

BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE 2000

Article I – The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

WHAT DOES THE SCRIPTURE SAY ABOUT ITSELF?

1) THE SCRIPTURES ARE GOD'S REVELATION OF HIMSELF

We believe that the entire Bible is God's divinely inspired Word, his special revelation. The Scriptures have God for its author. We believe that it originates from God, and that men recorded it as the Spirit moved them. There are a few erroneous ways to think about this.

- a. **Unevenly Inspired** – There are some that believe that parts of the Bible are inspired, or there are parts of the Bible that are inspired more than others.
- b. **Inspired Ideas** – Some believe that God just inspired the ideas that we see in the Bible, but he is not the author of the words that are contained in the Bible. He just gave general ideas to the human authors and they did the rest.
- c. **Dictation Theory** – Some believe that the Spirit dictated word for word what each writer was to record as if they were in a trance.

The way that we should understand God's revelation of himself through divinely inspired human authors is called **Verbal Plenary Theory** of the inspiration of God's Word. The verbal plenary theory means (a) verbal – the words themselves are inspired, and (b) plenary – all of scripture is inspired, not just some parts. This is what 2 Timothy 3:16 teaches. God breathed out his Word to the human authors. Men recorded the Word in their own words, in their own style, but it God inspired their writing. All of the words that are recorded are the words that God intended to be there.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

[16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Exodus 24:1-4

[1] Then he said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar. [2] Moses alone shall come near to the LORD, but the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him."

[3] Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words that the LORD has spoken we will do." [4] **And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD.** He rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

In the New Testament, God spoke through his Son, and again through the Apostles as they recorded the Word of God. Jesus spoke about this in John 16.

John 16:12-15

[12] "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. [13] **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. [14] He will glorify me, for **he will take what is mine and declare it to you.** [15] All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

2 Peter 1:19-21

[16] For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. [17] For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," [18] we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. [19] **And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed,** to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, [20] knowing this first of all, that **no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.** [21] **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.**

Because God has revealed himself to us in his Word, this is how we can know him. He has given us a treasure trove of grace to us by giving us his Word. It is through his Word that we find peace, love, and hope.

Psalms 119:11,89,105,140

[11] I have stored up your **word** in my heart, that I might not sin against you. [89] Forever, O LORD, your **word** is firmly fixed in the heavens. [105] Your **word** is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. [140] Your **promise** is well tried, and your servant loves it.

Matthew 22:23-33

[23] The same day Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him a question, [24] saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.' [25] Now there were

seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no offspring left his wife to his brother. [26] So too the second and third, down to the seventh. [27] After them all, the woman died. [28] In the resurrection, therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her."

[29] But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because **you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.** [30] For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. [31] And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: [32] 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living." [33] And when the crowd heard it, they were astonished at his teaching.

Jeremiah 15:15-16

[15] O LORD, you know; remember me and visit me, and take vengeance for me on my persecutors. In your forbearance take me not away; know that for your sake I bear reproach. [16] **Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart,** for I am called by your name, O LORD, God of hosts.

The Bible is our foundation because it is God's revelation of Himself to us.

2) THE SCRIPTURES HAVE SALVATION FOR ITS END

God has given us the Bible not just so we can know him, but in him we can find salvation. It was given to his people for the purpose of drawing us to him and uniting with Christ forever. It always accomplishes what is set out to do. It is through the scriptures that we have hope and we can find rest in the salvation of our God.

Romans 15:4

[4] For **whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction,** that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Hebrews 4:8-13

[8] For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. [9] So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, [10] for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

[11] Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. [12] **For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.** [13] And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

God's Word by God's Spirit is what guides us, beginning to end, unto salvation. We see again in 2 Timothy that his salvific work is accomplished through the means of the Word. It makes us "wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."

2 Timothy 3:14-17

*[14] But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it [15] and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the **sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. [16] All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.***

3) THE SCRIPTURES HAVE TRUTH WITHOUT ANY MIXTURE OF ERROR

The Bible is:

- a. Inerrant – The Bible is completely without errors.
- b. Infallible – The Bible never fails. It always accomplishes what God wills.
- c. Sufficient – The Bible is sufficient for all matters of life and doctrine.
- d. Authoritative – Because it is from God, it is authoritative in all matters.
- e. Eternal – The Word of God will stand forever.

God has given us his Word, and as we have a God who is perfect, we can trust that his Word is truth. Jesus confirmed this himself as he was praying to the Father.

John 17:17

*[17] “Sanctify them in the truth; **your word is truth.**”*

The Psalmist gives us insight into this was well in Psalm 19.

Psalm 19:7-10

*[7] **The law of the LORD** is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; [8] the **precepts of the LORD** are right, rejoicing the heart; the **commandment of the LORD** is pure, enlightening the eyes; [9] the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the **rules of the LORD are true**, and righteous altogether. [10] More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.*

Contrary to the belief of some, the concept of inerrancy is not something new. We see the Bereans valuing the Word of God. Even as the Apostle Paul was preaching to them, they studied the Word to see if what he was saying was true.

