

**The Doctrine of the Bible:
Southside Baptist Church
Apollos Teacher Training
Student Outline**

Introduction:

We want to take a moment together to study the Bible that we study. When you are preparing a lesson each week, you are considering a passage in the Word and seeking to determine how to rightly divide it, thus interpret it correctly and then seek to see how it can be applied to a life. That is great and praise the Lord that we get to study and teach His Word.

When it comes to investigating the Doctrine of the Bible, we are seeking to answer and understand some foundational questions that you and others may have about the Bible. For example, what is the Bible? How did the Bible come to be? Is the Bible trustworthy? What is the Bible about?

Outside of these questions, what questions do you have about the Bible? What questions have you faced as a teacher about the Bible? Are you convinced that the Bible is God's Word?

As a basis for these classes, we are using our current church doctrinal statement as a starting point. We thought it would be important to bring greater clarity for our teachers by teaching each doctrinal position.

We live in a time when truth is considered to be more situational than absolute. That very thing is at the root of many of the cultural issues we are dealing with today. Man's ideas, opinions, thoughts and constant situational ethics means that man today is doing what is right in his own eyes which is a path toward destruction. The Lord has enabled us to serve here at Southside, to be teachers and equippers to limit the number of believers from being deceived and getting the truth of the Gospel to those who have yet to accept Jesus.

Let's make the most of these moments in our training. Come ready and prepared. Come with a mental focus. Come to learn, to be equipped so that you can pass the truth of God's Word forward to those who can impact the next generations.

Here is a copy of our doctrinal statement that expresses the position of the Church concerning the Bible. When you are writing a doctrinal statement it can be hard at times to know how much to say. You can write too much in trying to explain it, that most people will not read it. However, you want to make sure that you say enough that leaves no doubt in someone's mind what we believe.

God's Revelation Session 1

1. God's Revelation:

a. God has revealed His truth to Humanity.

- 1) As we begin to look at God's Revelation to man, we want to make sure that we understand the difference between general revelation and special revelation.

b. What is the Doctrine of the Bible?

- 1) "Bibliology", which simply means the study of the Bible.
 - a) There is a difference between rightly dividing a passage to teach it to your life group versus answering foundational questions about the Bible that we study.
- 2) My hope is that you will develop some convictions, or this will strengthen the convictions you already have with a greater understanding of the trustworthiness of the Bible.
- 3) We know that God's message through His Word, is a revelation of himself to man. In the Word we get to see up close God's character in God's ways.
 - a) Question – on a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your confidence with the Bible. With 1 being no confidence and 10 being completely confident.

2. Revelation comes from God:

a. What does this mean?

- 1) When we say that revelation comes from God, what do we really mean?
 - a) Revelation is the work of God whereby He makes Himself and His purposes known to man.

b. God's Purpose:

- 1) If you think back, we can see how God revealed to Adam truth about who he is and what he needed.
- 2) Did Adam understand?
- 3) Do you see the pattern here?
 - a) God is the one who initiated this revelation to man, through that revelation showed him his need, and then revealed to him that He had met that need.
- 4) Today we know that sin has passed on to all men for all have sinned.
 - a) Do we not think that man today is in urgent need of what God has to say about who they are and what they need?
- 5) At the root of the term translated as "**revelation**" is the idea of unveiling.

c. Implication:

- 1) All revelation, though God may have revealed it in different ways, still points to him.

3. General Revelation:

a. By definition:

- 1) God's work of revealing truth about Himself through the universe He has created.
 - a) The first chapters of the book of Genesis show forth God's power and authority through creation.
 - b) **Exodus 20:11** – “*For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.*”
- 2) How important is this general revelation of God?
 - a) **Romans 1:18-20** – “*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; ¹⁹ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. ²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.*”
 - b) According to **verse 18** what do people naturally do with the truth they learn about God from creation?
 - c) When you look at **verse 20**, what do we find that God says can clearly be seen through creation?
- 3) **Psalm 19:1-6** - “*The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. ² Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. ³ There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. ⁴ Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, ⁵ Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. ⁶ His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.*”
 - a) What does God's creation, according to these verses, teach us about God?
 - b) The word “**glory**” contains “**the concept of worthiness, of value that is unmistakable.**” Regula Baptist Press.
- 4) If we follow this line of thinking so far, we recognize that the general revelation of creation shows man a God who is worthy of our worship.

4. Special Revelation:

a. By definition:

- 1) Special revelation means that God has revealed truth that will bring mankind into a saving relationship with him and will meet their needs within that relationship.
 - a) The argument can be made that special revelation is built upon the foundation of general revelation. Would you agree?

b. How did God provide this special revelation?

1) God used Prophets:

- a) **II Peter 1:21** – “**For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**”
- b) The prophets served as a mouthpiece for the Lord.
- c) The Spirit of God is the one that moved them, that carried them along in their ministry as a prophet.
- d) We may not know the specifics about how God communicated his message to the prophets, but the Bible often tells us in these words, “**the Word of the Lord came to...**” or you might read, “**thus saith the Lord.**”

2) Another way that we could look at this is to consider:

- a) **Deuteronomy 13:1-5** - “**If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, ² And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; ³ Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴ Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. ⁵ And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn *you* away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.**”
- b) What does God's instructions about false prophets here tell us about how seriously God took the role of his prophets?
- c) Here is a good example of how God worked through a prophet. **I Samuel 15:1-3, 19-23.**

3) God used miracles:

- a) It is interesting to think about how God created the heavens and the earth and then the laws that God set in place to keep His creation in balance.
- b) There are many great examples of this in the Word. We have the crossing of the Red Sea, the drought that took place during the reign of Ahab. water from a rock and Jesus walking on water.
- c) When God was working through the plagues in Egypt to set His children free, what did He tell the Egyptians by bringing the plagues upon them? That He is the Lord. **Exodus 7:5** – “**And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them.**”

- d) **Exodus 8:22** – This is an example of special revelation that God used to make known to man, the Egyptians, that “**I am the Lord in the midst of the earth.**”
- e) There would be a lot of parallels that you could draw here of the time of the Jews in the wilderness.

