people in the province Beyond the River, all such as know the laws of your God. And those who do not know them, you shall teach. Whoever will not obey the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgment be strictly executed on him, whether for death or for banishment or for confiscation of his goods or for imprisonment.” Blessed be the Lord, the God of our fathers, who put such a thing as this into the heart of the king, to beautify the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, and who extended to me his steadfast love before the king and his counselors, and before all the king’s mighty officers. I took courage, for the hand of the Lord my God was on me, and I gathered leading men from Israel to go up with me.*

*Ezra 7:25-28*

- A tax collector

*As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.*

*Matthew 9:9*

- A doctor

*Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught. In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.*

*Luke 1:1-5*

- A scholar

*Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures ...*

*Romans 1:1-2*

- Fishermen

*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.*

*1 Peter 1:1-2*

*The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.*

*Revelation 1:1-3*

- With a wide variety of \_\_\_\_\_ styles ...
  - Laws

*And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me."*

*Exodus 20:1-3*

- Genealogies

*Adam, Seth, Enosh; Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared; Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech; Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

*1 Chronicles 1:1-4*

- Psalms of praise

*O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.*

*Psalms 8:1-2*

- Laments

*How lonely sits the city that was full of people! How like a widow has she become, she who was great among the nations! She who was a princess among the provinces has become a slave. She weeps bitterly in the night, with tears on her cheeks; among all her lovers she has none to comfort her; all her friends have dealt treacherously with her; they have become her enemies.*

*Lamentations 1:1-2*

- Oracles of judgment

*An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum of Elkosh. The Lord is a jealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and keeps wrath for his enemies.*

*Nahum 1:1-2*

- Gospel accounts

*Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

*John 20:30-31*

- Narratives of theological history

*In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.*

*Acts 1:1-3*

- Letters to churches

*See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.*

*Galatians 6:11*

- Apocalyptic prophecies

*And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place."*

*Revelation 22:6*

- Through a wide variety of \_\_\_\_\_ processes \_\_\_\_\_ ...
  - Divine dictation

*Then the word of the Lord came to Isaiah: "Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus says the Lord, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Behold, I will add fifteen years to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and will defend this city."*

*Isaiah 38:4-6*

*Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder.*

*Exodus 19:18-19*

*To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: "The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands."*

*Revelation 2:1*

- Historical \_\_\_\_\_ research \_\_\_\_\_

*Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.*

*Luke 1:1-4*

*Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*

*John 20:30-31*

- Dreams and \_\_\_\_\_ visions \_\_\_\_\_

*In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the Chebar canal, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. On the fifth day of the month (it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin), the word of the Lord came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the Chebar canal, and the hand of the Lord was upon him there.*

*Ezekiel 1:1-3*

*Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night.*

*Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.*

*Daniel 2:19*

*For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.*

*Galatians 1:11-12*

- Hearing God's voice

*Then the Lord called Samuel, and he said, "Here I am!"*

*1 Samuel 3:4*

*The Lord of hosts has revealed himself in my ears: "Surely this iniquity will not be atoned for you until you die," says the Lord God of hosts.*

*Isaiah 22:14*

*Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying ...*

*Jonah 1:1*

- Recording the \_\_\_\_\_ exact \_\_\_\_\_ Word of God ...

*And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.*

*Exodus 24:4*

*Then the Lord said to me, "Take a large tablet and write on it in common characters, 'Belonging to Maher-shalal-hash-baz.' And I will get reliable witnesses, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah, to attest for me."*

*Isaiah 8:1-2*

*And now, go, write it before them on a tablet and inscribe it in a book, that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever.*

*Isaiah 30:8*

*In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the Lord: "Thus says the Lord: Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in the house of the Lord all the words that I command you to speak to them; do not hold back a word."*

*Jeremiah 26:1-2*

*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*

*Matthew 5:17-18*

*And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*

*Luke 24:27*

*Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."*

*Luke 24:44*

*You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me ...*

*John 5:39*

*I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone*



*takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*

*Revelation 22:18-19*

- God moved.
- The writers mouthed.

*And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

*2 Peter 1:19-21*

### **The Canon: Recognized by Man**

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

*2 Timothy 3:14-17*

“When the Word of God was written it became Scripture and, inasmuch as it had been spoken by God, possessed absolute authority. Since it was the Word of God, it was canonical. That which determines the canonicity of a book, therefore, is the fact that the book is inspired by God.”

Edward J. Young

“One thing must be emphatically stated. The New Testament books did not become authoritative for the Church because they were formally included in a canonical list; on the contrary, the Church included them in her canon because she already regarded them as divinely inspired, recognizing their innate worth and generally apostolic authority, direct or indirect. The first ecclesiastical councils to classify the canonical books

were both held in North Africa—at Hippo Regius in 393 and at Carthage in 397—but what these councils did was not to impose something new upon the Christian communities but to codify what was already the general practice of these communities.”

F. F. Bruce

- Was it written by a \_\_\_\_\_ prophet \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ apostle \_\_\_\_\_ of God?

*I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.*

*Deuteronomy 18:18-20*

*For the Lord God does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets. The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken; who can but prophesy?*

*Amos 3:7-8*

*Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead ...*

*Galatians 1:1*

- If not, was it written by someone with a special relationship to a prophet or apostle who \_\_\_\_\_ affirmed \_\_\_\_\_ its authority?

*Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.*

*Luke 1:1-4*

*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*

*Mark 1:1*

*She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings,  
and so does Mark, my son.*

*1 Peter 5:13*

- Does it tell the \_\_\_\_\_ truth \_\_\_\_\_ about God?

*“But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.” And if you say in your heart, “How may we know the word that the Lord has not spoken?”—when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him.*

*Deuteronomy 18:20-22*

*So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.*

*Hebrews 6:17-18*

- Does it demonstrate the \_\_\_\_\_ power \_\_\_\_\_ of God?

*For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.*

*Isaiah 55:10-11*

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

*2 Timothy 3:16-17*

*For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

*Hebrews 4:12*

- Was it \_\_\_\_\_ accepted \_\_\_\_\_ by the people of God?
  - Development of the Old Testament ...

*And he gave to Moses, when he had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.*

*Exodus 31:18*

*The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.*

*Exodus 32:16*

*Then I turned and came down from the mountain and put the tablets in the ark that I had made. And there they are, as the Lord commanded me.*

*Deuteronomy 10:5*

*When Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to the very end, Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, "Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against you."*

*Deuteronomy 31:24-26*

*And Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone and set it up there under the terebinth that was by the sanctuary of the Lord.*

*Joshua 24:26*

*Then Samuel told the people the rights and duties of the kingship, and he wrote them in a book and laid it up before the Lord. Then Samuel sent all the people away, each one to his home.*

*1 Samuel 10:25*

*Moreover, Josiah put away the mediums and the necromancers and the household gods and the idols and all the abominations that were seen in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, that he might establish the words of the law that were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord. Before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the Law of Moses, nor did any like him arise after him.*

*2 Kings 23:24-25*

*Now the acts of King David, from first to last, are written in the Chronicles of Samuel the seer, and in the Chronicles of Nathan the prophet, and in the Chronicles of Gad the seer, with accounts of all his rule and his might and of the circumstances that came upon him and upon Israel and upon all the kingdoms of the countries.*

*1 Chronicles 29:29-30*

*Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, from first to last, are written in the chronicles of Jehu the son of Hanani, which are recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel.*

*2 Chronicles 20:34*

*Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, from first to last, Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz wrote.*

*2 Chronicles 26:22*

*Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah and his good deeds, behold, they are written in the vision of Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel.*

*2 Chronicles 32:32*

*These also are proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied.*

*Proverbs 25:1*

*... this Ezra went up from Babylonia. He was a scribe skilled in the Law of Moses that the Lord, the God of Israel, had given, and the king granted him all that he asked, for the hand of the Lord his God was on him.*

*Ezra 7:6*

*Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words  
that I have spoken to you.  
Jeremiah 30:2*

*And on that day, declares the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the names of the  
idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more. And also I  
will remove from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness. And if  
anyone again prophesies, his father and mother who bore him will say to  
him, "You shall not live, for you speak lies in the name of the Lord." And his  
father and mother who bore him shall pierce him through when he prophesies.  
On that day every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies.  
He will not put on a hairy cloak in order to deceive, but he will say, "I am  
no prophet, I am a worker of the soil, for a man sold me in my youth."  
Zechariah 13:2-5*

*Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules that I  
commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. Behold, I will send you Elijah  
the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.  
Malachi 4:4-5*

- o Attestation in the New Testament ...

*And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.  
Genesis 15:6*

*For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it  
was counted to him as righteousness."  
Romans 4:3*

*Then the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven  
for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I  
may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. On the sixth day, when  
they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily."  
Exodus 16:4-5*

*So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from  
the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.  
John 6:13*

*This shall be the law of the leprous person for the day of his cleansing.  
He shall be brought to the priest ...  
Leviticus 14:2*

*And Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself  
to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them."  
Matthew 8:4*

*Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house.  
Numbers 12:7*

*Now Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant, to testify to  
the things that were to be spoken later ...  
Hebrews 3:5*

*But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by  
every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the  
holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are  
the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his  
angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you  
strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You  
shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a  
very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their  
glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and  
worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, 'You  
shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'"  
Matthew 4:4-10*

*... which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures ...  
Romans 1:2*

o Development of the New Testament ...

