

Notes from Chapter 2 and 3

The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God's words in such a way that to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.

1. The Bible Claims to be the Word of God.

- A. There are specific expressions of God's authorship in the OT.
- B. The OT is viewed as a collective book. (2 Tim. 3.15-16)
- C. The NT calls the OT "God-breathed." (2 Tim. 3.16-17; 2 Peter 1.21)
- D. The NT refers to the books of the NT on the same level as the OT. (1 Tim. 5.18 – Deut. 25.4, Luke 10.7)
- E. The NT writers were aware that their writings were from God. (1 Cor. 14.37)

2. We cannot "scientifically" prove that the Bible is the Word of God.

- A. Belief in the Scriptures is ultimately a work of the Spirit.

Jesus promised that the Spirit would help the disciples remember and would guide them in all truth. John 14.26; 16.13 – The Spirit did that! 1 Cor. 2.13-14

- B. The Scriptures are authoritative whether I believe them or not.

Mormon story (will have a burning feeling – attempt to describe an inner witness in experiential terms), how does this differ from us?

- the Scriptures are consistent with themselves, the book of Mormon is not consistent with the Scriptures

Although we cannot "scientifically" prove that the Bible is the Word of God, true science is incapable of disproving because it is true. Mormon revelation is inconsistent with itself and must be improved upon (5 books) with each one having more authority than the last one.

- C. Even if you could prove the Bible – "scientifically" it would still be rejected.

Proving something "scientifically" assumes that people are completely neutral, unbiased and capable of making a clear, rational decision that is totally uninfluenced by their own desires. This is impossible, since the condition of the human heart creates a bias in every person.

3. Apologetics and Archaeology are interesting, but do not carry the day.

- A. Appeals to rational thinking cannot force faith (sin is irrational).
- B. Appeals to evidence are helpful but cannot by themselves change a heart.

4. God used the backgrounds and personalities of the men he chose to record His Word.

God used different ways for the writers to gather and or write their material. Research and interview – Luke; Direct revelation and records – Moses; Times of crisis and joy – David; Education, training and analysis – Paul (Romans)

“...God’s providential oversight and direction of the life of each author was such that their personalities and skills were just what God wanted them to be for the task of writing Scripture...so that when they actually came to the point of putting pen to paper, the words were fully their own words but also fully the words God wanted them to write, words God would also claim as his own.”

The authority of Scripture means that all the words in Scripture are God’s words in such a way that **to disbelieve or disobey any word of Scripture is to disbelieve or disobey God.**

1. Only God’s Word has final authority to bind the conscience and to call for submission.
2. The preacher and teacher only has a vested authority to the extent that he/she is accurately reflecting the Word of God. e.g. parenting

Is the Bible Trustworthy?

1. God is the ultimate author of the Scriptures.
2. God cannot and will not lie. (Titus 1.2, Hebrews 6.18)
3. God has promised to preserve and fulfill His Word. (Psalm 119.89; Matt 24.35)
4. Therefore, the Scriptures are true and worthy of my trust. (John 17.17)

“Truth is what God says, and we have what God says in the Bible.” What we have is accurate, but it is not exhaustive. In other words, everything that we have is right, we do not have everything that God has ever said. However, we do have everything that we need.

How did a book get into the Bible?

Canonicity (supplement to Bible Doctrines, chapter 2)

For our purposes, I am going to focus these notes on the NT, since the NT validates the OT. If one accepts the canonicity (fancy word for official recognition of a book as belonging in the Bible) of the NT, that essentially recognizes the canonicity of the OT books as well.

The NT (27 books) were written during the 70 years after the life of Christ. The men who wrote these books wrote them from many different places (e.g. Prison epistles, Revelation – isle of Patmos) and became the property of the churches to which they were written. These books were also copied and passed around and became the property of the churches as well. Because the church did not have an official organization, there was no central gathering point for the books, although a collection of the writings of the church was found in Rome, Ephesus and Corinth. The presence of false writings from false teachers muddied some of the waters and began to force the church into seeing the need to officially recognize and designate which writings were from God and which weren't.

Since the OT was also the product of this process to some degree (God's people recognizing the value, validity and absolute authority of a document – a process validated by the Lord Jesus who often quoted the OT), believers chose to publicly affirm what God had already made clear. A council of church leaders in Carthage in A.D. 397, established a standard (canon) by which they measured the writings of the church.

1. The standard of Apostle Authorship – Did an apostle or someone very close to an apostle write this book?
2. The standard of content – Did the writings of the book agree with or contradict other portions of Scripture?
3. The standard of universality – Did the writing demonstrate evidence of acceptance in the lives of believers from many different places?
4. The standard of inspiration – Does the book have internal characteristics consistent with inspiration? Does it show clear evidence of building up the believers?

While the 27 books that comprise our NT were basically viewed already as being “bibline”, it wasn't until the council of Carthage that the church officially recognized these books (in addition to the OT) as the standard (the canon) by which the belief and the behavior of the church is to be measured.

Is the Bible completely free from error? (inerrant)

1. God is the ultimate author the Scriptures.
2. God cannot and will not error. (Titus 1.2, Hebrews 6.18)
3. Therefore, the Scriptures as originally given are incapable of being in error.

We know what God's Word claims to be. But do we believe its' own claims? How can a person be convinced that the Scriptures are indeed God's Word?

1. The Spirit of God has to be in operation in a person's life to bring about this conviction. (1 John 2.20, John 10.27)

2. The person needs to study the Scriptures and see for him/herself. Since the Scriptures are dynamic (Heb. 4.12) the student will not remain with any sense of neutrality. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word – Rom. 10.17. The Word is the Spirit’s sword that He uses to bring about faith.

Note the new definition of infallible (which brought about the word inerrant) which was used as a convenient cloak by liberals. (liberals love to add new definitions so that they can stay under radar instead of admitting their true beliefs)

Therefore, the Scriptures as originally given are incapable of being in error.

Is this really a big deal?

Chapter 3 Outline

1. The Clarity of Scripture
 - A. The Bible affirms its own clarity
 - B. The moral and spiritual qualities needed for right understanding
 - C. Definition of the clarity of Scripture
 - D. Why do people misunderstand Scripture?
 - E. Practical Encouragement from this doctrine
 - F. The role of scholars and teachers
2. The Necessity of Scripture
 - A. The Bible is necessary for knowledge of the gospel
 - B. The Bible is necessary for maintaining spiritual life
 - C. The Bible is necessary for certain knowledge of God’s will
 - D. But the Bible is not necessary for knowing that God exists or for knowing something about God’s character and moral laws.
 - 1) General Revelation and Special Revelation
 - 2) Special Revelation is necessary for salvation
3. The Sufficiency of Scripture
 - A. We can find all that God has said on particular topics and we can find answers to our questions.
 - B. The amount of Scripture given was sufficient at each stage of redemptive history.
 - C. Practical Applications of the sufficiency of Scripture
 - 1) An encouragement to search the Bible for answers
 - 2) A warning not to add to Scripture.
 - 3) A warning not to count any other guidance from God equal to Scripture.
 - 4) A warning not to add more sins or requirements to those named in Scripture.

5) An encouragement to be content with Scripture.