Acts 17:11

*[10] The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. [11] Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; **they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures***

daily to see if these things were so. [12] Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men.

God's revelation of himself is divinely inspired, completely true, and it will remain forever.

Isaiah 40:8

*[6] A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. [7] The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass. [8] **The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.***

1 Peter 1:25

*[22] Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, [23] since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; [24] for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, [25] **but the word of the Lord remains forever.**" And this word is the good news that was preached to you.*

Luke 21:29-33

*[29] And he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. [30] As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. [31] So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. [32] Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place. [33] **Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.***

Jeremiah 36:1-32

God is sovereign and his Word will never fail. It will never not be true.

Isaiah 34:15-17

*[15] There the owl nests and lays and hatches and gathers her young in her shadow; indeed, there the hawks are gathered, each one with her mate. [16] **Seek and read from the book of the LORD: Not one of these shall be missing; none shall be without her mate. For the mouth of the LORD has commanded, and his Spirit has gathered them.** [17] He has cast the lot for them; his hand has portioned it out to them with the line; they shall possess it forever; from generation to generation they shall dwell in it.*

4) THE SCRIPTURES ARE GOD'S SUPREME STANDARD

In the Scriptures we have a record of God's standard, his expectations for his creation. As creator, he has the right to demand what he will from his creation. He has given this to us in his Word. In it, we see how we are supposed to worship him and him alone.

Deuteronomy 4:1-2

*“And now, O Israel, **listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, & do them,** that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. [2] You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may **keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you.**”*

Deuteronomy 17:19

[14] “When you come to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,’ [15] you may indeed set a king over you whom the LORD your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. [16] Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall never return that way again.’ [17] And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold.

*[18] “And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. [19] **And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them,** [20] that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.*

Joshua 8:30-35

*[30] At that time Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal, [31] just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the people of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, “an altar of uncut stones, upon which no man has wielded an iron tool.” And they offered on it burnt offerings to the LORD and sacrificed peace offerings. [32] And there, in the presence of the people of Israel, he wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written. [33] And all Israel, sojourner as well as native born, with their elders and officers and their judges, stood on opposite sides of the ark before the Levitical priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and half of them in front of Mount Ebal, just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded at the first, to bless the people of Israel. [34] **And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law.** [35] There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not read before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the sojourners who lived among them.*

In the New Covenant, we see that now God’s people live under the Law of Christ. Though we are no longer under the Law delivered to Israel, God still has revealed his standard to us through his Son.

Hebrews 1:1-2

*[1] Long ago, at many times and in many ways, **God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,** [2] but in these last days **he has spoken to us by his Son,** whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.*

Matthew 5:17-18

*[17] “Do not think that **I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.** [18] 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.”*

It is not just conduct that is held to this standard, but our beliefs as well. Scripture is the standard by which all creeds (including this one) should be judged. Just as we have already talked about the Bereans comparing Paul’s teaching to Scripture, all of what we believe needs to be examined in light of God’s revealed truth.

5) THE SCRIPTURES FOCUS ON CHRIST

Finally, we see that all of the Scriptures focus on Christ. From Genesis to Revelation, this book is written with Jesus as the center. The Scriptures, beginning to end, are about Jesus.

Luke 24:44-46

*[44] Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.**” [45] **Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,** [46] and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, [47] and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. [48] You are witnesses of these things.*

John 5:36-47

*[36] “But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me. [37] And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, [38] and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. [39] **You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,** [40] yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. [41] I do not receive glory from people. [42] But I know that you do not have the love of God within you. [43] I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him. [44] How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? [45] Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. [46] **For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. [47] But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?”***

In Acts, Peter delivers a sermon that unpacks the ministry of Jesus. He links his ministry to the prophecy found in Joel. We see that God’s Word pointed directly to the Christ, a testimony of who he is what he has come to do.

Acts 2:14-22

[14] But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. [15] For

*these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. [16] But **this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:***

[17] “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; [18] even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. [19] And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; [20] the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. [21] And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

*[22] “Men of Israel, hear these words: **Jesus of Nazareth**, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know.”*

Finally, in Romans and other places Paul refers to “the mystery” that has now been revealed. The Gentiles have been grafted into the people of God through the work of Jesus. This was done according to the prophetic Word of God.

Romans 16:25-27

*[25] Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, **according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages [26] but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations**, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—[27] to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.*

HOW SHOULD I RESPOND?

The Scriptures are God’s revelation of himself to mankind. God is the divine author of these 66 books. The Bible has salvation for its end, and complete and total truth for its matter. It is the righteous rule and standard that we hold up for all things, and from cover to cover it points to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Because we have seen things:

A) What difference does this make in my life? How should my life look because of these truths?

B) What changes do I need to make because of these truths?

C) How can I share these truths with family, friends, or neighbors?

HOMEWORK

For next week, read Article 2A and all of the associated scriptures with this article.