*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will  
teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.  
John 14:26*

*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he  
will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he*

*will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*

*John 16:13-14*

*But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.*

*Galatians 1:8-9*

*And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.*

*Colossians 4:16*

*And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.*

*1 Thessalonians 2:13*

*I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers.*

*1 Thessalonians 5:27*

*... as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*

*2 Peter 3:16*

*We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*

*1 John 4:6*

*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.*

*Hebrews 1:1-2*

*Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.*

*Revelation 1:3*



*I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*

*Revelation 22:18-19*

- Authority \_\_\_\_\_ equal \_\_\_\_\_ to the Old Testament ...

*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.*

*Ephesians 2:19-21*

*When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.*

*Ephesians 3:4-5*

*Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages."*

*1 Timothy 5:17-18*

*You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain.*

*Deuteronomy 25:4*

*And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house.*

*Luke 10:7*

- What about the Apocrypha?
  - Additional \_\_\_\_\_ books \_\_\_\_\_ which the Roman Catholic Church claimed were canonical at the Council of Trent in 1546.

“The Synod ... receives and venerates ... all the books (including the Apocrypha) both of the Old and of the New Testament seeing that one God is the Author of both ... as having been dictated, either by Christ’s own word of mouth or by the Holy Ghost ... if anyone receive not as sacred and canonical the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church ... let him be anathema.”

Council of Trent (1546)

- Wasn’t written by prophets or apostles.
- Doesn’t tell the truth about God.
- Doesn’t demonstrate the power of God.
- Wasn’t accepted by the people of God.

“There are no marks in these books which would attest a divine origin ... both Judith and Tobit contain historical, chronological and geographical errors. The books justify falsehood and deception and make salvation to depend upon works of merit ... Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon inculcate a morality based upon expediency. Wisdom teaches the creation of the world out of pre-existent matter (Wisd. 11:17). Ecclesiasticus teaches that the giving of alms makes atonement for sin (Eccl. 3:30). In Baruch it is said that God hears the prayers of the dead (Bar. 3:4), and in I Maccabees there are historical and geographical errors.”

E. J. Young

*I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*

*Revelation 22:18-19*

## **Is the Bible Divine? (Or Did Humans Create It?)**

- The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_ revealed \_\_\_\_\_ by God.
  - The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_ recognized \_\_\_\_\_ by man.

“We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of

all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts."

Westminster Confession of Faith (1643-46)

- God has made Himself known to us.
  - We can \_\_\_\_\_ know \_\_\_\_\_ God.

*Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord."*

*Jeremiah 9:23-24*

## **Is the Bible True? (Can We Trust It?)**

*The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your  
righteous rules endures forever.*

*Psalm 119:160*

### **Three Foundations ...**

- \_\_\_\_\_ God \_\_\_\_\_ is true.

*Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior ...*

*Titus 1:1-3*

- The \_\_\_\_\_ Bible \_\_\_\_\_ is the Word of God.

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness ...*

*2 Timothy 3:16*

- The Word of God is \_\_\_\_\_ true \_\_\_\_\_.

*Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*

*John 17:17*

### **One Implication ...**

**The Bible is truthful and without error in all of its teachings.**

*And now, O Lord God, you are God, and your words are true,  
and you have promised this good thing to your servant.*

*2 Samuel 7:28*

## Affirmations and Denials ...

(The Articles below are quoted directly from the  
“Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy.”)

- Article I

- We affirm that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God.

*And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.*

*1 Thessalonians 2:13*

- We deny that the Scriptures receive their authority from the \_\_\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_, tradition, or any other human source.

*And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.” And he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’ But you say, ‘If a man tells his father or his mother, “Whatever you would have gained from me is Corban”’ (that is, given to God)— then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, thus making void the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And many such things you do.”*

*Mark 7:6-13*

- Article II

- We affirm that the Scriptures are the \_\_\_\_\_ supreme \_\_\_\_\_ written norm by which God binds the conscience, and that the authority of the Church is subordinate to that of Scripture.

*But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.*

*Isaiah 66:2b*

- We deny that Church creeds, councils, or declarations have authority greater than or equal to the authority of the Bible.

*I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*

*Revelation 22:18-19*

- Article III

- We affirm that the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God.

*If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord.*

*1 Corinthians 14:37*

- We deny that the Bible is merely a \_\_\_\_\_ witness \_\_\_\_\_ to revelation, or only becomes revelation in encounter, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.

*Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? By no means! Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written, "That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged."*

*Romans 3:1-4*

- Article IV

- We affirm that God who made mankind in His image has used \_\_\_\_\_ language \_\_\_\_\_ as a means of revelation.

*The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."*

*Genesis 2:15-17*

- We deny that human language is so limited by our creatureliness that it is rendered inadequate as a vehicle for divine revelation. We further deny that the corruption of human culture and language through sin has thwarted God's work of inspiration.

*For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

*2 Peter 1:21*

- Article V

- We affirm that God's revelation in the Holy Scriptures was \_\_\_\_\_ progressive \_\_\_\_\_.

*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.*

*Hebrews 1:1-4*

- We deny that later revelation, which may fulfill earlier revelation, ever corrects or contradicts it. We further deny that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings.

*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.*

*Matthew 5:17*

*I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*

*Revelation 22:18-19*

- Article VI

- We affirm that the whole of Scripture and all its \_\_\_\_\_parts\_\_\_\_\_, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration.

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness ...*

*2 Timothy 3:16*

- We deny that the inspiration of Scripture can rightly be affirmed of the whole without the parts, or of some parts but not the whole.

*For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*

*Matthew 5:18*

- Article VII

- We affirm that inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The \_\_\_\_\_origin\_\_\_\_\_ of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us.
- We deny that inspiration can be reduced to human insight, or to heightened states of consciousness of any kind.

*... knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

*2 Peter 1:20-21*

- Article VIII

- We affirm that God in His work of inspiration utilized the distinctive \_\_\_\_\_personalities\_\_\_\_\_ and literary styles of the writers whom He had chosen and prepared.
- We deny that God, in causing these writers to use the very words that He chose, overrode their personalities.



*And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.*

*2 Peter 3:15-16*

• Article IX

- We affirm that inspiration, though not conferring omniscience, guaranteed true and trustworthy \_\_\_\_\_ utterance \_\_\_\_\_ on all matters of which the Biblical authors were moved to speak and write.
- We deny that the finitude or fallenness of these writers, by necessity or otherwise, introduced distortion or falsehood into God's Word.

*And he gave to Moses, when he had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.*

*Exodus 31:18*

• Article X

- We affirm that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.
  - The original \_\_\_\_\_ autographs \_\_\_\_\_ are completely inspired.
  - The subsequent manuscripts are extremely \_\_\_\_\_ accurate \_\_\_\_\_.
    - Thousands more manuscripts exist for the Bible than any other ancient writing.
    - The earliest manuscripts are dated to within decades of the original autographs.
    - These manuscripts are approximately 99.5% textually \_\_\_\_\_ consistent \_\_\_\_\_.

“For the New Testament, beginning with the second century ancient versions and manuscript fragments and continuing with abundant quotations of the Fathers and thousands of manuscript copies from that time to the modern versions of the Bible, there is virtually an unbroken line of testimony. Furthermore, there are not only countless manuscripts to support the integrity of the Bible (including the Old Testament since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls), but a study of the procedures of preparation and preservation of the biblical manuscript copies reveals the fidelity of the transmission process itself. In fact, it may be concluded that no major document from antiquity comes into the modern world with such evidence of its integrity as does the Bible.”

Norman Geisler

“There is no body of ancient literature in the world which enjoys such a wealth of good textual attestation as the New Testament.”

F. F. Bruce

- We deny that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs. We further deny that this absence renders the assertions of Biblical inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.

“The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation throughout the centuries.”

Sir Frederic Kenyon

• Article XI

- We affirm that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses.
- We deny that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. Infallibility and inerrancy may be distinguished, but not separated.

*The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the*

*commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.*

*Psalm 19:7-9*

• Article XII

- We affirm that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit.
- We deny that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation and the flood.
  - Biblical assertions in the fields of history and \_\_\_\_\_ science \_\_\_\_\_ are true.

“There can be no doubt that archaeology has confirmed the substantial historicity of the Old Testament tradition.”

William F. Albright

“No archeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical descriptions has often led to amazing discoveries.”

Nelson Glueck, Authority on Israeli Archaeology

“There have been thousands—not hundreds—of archeological finds in the Middle East that support the picture presented in the biblical record.”

Norman Geisler

- If historical details and scientific facts in the Old Testament are untrue, then the teachings of Jesus and the writers of the New Testament are \_\_\_\_\_ untrustworthy \_\_\_\_\_.