4) **God used visions and dreams:**

- a) We find times that in this special revelation of God, God would use visions and dreams.
- b) One of the more famous ones involves a young boy named Joseph. God had revealed to him his rise to a position of authority that even his family would bow down to him.
Genesis 37.
- c) In that same story God gave Pharaoh dreams that would be interpreted by Joseph.
- d) A question that often arises when talking about visions and dreams. Does God still do that today?

5) **God revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ:**

- a) Jesus is the absolute perfect revelation of God to man.
- b) **John 1:1-2** what do we see. “**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.**”
- c) Jesus has always been. Jesus has always existed.
- d) In **John 1:14** – “**And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.**” – Whose glory do we see when we observe the life of Christ?
- e) **Hebrews 1:1-4** – “**God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, ² Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; ³ Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; ⁴ Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.**” What do you see? Jesus is the perfect revelation of God.
- f) **John 14:7-11** – “**If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. ⁸ Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. ⁹ Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father? ¹⁰ Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. ¹¹ Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake. –**
- g) What did Jesus tell Phillip and all the disciples about His relationship with the Father?

- h) As you continue to think this special revelation of God to man through, we also recognize that Jesus not only revealed the Father, but He clearly showed the “**way**” man could be restored to the Father.
 - i) Special revelation draws us to the knowledge of God and provides us an opportunity to be made right with God.
- 6) **God revealed in the Word of God:**
- a) Praise the Lord that we are privileged to have right here in front of us a copy of the WORD OF GOD!!!
 - b) We have special revelation recorded for us like that of **2 Timothy 3:16-17 – “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”**
 - c) This special revelation is designed to reveal God to us and draw us to Him so that we might be in a right relationship with Him.
 - d) This is why we are taking the time to dig into this Doctrine of the Bible. God spent roughly 1500 years putting this together for us through men moved by Him.

Inspiration of the Bible Session 2

1. The Inspiration of Scripture:

a. What are we talking about:

- 1) We hold the position that the Bible is God's revelation to man in writing and that it is without error and completely accurate from beginning to end.

b. Definition of Inspiration:

- 1) The Greek word "**theopneustos**", translated as inspiration, literally means, "**God Breathed.**"
 - a) We recognize that there is a connection between our breath and our words.
 - b) The English word "**inspiration**" comes to us from the Latin word, "**inspirare**" which means to breathe in.
 - c) The Latin word is used as the translation of the Greek word in **II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21.**
- 2) Our understanding through the doctrine of inspiration is that the scriptures came directly from God. He breathed them out.
 - a) Inspiration - "Gods superintendence of human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error his revelation to man in the words of the original autographs." Charles Ryrie, "A Survey of Bible Doctrine [Chicago, Moody publishers, 1972]"

2. Explanation of inspiration

a. The scriptures are God breathed:

- 1) The doctrine of inspiration places the Bible's authority with the one who wrote it, its author, God.
 - a) Again, we look at **II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21**. What do these scriptures tell us that scripture is not?
 - b) What do we learn from these verses that scripture is?

- 2) We know the Bible is not the product of human ideas or wisdom.
 - a) It is suggested that over 2000 times in the Old Testament you would read that the prophets said, "**thus sayeth the Lord.**"

- 3) We believe that the Bible contains God's own words of truth and those words of truth reflect his authority.

b. The scriptures had human writers:

- 1) We understand that there were over 40 authors used to record God's Word over a 1500 year span.
- 2) Does this fact cause you to waver in your belief that the Bible is accurate and without error?

- 3) "Recognizing writers' personalities within scripture does not diminish the divine nature of God's word. The Holy Spirit was still the source of all of God's word." RBP
 - a) "the presence of the writers personalities in the inspired word is a testament to God's sovereignty. He gave the writers the personalities that would reflect exactly the style of writing God wanted in the parts of scripture that they wrote." Regular Baptist Press.
- 4) **II Peter 1:20-21** – Peter makes a bold statement here concerning this, "**no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation**".
 - a) This confirms that the Bible we hold does not consist of the teachings of wise men who came together to compose a book such as the Bible.
- 5) The Holy Spirit arranged for the writing of the word of God.
 - a) He accomplished this as He moved the writers who wrote the Word.
 - b) The word "**moved**" in **verse 21** means to move by bearing, to be conveyed or borne and specifically here to what Peter states to be moved of the mind, to be moved inwardly, prompted.

c. The scriptures are God's word to humanity:

- 1) What questions does the Bible not address?
- 2) Can you think of how the subjects that the Bible does address helps to point to what is really important in life?
- 3) The Bible addresses people's greatest needs. While there may be questions that the Bible doesn't specifically answer if you think about it, God has already told us what we need to know.
 - a) **II Peter 1:2-4** - How could you explain how God's Word fits into the picture of having all things that pertain to life and godliness?
- 4) We recently saw in the book of James that when we have a question, or we are uncertain about something we simply need to ask God for wisdom.

