

The Bible: What it is and How we got it

RCF Academy

Lesson 1: Introduction to Scripture

Course Objectives

1. Equip the saints with confidence in the scriptures
2. Equip the saints with apologetic resources

Today

- Orthodox presuppositions of God and scripture
 - canonical philosophy
 - justification for Textual Criticism.

- We will examine
 - God and the Scriptures
 - Attributes of scripture

God's word as His action

- God's first words were effectual
 - *"And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light." Genesis 1:3 ESV*
- God's commands have lasting effect on mankind
 - *"but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." Genesis 2:17 ESV*
- After Adam sinned, immediately he died spiritually

Jesus (the Word) as God's action

- Christ is God's action
 - “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.” Colossians 1:15-16 ESV
- Christ does the will of the Father
 - "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.” John 14:9-11 ESV
 - “For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.” John 6:38 ESV

Jesus gives authority to Apostles

- Apostles words carry same weight
 - ““And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town. "Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.” Matthew 10:14-15, 40 ESV
- Holy Spirit guides them
 - “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.” John 16:7 ESV
- Apostles unique role in the church
 - “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,” Ephesians 2:19-20 ESV

Attributes of Scripture

- 1689 London Baptist Confessions states:
 - *“The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience, although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and his will which is necessary unto salvation. Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers manners to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church; and afterward for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan, and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing; which maketh the Holy Scriptures to be most necessary, those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased. ~ 1689 LBCF 1.1”*

Inspiration

- Inspira = Breathed into the minds
- More Scripturally accurate = breathed out
 - “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,” 2 Timothy 3:16 ESV
- B.B. Warfield says of the dual nature of scripture:
 - “No human activity-not even the control of the will-is superseded, but the Holy Spirit works in, with and through them all in such a manner as to communicate to the product qualities distinctly superhuman.”

Inspiration

- Discursive

- God gives revelation by voice or by his own hand

- “And he gave to Moses, when he had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.” Exodus 31:18 ESV
- “Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying,” Jeremiah 1:4 ESV

- Concursive

- Men carried along by the Holy Spirit to write the words of God

- "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.” John 16:12-15 ESV
- “knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” 2 Peter 1:20-21 ESV

Inspiration

- Objections
 - The finite capacity of human language conveying the transcendence of God
 - The sinful capacity of man distorting God's perfect message
- Timothy Ward says regarding human capacity:
 - “Whatever else may be true of human language, it is quite reasonable to suppose that it has the ability to speak truly of God, both because it was given to us by a God who speaks within himself as eternally three speaking persons, and also because our possession of language, as made in God's image, is analogous to God's communicative capacity. Our language can be made by God to speak truthfully of him because our language has its origin in him and in some way is like his own. The fall makes this much more problematic, of course, but sin does not erase humanity as the image of God, and thus does not destroy the capacity of human language to speak truly of God.”
- God's perfection is more capable than man's imperfection

Authority

- Material
 - The external authority that is in the words themselves
 - Only applies to the autographs
- Formal
 - The authority of the doctrines contained internally
 - Applies to all faithful copies and translations

Inerrant

- All the bible **AFFIRMS** is true
 - “The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good.” Psalm 14:1 ESV
 - It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." Matthew 13:32 ESV