

If you have your book split, you can turn to page five. This is title preparation for lessons two and three. Obviously, you are welcome to do that at home if you desire the true or false questions, but I figure we can kind of go over them together. So, the first true or false question here, which is found on page 5, is this.

True or false? The New Testament is more valuable than the Old Testament. And we want to say false to that. We want to say false. While we can acknowledge that there is a fulfillment of the Old Testament, in the New Testament there is a greater light. In the New Testament, in terms of its fullness, it's not more valuable.

We want to be careful how we speak about these things. You probably felt me struggling with that as I've been preaching through Hebrews, because I have a little bit, even in the way I've been having to wrestle through these things. But even in Hebrews, it's so interesting to me to think about how he makes that statement in verse 1. You know, 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, or through His Son.

And so, that does show the fullness that has come in Christ. But then, to prove that very argument, what does He do? He goes on in verses 4 through 14 of Hebrews 1, to quote seven Old Testament texts. So how does he sort of prove that the fullness has arrived? By quoting the Old Testament, that it was pointing to this fullness that has arrived.

So in other words, we don't want to fall into the mistake of thinking the Old Testament's unimportant, I don't really need it, I just need the New Testament. They're both valuable. The way P.B. Warfield somewhere put it, I think he was actually, may have particularly been speaking on the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament, but here's how he put it, it's so helpful, I think.

He said, He said, the Old Testament is like, imagine you come into a room and the lights turned off, and there's maybe some windows, and there's some dim moonlight, or maybe just a little bit of the sun is managing to peek through some windows, so you can kind of see the furniture in the room, but not a whole lot.

And then when you come to the New Testament, it's like that light has been flipped on, and now you can see all the furniture in the room much more clearly. But that didn't add any new furniture to that room that you were in. It just merely showed more clearly the furniture that was already in the room, right? you walk into the room, now it's dark, the light turns on. Oh, now I can see how many chairs are in here. I knew there were some chairs, I could kind of tell what was going on, but now the light's been turned on.

And so that's one way we might think about it. It's not as though the New Testament is giving us something that's entirely different than the Old Testament, but it's more fully showing it. But in terms of their value, they're both needed. They're both the Word of God. They're both true, authoritative, all those things, and so we want to say false to that first question. Then we go on here to the second one. Actually, if I could, I find it helpful personally, so maybe it's helpful for y'all. I kind of just did this from Hebrews 1, but let me give at least one other example of a place in Scripture where we can see that they're both of equal value.

First, Timothy 5.18.

First, Timothy 5.18. is helpful in showing us the unified value of both Old and New Testaments.

So, 1 Timothy 5.18, we read this.

Paul, the apostle, is writing by divine inspiration, and he says, For the scripture says, You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain. Okay, so he says, the scripture says, you shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain. Bonus points if you know where that comes from. There's no way I would have known if I didn't just look.

Deuteronomy 25.4. But it's from the Old Testament, right? I mean, I knew that much. You probably knew that much, right? It's from the Old Testament. Where exactly?

Well, Deuteronomy 25.4. So he says, the scriptures say, the scripture says, you shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain.

That's the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 25.4. and the laborer deserves his wages." Where is that from?

Jesus Christ, Luke 10 7. So right here, right parallel to one another, he says the Scripture singular, and then he quotes from the Old Testament to make his point, and the New Testament to make his point. They're both valuable. Do you see that? So he's quoting from the Old Testament to make his point, And then right next to that, he quotes from the New Testament to make his point. And I think from that, we can see their unified value.

So the two quotations there are from Deuteronomy 25.4 and Luke 10.7. Another just really quick passing remark that I always found very interesting is Acts 15, to the same effect of the value of the Old Testament, Acts 15.

There, they're at the Jerusalem Council. They're trying to figure out some issues in the church. You've got a lot of the apostles together, the elders are together, and again, apostles are there, Peter and so forth, and they spend all this time in prayer and so forth, and then Peter reads something from the Old Testament. I think it's Peter or James, one of the two. They read something from the Old Testament, and it's a breakthrough as they're trying to answer this problem in the church, this question in the church. And it's interesting to think about here, you've got Peter and James and other apostles together, and they're trying to figure something out in the church.

If anybody could just figure it out by either their intellect or sort of by a direct revelation from God, you know, just tell me what we're supposed to do, God, it would have been these guys, right? I mean, they're literally the apostles and first elders of the church, but what do they do? Acts 15, they appeal to the Old Testament so that you see the value of it for God's people.

So the New Testament is more valuable than the Old Testament, that's false. Then two here, God still speaks, and I put here in my little note, audibly to people today apart from the Bible. The answer's false. God does not speak to people audibly anymore. Now that can be offensive, that can be considered whatever, but in an audible way, God does not speak to people like he did in the Old Testament times.