3. Extent of Inspiration:

a. The original manuscripts are inspired:

- 1) Inspiration is attributed to what is called "autographs" of the Bible.
 - a) That term, "**autograph**", simply speaks to the original manuscripts of the Bible.
 - b) "**Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.**" I Cor. 2:13.
- 2) Sometimes people put a lot of emphasis, whether positive or negative, as to us not having original manuscripts today of the Bible.
 - a) It has been noted that maybe that is a good thing because if we had them, the original manuscripts could become a point of worship for some people.

- 3) With that said we recognize that inspiration applies to the original autographs and not to the copies of those manuscripts.
 - a) We know that the Lord has promised that he would preserve his word.
 - b) **“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.” I Peter 1:23-25**
- 4) While God did not give us specifics as to how he would preserve his Word, you can see some examples if you look back at history.
 - a) “The Masoretes were Jewish copyist who exemplified the care that was used in hand copying the Word of God. RBP
 - b) “The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls provided us with Hebrew manuscripts that dated to the 2nd century BC.
 - c) The New Testament manuscripts show similar accuracy.
 - d) “All scholars compare these many different manuscripts, they find the same situation as with the Old Testament; That is, the New Testament has been marvelously preserved for us.” Regular Baptist Press.
- 5) So, what would be your conclusion from these simple examples?
- 6) This is part of the reason here why I suggest that you watch the video with the scholar Daniel Wallace who is with Dallas theological seminary.
- 7) When we speak of the Bible today being inspired it is because we believe it to be an accurate representation of the inspired original manuscripts.
- b. **The words are inspired:**
 - 1) The words themselves of scripture are inspired.
 - a) Passages such as **II Timothy 3:16, II Peter 1:21** would confirm this.
 - 2) Nowhere does the Bible urge believers to know the general ideas of God's revelation or to give attention to the basic ideas that God taught.
 - a) In **Deuteronomy 6:1** – **“now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that you might do them in the land whether you go to possess it.”**
 - b) **Deuteronomy 30:15-16** – “How important was it for the Israelites to know the very words of God's commands, statutes and judgments? It sure seems that Israel's condition and life was dependent on them knowing, trusting, and keeping the very words of God.” R.B.P.
 - 3) The New Testament motivates us to have a similar regard for the words of God.
 - a) For example, in **Galatians 3:16** Paul made a point based on the difference between the singular and plural use of the word **“seed”** and the Genesis record of God's promises to Abraham.

b) “Now the promises (covenants, agreements) we're decreed and made to Abraham and his Seed (this Offspring, his Heir). He [God] does not say, and to seeds (descendants, heirs) as if referring to many persons, but, and to your Seed (your Descendant, your Heir) obviously referring to one individual, who is [none other than] Christ the Messiah.” Amplified – Galatians 3:16.

c. **The whole text of Scripture is inspired:**

- 1) “**plenary**” - plenary inspiration refers to the inspiration of the whole text of scripture.
 - a) **Genesis 1:1, 10:4; John 3:16-17, II Timothy 4:20.** Which of these passages would you deem most important? Why?
 - b) Which of these passages do not seem important? Why?
 - c) Now let's read **II Timothy 3:16-17** – What does this teach about each of these verses?
- 2) It's important to recognize that while we may place a prominence or a value on a portion of scripture, we must be reminded that all of them are inspired therefore all of them are important passages whether we understand it or not.
- 3) Because we believe the word of God to be the inspired words of God then it is worthy of careful study.
 - a) We recognize that some portions are easier to understand but all scripture has value because God wrote it and designed it for our growth in knowing and walking with him.
- 4) “The implications of verbal plenary inspiration are vast. We have possession of a book that is God's revelation. We're going to have confidence that all of it is of divine origin. This should motivate us to study, for a we can know God and His will for our lives with certainty.” Regular Baptist Press.

Inerrancy and Infallibility Session 3

1. Inerrancy and infallibility:

a. Overview:

- 1) In this session we want to understand the importance of inerrancy and look at supporting arguments that qualify this view of the Bible.
- 2) Something to think about –

2. Definitions are needed:

a. Inerrancy:

- 1) The word “**inerrancy**” comes from the Latin word “**errare**” meaning to wander.
- 2) The meaning seems to suggest that inerrancy is associated with a departure from something. “Departing is not a good action to associate with truth. The Latin prefix “**in**” is negative. It fills out the meaning of the word so that ‘**inerrancy**’ means to be free from error.” RBP.
- 3) Whatever is inerrant could be said to have not wandered from the truth.
- 4) When we say the Bible is inerrant, we are saying that it is without error.
- 5) “Biblical inerrancy means the Bible is free from error and that it speaks the truth whether it addresses doctrine, ethics, or history.” RBP
- 6) The term inerrancy is not found in the Bible. But we do know as we just studied that the Bible is inspired, **II Timothy 3:16**, therefore inerrancy is the logical outworking of verbal, plenary inspiration.
- 7) Question - what would we have to conclude about God if the Bible was both inspired and filled with errors and false claims?
- 8) Question - **Titus 1:2 and John 17:17** - what truths about God point to the fact that His Word must be free from error?
 - a) **Proverbs 30:5** says that every word of God is pure. “The word ‘**pure**’ has the idea of being refined and found to be pure. When God's Words are heated up and melted down, not one drop of impurity comes to the surface. There is nothing to skim off the top. All God's words are absolutely true, including those recorded in the Bible.” RBP

b. Infallibility:

- 1) “It was impossible for the writers to record an error of any kind as they penned the scriptures since they were under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. That impossibility of error is what is meant by the word **infallible**. The Bible is inerrant because it is infallible, and it is infallible because it is inspired.” RBP
- 2) So, what do we do with what is called textual variance?

