

# Christian Essentials

Lessons on Basic Bible Doctrines

Section 2, The Bible



Before we start, let me get a  
few things straight...

NELSON'S

Bible Manners & Customs

How the People of the Bible Really Lived

Howard F. Vos

THOMAS NELSON PUBLISHERS

Nashville

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Published in Nashville, Tennessee, by Thomas  
Nelson, Inc.



Before we start, let me get a few things straight...

- SKETCHES OF JEWISH SOCIAL LIFE
- THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JESUS THE MESSIAH
- THE TEMPLE - ITS MINISTRY AND SERVICE

by

Alfred Edersheim, D. D., Ph. D.



# My research for this section:

- Major Bible Themes - Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer
- Systematic Theology - Dr. Wayne Grudem
- Our Daily Bread Films (Day of Discovery)
  - The Bible Why Does It Endure, Part 1*
  - Retrieved from YouTube 8/7/23
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEdwBu2AP8c>
- New Evidence That Demands a Verdict - Josh McDowell
- The Chicago Statement on Inerrancy
- Ligonier Ministries - Dr. R. C. Sproul
- Wikipedia



# Why concern ourselves with Bible Doctrine?

Is it a Scriptural command:



**Philippians 2:12-13** "So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your salvation with fear and trembling;** <sup>13</sup> for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."



Why concern ourselves with Bible Doctrine?

If I'm honest, it's because I'm trying to  
make you into Bereans.



Why concern ourselves with Bible Doctrine?

If I'm honest, it's because I'm trying to make you into Bereans.

**Acts 17:10-11** "And the brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.

<sup>11</sup> Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."



# Why concern ourselves with Bible Doctrine?

From a human standpoint, in our culture, one can no longer assume any amount of Biblical knowledge of anyone we meet. Therefore, if we are to follow the Lord's command to make disciples, we must be equipped with tools that are useful in today's culture. An ability to defend our faith with at least a rudimentary level of Christian **apologetics** is needed to communicate the Gospel to the current culture. The Bible tells me so doesn't cut it anymore.



# The Current Section:

## Section One: The Bible [Bibliology]

- Inspiration and Preservation
- Purpose and Revelation







# The Bible

In this study the authenticity and credibility of the Bible are assumed, meaning it is accepted:

- That the books of the Bible were written by the authors to whom they are ascribed, and that their contents are in all material points as when they were penned (i.e. **preserved**).
- That those contents are worthy of entire acceptance as to their statements of fact (**inerrant**).



# Inspiration

What does it mean if a writing is  
"inspired?"

Shakespeare was inspired to write.  
We all have been inspired by a beautiful  
view. Song writers are inspired to write.  
Pastors are inspired to create sermons.

Is the Bible inspired differently?  
If so, how?



# Inspiration

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is **God-breathed** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be equipped, having been thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**ΘΕΟΠΝΕΥΣΤΟΣ**

theopneustos - theh-op'-nyoo-stos  
divinely breathed: - given by inspiration of God.



# Inspiration

Inspiration, as refers to Scripture means that the human authors of canonical Scripture were led by the Holy Spirit with the result that their writings are the word of God.



# Theories of Inspiration

- Automatic Writing Theory
- Dictation Theory
- Negative Assistance Theory
- Verbal Plenary Theory



# The Automatic Writing Theory

According to this theory, the human author becomes possessed by God and loses consciousness of self, surrendering to the divine Spirit and its communicative powers.



# The Dictation Theory

According to this theory, the Holy Spirit pre-determined each word that the authors wrote.

The "authors" were thus performing the function of a secretary.



# The Negative Assistance Theory

According to this theory, the authors expressed their own style and words, while the Holy Spirit only intervened as needed, in order to prevent them from making any mistakes.



# Verbal Plenary Theory



God the Holy Spirit supernaturally directed the writers of Scripture so that, without disregarding their intelligence, individuality, personality, literary style, or any other human factor, His complete and coherent message to all humanity was recorded in the original languages of Scripture with perfect accuracy: the very words bearing Divine authorship.



# Verbal Plenary Explained

"Verbal" means, the Bible in its original writings (autographs), is an exact record of the mind and will of God as He intended it to be.

"Plenary" means, the entire text of the Bible is equally inspired, but not necessarily equally important.



# Inerrancy

The inerrancy, infallibility and inspiration of Scripture are closely related concepts.

"The inerrancy of Scripture means that Scripture, in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact."

Dr. Wayne Grudem



# Inerrancy Simplified

Simply put, Scripture is true in all that it affirms.

The matter at issue is the **truthfulness** of Scripture.



# Infallibility

"Infallible" indicates the inability to be misleading and so safeguards in categorical terms the truth that Holy Scripture, interpreted properly, is a sure, safe, and reliable rule and guide in all matters.



