

Renewed Unity Scripture

Scripture describes itself as a sword—the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17), sharper than a double-edged sword and able to penetrate soul and spirit and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Hebrews 4:12). We are called to accurately wield and handle the (s)word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15). A skilled swordsman not only knows how to use the sword, but is knowledgeable about how it is constructed and cared for. So, too, we must know both how to use the Bible and know about how it came about and has endured to this day.

Topic: The Bible is the most remarkable book in existence. It is a collection of 66 books that tell a story about God saving His people from their sins. The Bible has 40+ human authors and was written over 1500 years, yet has one ultimate author—Yahweh Himself—and contains eternal truths. The Bible is our sole rule for faith and practice. That is to say, the Bible is sufficient for explanation and implementation of faith which receives God’s saving grace. This is not to say that the church is of no value. Quite the contrary; the Bible details the birth, growth, and prescribes the necessary mission of the church. The Bible is the rule, or standard, against which the church’s doctrines and actions must be evaluated. Tradition has value, but that tradition must agree with Scripture to be valid.

- All authority belongs to God. How can God vest His authority into the Bible and into His chosen church leaders?
- Why do we need the Bible if believers have the Holy Spirit?
- Many people claim that God told them certain things. How does the Bible help us sort through these claims?
- How do you suppose God inspired His chosen authors to write His message? Did He give them word-for-word dictation?
- How does a knowledge of the Scriptures help prevent church errors? (Read Acts 17:11-12)
- Why is tradition valuable, but not as precious as Scripture? (Read 1 Corinthians 4:6 and Mark 7:6-9).
- How do we know that the Bible is accurate? (Does the following move your needle: Homer wrote in 900BC and the oldest copies of his work date from 400BC—500 years later, and there are 643 copies. Plato wrote in 400BC and the oldest copies of his work date from 900AD—1200 years later, and there are 7 copies. The New Testament was written between 40-80AD and the oldest copies of it date to 130-160AD—less than 100 years later, and there are 5600 copies!)

Association: We all have a connection to the word of God.

- Have you read the whole Bible?
- Was the Bible an important part of your upbringing?
- Is the Bible an important part of your contemporary life?
- What study have you done concerning the construction and transmission of the Bible?
- What study have you done regarding the accuracy of the Scripture?
- Do you prefer archaeology or fulfilled prophecy as evidence of accuracy?
- How and when did you fall in love with God’s word?

Guidance: Share your best techniques and tips for studying the content and construction of the Bible.

- Practice summarizing the Essential Christian Doctrine in list form and in narrative form.
- Pray for and with one another to become more practiced wielders of the word.