- a) Again, this is why the video I recommended by Daniel Wallace will help answer this question.
- b) "We recognize that during the course of the transmission of scripture from the originals, there were minor scribal errors made in the copies. As a result, there are textual variants in the manuscripts we have today." RBP
- c) "These textual variations are not proofs against the inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible. The terms inerrant and infallible applied to the original manuscripts." RBP

3. Importance:

a. Inerrancy and authority:

- 1) If the Bible is not inerrant, then there has to be an authority over the Bible to tell us which parts of it are true in which are not.
- 2) Question - **Psalm 19:12** - Why is every human unqualified to stand as a judge over the Bible?

b. Inerrancy and interpretation:

- 1) Because we hold the position of the inerrancy of the Bible, we have confidence as we seek to rightly divide it. Since we believe it is true, we recognize that as we understand its meaning and apply it to our lives there will be change.

4. Debate:

a. Arguments for qualified inerrancy:

- 1) Based on language:
 - a) "Some theologians argue that the Bible cannot be inerrant because it contains imprecise language. They demand the Bible must be exact and all that it reports and describes in order for it to be unqualifiedly inherent. For example, they would list round numbers, non-scientific descriptions such as the sun rises or sets, symbolic language and generalizations (using all instead of almost all) as qualifications to inerrancy of scripture." RBP
 - b) Biblical inerrancy does not demand that the Bible be as precise and accurate as possible in all that it reports and claims.
- c) Here's an example to consider.
- d) When the Bible doesn't claim to be precise, we should accept the imprecision or generalization as a part of God's inerrant word.
- e) Question - **Matthew 14:13-21** - List five details that this account does not include for us?
- f) What would be true of the Bible if it had to be as accurate and precise as possible in every single subject it touched and event it recorded?
- g) In contrast the Bible does use precise language when it communicates doctrine. For example, doctrines such as the holiness of God in **Isaiah 6:3**, the way of salvation, **John 11:25-26**, the deity of Christ, **John 1:1-2**.

- 2) Based on content:
 - a) Two different terms concerning the inerrancy of scripture. Unqualified and Qualified Inerrancy.
 - b) The **Unqualified** view states that inerrancy means the Bible is free from any error and that it speaks the truth whether it addresses doctrine, ethics, or history.
 - c) The **Qualified** view states that inerrancy means the Bible communicates the purposes of God flawlessly but contains factual errors and discrepancies.
 - d) Let's deal with the qualified view first - The theologians who hold to this view of inerrancy believe that God, knowing full well that the stories were myths, overrode the human writer's ineptness and immature understanding to communicate his divine purpose through the myths. The theologians conclude that the result is a conglomeration of stories that are the product of both human myths and divine inspiration. RBP
 - e) "The proponents of the qualified view of inerrancy point to Christ as an example of a mix of perfect deity and imperfect humanity. They say that Christ's human side was limited, meaning he didn't necessarily excel at things such as math and carpentry. They also suggest that the simple fact that Christ had a human body meant he must have been physically less than perfect." RBP.

b. Answers to qualified inerrancy advocates:

- 1) Qualified inerrancy is very different than a biblical view of inerrancy.
 - a) This redefinition of inerrancy does very little to strengthen someone's confidence in the Bible.
- 2) So how do you answer this intellectual attack on the inerrancy of scripture?
- 3) First:
 - a) Question - **II Peter 1:16** - What did Peter say about the biblical accounts of the power and coming of the Lord Jesus?
 - b) Question - **II Timothy 4:1-5** - What did the apostle Paul instruct pastors concerning the Word of God and fables?
 - c) Paul taught Timothy to reject any sources that people wanted to add to the Bible as authoritative. **I Timothy 1:4, 4:7**
- 4) Second:
 - a) The historical record is an essential part of the Bible; it is the vehicle through which God reveals truth about himself and his relationship with humanity.
 - b) Question - **Luke 24:13-27** – Why did Jesus use Old Testament history here?
 - c) Question - **Luke 24:28-35** – What was the result?

5) Third:

a) According to John N. Oswalt, it shows that “the Old Testament could in no way be myth or even based on myths of other cultures. Oswalt carefully defined myths by demonstrating that ancient myths were born out of the belief that all things are continuous, which means nature, humans and the divine all share a real oneness.” “The Bible Among Myths” by John N Oswalt.

b) “That means both nature and divine have human qualities that can be reflected by the characters in the myths. The myths, then, are expressions of the continuities of the human, natural, and divine realms.”

c) “When the worldview behind the ancient pagan myths is considered, the idea that the Bible was written based on those myths becomes absurd.”

d) Question - **Job 42:1-2; Psalm 115:3; Proverbs 21:1** – What limits are there on what God can do?

6) Why try to redefine inerrancy? What would be the point?

c. **Ambitions of Qualified Inerrancy Advocates:**

1) If you have studied the Word for very long you will eventually come across attacks against the Bible.

2) This attack on what God has said began in the Garden with Eve and it will continue until the very end to the Great White Throne Judgement.

a) What are we to do?

b) Why is it important to hold such a high view of the Word of God.

