

The Word of God

By Jared Craft 6/12-13/2021

2 Timothy 3:15-17 // 2 Timothy 4:1-5 // Romans 12:2 // Jeremiah 1:12 // Malachi 2:7-9 // ROMANS 1:18-21 // JOHN 1:1-3 // GALATIANS 4:4-7 // ROMANS 10:13

How can we think rightly?

How can we trust what we know?

What is revealed in God's Word?

I want to start out with a couple of definitions that are going to help us today:

Doctrine: The foundation of the Church's faith and practice. Healthy, biblical doctrine leads to how we think rightly. In other words, faithful doctrine leads us to healthy practice. If we are intentional about our doctrine, by God's grace, we will build a strong understanding of theology.

Theology being the study of the nature of God.

2 Timothy 3:15-17 (ESV)

¹⁵and 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.

¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 4:1-5 (ESV)

¹I 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:

²preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

³For 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, ⁴and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

⁵As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

1. How can we think rightly today?

Quote

What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.

A.Z. Tozer,

Romans 12:2 (ESV)

²Do 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.

The new birth gives us a new mind. God gives us a new heart and we are born again. We begin to have new desires, new affections, new love, new life, and new thinking. **ALL THINGS ARE MADE NEW.**

So the question, “How can we think rightly?” must be answered by looking to the Scriptures that were carefully and purposefully breathed by God himself.

Theopneustos (God Breathed) (Inspired) 2 Tim. 3:16

We must recognize Scripture for what it is. It is the revelation of God.

God is the ultimate subject and the object or purpose of Scripture.

Anything that we could ever know or understand or think or dream is because God has revealed that knowledge and allowed us to do so and he does so not that we would be selfish or man centered in our thinking, but that He alone would be glorified in it.

To be human is to be conscious that we are designed and created by God. We only operate correctly when we willingly and delightedly yield to the authoritative voice of the One who is holy.

The human mind NEVER functions as Creator or (independently). It only functions as one that is created.

Each one of us make decisions every single day based off of how we think about God and how we would see our identity and purpose in the world.

To think rightly firstly begins with seeing this distinction. We are able to think rightly because he has given us his Word through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We have the incredible gift of God's Word to orientate us according to designed purposes, to teach us, to worship the Creator, and to equip the church with with Gospel-centeredness to follow Christ's command to grow the kingdom of God by teaching and preaching this good Word.

God's has given us a look into his redemption plan. The Scriptures are God's revelation of how he was able to make it so an unholy people (us) be able to be in the presence of a Holy Creator (him) without compromising who he is. What HE HAS GIVEN in his Word is the only way that we can know of our sinful state and to know of the redemptive plan he put in place through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

This is why the truth of God's Word must shape our thinking. It's what gives us hope.

The Word of God is meant to be believed, obeyed, and does not depend on the testimony of Man, or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the author of the Scriptures, and therefore it is to be received as authority.

It's not that we are saved by being obedient, but a life that has faith in Christ is led to be obedient. It is the result of our faith.

Revelation of God must govern or rule our human thought.

Even when the world is demanding something different.

2. How can we trust what we know?

Quote

Let us study the Bible with diligence, go to that fountain of truth and never be satisfied with a secondhand version of it.

Charles Spurgeon, Sermon from Sept. 1 1878

Let's look at the ideas behind *infallibility* and *inerrancy* of Scripture.

a. Infallibility has to do with possibilities, and it means that the Word of God is incapable of erring.

b. Inerrancy means that the Scriptures do not affirm any errors. The Bible does not endorse anything untrue. When it tells history, it tells us what actually happened. It may report on what a person said when he told a lie to someone else, but it does not endorse the lie. It is merely giving an accurate report of what the liar said. Where it speaks to science, it does not contradict God's revelation in the natural world. The Bible is entirely truthful and has no errors at all in the original manuscripts that the prophets and Apostles actually wrote.

If God never lies, His Word never lies either. We can therefore trust it to be free from all error.

So then, let's ask this question about God's Word:

Do we, today, have the very words of the biblical authors?

There are many scholars and skeptics that would disagree with this because of the original biblical languages being Hebrew and Greek.

Here's what we know:

Jeremiah 1:12 (ESV)

¹²Then the Lord said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to perform it."

Let's take a very quick look at what Jesus taught about the Scriptures.

1. It is divinely authoritative.

When tempted by Satan, Jesus corrected him by quoting from the Old Testament.

He said, "It is written, 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" . . . Jesus answered him, 'It is also written: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test." . . . Then Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only"' (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10). Why would Jesus so confidently quote from the Old Testament if the Old Testament was not authoritative? He must have considered the Old Testament to be a source of truth in order to dismiss his most powerful enemy with it.

In fact, on ninety-two occasions Jesus and his apostles supported their position by saying "it is written" (or the equivalent) and then quoting the Old Testament. Why? Because Jesus and his apostles considered the Old Testament Scriptures to be the written Word of God, and thus the ultimate authority for life.