*He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were*

*with him, but only for the priests? Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? I tell you, something greater than the temple is here.”*

*Matthew 12:3-6*

*The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.*

*Matthew 12:41*

*So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.*

*John 4:5-6*

*... because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

*Romans 10:9-13*

*For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, and to him Abraham apportioned a tenth part of everything. He is first, by translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then he is also king of Salem, that is, king of peace.*

*Hebrews 7:1-2*

*For when every commandment of the law had been declared by Moses to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant that God commanded for you." And in the same way he sprinkled with the blood both the tent and all the vessels used in worship. Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.*

*Hebrews 9:19-22*

*Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.*

*2 Peter 2:15-16*

- If controversial stories in the Bible are untrue, then \_\_\_\_\_ spiritual \_\_\_\_\_, redemptive assertions in the Bible are untrustworthy.

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

*Genesis 1:1*

*For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.*

*Colossians 1:16*

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.*

*Genesis 2:24-25*

*For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.*

*1 Timothy 2:13-14*

*Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came upon the earth. And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood. Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the earth.*

*Genesis 7:6-10*

*Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given*

*in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.*

*Luke 17:26-27*

*But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, "Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her." So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel. And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord. But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.*

*Joshua 6:22-25*

*... quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.*

*Hebrews 11:34*

*And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish ...*

*Jonah 1:17-2:1*

*For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

*Matthew 12:40*

*He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay.*

*Matthew 28:6*

*But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in*

*your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.*

*1 Corinthians 15:13-19*

• Article XIII

- We affirm the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.
- We deny that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, or variant selections of material in parallel accounts.

- Lack of modern technical \_\_\_\_\_ precision \_\_\_\_\_.

*He made an altar of bronze, twenty cubits long and twenty cubits wide and ten cubits high. Then he made the sea of cast metal. It was round, ten cubits from brim to brim, and five cubits high, and a line of thirty cubits measured its circumference.*

*2 Chronicles 4:1-2*

- Observational descriptions of nature.

*... until the Lord gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise.*

*Joshua 1:15*

*From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised!*

*Psalm 113:3*

- Reporting of falsehoods.

*Then David said in his heart, "Now I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should escape to the land of*

*the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within the borders of Israel, and I shall escape out of his hand.”*

*1 Samuel 27:1*

- Use of hyperbole and                     round                     numbers.

*The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.*

*Matthew 12:42*

*Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.*

*Acts 2:5*

*Nevertheless, those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.*

*Numbers 25:9*

*We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day.*

*1 Corinthians 10:8*

- Topical arrangement of material.

*On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. And he said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And his disciples heard it. And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. And he was teaching them and saying to them, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations?’ But you have made it a den of robbers.” And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared him, because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching. And when evening came they went out of the city. As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered*



*away to its roots. And Peter remembered and said to him, “Rabbi, look!  
The fig tree that you cursed has withered.”*  
Mark 11:12-21

- Variant selections of material in parallel accounts.

*As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”*  
Luke 19:37-38

*And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”*  
Matthew 21:9

- Article XIV

- We affirm the unity and internal consistency of Scripture.
- We deny that \_\_\_\_\_ alleged \_\_\_\_\_ errors and discrepancies that have not yet been resolved vitiate the truth claims of the Bible.

*And the woman of Tekoa said to the king, “On me be the guilt, my lord the king, and on my father’s house; let the king and his throne be guiltless.”*  
2 Samuel 14:9

*And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to David. In all Israel there were 1,100,000 men who drew the sword, and in Judah 470,000 who drew the sword.*  
1 Chronicles 21:5

- The harmonizing approach: Force a resolution, no matter how fanciful it might seem.
- The heretical approach: Deny the truthfulness of one or both passages.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ humble \_\_\_\_\_ approach: Work to resolve the alleged discrepancy, but with the realization that we don’t know everything.
  - Consult resources.

*But he did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, for the king's command was abhorrent to Joab.*

*1 Chronicles 21:6*

- Have \_\_\_\_\_ confidence \_\_\_\_\_.

“After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest scientific guns that could be brought to bear, the Bible has survived—and is perhaps the better for the siege. Even on the critics’ own terms—historical fact—the Scriptures seem more acceptable now than they did when the rationalists began the attack.”

*Time Magazine* (December 30, 1974)

- Article XV

- We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration.
- We deny that Jesus’ teaching about Scripture may be dismissed by appeals to accommodation or to any natural limitation of His humanity.

*And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

*2 Peter 1:19-21*

- Article XVI

- We affirm that the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church’s faith throughout its \_\_\_\_\_ history \_\_\_\_\_.
- We deny that inerrancy is a doctrine invented by Scholastic Protestantism, or is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism.

“The Sacred Scriptures are ‘the true utterances of the Holy Spirit.’ You know that in them there hath not been written anything that is unrighteous or counterfeit.”

Clement of Rome (30–100 A.D.)

“The Scriptures are indeed perfect, since they were spoken by the  
Word of God and His Spirit.”

Irenaeus (120–202 A.D.)

“The sacred volumes are fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, and there is  
no passage either in the Law or the Gospel, or the writings of an Apostle,  
which does not proceed from the inspired source of Divine Truth.”

Origen (185–254 A.D.)

“I have learnt to ascribe to those Books which are of Canonical rank,  
and only to them, such reverence and honor, that I firmly believe that no  
single error due to the author is found in any of them. And when I am  
confronted in these Books with anything that seems to be at variance with  
truth, I do not hesitate to put it down either to the use of an incorrect text,  
or to the failure of a commentator rightly to explain the words, or  
to my own mistaken understanding of the passage.”

Augustine (354–430 A.D.)

“The Scriptures have never erred... The Scriptures cannot err...”

It is certain that Scripture would not contradict itself; it only  
appears so to the senseless and obdurate hypocrites.”

Martin Luther (1483–1546 A.D.)

• Article XVII

- We affirm that the Holy Spirit bears \_\_\_\_\_ witness \_\_\_\_\_ to  
the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God’s  
written Word.
- We deny that this witness of the Holy Spirit operates in isolation  
from or against Scripture.

*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will  
teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*

*John 14:26*

• Article XVIII

- We affirm that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-  
-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices,  
and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture.

- We deny the legitimacy of any treatment of the text or quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, dehistoricizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship.

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.*

*2 Timothy 2:15*

- Article XIX

- We affirm that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is \_\_\_\_\_ vital \_\_\_\_\_ to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We further affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

*2 Timothy 3:14-17*

- If we deny inerrancy, then we cannot trust the Word of God.
- If we deny inerrancy, then we cannot trust the \_\_\_\_\_ God \_\_\_\_\_ of the Word.

*And now, O Lord God, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant.*

*2 Samuel 7:28*

*God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?*

*Numbers 23:19*

- We deny that such confession is necessary for salvation. However, we further deny that inerrancy can be rejected without \_\_\_\_\_grave\_\_\_\_\_ consequences, both to the individual and to the Church.

“The best way to proceed is to observe what tend to be the implications for other areas of doctrine when biblical inerrancy is abandoned. There is evidence that where a theologian, a school, or a movement begins by regarding biblical inerrancy as a peripheral or optional matter and abandons this doctrine, it frequently then goes on to abandon or alter other doctrines which the church has ordinarily considered quite major, such as the deity of Christ or the Trinity. Since, as we argued in the opening chapter of this book, history is the laboratory in which theology tests its ideas, we must conclude that the departure from belief in the complete trustworthiness of the Bible is a very serious step, not only in terms of what it does to this one doctrine, but even more in terms of what happens to other doctrines as a result.”

Millard Erickson

“In our affirmation of the authority of Scripture as involving its total truth, we are consciously standing with Christ and His apostles, indeed with the whole Bible and with the main stream of Church history from the first days until very recently. We are concerned at the casual, inadvertent, and seemingly thoughtless way in which a belief of such far-reaching importance has been given up by so many in our day. We are conscious too that great and grave confusion results from ceasing to maintain the total truth of the Bible whose authority one professes to acknowledge. The result of taking this step is that the Bible which God gave loses its authority, and what has authority instead is a Bible reduced in content according to the demands of one’s critical reasonings and in principle reducible still further once one has started. This means that at bottom independent reason now has authority, as opposed to Scriptural teaching. If this is not seen and if for the time being basic evangelical doctrines are still held, persons denying the full truth of Scripture may claim an evangelical identity while methodologically they have moved away from the evangelical principle of knowledge to an unstable subjectivism, and will find it hard not to move further.”

Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

## **Is the Bible Clear? (Can We Understand It?)**

*For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?" Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?" But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.*

*Deuteronomy 30:11-14*

**The Bible is a unified story that is clearly understandable to all who devote themselves to study it in dependence on the Holy Spirit.**

*Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.*

*Psalms 119:18*

### **The Bible is a unified story ...**

- Over 40 distinct authors.
- In 3 different languages.
- Across 1500 years.
- Concerning 1 central theme: The \_\_\_\_\_ gospel \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ.

*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*

*Genesis 3:15*

*And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*

*Luke 24:27*

*Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem."*

*Luke 24:44-47*

*“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.” The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price. I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.*

*Revelation 22:16-21*

- From start to finish, the Bible reveals who God is and how God redeems His people for His kingdom.
  - The main character of the Bible: \_\_\_\_\_ God \_\_\_\_\_.

