

# The Word Made Flesh

## What Christians Believe About the Bible

John 7:53-8:11

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### I. Introduction

- A. Continuing the series *The Word Made Flesh*, walking verse by verse through John.
- B. Recap of John 7 and the Feast of Tabernacles:
  - 1. Celebrating God's provision of water, fire, and presence in Israel's wilderness journey
  - 2. Anticipating God's future dwelling (tabernacling) with His people
  - 3. John shows Jesus as the fulfillment of the Feast
- C. Beginning John 8—an important and fascinating passage requiring theological clarity.
- D. The sermon begins with:
  - 1. What Christians believe about the Bible
  - 2. How the Bible we have today was formed
  - 3. Why this matters for John 7:53–8:11

### II. What Christians Should Believe About the Bible

- A. Inspiration
  - 1. Scripture is “God-breathed”—God is the ultimate author.
  - 2. Human authors wrote with personality, style, vocabulary under God’s direction.
  - 3. Inspiration applies only to the original manuscripts.
  - 4. Implication: What Scripture says, God says.
- B. Inerrancy
  - 1. Everything Scripture affirms is true because God cannot lie.
  - 2. Applies to the original writings, not every later copy.
  - 3. Not everything is literal—genres and intentions matter.

## When God Offends

4. Implications:
  - a. Scripture is true
  - b. Scripture is reliable
  - c. Doctrine can be built from Scripture

### C. Infallibility

1. Scripture cannot fail because God cannot fail.
2. It will accomplish God's purposes perfectly.
3. Implications:
  - a. Everything God intended to reveal is true
  - b. Everything He inspired is trustworthy
  - c. Everything He breathed out accomplishes its purpose

### D. Important Clarification

1. These doctrines apply only to the originals, not copies or translations.
2. Translations are not inspired or inerrant—but they are accurate, trustworthy, and sufficient.

## III. Why Christians Believe This

- A. These doctrines come from Judaism and Jesus' own understanding of Scripture.
- B. When Paul wrote "All Scripture is God-breathed," he was referring to the OT.
- C. The NT was later recognized as Scripture because:
  1. It bore divine authority
  2. It came from apostles or close associates
  3. It aligned with Jesus' teaching and the OT
- D. The NT arose from real ministry, real churches, real pastoral needs.

## IV. Quick Summary Before Reading the Passage



## When God Offends

- A. Both Testaments are inspired, inerrant, and infallible in their originals.
- B. Translations are faithful and sufficient.
- C. The Bible you hold is trustworthy.

### **V. Reading the Passage — John 7:53–8:11**

### **VI. The Bombshell: This Passage Is a Later Addition**

- A. This entire story is absent from the earliest and best manuscripts.
- B. In John's original text, the narrative moves directly from 7:52 to 8:12.
- C. This is one of the three major additions in our modern translations.

### **VII. How Did the Passage Get There?**

- A. The story appears in manuscripts around AD 400.
- B. The story was widely known and circulated orally in the early church.
- C. Scribes inserted it to preserve a beloved and well-known narrative.
- D. It becomes widely included in copies from AD 700–900.
- E. The KJV used medieval manuscripts, so it included this passage.
- F. Later discoveries of much earlier manuscripts revealed it was not original.
- G. The early church fathers' writings give us over one million NT quotations—enough to reconstruct the NT even if every manuscript vanished.

## When God Offends

### VIII. Why Modern Bibles Still Include It

- A. The story is ancient.
- B. It is known in church tradition.
- C. It reflects Jesus' character and matches His teachings.
- D. Translation committees choose transparency over erasure.
- E. Brackets and footnotes tell you exactly what is original and what is not.
- F. The presence of notes strengthens—not weakens—trust in the Scriptures.

### IX. To the Person Who Feels Uneasy

- A. The fact that you *know* this is proof your Bible is trustworthy.
- B. Nothing is hidden; everything is transparent.
- C. We can identify additions because:
  - 1. Manuscript evidence is overwhelming
  - 2. Early Christian writings confirm original readings
  - 3. Scholars are forthright, not secretive
- D. This story is not part of John's autograph, but:
  - 1. It is ancient
  - 2. It aligns with the Gospels
  - 3. It reflects Jesus' mercy and truth
  - 4. God has used it for centuries
- E. Your Bible is the most historically supported ancient text in existence.



## When God Offends

F. No doctrine changes with or without this passage.

### **X. Communion Application**

- A. If Scripture is preserved, the gospel is preserved.
- B. If God safeguarded His Word, He can safeguard your soul.
- C. If God's Word in ink is trustworthy, God's Word in blood is even more so.
- D. Communion is a moment to rest in the faithfulness of God to preserve His promise, His gospel, and His people.