3) How do you approach God’s Word when you read and study it? Remember what James says God does when someone approaches Him with pride. God resists them.

Canonicity of Scripture Session 4

1. Canonicity of Scripture:

a. Overview:

- 1) As we continue to investigate the truth about God's Word, we want to turn our attention to the process that the early believers used in identifying what books should be a part of the Canon of Scripture.
- 2) The 66 books of our Bible were not selected at random but were the result of a process where they had to measure up to a standard before being accepted as scripture.
- 3) When you encounter someone who is attacking the integrity of the Bible, just remember that for some it is a tactic they use to provide themselves an excuse from the Bible's authority.

2. Definition of Canonicity:

a. "Canon"

- 1) The word "**canon**" comes from the Latin word, meaning ruler, rule, model, standard.
 - a) The Romans borrowed this word from the Greek language in which it meant a reed that was used as a measuring rod.
- 2) Apparently, the believers at this time could recognize that certain books were inspired by God, God breathed, when they were written.
 - a) But how did they make this determination?

3. Five Tests of Canonicity:

a. God directed this:

- 1) God determined which writings were to be included in the Canon. The Holy Spirit led the people of Israel and then the people of the early church to recognize which writings were inspired and therefore were to be set apart and identified as the scriptures.
- 2) Those tests included:

b. **Authority**: Does the book express the authority of God?

- 1) **Genesis 15:1; II Samuel 7:4; Jeremiah 1:4**. What is a phrase that you see repeated in these verses?
- 2) What do we take from this?
- 3) What would be a takeaway with that number of statements?
- 4) **I Corinthians 11:23** – What did Paul say about what he wrote?
- 5) **Galatians 1:11-12**. What did Paul say that he had received directly from God?

6) What did Paul state in **Galatians 1:8-9**?

- a) This means that Paul recognized that God is the sole authority for His words to the Churches.

c. **Writer:**

1) You may remember **1 Peter 1:21**. We have looked at this several times thus far. What did Peter write here?

2) What are some things they were looking for as it related to the writers?

- a) "Were the Old Testament writers acknowledged as prophets, lawgivers, or leaders in Israel?" RBP
- b) "Were the New Testament writers recognized as apostles or those who were backed by an apostle?" RBP
- c) "Once the human writers were recognized as authorized by God, the early Christians needed to consider whether each book was written by the name it bears." RBP
- d) "For those books that don't list an author, they considered whether the book was written by the person traditionally recognized as the author." RBP
- e) "The books that are not associated with an author directly or traditionally, they considered whether the book was written in the time period traditionally associated with the book." RBP
- f) Books are not accepted as genuine when they appear to be forged or written later than claimed.

3) None of the books of the Bible failed the canonicity test.

4) While we cannot delve into every book of the Bible, let's look at a few.

- a) The first 5 books of the Bible known as the Pentateuch; they are believed to have been written by Moses. Is there evidence to support this conclusion?
- b) **Exodus 17:14** – What did God ask Moses to do? Specifically, to write the account of the victory over the Amalekites.
- c) **Exodus 34:27** – What did God want Moses to write about in this verse? God's covenant with Israel.
- d) Moses gives us two important pieces of evidence here. He wrote about what God told him to write and he also wrote that which God told him to write about it.

e) Why would God do this?

5) Other places, in the first five books, state that Moses recorded both the Lord's instructions to Israel (**Exodus 24:4, Deut. 31:9,24**) and the records of their journeys with the Lord. **Num. 33:2**

- a) Within the Pentateuch, Moses' writings are referred to as "**the words of this law and the book of this law**", **Deut. 28:58, 61**.
- b) Outside the Pentateuch Joshua refers to them as "**the book of the law of Moses**", **Joshua 8:31**.
- c) Nehemiah calls the Pentateuch, "**the book of Moses**", **Neh. 13:1**.

- d) I Kings, II Kings, II Chronicles, and Daniel also attribute the Pentateuch to Moses.
- 6) The New Testament gives further evidence to the fact that Moses wrote the Pentateuch.
 - a) Luke wrote that after Jesus rose from the dead, He explained the scriptures to the men on the road to Emmaus. Luke recorded that Jesus began as “**Moses**” **Luke 24:27**, a reference to the Pentateuch.
 - b) Luke referenced the Pentateuch as Moses in **Acts 15:21**.
 - c) Paul did the same in **II Cor. 3:15**.
- 7) **Galatians 1:6-7** – What warning did Paul give to the believers in Galatia who had begun to follow a false gospel?

8) **I John 4:1-6** – What admonition did John give to believers?

d. **Authenticity:**

- 1) The question of authenticity deals with the content of scripture.
 - a) What does it say about God?
 - b) Is its message consistent with the rest of the Bible?
 - c) If a book contradicted other scripture, then it would be suspect.
- 2) **Acts 17:12** – What was the result of the Bereans faithful testimony of the genuineness of Paul’s teaching?
- 3) Jesus used the Old Testament with such confidence that he regarded its historical records as adequate evidence to condemn the religious leaders of His day.
 - a) The testimony of all of scripture is that it is incredibly harmonious.
 - b) That doesn’t mean that the books are not without their challenges.
 - c) For example, do Paul and James contradict each other when it comes to salvation?
James 2:14-26 and **Romans 4:4,5**.
- d) We can see how that both emphases are important to understanding the Christian life.

