

F O U N D A T I O N S O F F A I T H

the BIBLE

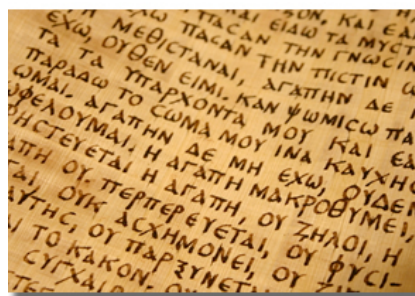
CAN I BE SURE IT IS GOD'S OWN WORDS?

"14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 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. (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

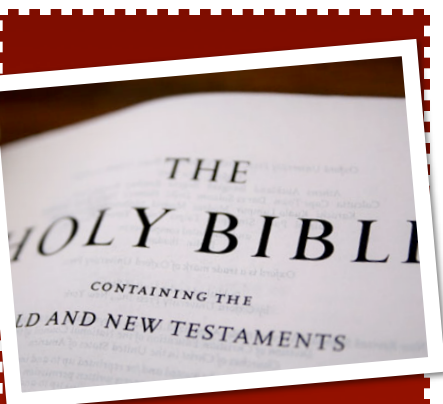
THE LAST LINE OF DEFENSE

Today, every attack on Christianity, and the faith of individual believers, comes down to an attack of the authority and reliability of Scripture. Do we believe that the Bible is true in everything it says? How can we be sure? If you have ever been asked a question like this, you may not have had a coherent answer to give non-believers. Yet, it is essential that Christians

know exactly what they believe and exactly why they believe it. If we are to study the foundational doctrines of the Christian faith, we must start with the very Word that informs all we believe and trust. If we do not rightly understand the word of God, we cannot rightly understand all that it tells us about everything else.



Greek Manuscript of 1st Corinthians 13



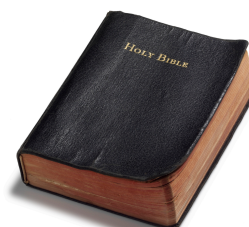
The Word of God is like a caged lion. When someone comes to attack the lion, I don't have to defend it. I simply let it out of the cage.

Charles Spurgeon

Can you explain why you believe the Bible?

The quickest way to attack any aspect of Christianity, morality, or devotion to Jesus is to attack the words that explain God's mind. If unbelievers can put the

Scriptures themselves in doubt, everything else will fall.





The Bible's Authority



Think about this for a moment. If you wanted to develop a relationship with me, what would have to happen. You could observe me, talk to others about me, and research everything there is to know about me. But, would that get you any closer

to having a relationship with me? You would probably find out everything there is to know about me, but you still would not develop a relationship with me. For you to connect with me, I would have to speak to you. I would have to communicate with you in some way so that you would really know who I am. Only by getting to know my thoughts, dreams, and the things I love and hate, you would develop a relationship. For you to develop a relationship with God, it is absolutely necessary for Him to speak to you. You must have an open line of communication or you are only learning **about** God. This is what the Scriptures do. They are the authoritative, infallible Word of God. In the next lesson, we will discuss exactly how we know we can trust the Bible, but now we must understand that the Scriptures are God's communication to the world.

The Final Word

Hebrews 1:1-2 says, *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 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."* God has spoken in different ways throughout

history. God has spoken through prophets, dreams, and visions. He used many different people and many different methods of communication. However, *"in these last days"* God has spoken to His people through His Son.

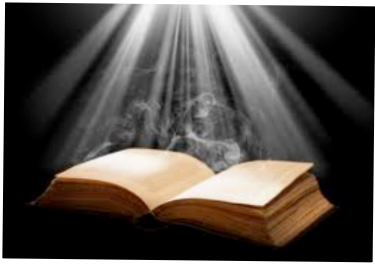
Jesus, His person and message, is God's final Word to the world. There will never be another prophet, another Word from God that will add to, or contradict what He has given us in His Word.



God

may still speak to individuals through dreams, circumstances, or experiences, but if a person's dream contradicts what is found in the Scripture...his dream is wrong! Scripture is the sole authority for faith and practice in the Church. Anything that is not supported by Scripture is not supported by God. Many Pastors who counsel broken marriages have heard someone say, "God brought another person into my life because He wants me to be happy!" The person may truly believe that this is true, but Scripture emphatically denies that adultery is condoned in any fashion.





The Bible's Inspiration

In our text for this week, 2 Timothy 3:16, we are told that “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God.*” Literally, the text says, “Every Scripture is God-breathed.” Take a moment and put your hand in front of your mouth. When you speak, can you feel the breath

coming out of your mouth? That is what the Bible is. It is the very breath and words of God. When Scripture speaks, it is God Himself speaking. Therefore, when the Bible speaks on an issue, there is no doubt that God’s will has been revealed, regardless of what people may think or feel.