2. It is imperishable.

In the Sermon on the Mount, a passage loved by many, Jesus claimed that not even the smallest little mark in the Scriptures—the equivalent of a dot on an "i" or a cross on a "t"—will ever perish: "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets," he declared. "I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one iota will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled" (Matt. 5:17). Jesus could not express the imperishability of the Scriptures more forcefully.

3. It's infallible.

In John 10, Jesus was about to be stoned for blasphemy. To get himself out of this jam, Jesus cited the Old Testament and declared, "the Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). In other words, when his life was on the line, Jesus referred to an infallible authority that cannot be broken—the Scripture. Furthermore, he later affirmed the truth of the Scriptures when he prayed for the disciples, "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:17).

4. It's inerrant.

When the Sadducees tried to trap Jesus with a question, Jesus said to them, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God" (Matt. 22:29). The implication, of course, is that the Scriptures are inerrant. It wouldn't make any sense for Jesus to say, "You are in error because you don't know the Scriptures, which also err!"

5. It is historically reliable.

Jesus affirmed two of the most historically disputed stories in the Old Testament: Noah (Matt. 24:37–38) and Jonah (Matt. 12:40). Jesus spoke of those stories as being historically true. And why wouldn't they be true? The miracles associated with Noah and Jonah are child's play for the all-powerful God who created the universe. With our limited intelligence, we build great ships and keep people alive for months underwater. Why couldn't God do the same?

6. It is scientifically accurate.

He told Nicodemus, "If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?" (John 3:12, NASB). In other words, Jesus taught that if the Bible does not speak truthfully about the physical world that you can see, then it cannot be trusted when it speaks about the spiritual world that you cannot see. Indeed, Christianity is built on historical events—such as Creation and the Resurrection—that can be tested through scientific and historical investigation. While other religions may accept a complete separation from science, Christians do not. Truth about the universe cannot be contradictory. Since all truth is God's truth, then scientific fact must agree with biblical truth. As we have seen, many of the claims of Christianity are affirmed by scientific investigation. Christ knew it would be this way.

7. It has ultimate supremacy.

The pharisees: He said, "Why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? . . . You nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition" (Matt. 15:3, 6). He then blasted them for failing to live up to the Scriptures by quoting from the Old Testament: "You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men'" (Matt. 15:7–9). Why would Jesus correct the religious leaders of Israel with the Old Testament unless the Old Testament had ultimate supremacy over their own ideas?

There's no question Jesus considered the entire Old Testament to be the inerrant, written Word of God. He said he came to fulfill the entire Jewish Old Testament (Matt. 5:17), which he referred to as "the Law and the Prophets" (Matt. 5:17; Luke

24:26–27). And he told the Jews, “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life” (John 5:39–40). So Jesus came to fulfill the Scriptures that testify of him.

Jesus came to fulfill the Scriptures and Law and then points us back to Scripture that we would be sanctified by it in his high priestly prayer.

We can trust what we know because of God’s goodness and faithfulness.

He has been generous in his giving of the Word.

In a world made by God, he has spoken in a way, in human language, so that we could even understand. Do you see the majesty of this?

How cruel would it be if God only revealed himself in ways that none of us could ever understand?

Spotting the difference between truth and lies:

It is important that we know the Word of God so that we can identify and avoid those teachings that add to the Gospel, subtract from it, or add in their own ideas or agenda when preaching. Don’t add to it. Don’t change it. **Exegesis // Eisegesis**

You see: Paul makes a remarkable statement in 1 Timothy 6:3-4, “If anyone teaches false doctrine and does not agree with the sound teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the teaching that promotes godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing.

The problem here is that a false teacher chooses their preferred doctrines over God’s revealed doctrines. That isn’t just an error; it says, “I trust my own opinions and perspectives more than I trust God’s.”

Should the church still act as though new prophecies or revelations still happen today?

The simple answer is No.

Biblical canon is closed. We would consider the 66 books of the protestant Bible as the foundation that we must rest upon.

Sola Scriptura (God’s Word Alone)

As we look to God’s Word, both OT or the NT, we see it as Christo-centric. (Christ-centered) from beginning to end.

As Christ has already been revealed, there is nothing new or greater that can be revealed.

Beware of anyone that says that there is anything new to be considered that should be seen as authoritative.

Beware of anyone that suggests that anything greater than Christ can be revealed.

Quote

“If private revelations agree with Scripture, they are unnecessary and if they disagree they are false.”

John Owen, Private Revelations

Malachi 2:7-9 (ESV)

⁷For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.

⁸But you have turned aside from the way. You have caused many to stumble by your instruction. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of hosts,

⁹and so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch as you do not keep my ways but show partiality in your instruction.”

These teachers have compromised the truth.

When the word of God is distorted people will have a distorted view of who he is and therefore they will have a disillusioned view of what their purpose and identity is in the world today. If we get the gospel wrong, two very terrible things happen. God is not glorified, and people are not saved.

What we can **certainly** believe in when it comes to hearing from God is this: The doctrine of illumination through the Holy Spirit.