4) **Power:**

- a) Is there evidence that the book was inspired by God? **Hebrews 4:12** tells us –
- b) **Hebrews 4:12** – What books of the Bible has God used to powerfully affect your life?
- c) How do the effects of God’s Word help build your confidence in it?

5) **Reception:**

- a) The final question and test was if God’s people recognized a book in the Bible as being from God when it was written and then read over the years.
- b) “The question of what books belonged in the Jewish Canon of scripture had been settled centuries before the time of Christ. The scrolls containing the law of Moses and the

prophets along with the psalms had been collected in the Tabernacle and later in the temple. Luke 24:44.” RBP

- c) What did Moses command the priests to do according to **Deuteronomy 31:9-13, Nehemiah 8:1-8**?
- d) “The early leaders of the church quoted from the epistles and the gospels in the same way they quoted from the Old Testament books. Records of worship in the early church indicate that the books of the New Testament were read along with the Old Testament in the 2nd century AD.” RBP
- e) “Formal councils held by the early churches did not announce to the churches which books to use and which to reject. Rather, they offered formal statements that they were using the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments because they recognized them to be the word of God.” RBP
- f) “The council of Carthage in AD 397 was the first church council to recognize the 27 books of the New Testament as belonging to the Canon.” RBP
- g) “Though most of the New Testament books had already been considered canonical before then. The books of Hebrews, James, second Peter and third John and Jude were debated some but were eventually recognized. All of the 27 books in the New Testament have proven to be indeed worthy of their place in the Canon of scripture.” RBP
- h) “The apocrypha was not accepted by the Jews nor was it accepted by Christ or others in his time because those books contained historical inaccuracies and strange statements that were morally questionable.” RBP
- i) “Christ never quoted from those books, even though he quoted from almost all the books of the Old Testament.” RBP
- j) Philo, a Jewish philosopher (20BC-AD40) quoted the Old Testament books, but he never included or recognized any of those books of the apocrypha as sacred.
- k) The Jewish historian Josephus, (AD 30-100), explicitly excluded the apocrypha from the Canon of scripture.
- l) “No council of the Christian Church gave credibility to the apocryphal books until 400 years after the time of Christ. The early church actually spoke out against them. It was not until the council of Trent (1546) that the Roman Catholic Church acted to counter the Protestant movement and included the apocryphal books as belonging in the Bible.” RBP
- m) “Just a reading of those books shows that their quality and reliability are not on the same par with the inspired word of God. It is argued that sense the Catholic Church waited so long to officially accept the apocrypha that that is a strong indication that those books were never considered a part of the Canon of scripture.” RBP

4. Important of Canonicity:

a. Question:

- 1) Why is it important for believers to be able to defend the canonicity of Scripture?

b. Some things to remember:

- 1) Throughout time different religions have claimed that extra books are part of or equal to the 66 books of the word of God. The Roman Catholic Bible contains 14 additional books between the Old and New Testament that we know as the apocrypha.
- 2) “The foundation of God's word and our faith rests upon the deity of Jesus Christ. satan will use whatever means possible to cause people to doubt the authenticity of the Bible. Any religion or form of entertainment that distorts the biblical view of Christ or seeks to add to the word of God offers an unbelieving world even greater reason to question Christianity.” RBP
- 3) This is why we do what we do as teachers and why continually being equipped with the Word is so important.

Transmission of the Bible Session 5

1. Transmission of the Scriptural Text:

a. Overview –

- 1) We want to take some time to look at the history of how the Bible was transmitted from the early manuscripts to the later translations.
- 2) How difficult do you think it would be to translate the Bible from the original languages?
- 3) None of us here are scholars. We are not familiar with the Greek or Hebrew language therefore the work of translation would be for scholars.
 - a) Imagine being a part of a people group who have no written language? With no written language there would be no written Word of God either.
 - b) At last check there was nearly 3000 people groups in the world without access to a Bible that each of us hold and are privileged to study.

b. Masoretic Text:

- 1) “The Old Testament is based on the Masoretic text, which was transcribed by a group of scribes called the Masoretes beginning around the 6th century AD.” RBP
- 2) “Their job was completed in the 10th century by scholars at Talmudic academies located in Babylon and Israel. These Jewish scribes preserved the scriptures by assembling and codifying every available text at that time. Their goal was to preserve the original text of the Hebrew Old Testament.” RBP
- 3) “The masoretes supplied diacritical marks to enable correct pronunciation.” “Diacritical” – is a mark or sign serving to indicate different pronunciations of a letter above or below which it is written.
 - a) “The reason for these markings is that the Hebrew manuscripts they consulted lacked vowel markings and other guides for reading the text. The dots and dashes above and below the letters in the Hebrew Bible tell the reader how to properly pronounce the words while other marks help the reader know when to accent a word and when to pause.” RBP
- 4) “The Masorete’s work, as mentioned in an earlier lesson, was extremely meticulous.” Here are some examples of what they did.
 - a) “They checked that every word and letter was accurate, pointing out odd spellings and any unusual grammar.”
 - b) “They also noted where they saw variations in the text they were using.” RBP
 - c) “The Masoretes even counted the verses, words, and letters in the text.” RBP
 - d) “They especially noted the middle letter of each page, book, and section so that any revisions or mistakes would be more obvious when additional copies were made.” RBP
- 5) The written Masoretic text we have today dates back as far as the late 9th century AD.”

6) Would you say that we are fortunate that the Masorete's work as so careful?

c. Septuagint: (LXX)

- 1) "Around 200 BC, Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt, translated the Hebrew Bible into the commonly spoken Greek. This translation was called the Septuagint. The name comes from the Latin word for 70." RBP
 - a) "Tradition holds that 72 men, 6 from each tribe of Israel, participated in the work and simultaneously produced perfect translations." RBP
- 2) The New Testament, which was written in Greek and often quotes the Septuagint, though not exclusively.
- 3) "The parallels between the Masoretic texts and the Septuagint are evidence that both are accurate copies of the original Word that God gave to His prophets." RBP
- 4) "In addition to the early versions of the Septuagint, Jerome translated both testaments of scripture into a new Latin version by AD 405. The Latin translation became known as the Vulgate and was the preferred Bible text throughout most of Europe during the next Millennium. The Vulgate provides yet another test for the accuracy of the Old Testament." RBP

d. Dead Sea Scrolls:

- 1) "The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls starting in 1947 has proven to be the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times. A shepherd found clay jars in a cave a short distance from the Dead Sea." RBP
 - a) "The jars contained leather scrolls with ancient Hebrew writing."
 - b) "Manuscripts were found in 11 different caves."
 - c) "Cave 4 contained the majority of the manuscripts containing scripture."
 - d) "Scholars were able to reconstruct more than 500 books written in Hebrew, many of them containing large portions of the Old Testament."
 - e) "Only the book of Ester was missing from the scrolls."
- 2) "These ancient scrolls are from the 1st and 2nd century BC, which is about 1,000 years older than the earliest complete edition of the Masoretic text."
 - a) "They help confirm the overall accuracy of the Masoretic text."
 - b) "Most of the differences that scholars identified are insignificant spelling variations, grammar errors, or missing words."
 - c) "None of the discrepancies affect any teaching or doctrine. Thus, when compared with each other,"
 - d) "The Septuagint manuscripts, the Masoretic text, and the Dead Sea Scrolls are remarkably similar and ultimately yield and extremely accurate Old Testament." RBP.

e. Ancient copies of the New Testament:

- 1) We have about 5,000 (some other estimate include as many as 5800) ancient copies of portions of the New Testament to examine and compare:

- a) Some of the earliest are 3rd century AD translations of the New Testament into Old Latin, Syriac, and Egyptian.
 - b) The Latin Vulgate and the Greek Codex Vaticanus, Codex Sinaiticus, and Codex Alexandrinus are all 4th and 5th century AD translations of the New Testament.
 - c) We also have about 75 papyri fragments dating from 135 AD to the 8th century. Those fragments cover parts of all but two New Testament books. Overall, 40% of the New Testament is covered by the early fragments.
- 2) How would you describe the amount of evidence we have to substantiate the New Testament?
- 3) “While it is true that no original New Testament manuscripts exist, the Bible scholars who work faithfully with the texts of those copies of manuscripts can compare the copies and determine what the words of the original manuscripts must have been.” RBP
- a) While the scholars may differ on how to prioritize how the manuscripts are used, we do know that 90% of the New Testament is supported by all of the manuscripts.
 - b) There are no doctrines affected in the New Testament by any of the discrepancies in the New Testament texts.
 - c) It has been said concerning the accuracy of the New Testament that God used careful men to transmit the Word of God in a highly accurate way.
- f. **Here is an example to help us better understand:**
- 1) “Similar history books from the time of the New Testament, such as Caesar’s ‘Gallic War’ (AD 50), are readily accepted as accurate even though they have less than one percent of the total number of New Testament manuscripts and fragments.” RBP
 - 2) “Many manuscripts to support those history books are from about 1,000 years after the originals were written.” RBP
 - 3) “By comparison, the overwhelming number of New Testament manuscripts is more than ample to establish the New Testament text. Critics simply cannot argue that our New Testament is invalid because we don’t have enough evidence to establish an accurate text.” RBP

2. History of the Bible:

a. Middle Ages:

- 1) Here is a description of why John Wycliff translated the Bible into English.
 - a) “Literacy rates in Europe were low during the Middle Ages, AD 276 to the 14th century. Historians estimate that around 90% of Europeans throughout much of the Middle Ages could not read and write. Not only that, but the Bibles available at the time were mostly in Latin, a language only the church leadership understood. Stained glass and art in cathedrals were the closest the people came to understanding God’s word for themselves.” RBP

b) "Near the end of the Middle Ages, an Oxford scholar and professor named John Wycliffe became convinced that the contemporary Catholic Church had drifted far from New Testament Christianity. He rightly believed the church was the people, and not the Catholic Pope, priest, and sacramental system. If the people were going to understand the Bible and the distortions concerning the Catholic Church, then they needed to at least have God's word in their own language." RBP

c) "Wycliff earnestly desired that every common person might learn the words of the gospel according to his (The Lord's) simplicity. So, he began to work on an English translation of the Latin vulgate. He and his assistants completed their first edition before his death in 1384. Wycliffe's influence continued after his death prompting the Catholic Church to condemn him as a heretic. His bones were dug up and crushed in his books or burned. His followers, named "Lollards" (mumblers) by their enemies, later produced a second edition of the Bible in English. The Wycliffe Bible was banned by Church authorities and was frequently burned. In 1408 it became illegal to translate or read the Bible in vernacular English without permission from the Bishop." RBP

2) Wow how sad. Done by the Church.

