

The Authority of the Word

Key Verse: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Timothy 3:16-17

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Introduction

The foundation and guide for the Christian life is the word of God. Within its vast wisdom we find the keys to salvation for every area of our life: spirit, soul and body. For a person to be solid in his beliefs about God, he must establish each belief on the Word.

It is also important for us to believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, carrying with it this promise for those who believe it:

"Therefore whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not: **for it was founded upon a rock.**" Matthew 7:24-25

However, of those who decide they will not believe the word or only a portion of the word Jesus said:

"And everyone that hears these sayings of mine, and does them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon the house; and it fell: And great was the fall of it." Matthew 7:26-27

According to Matthew 7:24-27, what is the outcome of those who place their confidence in the word of God as final authority, and those who do not accept its authority?

Why Scripture Is Given

In 2 Timothy 3:16-17 we read:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

The word "inspiration" means "breathed out by God". Rephrased, this verse says, "all scripture was breathed out by God and is inspired and profitable for teaching,

conviction, correction, instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

To expand further the word *doctrine* is translated "instruction," *reproof* is translated "conviction of sin," *correction* is translated "improvement of character" and *instruction in righteousness*, has the idea of "training or discipline."

We could accurately paraphrase this verse this way:

“The scriptures for the salvation of our spirit, soul and body are Divinely breathed by God and are profitable for instruction, for the conviction of sin, for the improvement of our character and for our training in righteousness, so that we may be mature, being fully equipped for every beneficial work!”

The word of God is (and has) everything we need to become a complete and perfected Christian, fruitful in every good work!

 **According to 2 Timothy 3:16 the scriptures are profitable in least four ways. List those ways and explain them briefly.**

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

The Authorship of the Word of God

“For all scripture is given by inspiration of God (is God-breathed).” 2 Tim 3:16

“Know this first, that no prophecy is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” 2 Peter 1:20, 21

The Bible is not attributed to men, was not originated by the human mind, was not compiled, nor can it be accounted for, on human terms, but fantastically, it came down from God to us through human vessels speaking (and recording) for Him!

The Bible expresses the same truth when it speaks of the scriptures as the “Word of God,” the “Word of the Lord,” “My Word,” “thus says the Lord,” and in regards to men delivering it, “The word of the Lord came unto me!” **THE BIBLE IS GOD’S WORD!**

Because it is supernatural in origin, it sometimes seems like the Word is contrary to human reason. It is not contrary to reason, but contrary to the natural mind and ordinary human experience! Men being raised from the dead, being led by a pillar of fire and cloud, or hearing and writing the Word of God under Divine Guidance are not ordinary experiences... But given the extraordinary nature and abilities of God the events recorded for us are not contrary to reason. He can do anything!

The Word of God is completely trustworthy! We can build our lives on it without care because He watches over His Word to perform it and He is not a man that He can lie!

The Word of God Is Alive

The Bible is the only book that can be read over and over, and still bring new insights and understanding. There are no limits to what we can learn if we apply ourselves to the study of God's Word! Jesus said:

"It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63

There are two ways to learn spiritual things. First, we can learn mentally. We take things "in," think about them and come to certain conclusions. Learning at this level alone will always lead us into error when it comes to spiritual things, because spiritual things are discerned at a spiritual level! Second, we learn by direct revelation of the Spirit of God. He comes to quicken in us the things we know and to teach us things that we don't! This happens by a "quickening" of the things we read in the Word or by Spirit inspired teaching. The things we think we are hearing by direct revelation and the things we are taught must line up with the whole word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 says:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

When the word of God is applied to our lives, it is capable of cutting out unwanted areas and replacing it with the life of God.

 **From the scripture mentioned above, describe the characteristics of the word of God.**

Reasons For Studying The Bible

- The Bible will keep you from sin. Psalm 119:9-11
- It is a lamp unto our feet, lighting the way we should go Psalm 119:105
- The Bible is a guide to, and equipper on, the way of life. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- The word cleanses us. John 15:3, Ephesians 5:26
- The Bible causes people to live fruitful and prosperous lives. Psalm 1:1-3
- To rightly divide the word and not be ashamed. 2 Timothy 2:15
- The word is the Sword of the Spirit. Ephesians 6:13-17
- Because faith comes by the word. Romans 10:17
- Because we are destroyed for a lack of knowledge of the word. Hosea 4:6
- By it we receive hope Romans 15:4
- It brings us continuing salvation 1 Timothy 4:16
- It contains everything we need to live a godly life. 2 Peter 1:3-4

 **At home, look up the passages above and list the benefits we receive by studying the Bible. (Can you find more?)**

Man's Opinion In Light Of God's Word

The authority of God's word has been established. However, there are those who believe and preach contrary to the word. What should our attitude be?

We must obey God's Word

Once we have knowledge of the Word, we must be obedient to that word in order to call him Lord.