Whereas Inspiration is from God and in His righteousness and grace do we have the scriptures.

Illumination is a specific work of the Spirit to reveal to us the meaning of the Word that has already been written.

The term inspiration refers to the work of the Holy spirit conveying the Word of God into the minds of the biblical authors and inspiring them to dictate it as God intended. ... Illumination is the Holy Spirit's work of guiding and teaching believers in God's message.

Quote

“The mind needs to be enlightened by light from outside itself, so that it can participate in truth, because it is not itself the nature of truth.”

St. Augustine , Illumination

Quote

“The Spirit’s illumination does not change Scripture, it changes us.”

David Garner,

3. What is revealed in God's Word

Bible Verse

Romans 1:18-21 (ESV)

¹⁸For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

¹⁹For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them.

²⁰For 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.

²¹For 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.

When we read these verses, we must recognize that there are men, women, and children in our community are lost.

Do we see them the way that Paul sees them. The way God sees them?

Are we eager to share the Gospel? Do we have a boldness that is matched with sincere compassion and love? As our opening verse states, do we bring correction, do we equip, do we desire for them to know Jesus?

There is a sad and terrible judgment coming for those that do not know Christ.

You see, to be aware of nature around you is not enough. We need the specific or special revelation of God’s Word and his redemptive plan to know that there is hope!

So let’s now look at Special Revelation, specifically as it relates to Jesus Christ the messiah. God in flesh.

John 1:1-3 (ESV)

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

²He was in the beginning with God.

³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4. THE MORE IMPORTANT QUESTION WE SHOULD ASK IS "WHO IS REVEALED IN GOD'S WORD?"

Because of sin, each of us are in a state of brokenness and decay. Every illness, every fit of anger, every decaying thing that we may see or experience is because of sin. All of us has sinned.

All of us has failed in some way, shape, or form to perfectly see God for who he is and worship him perfectly and keep his Law perfectly, and love our neighbor perfectly.

But we have this hope.

Galatians 4:4-7 (ESV)

⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,

⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

The Law, again we would consider as God's Law, was lived out perfectly by Jesus Christ.

Jesus was born under the Law and in the humble flesh of humanity so that he would be able to perfectly relate to us.

His fulfillment of Law and prophecy would mean that we can now have the opportunity, should we place sincere faith in his work and not our own, that we may now be justified and perfected by the process of sanctification. We would be saved and perfected. in Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:13 (KJV)

¹³For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Benediction/ Encouragement

May the Holy Spirit, as we should believe in the doctrine of illumination... May He illuminate these Words that we have studied today. May he awaken the eyes of your heart and soul. May God write his Word upon our hearts. May the Spirit fill you to call

out upon the name of the Lord. May he regenerate your heart for you to be born again. To see the kingdom of God, you must be born again as Jesus says in John 3. May the Spirit fill you to call out to the Father in heaven in an incredibly intimate way. Dad, Father, cry out for salvation.

Receive the gift that is certainly available to you because of the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

This gift was promised to us in Genesis and was born in a manger in humility.

This gift was nailed to a cross and bore our shame and sin.

This gift is Jesus Christ himself.

We must have a high regard for faithful doctrine when we preach or minister to people in the Word of God.

J I Packer a humble and brilliant theologian that we lost last year, but heaven gained, said this about this matter:

“Doctrinal preaching certainly bores the hypocrites, but it is only doctrinal preaching that will save Christ’s sheep.”

Bottom Line

WHY SHOULD THERE BE SUCH A HIGH PRIORITY PLACED ON GOD’S WORD, why should the Word of God be so important IN MY LIFE?

WHEN WE HAVE A HIGH REGARD FOR FAITHFUL TEACHING OF GOD’S WORD IN THE CHURCH, IT DEEPENS OUR UNDERSTANDING OF CHRIST, DEEPENS OUR CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST, DEEPENS OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST.

Final Payer

Father in heaven, gracious God.

We thank you for your holy Word. We thank you for your commands, promises, direction, and light to illuminate them to our hearts.
In them may we learn more of Christ, be enabled to retain your truth and may we have the grace to follow it.

Help us open up the gates of our souls that Christ may come in and show himself when we search your Scriptures, for we have no ability to understand how deep or no ability to understand how high your ways are.

By your Spirit's help may we explore more of your truths and not only search them, but love them with all that is within our hearts.

Tether your Word to our lives. Bind them on our hearts.
Let your Word take deep root within us. May it be the deep and strong foundation in our lives.

May it refresh us daily. May we see the good graces that are promised for the one that remains faithful.
Father, we repent of any wrongdoing and sinful deed against you. We repent of anytime that we believe we know better than you.

Help us to see the treasure stored in your Word, O God.
As we dig into the pages of Scripture may our faith increase when we recognize your goodness to give us promises and that you have kept them all.

Because you have done this Lord, please deepen our understanding, deepen our confidence, and deepen our relationship with Christ.

May all of this be for your Glory, Father. That you would be glorified and that we would enjoy you now and forevermore.

We ask these great things of a great God.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen.