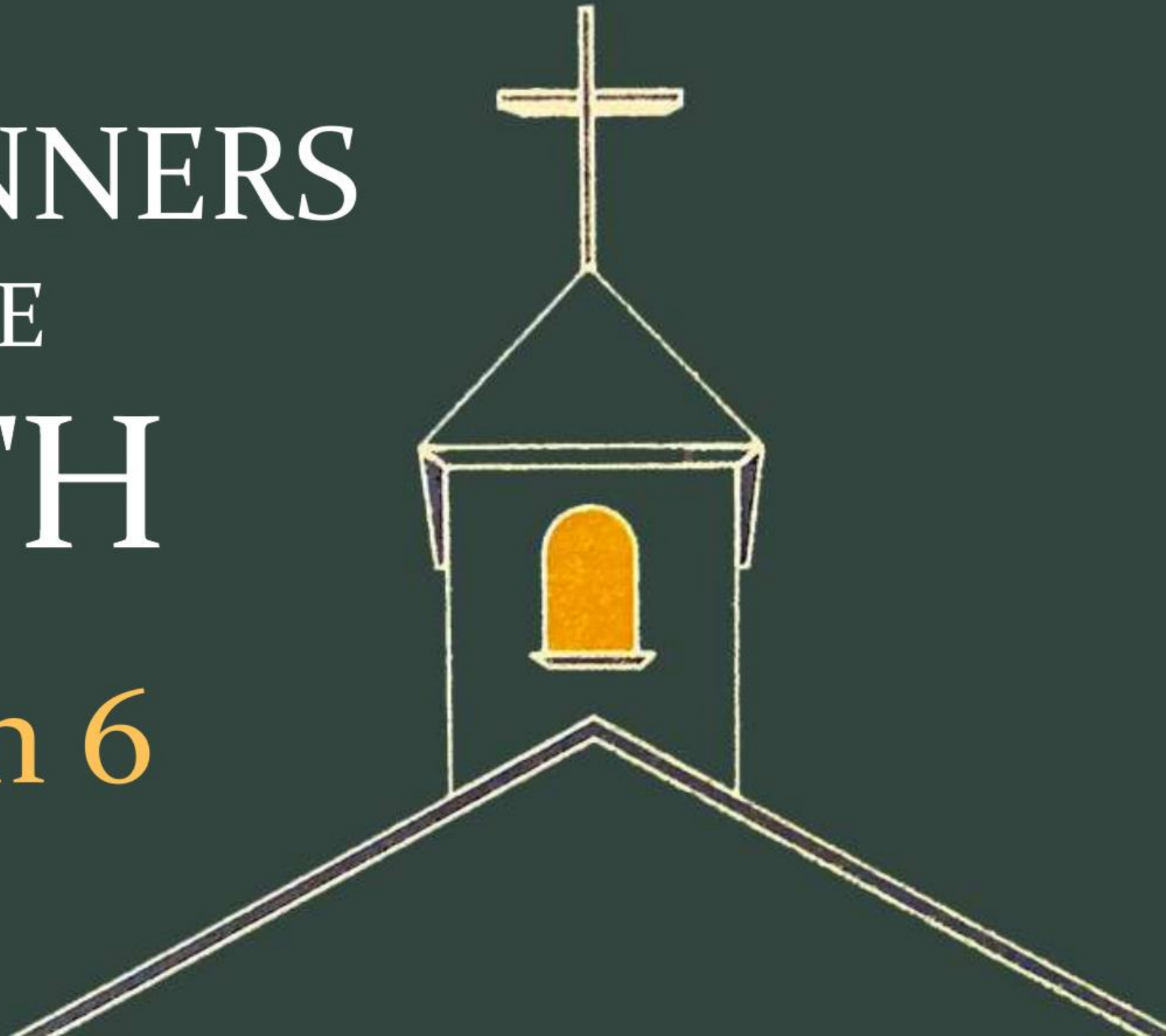


# FORERUNNERS OF THE FAITH

## Lesson 6



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# Grace & Truth

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# Introduction

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**John 1:14-17** — And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’ ” 16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. 17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

# SETTING THE STAGE

|                                                                                          |                                                                                                   |                                                                          |                                                                                              |                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1<sup>st</sup> Century</b><br>Apostolic Era<br><br>Pentecost<br>Peter<br>Paul<br>John | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Century</b><br>101–200<br><br>Apostolic<br>Fathers<br>Justin Martyr<br>Irenaeus | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Century</b><br>201–300<br><br>Tertullian<br><br>Origen | <b>4<sup>th</sup> Century</b><br>301–400<br><br>Council of<br>Nicaea (325)<br><br>Athanasius | <b>5<sup>th</sup> Century</b><br>401–500<br><br><b>Chrysostom</b><br><br><b>Augustine</b><br><br><b>Fall of Rome</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Ante-Nicene Period  
(1–3 Centuries)

Nicene & Post-Nicene  
Period (4–5 Centuries)

# DOCTRINAL PILLARS

- 1. The Word of God (in Scripture):** The true church views Scripture alone as its final authority.
- 2. The work of God (in salvation):** The true church understands that sinners are justified solely by God's grace through faith on account of Christ.
- 3. The worship of God (in spirit and truth):** The true church worships the Triune God in purity of devotion and purity of doctrine.

# DOCTRINAL PILLARS

**The Sanctity  
of the  
Worship of God**

**A RIGHT VIEW  
OF THE SAVIOR**

Athanasius

**The Sufficiency  
of the  
Work of God**

**A RIGHT VIEW  
OF SALVATION**

Augustine

**The Supremacy  
of the  
Word of God**

**A RIGHT VIEW  
OF SCRIPTURE**

Chrysostom

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# Augustine

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# AUGUSTINE (354–430)

- Aurelius Augustinus was born in modern-day Algeria.
- His mother, Monica, was a devout Christian who prayed earnestly for her son's salvation.



# AUGUSTINE (354–430)

- In his *Confessions*, Augustine explains how he left home to pursue satisfaction in worldly pleasure.
- “Our hearts are restless until they find rest in You, Lord.”



# AUGUSTINE (354–430)

- He was involved in a 15-year relationship with a woman whom he never married. Together, they had a son.
- His search for satisfaction also led him into the Manichaean heresy.



# AUGUSTINE (354–430)

- During this time, he taught rhetoric in places like Carthage and Rome.
- Eventually, he obtained a new teaching position in Milan. By this time, he had abandoned Manichaeism for Neo-Platonism.



# AUGUSTINE (354–430)

- In Milan, he went to hear the famous preacher Ambrose.
- Augustine went for the oratory, but was ultimately influenced by the powerful content of Ambrose's sermons.



# AUGUSTINE (354–430)

- God used Ambrose, as well as some of Augustine's friends, to draw the young man to Himself.
- One day, he opened his Bible to Romans 13:13–14 and was converted as he read that text.



# AUGUSTINE (354–430)

**Romans 13:13–14** – “Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and debauchery, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.”



# AUGUSTINE (354–430)

- As a new believer, he considered a life of monastic contemplation, but was drawn into pastoral ministry.
- In 395, he became co-bishop of the church in Hippo Regius (modern-day Annaba, Algeria).



# AUGUSTINE (354–430)

- Important works include his treatise *On the Trinity* and *The City of God*. Also produced polemical works against heretical movements.
- Became one of the most influential theologians in church history.

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# Augustine & Grace

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# AUGUSTINE ON GRACE

- His defense of the gospel of grace, in the face of a false movement called Pelagianism, resulted in Augustine being known as The Doctor of Grace.
- Pelagius claimed sinners are born basically good, without a sin nature, and therefore can merit salvation through their own efforts. Augustine strongly disagreed.

# AUGUSTINE ON GRACE

- Sinners are not justified on the basis of their own merit. They are saved by grace.

**Augustine:** “We conclude that a man is not justified by the precepts of a holy life, but by faith in Jesus Christ; in a word, not by the law of works, but by the law of faith; not by the letter, but by the spirit; not by the merits of deeds, but by free grace.”

# AUGUSTINE ON GRACE

- Old Testament saints, likewise, were not saved by works, but rather through faith in Christ.

*Augustine:* “Of whatever virtue you may declare that the ancient righteous people were possessed, nothing saved them but the belief in the Mediator who shed his blood for the remission of their sins.”

# AUGUSTINE ON GRACE

- Because salvation is by grace, and not by works, even the worst of sinners can be saved.

**Augustine:** “With none of their merits going before You will save them. . . . All in them is rough, all foul, all to be detested: and though they bring nothing to You whereby they may be saved; ‘For nothing You will save them,’ that is, with the free gift of Your grace.”

# AUGUSTINE ON GRACE

- The gospel of grace precludes anyone from boasting about their salvation.

**Augustine:** “No man can say that it is by the merit of his own works, or by the merit of his own prayers, or by the merit of his own faith, that God’s grace has been conferred upon him; nor suppose that the doctrine is true which those heretics hold, that the grace of God is given us in proportion to our own merit.”

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# Augustine & Truth

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# AUGUSTINE ON TRUTH

- INERRANCY – Because God cannot lie, Scripture is free from error.

*Augustine:* “I have learned to yield this respect and honor only to the canonical books of Scripture: of these alone do I most firmly believe that the authors were completely free from error.”

# AUGUSTINE ON TRUTH

- AUTHORITY – Because it comes from God, Scripture comes with divine authority.

**Augustine:** “This Mediator, having spoken what He judged sufficient first by the prophets, then by His own lips, and afterwards by the apostles, has besides produced the Scripture which is called canonical, which has paramount authority, and to which we yield assent in all matters.”

# AUGUSTINE ON TRUTH

- SUFFICIENCY – Scripture contains all we need for life and godliness.

*Augustine:* “For among the things that are plainly laid down in Scripture are to be found all matters that concern faith and the manner of life.”

# AUGUSTINE ON TRUTH

- Augustine demonstrated a clear commitment to the inerrancy, authority, and sufficiency of Scripture.
- This same commitment will be seen over a thousand years later during the Protestant Reformation.

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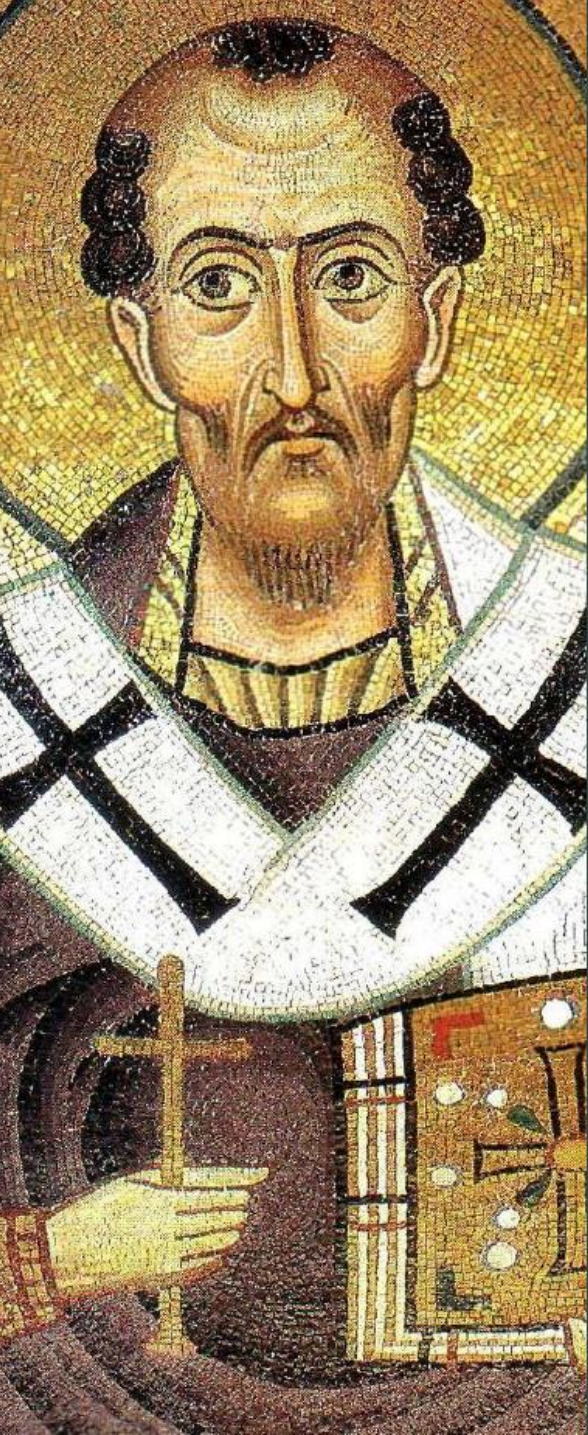
# John Chrysostom

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# CHRYSOSTOM (347–407)

- Born in Antioch and trained in rhetoric as a young man.
- Lived as a monk in the wilderness for two years. During that time, he damaged his health, but also memorized portions of Scripture.



# CHRYSOSTOM (347–407)

- Back in Antioch, John began to teach through the New Testament, going verse-by-verse and explaining the text in a literal way.
- His oratorical ability earned him the nickname “Chrysostom,” which means “Golden Mouth.”



# CHRYSOSTOM (347–407)

- In 397, he was appointed the bishop of Constantinople, the capital city of the eastern Roman Empire.
- His preaching against worldliness and those who flaunted their wealth got him into trouble with the empress.



# CHRYSOSTOM (347–407)

- The conflict escalated to the point that he was banished from Constantinople and sent into exile. He died in exile in 407.
- His sermons from numerous NT books have survived to the present.

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# Chrysostom & Grace

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# CHRYSOSTOM ON GRACE

On Romans 3:27 — "But what is the 'law of faith?' It is, being saved by grace. Here he shows God's power, in that He has not only saved, but has even justified, and led them to boasting, and this too without needing works, but looking for faith only."

# CHRYSOSTOM ON GRACE

On Colossians 1:26–28 — “To have brought humanity, more senseless than stones, to the dignity of angels simply through bare words, and faith alone, without any hard work, is indeed a rich and glorious mystery. It is just as if one were to take a dog, quite consumed with hunger and the mange, foul and loathsome to see, and not so much as able to move but lying passed out, and make him all at once into a human being and to display him upon the royal throne.”

# CHRYSOSTOM ON GRACE

On 1 Timothy 1:15–16 — “For as people, on receiving some great good, ask themselves if it is not a dream, as not believing it; so it is with respect to the gifts of God. What then was it that was thought incredible? . . . It seemed to them incredible that a person who had misspent all his former life in vain and wicked actions should afterwards be saved by his faith alone. On this account he [Paul] says, “It is a saying to be believed.”

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# Chrysostom & Truth

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# CHRYSOSTOM ON TRUTH

- INERRANCY – The Word of God is perfectly true.

**Chrysostom:** “Your word is truth,’ that is, ‘there is no falsehood in it, and all that is said in it must happen.’”

# CHRYSOSTOM ON TRUTH

- AUTHORITY – God’s Word is the authoritative basis for what we teach and believe.

**Chrysostom:** “These then are the reasons; but it is necessary to establish them all from the Scriptures, and to show with exactness that all that has been said on this subject is not an invention of human reasoning, but the very sentence of the Scriptures.”

# CHRYSOSTOM ON TRUTH

- SUFFICIENCY – God’s Word instructs believers so they may be complete in the faith.

**Chrysostom:** “For this is the exhortation of the Scripture given, that the man of God may be rendered perfect by it; without this therefore he cannot be perfect. You have the Scriptures, he says, in place of me. If you would learn anything, you may learn it from them.”

# CHRYSOSTOM ON TRUTH

- CLARITY – God’s revelation is understandable and should be interpreted in a literal way.

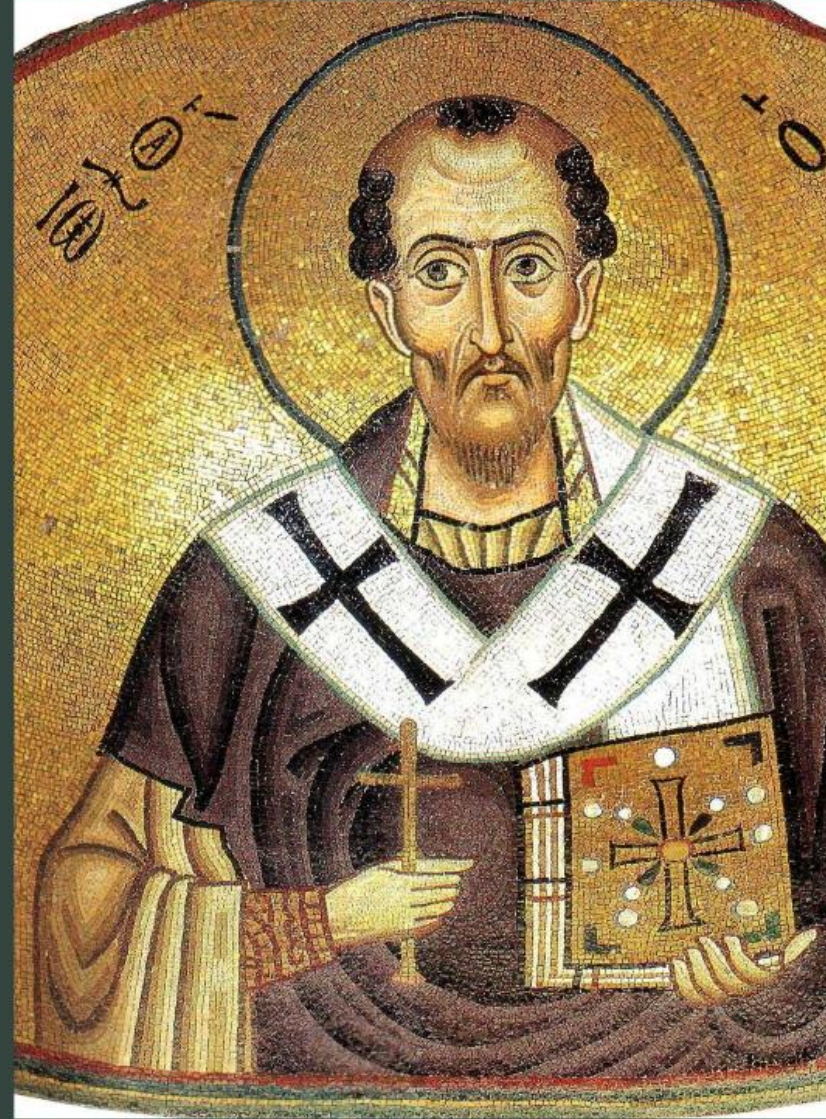
**Chrysostom:** “We ought to unlock the passage by first giving a clear interpretation of the words. . . . We must not attend to the words merely, but turn our attention to the sense, and learn the aim of the speaker, and the cause and the occasion, and by putting all these things together turn out the hidden meaning.”

As Chrysostom explains, proper Bible interpretation involves a clear understanding of what the passage means. Sound Bible study involves looking at details like: the words, the flow of the argument in its context (the sense), the author's intent (the aim of the speaker), and the historical setting (the cause and the occasion).

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# Putting It All Together

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# DOCTRINAL PILLARS

**The Sanctity  
of the  
Worship of God**

**A RIGHT VIEW  
OF THE SAVIOR**

Athanasius

**The Sufficiency  
of the  
Work of God**

**A RIGHT VIEW  
OF SALVATION**

Augustine

**The Supremacy  
of the  
Word of God**

**A RIGHT VIEW  
OF SCRIPTURE**

Chrysostom

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. (p. 51) In salvation, God extends both mercy and grace to us. What do Christians deserve that they will not receive? What will they receive that they do not deserve?
2. (p. 52) Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. What does it mean that the Bible is sufficient? What are the practical implications?
3. (p. 53) Read Psalm 119:11, 105. Why is it important for believers to hide God's Word in their hearts?

FORERUNNERS  
OF THE  
FAITH