*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.*  
*Deuteronomy 6:4*

*Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.*  
*Romans 3:29-30*

- The main story of the Bible:
  - How God \_\_\_\_\_redeems\_\_\_\_\_ His people ...
    - God is restoring His creation to Himself.
    - God is re-creating His people in His image.
  - For His kingdom ...
    - A kingdom ...
      - People who are ruled by the King.
      - A place where the King has dominion.
      - A purpose for the King and His kingdom.
    - God's kingdom ...
      - God is bringing His people ...
      - To His place ...
      - For His \_\_\_\_\_purpose\_\_\_\_\_.

# TRACING THE

	<b>PEOPLE</b>
<b>CREATION</b> (Genesis 1-2)	God's Blessing on His People
<b>FALL</b> (Genesis 3-11)	God's Blessing and Judgment through ... Adam & Eve
<b>PATRIARCHS</b> (Genesis 12-50)	God's Blessing and Judgment through ... Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob
<b>EXODUS &amp; CONQUEST</b> (Exodus-1 Samuel 8)	God's Blessing and Judgment through ... Moses, Joshua, Judges, & Samuel
<b>UNITED MONARCHY</b> (1 Samuel 9-1 Kings 11; 1 Chronicles-2 Chronicles 9)	God's Blessing and Judgment through ... Saul, David, & Solomon
<b>DIVIDED MONARCHY</b> (1 Kings 12-2 Kings; 2 Chronicles 10-Esther)	God's Blessing and Judgment through ... Prophets
<b>JESUS</b> (Matthew-John)	God's Blessing and Judgment through ... Christ
<b>PRESENT</b> (Acts-Jude)	God's Blessing and Judgment through ... His Church
<b>NEW CREATION</b> (Revelation)	God's Final Blessing and Judgment



# STORY OF SCRIPTURE

PLACE	PURPOSE
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Perfect</u> Fellowship</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">God's Glory Multiplied to All Peoples</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Disrupted</u> Fellowship</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">God's Glory Marred in All Peoples</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Promised</u> Fellowship</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">God's Glory Made Known to All Peoples through ... His Faithfulness</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">God with His People: <u>Tabernacle</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">God's Glory Made Known to All Peoples through ... His Deliverance</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">God with His People: <u>Temple</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">God's Glory Made Known to All Peoples through ... His Anointing</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">God with His People: <u>Exile</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">God's Glory Made Known to All Peoples through ... His Discipline</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">God among His People: <u>Incarnation</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">God's Glory Made Known to All Peoples through ... His Salvation</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">God in His People: <u>Body</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">God's Glory Multiplied to All Peoples</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Eternal</u> Fellowship</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">God's Glory Enjoyed by All Peoples</p>

**... that is clearly understandable to all ...**

*Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and  
observe it with my whole heart.*

*Psalm 119:34*

- \_\_\_\_\_ **All** \_\_\_\_\_ are able to understand the Word.

*And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

*Deuteronomy 6:6-9*

*The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple ...*

*Psalm 19:7*

*The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.*

*Psalm 119:130*

*Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes, To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours ...*

*1 Corinthians 1:1-2*

*Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—and all the brothers who are with me, To the churches of Galatia ...*

*Galatians 1:1-2*

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Some** \_\_\_\_\_ are gifted to teach the Word.

*And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.*

*1 Corinthians 12:28*

*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.*

*Ephesians 4:11-14*

*The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach ...*

*1 Timothy 3:1-2*

*Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.*

*James 3:1*

### **... who devote themselves to study it ...**

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.*

*2 Timothy 2:15*

- Choose a significant portion to study.

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.*

*Psalms 1:1-2*

- Start with the question, “What is the point of this passage in its \_\_\_\_\_ context \_\_\_\_\_?”

- In its \_\_\_\_\_ local \_\_\_\_\_ context.
- In its \_\_\_\_\_ overall \_\_\_\_\_ context (all of Scripture).
- Do NOT start with the question, “What does this passage mean to \_\_\_\_\_ me \_\_\_\_\_?”
- Be aware of the \_\_\_\_\_ type \_\_\_\_\_ of literature you are reading.
  - Narrative, law, poetry, hymns, prayers, wisdom, prophecy, parables, letters, apocalypse.
- Be aware of the historical \_\_\_\_\_ setting \_\_\_\_\_ in which it was written.

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

*Ephesians 1:3-14*

- Be aware of \_\_\_\_\_ cultural \_\_\_\_\_ issues that might affect the meaning of the passage.

*And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. And he was teaching them and saying to them, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations?’ But you have made it a den of robbers.” And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared*

*him, because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching. And when evening came they went out of the city.*

*Mark 11:15-19*

- Use outside resources wisely.

“The big problem with Bible study today is that we think it should be easier than other things we do. We study recipes for quality meals, how-to books for all kinds of things—carpentry, plumbing, automobile maintenance and so on—and read vociferously for our hobbies. Why do we think the Bible is the only subject we should not have to study?! Let me challenge you—make the Bible your hobby. At one level I do not like the analogy; the Bible must be so much more than a hobby! But at another level, what if we spent as much time and money on Bible study as we do our hobbies? What if we took the same amount we spend on golf clubs and courses or on skiing equipment and skiing trips, and put it into Bible study? Yes, encyclopedias, commentaries and other reference materials are expensive. But so is everything we do.”

Grant Osbourne

- Learn \_\_\_\_\_ humbly \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - We all bring different things to the table ...
    - Education and knowledge
    - Experience
    - Cultural insights and blinders
  - Our goal is humble, hard work aimed at minimizing subjectivity in order to understand the meaning of a passage.
- Read the Bible in \_\_\_\_\_ community \_\_\_\_\_ .
  - Community of your local church.
  - Community of the global church.
    - Now
    - Throughout history
- Remember that complete originality is probably \_\_\_\_\_ wrong \_\_\_\_\_ .
- Always read the Bible in the context of prayer, praise, and \_\_\_\_\_ obedience \_\_\_\_\_ .

*Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the Lord! Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways! You have commanded*

*your precepts to be kept diligently. Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes! Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments. I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous rules.*

*Psalms 119:1-7*

*The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love; teach me your statutes!*

*Psalms 119:64*

*Let my soul live and praise you, and let your rules help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek your servant, for I do not forget your commandments.*

*Psalms 119:175-176*

*But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"*

*Luke 11:28*

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

*Matthew 28:18-20*

*If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.*

*John 7:17*

*Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.*

*John 14:21*

*But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.*

*James 1:22-25*

### ... in dependence on the Holy Spirit.

“The simple and external demonstration of the Word of God ought, indeed, to suffice fully for the production of faith, did not our blindness and perversity interfere. But such is the propensity of our minds to vanity that they can never adhere to the truth of God, and such is their dullness that they are always blind even to his light. Hence, without the illumination of the Holy Spirit the Word has no effect.”

John Calvin

“Nobody who has not the Spirit of God sees a jot of what is in the Scriptures. All men have their hearts darkened, so that, even when they can discuss and quote all that is in Scripture, they do not understand or really know any of it ... The Spirit is needed for the understanding of all Scripture and every part of Scripture.”

Martin Luther

“The Bible is a supernatural book and can be understood only by supernatural aid.”

A.W. Tozer

“The Word of God apart from the Spirit of God will be of no use to you. If you cannot understand a book, do you know the best way to reach its meaning? Write the author and ask him what he meant. If you have a book to read and you have the author always accessible, you need not complain that you do not understand it. The Holy Spirit has come to abide with us forever. Search the Scriptures, but cry for the Spirit’s light and live under His influence.”

Charles Spurgeon

- The weakness of man ...
  - Our hearts are \_\_\_\_\_ hard \_\_\_\_\_.

*For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.*

*Matthew 13:15*

*And he got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened.*

*Mark 6:51-52*

*And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember? When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve." "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven." And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"*

*Mark 8:17-21*

*Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word.*

*John 8:43*

*In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

*2 Corinthians 4:4*

- Our hearts are slow.

*And he said, "Are you also still without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person."*

*Matthew 15:16-18*

*But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.*

*Luke 18:34*

*And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"*

*Luke 24:25*



- Our eyes are \_\_\_\_\_ blind \_\_\_\_\_.

*In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.  
2 Corinthians 4:4*

- We are finite sinners.
  - God is holy; we are sinners.
    - We need a new heart.

*Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!  
Psalm 119:36*

*But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.  
Romans 2:29*

- We need spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ regeneration \_\_\_\_\_.

*And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.  
Ezekiel 36:26-27*

*Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."  
John 3:5-8*

- God is infinite; we are finite.
  - We need new eyes.

*Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.  
Psalm 119:18*

*And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?"*

*Luke 24:31-32*

*For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints ...*

*Ephesians 1:15-18*

- We need spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ wisdom \_\_\_\_\_.

*And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God ...*

*Colossians 1:9-10*

- When we disagree about Scripture ...
  - The weakness is not with Scripture.
  - The weakness is with us.

*And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

*2 Peter 3:15-18*

- We may be mistaken in our interpretation.

- We may be making affirmations where Scripture is silent.

- The work of the Spirit ...

*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

*John 14:16-17*

*Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"—these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 2:6-16*

- He teaches our minds.

*These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*

*John 14:25-26*

*But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.*

*Hebrews 5:14*

- He convicts our hearts.

*Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer ...*

*John 16:7-10*

- He guides our lives.

*I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.*

*John 16:12-13*

- He glorifies \_\_\_\_\_ Christ \_\_\_\_\_ ...