"And why call me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Luke 6:46

"As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Galatians 1:9

We must yield our personal opinions to scriptural authority.

Our preconceived ideas must be put away if they do not follow the established guidelines of the Bible. We should not change the word to line up with our understanding of it, but change our understanding to line up with the word.

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" 2 Corinthians 10:5

"There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end of it is death."
Proverbs 14:12

We must hold fast to, and stand for, sound doctrine.

"Hold fast to the pattern of truth you were taught, especially concerning the faith and love which is in Christ Jesus!" 2Timothy 1:13

"Know this, that in the last days dangerous times will come... And many will be led away with diverse lusts... But you continue in the things which you have learned and have been assured of, knowing of whom you have learned them; and that from a child you have known the holy scriptures which are

able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"
2Timothy 3:1,6,14,15

Preach the Word; be instant in season and out, reprove, rebuke, exhort with
longsuffering and doctrine for the time will come when people will not endure
sound doctrine, but after their own lusts will find for themselves reassuring
teachers, having itching ears; and they will turn away from the truth and they
will pursue fables" 2Timothy 4:2-4

 **What must our response be when we find that previously held doctrines and ideas are found to be contrary to the Word of God?**

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Getting the Most from the Word

We must read, hear and meditate on the Word.

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shall meditate therein day and night, that thou may observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shall make thy way prosperous, and then thou shall have good success." Joshua 1:8

We must set aside time every day to read the Word of God. It is food for our hearts just like the food we have for our bodies. Without it we starve. Try this -- don't eat food if you don't take time to imbibe the Word of God, pretty soon you'll be reading regularly! Listen to the word of God on CD in your car on the way to work or the store or wherever. Run a CD next to your bed before you knock out at night. Listen to it while you soak in the tub. Have it as background noise in your home or while you're working on a favorite project instead of the TV or radio. It will get inside you without a lot of effort. Meditate on it! To meditate means to "rollover in your mind" or to "think about" or to "mutter" something over and over, pressing it into your mind.

For genuinely sincere students, try this old mnemonic device; write the word! Start with a small epistle, sit down with your pen and a tablet, and write it out word for word (as if you were a centuries old scribe). Kick it up another notch by reading each phrase or verse out loud before you start writing and say it again as you write it! Engage the Word of God with your eyes, ears, voice, and hands and you'll find scriptures being indelibly imprinted on your mind and heart! What would happen if you scribed all the Pauline epistles... or the entire New Testament... or added the first five books of the OT? WOW! Try it! You'll love what happens to you!

 **What two promises are given for meditating on the Word?**

a. _____

b. _____

We must align ourselves with the Word of God.

We must confess the Word

"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised...)" Hebrews 10:23

The word profession here is translated - "confession". We are admonished to confess our faith and not to waiver for He is faithful.

When trials or temptations come be ready to meet and defeat them with the word. Confess the truth about yourself out loud!

We must examine ourselves by the Word.

"Examine yourself to find whether or not you are in the faith, prove your own selves." 2 Corinthians 13:5

All too often we "compare ourselves, with ourselves" and as scripture says, this is not wise! We can always develop a sense of false security about our lives if we are looking around at others to see how we are doing by comparison! We will always find someone doing worse than we are and the problem is that often it makes us feel good about ourselves! Jesus and the Word of God are the standards of our lives!

Let the Word of God become a mirror that you look in to see what you look like! Do you see Jesus in the pages of the Bible? How much like Him do you look? Do you see yourself in the Word? How close to it's calling to "higher ways, higher thoughts and heavenly places" are you?

We must apply the Word of God to ourselves.

Response To Truth

 **Do you believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God?**
_____ Yes _____ No

 **Are you willing to accept it as the final authority in your life?**
_____ Yes _____ No

 **How well are you applying the Word in the following areas of your life? (0-10, zero = not at all, 10 = working well)**

Doctrinal beliefs _____

Family relationships _____

Sexual conduct _____

all other relationships _____

Financial accountability _____

use of time _____

 **Are you willing to make a change?** _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

Final Thought!

Knowing the Word of God means knowing God! If you don't know the Word, you will always be hindered in knowing Him intimately. Through the Word we see His actions and learn His character. Through the Word we get familiar with His ways, drawing nearer to Him until, at some moment, we find ourselves in His wonderful presence. While we will never exist on this earth without the need to read and immerse ourselves in the Word, by spending quality time in the Word up front, we will come to the place where we will know His ways so well, we could live successfully in the end times without a copy of His word!

they will stand, they will fall; a) instruction, b) conviction of our sin, c) improvement of our character, d) for our training in righteousness; quick, powerful, sharp, piercing, dividing, discerner; personal response; a) obey God's Word, b) yield your own personal opinion, c) must hold onto truth and stand for it; a) way will be prosperous, b) have good success; personal response; personal response; personal response; personal response