MEN MOVED BY GOD

2 Peter 1:21 says, “*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.*” The Bible is God’s Word to man, but it was not simply dictated to man. God used the personalities, skills, backgrounds, and styles of the writers to communicate the very words of Scripture. The Holy Spirit “moved” the men to write exactly what God would have them write.

VERBAL PLENARY INSPIRATION

This means that the Bible is the inspired Word of God in the individual words which are used (verbal) as well as the whole of the message that it teaches (plenary).

Inspiration does not mean God dictated Scripture to men and had them write it down like robots. God used each person’s personality, writing style, and vocabulary to write His Word.

EVERY LETTER / EVERY WORD

The inspiration of the Bible is said to be *verbal* and *plenary*. This simply means that the Bible is infallible and without error in each

message of the Bible is without error, and every word is exactly the way God wanted it

earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

Modern readers may not understand exactly what a “jot” and a “tittle” means. However, the Jews who heard Jesus speak these words knew exactly what He meant.

jot or
tittle

אלהים

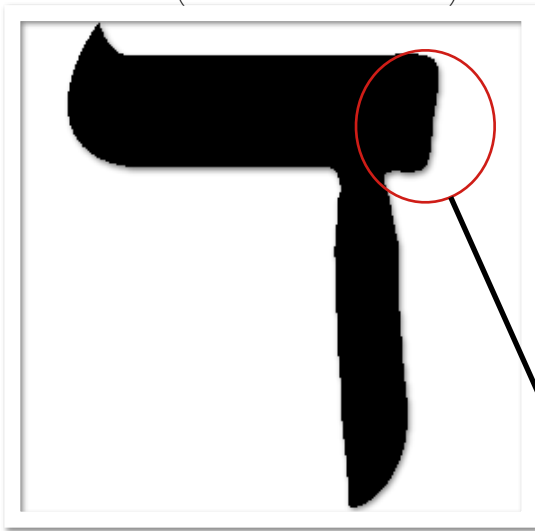
word and in every word. The entire

in the original manuscripts. Jesus teaches this in Matthew 5:18 when He says, “*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and*

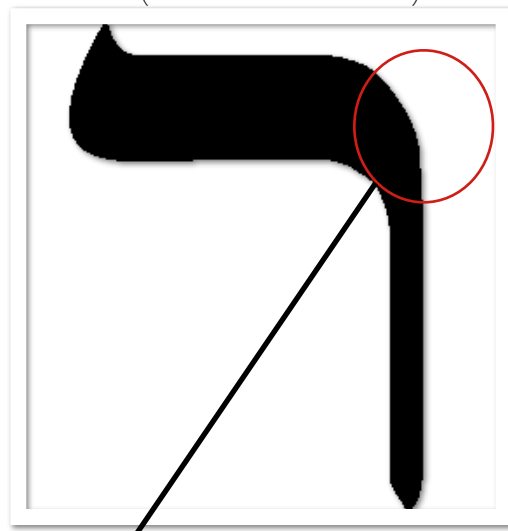
יהוה

Jots and Tittles

Dalet (Hebrew letter - D)



Resh (Hebrew letter - R)



Do you see the difference?

The small tab distinguishing the letter D from the letter R is called a tittle. There are many Hebrew letters that look very similar and are only distinguished by tittles.



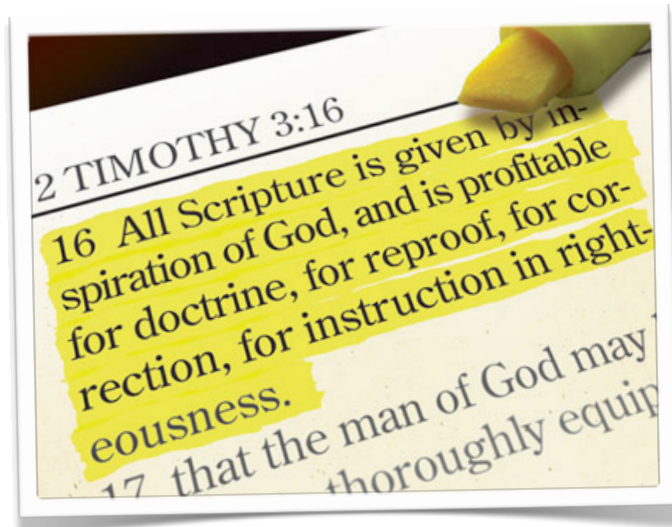
This is a Yod. It is the Hebrew letter Y. It is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet and is known as a “jot.”