Now, I think probably many of us, maybe even in this room, could tell a story about a time when it was as if God spoke to us. And I understand that type of speak. I understand why we might sit like... I was going through something extremely difficult. You know, you might say, I was going through this very hard time, you know, very, very hard. You're thinking of like the worst moments of your life kind of thing. And it's as if God spoke to you. And I wouldn't say, oh, well, that didn't really happen.

But I do want to say that I don't think there's a divine revelation in the same way that the scriptures are. And it's more of a sense of God communicating, a sense of God's comfort, a special sense of his presence. But the scriptures, as I understand them, teach us that there is no audible voice as if God comes and whispers in my ear to do something or to whatever, believe something. So, three, true or false, the only evidence we have that God exists is what is recorded for us in the Bible. The only evidence we have that God exists is what is recorded for us in the Bible. That's false, right? We have all sorts of other evidences. created world, our own consciences, and so forth, evidence the truth of the existence of God.

Four, true or false inerrancy means the words of the Bible in the original manuscripts are without error. Inerrancy means the words of the Bible and the original manuscripts are without error, and that's true. There's no error whatsoever in the original manuscripts of the scriptures. Absolutely none whatsoever.

So that of course means that we can trust our Bibles. The Bible is the only infallible rule of faith in life for Christians today. That is also true. It's the only infallible rule of faith in life. When we're ultimately trying to figure out, how am I supposed to live my life? What am I supposed to believe? We go to the Bible. That's our authority. That's very good. Six here. The writers of Scripture, Moses, David, Paul, etc. expressed their own style in their writings, but were kept from error by the Holy Spirit. And this is true, right? This is true.

So that's why David doesn't sound quite like Paul. And that's why Paul doesn't sound quite like Peter. That's why, you know, Moses doesn't sound quite like Isaiah. It's because they were the people they really were. They had their own personalities. They had their own vocabularies. When Isaiah was writing, he's not gonna start using words he doesn't know. He's gonna use the words that he knows. Now, And that in no way puts into question inspiration, right?

They were being fully inspired, but their whole lives were underneath God's providential control. So everything they knew, all their personalities, all their upbringings were underneath God's control. So when they went to write, they were being fully inspired, but God was using the people whom he had made, those actual people.

Moses, Paul, and so forth. He was using them and their personalities and their gifts and all those things, and in a way that is, of course, different than any other human writing, but he was fully using those people and working through them such that they are distinct in the way that they sound.

But the content, I should say, is always unified. You're never going to find something in Paul that contradicts Peter or anything of that sort. Seven, true or false, to say that the Bible is inspired means it inspires everyone who reads it with an open mind. That's false, right? It might inspire you, but that's not what it's meant.

Inspired here is referring to the Bible being breathed out by God, breathed out by God. Inspiration is by the expiration, the breathing out of God's word into The Bible so that comes from 1st Timothy 3 16 all scripture is breathed out. That's our word where we get our idea of inspiration It's breathed out by God and profitable for teaching for a proof for correction and for training in righteousness. So This is what inspiration is all about. It's God's Word being breathed out now every part of of the Bible is inspired. True. Every part of the Bible is inspired. And we call this plenary inspiration. That's the fancy theological term. Plenary inspiration meaning full or all. is full, entire inspiration, such that every single word of the Bible is inspired by God.

So, somebody might say to you, well, that seems a little bit closed-minded. You can't really believe that that book that's been passed down for now, you know, even the New Testament for nearly 2,000 years, or you had to go to the Old Testament, talking about 3,500 years. Can you tell me for 3,500 years, the Old Testament in particular, those books of Moses have been preserved and you can trust them? And I would say yes.

And the reason is, in some ways, it's as simple as, well, God tells me he never lies, God told me he wrote his Bible, therefore, I can trust it. But on a more technical level, we can trust our Bibles because the Bible itself tells us that every single word is trustworthy. So, for example, in Jeremiah 1-9, God says this to Jeremiah, 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." So every single word of Jeremiah, for example, was God's words in Jeremiah's mouth. And that's true of all the prophets.

So a lot of people, maybe not around here, I don't know, but just speaking in general, speaking in certainly the academic world, they would say, well, just the ideas about God were inspired. So, you know, Margaret kind of has this idea about God, and she's got these thoughts in her head, and she just, God kind of gave her those thoughts, and she can use whatever words she wants to kind of describe those thoughts. So that's what Moses did, and that's what Isaiah did, and that's what Paul did, and of course the end result of a view like that is that you really don't know if it's trustworthy, you know, what makes Margaret sort of inspired. Writings any better than anyone else. I mean, it's very nebulous. It's very It certainly is certainly takes away from the authority of Scripture But what does the Bible say?

Well behold I have put my words in your mouth not just ideas the very words That's why you'll have noticed perhaps here at Second Presbyterian Church. I nearly always say not that this has to be said It's just what I say, but but it is it's certainly scriptural to say this. I'll say this is the Word of God I'm not, before I read the Bible, because I'm not saying, you know, these are some ideas that we like and we think they're pretty neat, or, you know, some of these words are God's words I'm about to read, so pay attention to about half of them. No, I'm saying this is God's Word.

This is what He says. Another neat way, though, that we can see that the very words are inspired is the way even the New Testament uses the Bible. So, in Galatians chapter 3, Galatians chapter 3, verse 16, Paul is talking here about Abraham and the promises that are fulfilled in Christ that were spoken to Abraham, and he can build a portion of

his argument on the presence or absence of a single letter in the Hebrew Bible, from which he is quoting. Whether the word offspring is singular or plural. Offspring or offsprings.

So look at this, Galatians 3.16. Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring.

It does not say, and to offsprings, referring to many, but referring to one, and to your offspring, who is Christ. So the point with that quotation that I'm wanting to make for our context is, you notice that Paul builds his argument that Abraham's offspring, which is referring back to Genesis 17, finds its fulfillment in Christ, one of the ways he's making that argument is because it doesn't say offsprings, referring to many. It's got to have, in other words, Paul is saying that Genesis 17 has to have a singular individual where that promise finds its fulfillment, an offspring, singular, not offsprings. If it were offsprings, then Christ couldn't ultimately be the only climax and fulfillment of that promise, right?

Because there would have been other people that were maybe equally or alongside of him, the final fulfillment of that promise. But he says, no, it says offspring in the singular. But my point right now is he builds an entire argument off of a word being in the singular versus being in the plural. Paul obviously believed that he could trust every single jot and tittle of the Bible.

Then Jesus, in Matthew 5.17, has this same sort of thing. Y'all will perhaps remember these words of Jesus Christ, but just wanted to make us just fully confident in the trustworthiness of the Bible.

Matthew 5.17, do not think that I have come to abolish the law of 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." And we could multiply this, but this is why we believe in the plenary or full inspiration of the Bible.

So God reveals himself in nature. True or false? That's true. Of course, God reveals himself in nature, in the world around us. Number 10, creation is enough to show us what we must do to be saved. That's false. Creation can show us that we need to be saved, right? And it can even tell us some things about God, but it can't tell us about Jesus. It can't tell us about an atonement, right?

I always think of when this discussion comes up, and it's a reasonable one, I can understand where people are coming from. It's very, very, I could really mean that I can understand why this is a discussion that people have. When the discussion comes up, well, what about people who haven't heard about Jesus? Well, all I can say is, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart, you will be saved. And as plain as it is, as hard as it might sound, I don't see any way around this observation. Can somebody who doesn't know Jesus exists confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in their heart that God raised him from the dead? No, because they don't know about it.

And so that should have a couple of effects. One, it should stir up our hearts to want to tell those people about Jesus and pray for those people who don't know about Jesus. But the point is, the creative world can't tell you Christ Jesus is the Savior of sinners, repent and believe in Him and you will be saved. It can tell us there's a God, it can tell us things about that God, but we need to have the message of the Gospel to know Christ savingly, and to really know Him at all.

11. True or false, it is up to the church to decide which books belong in the Bible and which ones don't. That's false. That's false. It's not up to the church to make those decisions. Now, can someone give a guess as to what group of people would say that it is the church's decision, that they have that authority? Yeah, the Roman Catholics, right? So they would say that the only reason you can know what books are or are not in your Bible is by the church making a declaration, whereas we would say God is the one who, as soon as Paul wrote Romans, as Romans was being written, it wasn't like there was a point and said, I wonder if this is gonna be inspired.

That'd be pretty cool. I'd be neat if this made it into the special collection of books. No, as soon as Paul wrote Romans, it was, well, as he was writing it by the power of the Holy Spirit, it was inspired. It is inspired. It is God's word. Not because, you know, later on a council might've said, hey, Romans seems like a great book.

No, all that is is the church confirming with the spirits already made God's word. So it's sort of like, um, I'm trying to make some example off the top of my head, but it would be like if... It'd be like if Arthur came in here and y'all said, hey, that's Max's son. Okay, you didn't just make Arthur my son, you just declared what he already is, right? And so when the church says later on in the councils, say, hey, you know, these are the books of the New Testament. They didn't make the books be the New Testament. They already were the New Testament.

They were just merely saying what everybody, in reality, is when you study this stuff at a much higher level. But with, like, Michael Kruger, for example, you would see that the church already knew what books were and were not part of the canon. I'm gonna get us too far on a tangent if I go there.

But point is, the books don't need the church to make them the Bible. They are the Bible. They are God's Word. apart from any declaration of any council of any church. So, if God had not, and of course the problem there is it puts the church over God, right? I hope we all see that, because the Bible is God's word, doesn't need the church to tell it, that God doesn't need the church to be over him. He is over the church.

So, If God had not revealed himself to us, we would never have known him on our own. And that's true, at least in any saving way, right? Well, really, in any way. If God didn't reveal himself, we simply wouldn't know him. We're at his expense. Is there any difference between God's revelation in nature and his revelation in Scripture? Of course, the answer is yes, right? In what ways might we say there are differences? Yeah, special revelation and general revelation, yeah. And what are some ways that those two revelations differ? Yeah. Yeah, they're different in their clarity, we could say, right? And even we could say also in their, to some extent, we could say in their content.

Because while the revelation, general revelation, reveals that there is a God, it even does tell us some things about the God, maybe that He's loving, that He's merciful, that He's order, He's a God of order and not of chaos. Again,

it's not going to tell us explicitly about Christ. It's not going to tell us explicitly about repentance and faith and these sorts of things. Creation won't tell us those things. So we could say it differs in its content, not at every point, right?

I mean, there's going to be some overlap. Creation screams there's a God of order. The Bible also tells us that God is a God of order. But in terms of its content, we could say there are differences. Its clarity, there are certainly differences there. I mean, profound differences in terms of clarity.

I mean, creation doesn't tell you anything about how it came to be. It just tells you that it is. You just look at it and, well, that's there. But here's how I got here. That, of course, is where God, the special revelation, comes in. So they differ in those sorts of ways.

What sorts of things do you learn about God from creation? Write down whatever you think you can say you honestly learn about God from creation. I don't know, order, loving. I think you could say at some level he's just, even if we, you know, just from the way that certain things happen in nature that reveal he's a god of appropriate wrath, judgment.

And then you can think of other ways that God has revealed himself to mankind in the Bible. The burning bush there in that third question. All the theophanies of the Old Testament, think of Isaiah 6, when he reveals himself in a vision. Parting the Red Sea, yeah, yep. Oh, that's a good one, yeah. Yeah, what is it, like a burning cauldron or something? Yeah, Genesis 15. Yeah, that's a good kind of example of different ways that God has revealed himself.

So, the reason we've talked about all this, and the reason we're going to continue now on page 6 to discuss these matters, is because while we are discussing the doctrine of God, just like our standard, our Westminster Confession of Faith starts, it starts with, if you all remember, and Jamie brought this out in his Sunday school class, it starts with the Bible. not with God, and that's not because God isn't the ultimate final authority, not because God isn't God, but because we literally can't know him with any clarity apart from the Bible. So we start with the Bible so that we can understand how we can know God, and that's from his word. Westminster Confession of Faith, or a shorter catechism, question two, what rule hath God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him? The Word of God, which is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him.

And then there's 2 Timothy 3, 16, all scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. A couple of different passages there. The heavens declare the glory of God. Romans 1.20 referring again to general revelation and God's making himself known in creation. And then there's this quote from Revelation or this scripture reading from Revelation 22, 18 and 19, which says, 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 the holy city, which are described in this book. So neat to see how God closes the Bible in some ways with this declaration of the trustworthiness of the scriptures.

So is wisdom the same thing as knowledge? Explain. What do y'all think? Is wisdom the same thing as knowledge? No, right? How might we differ between the two? Knowledge can be facts. Wisdom is how you use things. Amen.

Exactly. Yup. So knowledge is knowing all sorts, you might know all sorts of things about stuff, but you don't really know how to apply it. You don't really know how to live. And so knowledge is just knowing things we could say about stuff. And then wisdom is applied knowledge, applying that actual knowledge to life.

I think, why did we ask that question? Well, you'll see hopefully in the next question, kind of what we're getting at here. Are educated and intelligent people more likely to know God's truth than the uneducated and simple? Why or why not? Yeah, exactly. We're gonna go, I'll let you go there for us, Elizabeth.

If you happen to remember exactly where, if not, I'll, you know. Well, about the foolishness of preaching or about the, I was thinking of 1 Corinthians 2, 11 and 12 or so. That's what I had in mind, but all of this does apply at one level or another, the whole first two chapters at some level. But yeah, if you're thinking about the foolishness of preaching, that would be verse 18 of chapter 1, which would apply as well.

Yeah. Well, the whole verses 26-31 deal with that issue of, for consider your calling, brothers, not many of you were wise according to worldly standards. Is that what you're getting at? Not many were powerful. But God has chosen the foolish things of this world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of this world to shame the things which are strong.

That's perfect. That's actually probably... What's that? 27. Yes, 1 Corinthians 1, 27. Elizabeth, I actually think in this context that's a better verse than the one I had in mind. I had a different one in mind that I plan to bring up later from this same section. Well, I love this verse. I mean, I have a lot of verses. But when I talk to people that I love dearly that are very, very, very smart. Yeah. Sometimes it goes over my head. Yeah. I'm so thankful that God chooses the foolish and the wise and the lovely to reveal His Word to the dead.

You don't have to be an intelligent, intellectual, smart somebody to get and understand and love the Word of God and to be just as important in God's world as the Yep. And what's so interesting, too, to your point, Elizabeth, it's interesting not to say that some of these people aren't very, very, very intellectually gifted by God, but there is something interesting to think, you know, if God has revealed himself to us in the scriptures, which he has, and he's said so very clearly, then to most intelligent thing you can do is receive that because it's his word, right? I always think of, and I've given this example here before, if some math genius who's just known for being really, really great at math tells me that this is the way this math problem works and this is the answer, then I can I can push back, but if I'm actually being intelligent doesn't mean necessarily that I know everything, but I should have enough humility to go, you know what, maybe the math genius knows what they're talking about, and I should shut my mouth, and I should listen to them. And how much more so with the God of the universe, right? If he's spoken to us, so these people are very intelligent in a very real way. At the same time, they certainly at least lack wisdom, as we've just seen, because wisdom would go, yeah, I'm going to listen to God. So, yeah, so the educated are not more likely to believe than the uneducated.

Is God's word clear? Yes, right? It's clear. It's clear. Perspicuous is our theological term for it. Perspicuity of Scripture.

And we'll talk a little bit more about that later, because you might have some thoughts. I was just reading Isaiah this morning. I'm not sure how clear it was. But I actually was reading Isaiah this morning, and I loved it. But anyways, it just takes a little more effort to figure out what exactly am I trying to figure out is happening right now. That's encouragement for some of y'all. I feel that way too sometimes. Or maybe that makes you think, why is he my pastor? But why do some people reject slash not believe God's Word if it is clear?

Because they're not called. Yeah, because they're not called. They're not called, right? They may not be called. They may not be chosen. Eyes have not been opened. Exactly. Eyes have not been opened. So those are all things that kind of came to my mind. I thought of a few passages. One that had come to my mind, which is one I thought you might be going to a minute ago, was 1 Corinthians 2.

Beginning in verse 11, it says, 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. And then in this verse in particular, verse 12, 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. So we understand because God has given us His Spirit, capital S, the Spirit, so that we can understand. And then he says in verse 13, 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.

And to y'all's point about God opening up the eyes of our heart. and of course that's biblical language, made me think of Ephesians 1 verse 18, which actually I believe Chad Graber's gonna preach on this this Sunday, I can't wait to hear it, because I'm not gonna actually be preaching with Kelly Eloise coming, hopefully, it's very soon, but I will be here.

I do plan to be here. But it says this, having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you. The eyes of your heart enlighten." And then you can think of Luke 24 on the Emmaus Road when Jesus opens their eyes and their hearts, you know, they talk about how they burned as they heard him speaking to them on the road.

I'm going to start reading and here it is. I think I found it. Somewhere in here I believe it does use language of the eyes being opened. Yeah, here we go. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, and he vanished from their sight. So their eyes were opened. God opened their eyes.

And I think similar, if not the same sort of language is used a bit later in this context. But this is all the reasons why people don't believe God's orders, because their eyes haven't been opened. They literally cannot see it for what it is. Not because it's not clear, but because they are unable to see it. Yeah, the hearts have been hardened.

I think of this illustration, I may have used it when we were going through the Book of Romans together for the first three chapters, but I always think of the radio antenna analogy where imagine you're driving down the road and your radio, you know, you've got your car and let's say, you know, I don't know if y'all still, like if y'all use your radios in your car or not, I know that at least the younger generation has gotten so used to just using their phones for

everything, they hardly turn on their car radios anymore. Y'all at least know of a day when people did. So you're driving down the road in your car, and you have your antenna, and say you hit a stick or something, the thing just explodes, breaks off, it's clearly broken, everything gets staticky on your radio, and you're driving and you're thinking, man, I can't believe all the radio towers are broken.

I can't believe they're not sending out any radio waves anymore. No, the issue isn't that the radio towers. The issue isn't that they're not sending out radio waves. The issue is that your antenna is broken. Your receiver is broken. You're not able to receive it because your antenna is broken.

So for us, God, it's not that God isn't speaking clearly. It's not that the word hasn't sending out clear signals, so to speak. It's that my heart won't receive it. My heart won't receive that because my heart antenna is shattered by the fall and by my own sin. And so I need to be I need to have a heart that's humbled, that's softened by the power of the Spirit.

So how should this make... So this is us here this morning. If we receive God's Word, how should this make you respond if you believe God's Word? So what should your attitude be? If you believe that God's Word is God's Word, you do want to learn more about Him, you do want to submit to Him, how should you respond if that's you today?

Thankful, right? And total humility, right? I was thinking when I was looking at this this morning, my mind went to, exactly, we should be thankful and humble, shouldn't we? We shouldn't be boastful, right? Any attitude of boasting within Christianity is just so not in keeping with what we claim to believe, I was thinking of one of our church's favorite hymns. This should be my adage, right?

Why was I made to hear your voice, right? And enter while there's room. When thousands make a wretched choice and rather starve than come. And so, that type of attitude. Why do I hear this? Why do I receive this? Why do I believe this? This is crazy.

Especially like Elizabeth was sharing a minute ago, and we've all had these experiences at some level. You're speaking to someone who you know on an intellectual level is just beyond you, right? They're just smarter than I am. And yet they don't believe it. And you're thinking, why do I believe this? They clearly should know better.

But it's just a humbling reminder. It's only the spirit of God. So we are thankful. What should you do for those who do not believe God's word? It's not a trick question. Pray for him, right? Pray for him. The only one who can break through the heart of stone is the Spirit of God. Can man left to himself come to a knowledge of the truth of God's Word? And we kind of talked about this, and the answer is no, and the answer is ultimately because they're sinners, right? Because they won't receive it.

Romans 1.30 said they were haters of God.

So yeah, no man left to himself can come to a true saving knowledge of God. Will we ever know all things? No, no, not in this life or in the life to come, right? Because in terms of all things, meaning the infinite being of God, for example, we can't ever know all of God. We'll study God and worship him for eternity in glory and we'll come no closer to getting to the depths of God. He's literally infinite. Is God just like us, only bigger? No. It's very important. This is very important, right? He's not just like me, only bigger. The theologians call this *sui generis*. *Sui generis*, which just means in a category all of his own.

And so it's not as though if I just sort of can learn enough, if I study for long enough, I can know as much as God, or I can know even just all of God. No, there's no way to know all of God. There's a sense in which you can say you never even get closer to knowing all of God the more you know of him because he's simply infinite. It's hard for us in our finiteness, our finitude, to grasp this. We will never even scratch the surface of knowing God, even in eternity. There's a sense in which you just cannot. He's in a category of his own beyond us. So God is just not like us, just only bigger.

And I've preached this in Zephaniah 4.17, and I think one of the benefits of this fact, and this isn't the main focus for us right now, but just a side note, is when we think God is like us, only bigger, it does put us in a very... it usually makes us have a... tend to have a something of the hard heart towards God, I would say, or maybe there's a better way of wording it, but because I know how I am, and so if I know how I am, and I think God is like me but bigger, then God's not gonna forgive me.

God is not gonna, he's gonna cast me out, he's not gonna put up with me any longer, right? Because that might be the way that I feel about myself. So if God is just like me, well that's why at some level it shouldn't be, especially as a Christian who's been saved by God's grace, but it could be the way that I'm tempted to treat other people, right? Well they just, they can't seem to get their act together, right? Well, God is just like me, only bigger, then we're in trouble, right? But God is not like me, only bigger. God is God, okay?

He is who He is, and that's the way it is. And it's good news. It's making great an image of Him. That's a great point. Because we're in our minds making God look like us. He is not. It's calling Him God. And we usually give him those attributes that we have.

But that's an idol. That's a great image. Well, I have to fight that. When I, in my mind, think of God and think in my mind that He's responding is generally like I would, and I have to remember, no, that's not what Scripture said. That's an idol. That's great. Thank you for bringing that out. That's very helpful.

How has God made Himself known? We already kind of discussed this as many goes, so there's nothing new here, but what are the two sources of truth? This is that general and special revelation, right? That's the two ways He is primarily made himself known to us, general revelation and special revelation. I think it can be helpful to remember that general revelation is not just creation around us. It is also our consciences.

So that that could be added as just as a side note. So, what is meant by the word rule in the Catechism above, that the Word of God, which is contained in the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us

how to make war, fight, and enjoy Him. Of course, this word rule here is just getting at guideline or standard, right? That it's the standard, it's the, you know, guideline, however you might want to think about it. That's the idea there.

Is God's Word true? This is helpful. I like this question. Is God's Word true because you feel like it is true, or it is true, or is it true because it comes to us from outside as true? Yeah, so it's true not because I feel like it's true, but it's true because it is true, right? So this is helpful because we are all prone, and certainly our day and age is prone, to make our feelings the basis of truth.

So if I feel like God's word is true, then it is true. If I feel like it's true to me, it's true to me. And if you don't feel like it's true to you, it's not true to you. But God's word is objectively either true or not true. And it is true. So it doesn't matter how I feel about it. What matters is that it is true.

I always think of, you've heard me say these things before, but I always think of the example of mathematics. It doesn't matter if you feel like 2 plus 2 equals 5. It equals 4. And you can get all upset about it. And that's fine. But you're still wrong. It's true. And it's just the way it is.

And so when it comes to God's word then, We need to conform ourselves to it. We've all heard the saying, many of us have said it ourselves, and it's not a bad saying. Oh, it's a great saying, I love it. My grandma had it in her Bible, probably, maybe some of y'all do in yours, so I'm not trying to step on toes, I'm about to get myself in deep water. But we often say, God said it, I believe it, that settled it. And that's a great saying, love that. A lot of my grandma had that in her Bible, okay? Love my grandma.

So I'm not picking on anyone, okay? but we could actually shorten it and say, God said it, that settles it, right? Not that, you know, because ultimately my believing of it, which is good, and I need to believe it, right? I need to believe it, I need to receive it, but that's not ultimately what settles it. It was settled when God said it, right?

So again, we have our math expert back here, Debbie. If Debbie says to her student, this is what the formula is, and this is what it equals, and the child doesn't believe it, well, it doesn't really matter if the child believes it. It's settled. It's true. It's what it is.

So that's just helpful for us to remember that it's not based on me. I'm not the final authority. God is. What does it mean to say that the Word of God is contained in the Old and New Testaments? Not really trying to get anything too crazy here. I think really what I had in mind is just know, this is where God has spoken with clarity. This is the container that he has chosen to place his revelation in. And so that's really just the idea here. I always want to be very careful, and I understand the idea, it's true, we want to be careful about this. While we do not want to put God in a box, you can't put God in a box, right? He is infinite.

We do want to also acknowledge at some level, in terms of how he has chosen to reveal himself to us, he's given us certain parameters, like this is where I'm primarily going to speak to you. So there's a sense in which he's told me

this is where he wants me to hear him. So I should at some level, I should not look anywhere else for a clear speech from him because this is where he told me he would speak.

The illustration I heard before was, imagine Angie, you wanted to go look for a dime. You're just like, no, I really want to go see if I can find a dime. And so you go, so you tell me, I'm going to go look for a dime. I've been looking for a little extra money. It's falling on hard times here at the Morrison home. It's falling on hard times at the Morrison home. And so I'm looking for a little extra money. And so I've been hiking through the woods over here looking for a dime. I would tell you that if you're looking for a dime, you probably should look somewhere else. Will you possibly run across a dime as you trek through the woods? You might, right? You might. Not very likely. However, if you went, you know, I don't know about your couch cushions, but maybe your couch cushions, maybe your car console, maybe you go to the bank, right? there are better places to look for a dime.

So when somebody says, man, I just, I just don't know if God, where is God going to speak to me? I'm going to go travel over here and I'm going to go look over there and I'm going to go to all these places. Well, maybe God in some way will, will help you in his great kindness, but in some ways, You just, you're being kind of silly, right? He's giving you a book, right? And so just go to his book, and I promise you, you will hear from him. Whether you receive it or not, you know, that's another question, but you will hear from him. So, that's what I mean, it's contained here. This is where he's told us he's gonna speak. So, let's go there, and not where we might think he might speak. So, Where should you go to hear the voice of God? Well, I just told us, right?

And we already know all the answers, or this answer anyways, the Bible. What does it mean to say that the Bible is infallible? Okay, to say that it is infallible, there are actually, from what I understand in my reading of this topic over the years, it seems that there are kind of two general attitudes towards what is meant by infallible. Some writers will say infallible has to do with the Bible not failing in its purpose, the purpose for which God sent it, so they'll go to, and this is true, certainly, biblically, they'll go to Isaiah 55, where God says that he sends forth the rain on the earth, and so it waters the ground and bears forth fruit, so his word, which he sends forth, will not fail to accomplish its purpose. So it's certainly biblical, that concept, that the Bible is gonna do what God wants it to do. It's gonna work in the hearts of the people who wants it to work. He's gonna accomplish his purposes through the Bible.

So that's what some people will say infallible is mostly getting at. My understanding, and I do think this is more to the point of the truth, is that it's more getting at not only that it is without error, that's inerrancy, it's without error, it's actually going a step further. It cannot err. It cannot err.