3) Why would the Catholic Church be so interested in keeping people from an English Bible?

b. Reformation:

1) It is interesting to note that for a long time the Catholic popes did not encourage nor support the growing availability of the Bible in languages the people could read.

2) Martin Luther, (1483-1546) is remembered for nailing what was called his ninety-five thesis to the Wittenberg Church door in 1517. He wanted to make it known that the Bible and not the Catholic Church, is the central religious authority and that salvation is by faith alone and not by works.

a) This caused quite a stir, but Luther and others began to teach these Reformation teachings throughout Europe.

b) Luther is also known for translating the New Testament into German in 1522. His goal and purpose was that people should be able to read the Bible for themselves. It was 12 years later that he finished his translation of the Old Testament.

c. English translations:

1) It is once again interesting how that religious leaders, like those of the Catholic church were afraid of people being free to read the Bible.

2) In England, William Tyndale, (1494-1536) served as a chaplain as well as a trained scholar from Oxford. Tyndale had the same aspirations as many others did concerning the Bible being available to people.

- 3) There is a story about a conversation that Tyndale had with one of his opponents. His opponent argued that “it would be better to be without the Bible than it would to be with the pope’s law.” RBP
- 4) Tyndale’s response was direct. He said, “If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plow to know more of the Scripture than thou dost.” RBP
 - a) “John Tewksbury was arrested and burned at the stake for distributing Tyndale’s New Testaments and for supporting Tyndale’s belief in salvation by faith alone.” RBP
 - b) “Tyndale finished translating 15 Old Testament books before he was betrayed by a friend and arrested.” RBP
- 5) “It has been said that his margin notes in his Old Testament translation were particularly condemning of the Pope.” RBP
- 6) Question - What do you think of John Tewksberry being burned at the stake and Tyndale being strangled and then burned for making the Bible available to the common man?
- 7) Some other English translations include:
 - a) Coverdale Bible – “This was the first licensed Bible to be printed in English, 1535. It was based on the Old Testament books Tyndale translated. Miles Coverdale, (1488-1569) was exiled from England three times for his preaching against Catholic doctrine.” RBP
 - b) Matthew’s Bible – “Was produced in 1538. It was also a completed version of Tyndale’s work. King Henry VIII eventually ordered a revision of the Matthew’s Bible, called the Great Bible, (1539), be placed in every church throughout England. The Great Bible was missing the protestant notes found in the margins of the Matthew’s Bible.” RBP
 - c) Geneva Bible – “Dated, 1560, is said to be the Bible that William Shakespeare used, was the text carried to America by the Pilgrims in 1620. There were many Anglican clergy who opposed the Geneva Bible’s marginal notes because they taught John Calvin’s controversial views.” RBP
 - d) King James Version or Authorized Version – “King James I did not like the Geneva Bible and ordered another version of the Bible. There were 47 scholars who worked on the translation for about 3 years. They consulted other translations such as the Bishops Bible and Tyndale’s Bible but also used the original languages. The first copy was completed and came off the press in 1611. There were slight revisions made, especially spelling changes in 1613, 1629, 1638, 1762 and 1769.” RBP
- 8) Question – With the Bible now available to the common people, what do you think started to happen?

3. Principles for Translation Work: I

a. Have a high view of scripture:

- 1) If you are translating the Word of God, your opinion of the Bible is important.
 - a) This high view that God inspired every word would ensure that the translators would treat with great care every word.
- 2) Those who hold to a high view of God's Word as translators believe that "translations should express the very Word of God as literally as possible in the receptor languages without distorting, adding to, or obscuring the meaning of the original text." RBP
 - a) Formal equivalence. "Often called a "word-for-word" translation, formal equivalence "seeks to represent each word of the translated text with an exact equivalent word in the translation so that the reader can see word for word what the original human author wrote," according to The Apologetics Study Bible."
 - b) Translations that tend to follow a formal equivalence philosophy include the King James Version (KJV), the New American Standard Bible (NASB), and the English Standard Version (ESV).
- 3) Dynamic Equivalence - Known as a "thought-for-thought" approach, dynamic equivalence attempts to distinguish the meaning of a text from its form and then translate the meaning so that it makes the same impact on modern readers that the ancient text made on its original readers.
 - a) Translations that tend to employ dynamic equivalence include the New International Version (NIV), the Contemporary English Version (CEV), and the Good News Translation (GNT).
 - b) "The problem with the dynamic equivalence method is that the translator actually plays the role of interpreter in the translation process." RBP

b. Be reasonably literal:

- 1) "Conservative scholars advocate that every word should be translated in a way that is literal and yet suitable in the new language." RBP
- 2) "This is important to understand. The translation must be structured consistently with the receptor language and thus understandable to those who speak the language." RBP
- 3) Here is an example of what I mean. A word for word translation of John 3:16 would read like this –
 - a) "thus for He loved the God the world, that the Son the only begotten he gave, in order that everyone the one believing into him not may perish but may have life everlasting."
 - b) "The Bible translators must arrange the translation in a manner that native speakers can comprehend." RBP

c. Work as a team:

- 1) Those who are concerned and have a high view scripture are more likely to work in committees rather than alone since the joint effort provides a system of check and balances.

2) We are certainly blessed by the Lord to have a Bible in our language. We are also blessed for those scholars who have handled the Word with great care and concern so that we could have what God has said readable and understandable.

d. **Let's stop here for a moment:**

1) Recognizing the price that some have paid to provide us a copy of the Word of God, how should we respond today?