*But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.*

*John 15:26-27*

*He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*

*John 16:14-15*

- By conforming us into the image of Christ.

*For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

*Romans 8:29*

*But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.*

*For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

*2 Corinthians 3:14-18*

*His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.*

*2 Peter 1:3-4*

## **Is the Bible Sufficient? (Is It the Only Book We Need?)**

*... and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

*2 Timothy 3:15-17*

“Inerrancy is not the most critical issue facing the church today. The most serious issue, I believe, is the Bible’s sufficiency.”

James Montgomery Boice

“Preoccupied with mystical encounters and emotional ecstasies, [many] seek ongoing revelation from heaven—meaning that, for them, the Bible alone is simply not enough. [With them], biblical revelation must be supplemented with personal ‘words from God,’ supposed impressions from the Holy Spirit, and other subjective religious experiences. That kind of thinking is an outright rejection of the authority and sufficiency of Scripture. It is a recipe for far-reaching theological disaster.”

John MacArthur

### **The Bible contains all we need in order to know and walk with God.**

*And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you.*

*Deuteronomy 4:1-2*

*Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it.*

*Deuteronomy 12:32*

“The Scripture is the library of the Holy Ghost; it is a pandect of divine knowledge, an exact model and platform of religion. The Scripture contains in it the credenda, ‘the things which we are to believe,’ and the agenda, ‘the things which we are to practice.’”

Thomas Watson

- The Bible is sufficient for our \_\_\_\_\_ salvation \_\_\_\_\_.

*And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

*Ephesians 2:1-10*

*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

*Romans 10:17*

*Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.*

*James 1:21*

*Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for “All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.”*

*And this word is the good news that was preached to you.*

*1 Peter 1:22-25*

- The Bible is sufficient for our \_\_\_\_\_ sanctification \_\_\_\_\_.

*His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.*

*2 Peter 1:3-4*

- The purpose of the Bible IS NOT ...
  - To answer every question we may ask.
  - To provide direction for every situation we may face.
- The purpose of the Bible IS ...
  - To \_\_\_\_\_ conform \_\_\_\_\_ us into the image of Christ.

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

*Genesis 1:1*

*Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

*Genesis 1:26-27*

*Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—" therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.*

*Genesis 3:22-24*

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.*

*Revelation 21:1*



*Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.*

*Revelation 22:1-5*

*As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.*

*Psalms 17:15*

*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

*Romans 8:28-30*

*And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

*2 Corinthians 3:18*

*... who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*

*Philippians 3:21*

*... and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.*

*Colossians 3:10*

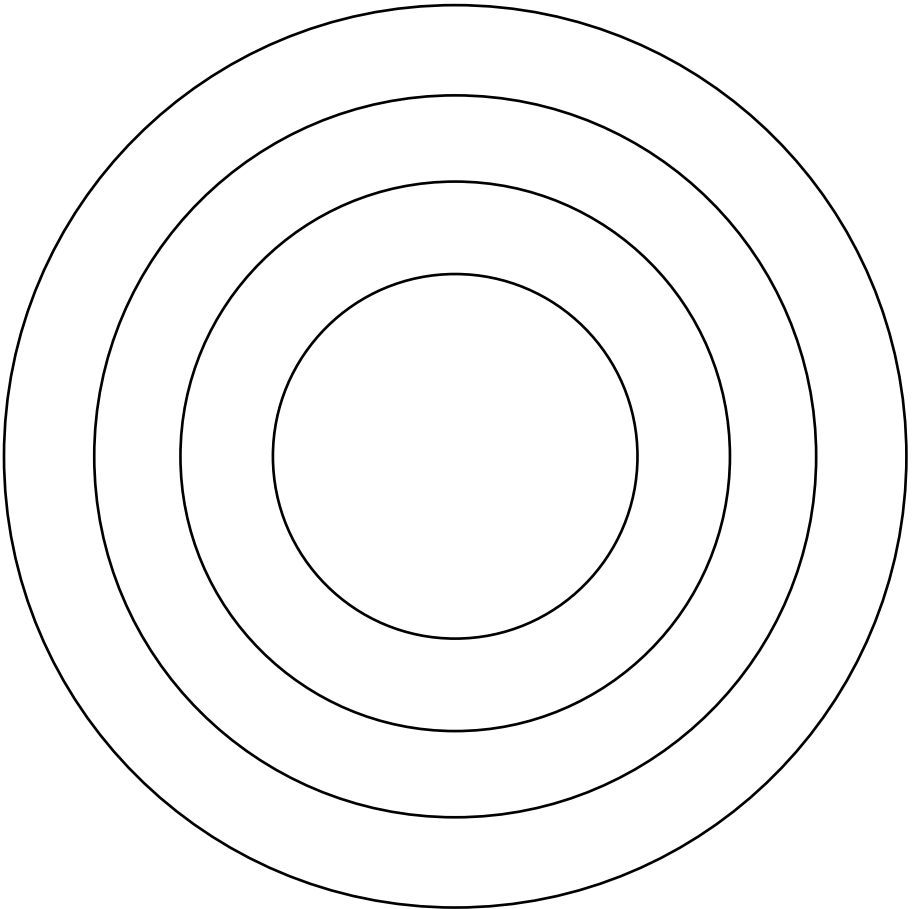
*His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through*

*them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.*

*2 Peter 1:3-4*

*Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.*

*1 John 3:2*



- The heart of Christ.

*And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

*Colossians 3:15-17*

- The \_\_\_\_\_ mind \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.

*I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

*Romans 12:1-2*

*Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. "For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.*

*1 Corinthians 2:12-16*

*For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ ...*

*2 Corinthians 10:3-5*

- The \_\_\_\_\_ will \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.

*I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*

*John 15:1-11*

- The body of Christ.

*You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. What then has become of your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me. Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth? They make much of you, but for no good purpose. They want to shut you out, that you may make much of them. It is always good to be made much of for a good purpose, and not only when I am present with you, my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!*

*Galatians 4:13-19*

- To bring us into step with the \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.

*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

*John 14:16-17*

*So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.*

*Romans 8:12-14*

- How does the Bible accomplish this purpose?

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

*2 Timothy 3:16-17*

- It instructs us.

*Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O Lord, and whom you teach out of your law ...*

*Psalm 94:12*

*I do not turn aside from your rules, for you have taught me.*

*Psalm 119:102*

- It \_\_\_\_\_ convicts \_\_\_\_\_ us.

*For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

*Hebrews 4:12*

*With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*

*Psalm 119:10-11*

- Important note: We identify as sin only that which the Bible explicitly or implicitly identifies as sin.

*And when the king heard the words of the Law, he tore his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiyah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the secretary, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying, "Go, inquire of*

*the Lord for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found. For great is the wrath of the Lord that is poured out on us, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to do according to all that is written in this book.”*

*2 Chronicles 34:19-21*

- It \_\_\_\_\_ corrects \_\_\_\_\_ us.

*And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

*Hebrews 12:5-11*

- It trains us.

*For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.*

*Titus 2:11-15*

- It \_\_\_\_\_ equips \_\_\_\_\_ us.

*Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*

*Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints ...*

*Ephesians 6:11-18*

*Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

*Hebrews 13:20-21*

- Important note: We trust that everything required of us by God is explicitly or implicitly commanded in the Bible.

*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 good success.*

*Joshua 1:8*

*Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes! Then I shall not be put to shame, having my eyes fixed on all your commandments.*

*Psalms 119:5-6*

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ...*

*Matthew 28:19*

- The Bible is sufficient for our \_\_\_\_\_ satisfaction \_\_\_\_\_.

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.*

*Psalm 1:1-2*

*The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*

*Psalm 19:7-11*

*In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.*

*Psalm 119:14*

*I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.*

*Psalm 119:16*

*Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counselors.*

*Psalm 119:24*

*... for I find my delight in your commandments, which I love.*

*Psalm 119:47*

*Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my sojourning.*

*Psalm 119:54*

*The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.*

*Psalm 119:72*

*Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.*

*Psalm 119:97*

*I rejoice at your word like one who finds great spoil.*

*Psalm 119:162*

- We must not (and do not need to) \_\_\_\_\_ add \_\_\_\_\_ anything to Scripture.



*You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you.*

*Deuteronomy 4:2*

*Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it.*

*Deuteronomy 12:32*

*I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*

*Revelation 22:18-19*

- We must not (and do not need to) \_\_\_\_\_ elevate \_\_\_\_\_ anything to the authority of Scripture.

*Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.*

*Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.*

*Proverbs 30:5-6*

- We don't elevate teachers.

*I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.*

*2 Timothy 4:1-4*

- We don't elevate traditions.

*He answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.' But you say, 'If anyone tells his father or his mother, "What you would have gained from me is given to God," he need not honor his father.' So for the sake of your*

*tradition you have made void the word of God. You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'*

*Matthew 15:3-9*

*See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.*

*Colossians 2:8*

- Roman Catholicism: The error of exalting human traditions to the stature of Scripture.

“Vainly do they run about with the pretext that they have demanded councils for the faith’s sake; for divine Scripture is sufficient above all things.”

Athanasius

“But if any one receive not, as sacred and canonical, the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin vulgate edition; and knowingly and deliberately condemn the traditions aforesaid; let him be anathema.”

Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Roman Catholic Church

“This (Gospel), of old promised through the Prophets in the Holy Scriptures, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, promulgated first with His own mouth, and then commanded it to be preached by His Apostles to every creature as the source at once of all saving truth and rules of conduct.

It also clearly perceives that these truths and rules are contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions, which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down to us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand. Following then, the examples of the Orthodox fathers, it receives and venerates with a feeling of piety and reverence all the books both of the Old and New Testaments, since one God is the author of both; also the traditions, whether they relate to faith

or to morals, as having been dictated either orally by Christ or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic church in unbroken succession.”  
 Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Roman Catholic Church

“Scripture can and does interpret itself to the faithful from within—Scripture is its own interpreter, *Scriptura sui ipsius interpres*, as Luther puts it—so that not only does it not need Popes or Councils to tell us, as from God, what it means; it can actually challenge Papal and conciliar pronouncements, convince them of being ungodly and untrue, and require the faithful to part company with them. ... As Scripture was the only source from which sinners might gain true knowledge of God and godliness, so Scripture was the only judge of what the church had in each age ventured to say in her Lord’s name.”

J. I. Packer

- Higher criticism: Lowering Scripture to the level of human tradition.

“We owe to the Scriptures the same reverence as we owe to God, since it has its only source in Him and has nothing of human origin mixed with it.”

John Calvin

- Both have the same disastrous effect: Minimizing the \_\_\_\_\_ voice \_\_\_\_\_ of God.

“What Luther thus voiced at Worms shows the essential motivation and concern, theological and religious, of the entire Reformation movement: namely that the Word of God alone must rule, and no Christian man dare do other than allow it to enthrone itself in his conscience and heart.”

J. I. Packer

“There is no use of evangelicalism seeming to get larger and larger, if at the same time appreciable parts ... are getting soft at that which is the central core, namely the Scriptures. ... We must ... say most lovingly but clearly: evangelicalism is not consistently evangelical unless there is a line drawn between those who take a full view of Scripture and those who do not. ... Holding to a strong view of Scripture or not holding to it is the watershed of the evangelical world.”

Francis Schaeffer

*I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word.*

*Psalm 138:2*

*Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word."*

*Isaiah 66:1-2*

## **Is the Bible Good? (Is It Worth Giving Our Lives For?)**

*You are good and do good; teach me your statutes.  
Psalm 119:68*

### **What We Know ...**

- God is \_\_\_\_\_ good \_\_\_\_\_.

*And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.  
Genesis 1:4*

*God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good.  
Genesis 1:10*

*The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed according to their own kinds, and trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind.  
And God saw that it was good.  
Genesis 1:12*

*... to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.  
Genesis 1:18*

*So God created the great sea creatures and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarm, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.  
Genesis 1:21*

*And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.  
Genesis 1:25*

*And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.  
And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.  
Genesis 1:31*

*Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!  
1 Chronicles 16:34*

*Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness!  
Come into his presence with singing! Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he  
who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.  
Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to  
him; bless his name! For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever,  
and his faithfulness to all generations.  
Psalm 100:1-5*

*The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.  
Psalm 145:9*

- The Bible is God's Word.

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof,  
for correction, and for training in righteousness ...  
2 Timothy 3:16*

- To believe and obey the Bible is to believe and obey \_\_\_\_\_ God \_\_\_\_\_.

*See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as the Lord my God commanded  
me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession  
of it. Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your  
understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes,  
will say, "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." For what  
great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is to us,  
whenever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that has statutes  
and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?  
Deuteronomy 4:5-8*

*You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord your God, and his  
testimonies and his statutes, which he has commanded you.  
Deuteronomy 6:17*

- To disbelieve and disobey the Bible is to disbelieve and disobey God.

*I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.*

*Deuteronomy 18:18-19*

*And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he commanded you. For then the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."*

*1 Samuel 13:13-14*

*For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king.*

*1 Samuel 15:23*

*This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.*

*2 Peter 3:1-3*

- The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_ good \_\_\_\_\_.

*Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules—that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long. Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.*

*Deuteronomy 6:1-3*

*And he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers. And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as we are this day. And it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment before the Lord our God, as he has commanded us.*

*Deuteronomy 6:23-25*

*My soul clings to the dust; give me life according to your word!*

*Psalms 119:25*

*And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your rules.*

*Psalms 119:43*

*When I think of your rules from of old, I take comfort, O Lord.*

*Psalms 119:52*

*The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love; teach me your statutes!*

*Psalms 119:64*

*If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.*

*Psalms 119:92*

*How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

*Psalms 119:103*

*Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart.*

*Psalms 119:111*

*Therefore I love your commandments above gold, above fine gold.*

*Psalms 119:127*

*Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them.*

*Psalms 119:129*

*Great is your mercy, O Lord; give me life according to your rules.*

*Psalms 119:156*



*I long for your salvation, O Lord, and your law is my delight. Let my soul live and praise you, and let your rules help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek your servant, for I do not forget your commandments.*

*Psalm 119:174-176*

*And behold, a man came up to him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?" And he said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments."*

*Matthew 19:16-17*

*Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life ..."*

*John 6:68*

### **What This Means ...**

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

*Psalm 119:105*

- Implications for studying and memorizing ...

*And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.*

*Deuteronomy 8:3*

- In our lives ...

*Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart.*

*Psalm 119:34*

*Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.*

*Psalm 119:97*

*My eyes are awake before the watches of the night, that I may meditate on your promise.  
Psalm 119:148*

- We must read the Bible \_\_\_\_\_ prayerfully \_\_\_\_\_ (we never study the Bible alone).

*Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.  
1 Corinthians 2:12-14*

- We must read the Bible humbly (we want to know God!).

*Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord."  
Jeremiah 9:23-24*

- We must read the Bible carefully (we want to understand it rightly).

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.  
2 Timothy 2:15*

- We must read the Bible \_\_\_\_\_ joyfully \_\_\_\_\_ (we want to experience it fully).

*I will run in the way of your commandments when you enlarge my heart!  
Psalm 119:32*

- We must read the Bible confidently (the Holy Spirit is in you!).

*If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

*John 14:15-17*

*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*

*John 16:13-15*

- We must read the Bible diligently (knowing God deeply doesn't happen overnight).
- We must read the Bible \_\_\_\_\_ completely \_\_\_\_\_ (don't skip over certain parts).
- We must read the Bible expectantly (read with a way to record your thoughts).

*And the Lord came and stood, calling as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears."*

*1 Samuel 3:10*

- We must read the Bible personally.

*I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways. I will delight in your statutes; I will not forget your word.*

*Psalms 119:15-16*

- We will fall in love with the \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_ of the Book.

*I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous rules.*

*Psalms 119:7*

- We will find true life under the authority of the Book.

*Behold, I long for your precepts; in your righteousness give me life!*

*Psalm 119:40*

- As we read, we must \_\_\_\_\_ memorize \_\_\_\_\_ ...

*I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*

*Psalm 119:11*

- Key verses.
  - Key passages.
  - Key chapters.
  - We spend concentrated time learning.
  - We spend continual time reviewing.
- In our homes ...

*And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

*Deuteronomy 6:6-9*

*Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

*Proverbs 22:6*

- We need a verbal commitment to the Word in our homes.
- We need a \_\_\_\_\_ visible \_\_\_\_\_ commitment to the Word in our homes.

*I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well.*

*2 Timothy 1:5*

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

*2 Timothy 3:14-15*

- We must teach the Scriptures.

*I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.*

*Psalm 78:2-8*

- We must tell the stories.

*I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your wonders of old. I will ponder all your work, and meditate on your mighty deeds. Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God? You are the God who works wonders; you have made known your might among the peoples. You with your arm redeemed your people, the children of Jacob and Joseph. Selah When the waters saw you, O God, when the waters saw you, they were afraid; indeed, the deep trembled. The clouds poured out water; the skies gave forth thunder; your arrows flashed on every side. The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind; your lightnings lighted up the world; the earth trembled and shook. Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were unseen. You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.*

*Psalm 77:11-20*

- We must warn against \_\_\_\_\_ sinfulness \_\_\_\_\_.

*The Ephraimites, armed with the bow, turned back on the day of battle. They did not keep God's covenant, but refused to walk according to his law. They forgot his works and the wonders that he had shown them. In the sight of their fathers he performed wonders in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan. He divided the sea and let them pass through it, and made the waters stand like a heap. In the daytime he led them with a cloud, and all the*

*night with a fiery light. He split rocks in the wilderness and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep. He made streams come out of the rock and caused waters to flow down like rivers. Yet they sinned still more against him, rebelling against the Most High in the desert. They tested God in their heart by demanding the food they craved. They spoke against God, saying, "Can God spread a table in the wilderness? He struck the rock so that water gushed out and streams overflowed. Can he also give bread or provide meat for his people?" Therefore, when the Lord heard, he was full of wrath; a fire was kindled against Jacob; his anger rose against Israel, because they did not believe in God and did not trust his saving power.*

*Psalm 78:9-22*

- We must exalt the Savior.