And that's different because you may have in your life written a paper that didn't have any errors in it. You may have written an inerrant paper. I mean, probably if you did, it probably wasn't a super long one, but maybe you wrote a page long, five paragraph thing where you didn't have any grammatical errors. You didn't have any factual errors. It was true insofar as it went. You maybe have written an inerrant piece of work. or at least a sentence. We've all written in it and we can all say that. I've written a sentence without any errors. But none of us have ever written anything infallible, not even a sentence. Because infallible is really getting at that it cannot err. Anything I've ever written had the potential of erring because I wrote it, right? And I'm full of errors. Right? And so even if I managed to, by God's grace, get a sentence correct without any errors in it, it still had the potential of error.

But since this is God's Word, it is infallible. It literally cannot err, because what Titus 1-2 says is that God never lies. He cannot lie. And so it literally is not allowed to err, which is such an encouraging thing. When you come to the Bible, I can know this is infallible. Not only does it not have errors, it literally cannot have errors. I can trust my Bible.

It's sufficient. It tells us all I need to know. All I need to know. All I need to know as far as my doctrine and my religious life, my moral life, is found in the Bible. It's sufficient. As far as inerrancy, I just thought of this actually, or infallibility rather, that it cannot err. A great verse for that would be... Oh, this is so good. This is so good. I wish I would have thought of this earlier. It applies, it just applies really well.

Jesus says this in John 10, 35. If he called them gods to whom the word of God came, and scripture cannot be broken." Notice that Jesus just said there, this is new to me, like as of right now. So notice that Jesus does not say scripture is not broken. He says, and scripture cannot be broken, John 10, 35. So he said it's infallible. It's not allowed to be broken. It cannot be broken. So again, infallible.

Moving back though to sufficiency. It's sufficient in that it tells me all I need to know for my doctrine and for my life. And this is helpful because so many, and again, I'm not trying to pick on anyone in particular, but it's not, it doesn't happen in my life. It definitely does. And we are all prone to look for some other source for final sufficiency.

But especially thinking of the church, generally speaking, I mean, why do we have so many things in our worship and so many things in our, in our sort of approaches to ministry that just aren't found in God's Word, because we don't really believe God's Word is sufficient. We believe we need something else to supplement it, to help come alongside of it, but we don't. We just need to come to the Word. Again, we don't need to go to sort of worshiping of angels or any other idols. We don't need to go to anything other than the clear, sufficient Word of God.

It's true. You can trust it. It's clear, so these are the attributes of Scripture, by the way, sufficiency, clear, authority, necessary. To help you remember this, I've said it from the pulpit, SCAN, S-C-A-N, sufficient, clear, authoritative, necessary. So it's clear, right? God's Word is clear, it's not hidden. Anyone can understand it. Anyone can understand the basics of salvation.

Arthur, at least verbally, I'll play games with Arthur. I'll literally say to him, I'll say, Arthur, what good thing can you do to save yourself? And he said, that's silly, you can't save yourself. And I said, come on, what if you're really nice? And I'll even try to get him to slip up just because I'm trying to see what he can, and I'm not saying only the Lord knows his heart, but my point is he's four years old. You can, it is not hard to understand the basics of Christianity. He knows Jesus is the only Savior. He's four years old. He does not believe that his works can save him. I'm just telling you, I'm using him as an example of it's easy to understand, it's clear. Authoritative, we all know what authoritative means, right? It's the final rule, he rules over us, what he says is done, it's true, yes and amen. It's necessary, it's necessary.

We cannot know the way of salvation apart from the Word of God, the revealed Word of God. Now someone will say, and it's a great question, I've had it before, I think it legitimately is a great question, I'll say, what about What

about the thief on the cross? Or what about somebody who doesn't actually get a Bible, but a missionary speaks the truth to them? Yes. Amen. But the point is, they're getting the substance of the truth of the Word.

So, Monica goes and becomes a missionary in some place where there's no Bible. She tells somebody clearly about who Jesus is and what he did to save us from our sins. That person believes. They may have not ever had a Bible, but it was still necessary that the truths directly revealed to Monica from the Bible got to them through Monica. They weren't saved apart from the Word in the sense of the truth that they received is the truth of God's Word. through Monica, even if they didn't get to hold a Bible in their hands.

So it's necessary. The doctrines of the Bible are necessary for salvation. 1 Timothy 3 teaches us this, "...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..." But it says, "...that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work." So the scriptures are necessary.

If the Bible is infallible, our last little thing here. Oh, I've gone on, I'm so sorry. If the Bible is infallible, clear, insufficient, then why do you think we have the Catechism, Bible Commentaries, Church Creeds? And I'll just answer this really briefly, I apologize.

The reason we still have creeds and commentaries and all these things is because they help us to learn from other brothers and sisters in Christ who have gone before us, who are still alive, who are studying the Scriptures. They're not on the same level as the Bible, right? They're underneath the Bible. We know they're, we should at least know they're underneath the Bible, but they're helpful tools that we don't go to as the final authority, but we can learn from them. So God didn't make us islands, he gave us a church to work through these things together.