“For Verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” Matthew 5:18

The “jot” is a single letter in the Hebrew alphabet. The “tittle” is what distinguishes similar letters in the Hebrew alphabet. By saying every jot and tittle is in its perfect place, Jesus is saying that even the letters found in the word of God are exactly where they should be. The very words themselves are inspired and authoritative.

The Bible's Sufficiency

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: **That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.**"



THERE IS NOTHING THE BIBLE DOESN'T PREPARE YOU FOR

There is absolutely no good work, no work of God, for which Scripture does not prepare us. There is no godly thing that we do that we must say, "Scripture gives no information on this so we must figure it out ourselves." The Scriptures have everything we need to understand God's mind about our lives here on earth and eternal life. In this passage,

Paul is speaking to Timothy specifically about the Old Testament, which many believers today don't think is very useful. However, Paul also says that "All Scripture" is given for correction and instruction.

WHICH BOOKS ARE SCRIPTURE?

In the next lesson, we will discuss how we know the Bible, and only the specific books in the Bible, are to be considered authoritative Scripture. For now, 1 Timothy 5:18 Paul says, "For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward." Notice that Paul says, "the scripture saith." Here Paul is quoting a passage from Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7. He puts the book of Luke on the same level of "Scripture" as Deuteronomy.

Also Peter calls Paul's New Testament letters Scripture. Peter writes, "As also in all his [Paul's] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, **as they do also the other scriptures**, unto their own destruction."



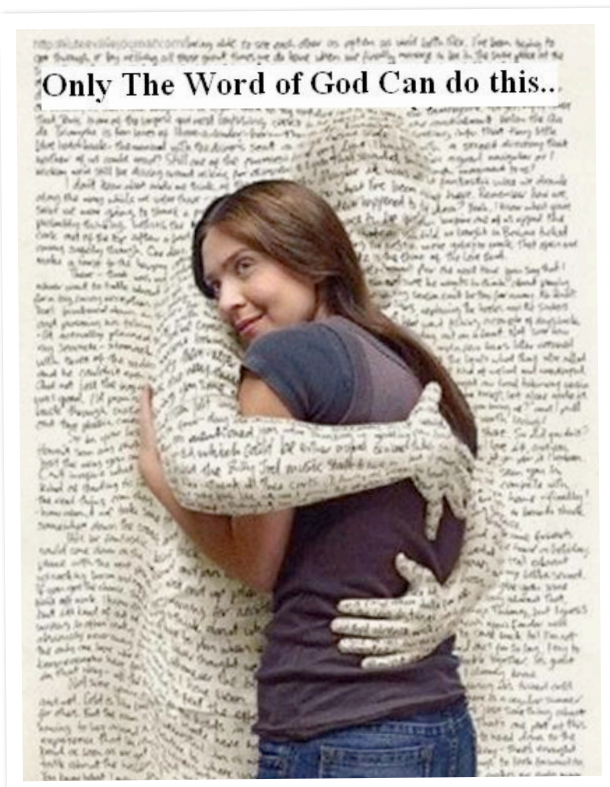
The Bible's Importance

We cannot serve God apart from Scripture. Only the Bible gives us the authoritative mind of God. Apart from this, we cannot know God.

Likewise, we cannot love God apart from the Scriptures. In John 14:15, Jesus says, *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* We cannot love Christ without knowing and understanding His commandments, which are specifically revealed in Scripture. We

cannot have a relationship with God apart from His Word. We cannot do anything that pertains to godliness apart from the Scripture.

So the question is simple. Do you have time



for God to speak to you? Today, our lives are busier than they have ever been. There is so much that vies for our time. Often, Bible study is pushed to the back burner, or seen as not as important as other things. Many people live their Christian lives thinking they can develop their relationship with God without a daily time of meditation on the Scripture. This is simply not the case.

Believers will NEVER grow in Christ apart from the Scripture. The Word of God is our spiritual food (Matthew 4:4). Without food you cannot grow physically or spiritually. You cannot simply eat once a week and expect to be healthy, happy, and full of life. Our bodies do not work this way, and neither does our spiritual lives. We need to be fed by the Word of God daily and we need to communicate with our Lord daily to develop our relationship with Him.

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Study Questions

1. How often do you spend time in God's Word?
2. If someone looked at a typical week in your life, how important would they say the Scripture is to you?
3. If you think God is speaking to you about something, how can you be sure it is Him?
4. How important do you think a growing relationship with God is?
5. Read Matthew 4:1-11. How important was Scripture to Jesus' defeat of the devil's temptations? How many times did Jesus say, "It is written?"
6. If Jesus used the Word to repel Satan's temptations, what do you think the believer's practice must be?
7. Why is it important to understand that we don't just read the Bible to gain knowledge, but to hear God's voice and develop our relationship?