*And David spoke to the Lord the words of this song on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. He said, "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; you save me from violence. I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. For the waves of death encompassed me, the torrents of destruction assailed me; the cords of Sheol entangled me; the snares of death confronted me. In my distress I called upon the Lord; to my God I called. From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry came to his ears. Then the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations of the heavens trembled and quaked, because he was angry. Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him. He bowed the heavens and came down; thick darkness was under his feet. He rode on a cherub and flew; he was seen on the wings of the wind. He made darkness around him his canopy, thick clouds, a gathering of water. Out of the brightness before him coals of fire flamed forth. The Lord thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered his voice. And he sent out arrows and scattered them; lightning, and routed them. Then the channels of the sea were seen; the foundations of the world were laid bare, at the rebuke of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils. He sent from on high, he took me; he drew me out of many waters. He rescued me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me. They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my support. He brought me out into a broad place; he rescued me, because he delighted in me."*

*2 Samuel 22:1-20*

- Implications for preaching and listening ...

*And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship,  
to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*

*Acts 2:42*

“If Jesus Christ is the head of the church and hence the source and goal of its entire life, true growth is only possible in obedience to Him. Conversely, if the church becomes detached from Jesus Christ and His Word, it cannot grow however active and successful it may seem to be.”

Os Guinness

- The \_\_\_\_\_ church \_\_\_\_\_ is a community formed by God's Word.

*I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

*2 Timothy 4:1-5*

- The church is a community focused on God's Word.

*On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered. And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. And they took the youth away alive, and were not a little comforted.*

*Acts 20:7-12*

- The church reveres the \_\_\_\_\_ magnitude \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Word.

*In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.  
What can flesh do to me?  
Psalm 56:4*

- We realize the significance of God's revelation.
  - Creation is formed by His Word.

*By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God,  
so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.  
Hebrews 11:3*

- Storms are stilled by His Word.

*And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!"  
And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.  
Mark 4:39*

- Fevers are cooled by His Word.

*And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and  
immediately she rose and began to serve them.  
Luke 4:39*

- Demons are cast out by His Word.

*But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!"  
Mark 1:25*

- Sins are forgiven by His Word.

*And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your  
sins are forgiven."  
Mark 2:5*

- The blind are made to see by His Word.



*And Jesus said to him, "Recover your sight; your faith has made you well."*

*Luke 18:42*

- The dead are raised to life by His Word.

*When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."*

*John 11:43-44*

- The entire \_\_\_\_\_ universe \_\_\_\_\_ responds to His Word.

*To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing.*

*Isaiah 40:25-26*

"The design of the universe ... is very magnificent and shouldn't be taken for granted. In fact, I believe that is why Einstein had so little use for organized religions, although he strikes me as a basically very religious man. He must have looked at what the preachers said about God and felt that they were blaspheming. He had seen much more majesty than they had ever imagined, and they were just not talking about the real thing. My guess is that he simply felt that religions he'd run across did not have proper respect ... for the author of the universe."

Charles Misner

- We remember the \_\_\_\_\_ seriousness \_\_\_\_\_ of man's proclamation.

*In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light*

*shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*  
2 Corinthians 4:4-6

- The preacher \_\_\_\_\_ exposes \_\_\_\_\_ the voice of God.

*I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.*  
Deuteronomy 18:18

*And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and he said to me, “Say, Thus says the Lord: So you think, O house of Israel. For I know the things that come into your mind.”*  
Ezekiel 11:5

- The preacher \_\_\_\_\_ exalts \_\_\_\_\_ the greatness of God.

*Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.*  
Psalm 78:1-4

*And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.*  
Nehemiah 8:5-6

*In God, whose word I praise, in the Lord, whose word I praise ...*  
Psalm 56:10

*I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes.*  
Psalm 119:48

*I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word.*

*Psalm 138:2*

- The church respects the \_\_\_\_\_ authority \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Word.
  - Apart from the Word, the preacher is helpless.

*The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach ...*

*1 Timothy 3:1-2*

- Apart from the Word, the church is powerless.

*Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law.*

*Proverbs 29:18*

- The church recognizes the \_\_\_\_\_ relevance \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Word.
  - The Word speaks to contemporary needs.
  - The Word speaks with eternal promises.
    - Promises of success.

*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 good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*

*Joshua 1:8-9*

- Promises of blessing.

*The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of*

*the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*

*Psalms 19:7-11*

- Promises to guide.

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

*Psalms 119:105*

- Promises to comfort.

*Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.*

*Isaiah 40:1-2*

- Promises of peace.

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Philippians 4:4-7*

- Promises of wisdom.

*Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.*

*Matthew 7:24-27*

- Promises of salvation.

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

*2 Timothy 3:14-15*

- Why would we want to listen to anything else?
- The church realizes the \_\_\_\_\_ purpose \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Word.
  - To conform us to the image of Christ.
  - To bring us into step with the Spirit of Christ.
  - The focus in preaching: Human tips or divine text?
    - When we focus on human tips instead of the divine text ...
      - We rob ourselves of the truth that is necessary for realizing God's purpose in our lives.
      - We make disciples of ourselves.

*But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves*

*Matthew 23:13-15*

- We \_\_\_\_\_ rob \_\_\_\_\_ God of the glory due His name.

*And the Lord said to me: "The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I did not send them, nor did I command them or speak to them. They are prophesying to you a lying vision, worthless divination, and the deceit of their own minds."*

*Jeremiah 14:14*

- When we focus on the divine text instead of human tips ...
  - We fill ourselves with the truth that is necessary for realizing God's purpose in our lives.
  - We make disciples of Jesus.
  - We \_\_\_\_\_ glorify \_\_\_\_\_ God by becoming like Christ.

*For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

*Romans 8:29*

- The church reveals the \_\_\_\_\_ effect \_\_\_\_\_ of God's Word.
  - The Word elicits conviction.

*Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"*  
*Acts 2:37*

- People realize the gravity of their need.
- People realize the greatness of God's provision.
- The Word explains conversion.

*And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*  
*Acts 2:38*

- The Word establishes a craving.
  - As we are led by the Spirit ...
  - We long for the Word.

*So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good.*  
*1 Peter 2:1-3*

- Implications for praying and working ...
  - We pray according to God's Word ...

*If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.*  
*John 15:7-8*

- Appealing to God's \_\_\_\_\_ promises \_\_\_\_\_.

*And the Lord said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you." But Moses implored the Lord his God and said, "O Lord, why does your*

*wrath burn hot against your people, whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, 'With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.'"* And the Lord relented from the disaster that he had spoken of bringing on his people.

*Exodus 32:9-14*

- Clinging to God's \_\_\_\_\_ character \_\_\_\_\_.

*God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment: "How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Selah Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked." They have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken. I said, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince." Arise, O God, judge the earth; for you shall inherit all the nations!*

*Psalms 82:1-8*

*The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*

*2 Peter 3:9*

- Imitating God-inspired intercession.

*For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in*

*Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

*Ephesians 1:15-23*

*For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*

*Ephesians 3:14-21*

*And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

*Philippians 1:9-11*

*And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.*

*Colossians 1:9-12*

- We work according to God's Word.

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

*Psalms 119:105*



- The common question ...
  - How do I find God's will for my life?
- The good news ...
  - God's will is not \_\_\_\_\_ lost \_\_\_\_\_.
  - God's will is revealed in God's Word.

*I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.  
Psalm 40:8*

- Commune with God continually.

*O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I prepare  
a sacrifice for you and watch.  
Psalm 5:3*

*Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust.  
Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.  
Psalm 143:8*

- Hear God's Word constantly.

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in  
the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law  
of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.  
Psalm 1:1-2*

- Does the Bible prohibit a certain action?
- Will a certain action cause you to neglect a command in the Bible?
- If the Bible addresses it, \_\_\_\_\_ obey \_\_\_\_\_ the Bible!
- Exercise wisdom confidently.

*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without  
reproach, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting,  
for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the  
wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the  
Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.  
James 1:5-8*

- Pray with humility.
- Gather information.
- Consider options.
- Seek godly counsel.
- \_\_\_\_\_Act\_\_\_\_\_ accordingly.

*My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints. Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path; for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you ...*

*Proverbs 2:1-11*

- Implications for sending and going ...
  - \_\_\_\_\_All\_\_\_\_\_ people have God's general communication in the world.

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*

*Romans 1:18-20*

- Remember: General revelation leads to overall  
condemnation.

*Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*

*Romans 3:19-20*

- Many people do not have God's special revelation in His Word.

*For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?*

*Romans 10:13-14*

- The Bible is not available in their language.
- The gospel is not accessible where they live.

*For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, "Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand."*

*Romans 15:18-21*

- Over 6,000 people groups.
- At least 2.8 billion people.
- Remember: Special revelation leads to the opportunity for salvation.

*But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ...*

*Romans 3:21-24*

- If these 2.8 billion people in over 6,000 people groups do not hear and receive God's Word, they cannot experience salvation from their condemnation.

*And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

*Romans 10:15-17*

- o Therefore, it is the responsibility and \_\_\_\_\_ privilege of everyone who has God's Word to make it known to everyone in the world.

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

*Acts 1:8*

*And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.*

*Joel 2:28-32*

*But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

*Acts 2:16-21*

- By going ...

*And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

*Matthew 28:18-20*

- Right where we live.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wherever \_\_\_\_\_ God leads.

*And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it."*

*Luke 9:23-24*

- By sending ...

*Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.*

*Acts 13:1-4*

- From each of our \_\_\_\_\_ churches \_\_\_\_\_.
- With much of our \_\_\_\_\_ resources \_\_\_\_\_.

*This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while.*

*Romans 15:22-24*

## Critical Conclusions ...

- The Bible is divine. (Humans did not create it.)

*And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

*2 Peter 1:19-21*

- The Bible is true. (We can trust it.)

*The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.*

*Psalms 119:160*

- The Bible is clear. (We can understand it.)

*For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, "Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?" Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, "Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?" But the word is very near you.*

*It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.*

*Deuteronomy 30:11-14*

- The Bible is sufficient. (It is the only Book we need.)

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

*2 Timothy 3:16-17*

- The Bible is good. (It is worth giving our lives for.)

*You are good and do good; teach me your statutes.*

*Psalm 119:68*

### **Final Exhortations ...**

*And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate.*

*And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel. So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law. And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiyah, and Maaseiah on his right hand, and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiyah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept as they heard the words of the Law. Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved." And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.*

*Nehemiah 8:1-12*

- Let's revere this Word humbly.
- Let's receive this Word continually.
- Let's believe this Word completely.
  - Let's believe what this Word says about our lives.

*Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.*

*Matthew 10:37-39*

*And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it."*

*Luke 9:23-24*

- Let's believe what this Word says about the lost.

*They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might ...*

*2 Thessalonians 1:9*

*And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

*Revelation 20:15*

- Let's believe what this Word says about the poor.

*Whoever oppresses a poor man insults his Maker, but he who is generous to the needy honors him.*

*Proverbs 14:31*

*Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse.*

*Proverbs 28:27*

- Let's obey this Word confidently.
- Let's proclaim this Word urgently.



*And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus. This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.*

*Acts 19:8-10*

## Recommended Reading

If you are interested in exploring the topics covered in this Secret Church study further, the list of recommended resources below is a good place to start. Note, however, that neither David Platt nor Radical necessarily recommends everything contained in these resources. We urge you to filter everything you read through the truth of God's Word.

- Gregory Beale, *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism*
- D.A. Carson, *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures*
- Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*
- Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, *The Big Book of Bible Difficulties*
- Norman Geisler and William Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*
- Norman Geisler and William Roach, *Defending Inerrancy: Affirming the Accuracy of Scripture for a New Generation*
- Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*
- Carl F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority (6 volumes)*
- John Piper, *A Peculiar Glory*
- Robert Plummer, *40 Questions About Interpreting the Bible*
- R.C. Sproul, *Can I Trust the Bible?*
- Samuel Waldron, *The Canon of Scripture*
- E.J. Young, *Thy Word is Truth*

## Pray for Iran

The church in Iran is under constant attack.

Christians are routinely discriminated against, imprisoned, or sometimes even killed for their faith. Although the Iranian constitution recognizes minority religions that are historically common to Iran, Christians and other minorities face harsh restrictions and penalties. Churches are not allowed to preach or distribute materials in the official Iranian language. Sharing the gospel, especially with a Muslim, is strictly forbidden and heavily monitored.

The Islamic Revolution of 1979 ushered in a new Islamic Republic that condemned Christianity as a Western influence and a threat to Islamic Iran. Since the revolution, Christians have lived under strict Islamic laws and have been subject to widespread persecution. In 2017 Open Doors ranked Iran as #8 on their World Watch List for Christian persecution, labeling the persecution as “extreme.”

Christians make up less than one percent of Iran’s more than 81 million people. Muslims who convert to Christianity are declared apostates and face the harshest persecution. Though a handful of churches exist openly in Iran, most believers worship in underground house churches.

Despite all of this, the church in Iran is thriving.

Known Christians in Iran in 1979 numbered less than 500, but now conservative estimates place that number at over 300,000. Despite the efforts of the Islamic Revolution, Iranians have become increasingly disillusioned with Islam due to political and economic hardships. Open hostility to evangelical Christians caused much greater interest in the faith among Iranians, contributing to the growth of house churches. Though they face the harshest penalties, the number of Muslims coming to Christ in Iran continues to grow steadily.

Our brothers and sisters in Christ in Iran need our prayers. Join with us as we ask God to sustain their faith and empower their witness in the midst of extreme persecution. We are praying that, through the proclamation of the gospel, many Iranians would put their faith in Jesus Christ.

## **How to Pray for Iran**

- Ethnic Persians and all Muslims endure the harshest penalties for placing their faith in Christ.
  - **Pray** for all believers currently in prison in Iran. Ask God to encourage them in their hardship and give them the grace to persevere under persecution.
  - **Pray** for Muslim background believers to faithfully endure persecution and to share their faith with other Muslims around them.
  - **Pray** for Iranians who persecute Christians to come to Christ as a result of seeing the faith of those they persecute.
- Only a few churches operate openly in Iran, and these churches are heavily monitored by the government. Believers, especially from Muslim backgrounds, are forced to meet in underground house churches.
  - **Pray** for house churches to continue to multiply and spread the gospel.
  - **Pray** for Muslim background believers to find Christian fellowship and community in house churches.
  - **Pray** for Iranian pastors to be raised up who will equip their churches to grow in the faith and boldly proclaim Christ.
- Many Iranians have been reached through Christian satellite TV, even though satellites are officially banned in the country. Thousands respond to Christian TV programs monthly.
  - **Pray** for Christian TV to reach more Iranians with the gospel in their homes as the message of Christ is shared with those who would not hear it otherwise.
  - **Pray** for Iranians to come to faith in Christ through these TV programs and to find fellowship in local house churches.
  - **Pray** for access to satellite TV to continue despite its official ban.
- Of Iran's 47 people groups, 45 of those groups remain unreached with the gospel, and 25 of those groups are considered unengaged.
  - **Pray** for the church in Iran to take the gospel to unreached people groups in their own languages.
  - **Pray** for leaders in the Iranian church to have a desire to reach all the people groups in their country.

- **Pray** for unreached people groups to have more opportunities to hear the gospel and respond to Christ.
- Although the government is openly hostile to Christianity, the people in Iran are often more open. When an individual comes to Christ, it is not uncommon for his or her entire family to become interested in Christianity.
  - **Pray** for entire families to believe in Christ and to reach out to other families with the gospel.
  - **Pray** for new Iranian believers to boldly share the gospel with their friends and family members, even in the face of persecution.
  - **Pray** for influential families in Iran's government and business world to come to Christ.

(The above information was gathered from Operation World, Open Doors International, Prayercast, and Elam Ministries.)

## About David Platt

David Platt is the President of the IMB (International Mission Board) and founder of Radical, a resource ministry that serves churches in accomplishing the ministry of Christ. He previously served as the Senior Pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Alabama.

David Platt has authored the following books: *Radical*, *Radical Together*, *Follow Me*, and *Counter Culture*. He has also contributed to the following volumes in the Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary series: *Exalting Jesus in Matthew*, *Exalting Jesus in James*, *Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, and *Exalting Jesus in Galatians*.

David received his Master of Divinity (M.Div.), Master of Theology (Th.M.), and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He lives with his wife and four children in Richmond, Virginia.

# About Radical

As the resource ministry of David Platt, Radical exists to serve the church in accomplishing the mission of Christ.

We serve local churches by offering free online resources, by making translated sermons available in multiple languages, by hosting Secret Church, and in a variety of other ways.

Radical is committed to God's Word as our final authority, and we are therefore driven by the following core values:

- Desperate Prayer
- Unconditional Devotion
- Humble Service
- Biblical Integrity
- Global Compassion
- Trusting and Teaching the Word
- Making Disciples through Local Churches
- Reaching the Unreached

To learn more about Radical and to access our resources, visit [radical.net](http://radical.net).

## **Secret Church Resources from Radical**

### **Secret Church 17 Discussion Guide**

The Secret Church 17 Study Guide is designed to help you teach and lead others through the truths contained in Secret Church 17. The Discussion Guide includes summaries, key terms and concepts, and discussion questions for each main section. Use them in a one-on-one setting or to lead an entire group through Secret Church 17.

Go to [radical.net](http://radical.net) to order your Discussion Guide or to download it for free.

### **Secret Church Studies**

Secret Church studies from David Platt are available on a variety of topics.

Secret Church 1: Survey of the Old Testament

Secret Church 2: Survey of the New Testament

Secret Church 3: How to Study the Bible

Secret Church 4: Who Is God?

Secret Church 5: Exploring the Holy Spirit

Secret Church 6: The Cross of Christ

Secret Church 7: Angels, Demons, and Spiritual Warfare

Secret Church 8: The Gospel, Possessions, and Prosperity

Secret Church 9: The Body of Christ

Secret Church 10: Crucifixion, Salvation, and the Glory of God

Secret Church 11: Family, Marriage, Sex, and the Gospel

Secret Church 12: The Cross and Suffering

Secret Church 13: Heaven, Hell, and the End of the World

Secret Church 14: The Cross and Everyday Life

Secret Church 15: Christ, Culture, and a Call to Action

Secret Church 16: A Global Gospel in a World of Religions

Secret Church 17: Scripture and Authority in an Age of Skepticism

For more Secret Church resources from Radical (Study Guides, Discussion Guides, DVDs, and digital downloads), go to [radical.net](http://radical.net).



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