# Infallibility Simplified

Simply put, Scripture is a reliable guide in every situation.

The matter at issue is the **guidance** of Scripture.



# Christian Essentials

Lessons on Basic Bible Doctrines

The Bible, Pt 2



# For Clarification

Regarding Bible selection:

- For simple reading choose a good paraphrase.
- For Sunday School level study a thought for thought translation works well.



# For Clarification

For serious or intensive Bible study a word for translation is required.



# For Clarification

## The best modern Bible...

### 2Ti 3:16

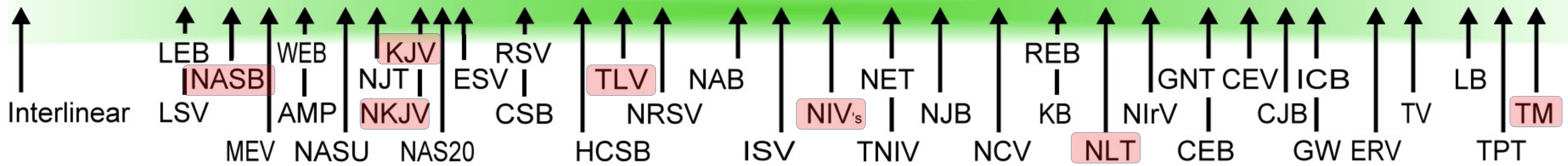
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# English Bible Translation Comparison

Word for Word ← Thought for Thought → Paraphrase



- AMP - Amplified Bible (12)
- CEB<sup>^^</sup> - Common English Bible (7)
- CEV<sup>^^</sup> - Contemporary English (5)
- CJB - Complete Jewish Bible (9)
- CSB<sup>^^</sup> - Christian Standard Bible (7)
- ERV<sup>^</sup> - Easy to Read Version (3.5)
- ESV<sup>\*</sup> - English Standard Version (9.5)
- GNT (GNB/TEV)<sup>\*</sup> - Good News Translation (6)
- GW<sup>^^^</sup> - God's Word (4.5)
- HCSB - Holman Christian Standard (8)
- ICB<sup>^</sup> - International Children's Bible (3.5)
- ISV<sup>^^</sup> - International Standard Version (8.5)
- KB<sup>\*~</sup> - Knox Bible (12.5)
- KJV<sup>\*'</sup> - King James Version (13)**
- LB - Living Bible (8.5)
- LEB - Lexham English Bible (11)

- LSV<sup>'</sup> - Literal Standard Version (12)
- MEV<sup>'</sup> - Modern English Version (13)**
- NAB<sup>\*</sup> - New American Bible (7)
- NASB - New American Standard 1977 (11)
- NASU - New American Standard 1995 (11)
- NAS20<sup>^^</sup> - New American Standard 2020 (11)
- NET<sup>^^^</sup> - NET Bible (7)
- NCV<sup>^</sup> - New Century Version (5)
- NIRV - New International Reader's (3.5)
- NIV - New International Version (8)
- NIV11<sup>^^</sup> - NIV 2011 Revision (8)
- NIVI<sup>^</sup> - NIV [UK only, 1996 edition] (8)
- NJB<sup>\*</sup> - New Jerusalem Bible (7.5)
- NJT<sup>±</sup> - New Jewish Translation (12)
- NKJV<sup>^</sup> - New King James Version (9)
- NLT<sup>^</sup> - New Living Translation (6.5)

- NRSV<sup>^^</sup> - New Revised Standard (10.5)
- REB (NEB)<sup>^^</sup> - Revised English Bible (7)
- RSV<sup>\*</sup> - Revised Standard Version (11)
- TLV - Tree of Life Version (10)
- TNIV<sup>^</sup> - Today's NIV (7.5)
- TM - The Message (4.5)
- TV - The Voice (7)
- TPT<sup>±^^</sup> - The Passion Translation (9.5)
- WEB<sup>\*</sup> - World English Bible (8)

<sup>^^</sup> No gender neutral language for God, careful/moderate inclusive language regarding mankind.  
<sup>^</sup> Gender neutral language \* Apocrypha available or included (#) Approximate overall reading grade level  
<sup>'</sup> Text based entirely or primarily on the Textus Receptus and the Jacob ben Hayyim edition of the Masoretic Text.  
<sup>~</sup> Text based entirely or primarily on the 1592 Sixto-Clementina Latin Vulgate prepared by Pope Clement VIII.

± Complete Bible Unavailable





# My research for this session:

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- Wikipedia



*The Bible Why Does It Endure, Part 2*

Retrieved from YouTube 8/7/23

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDMd3gCxN-s>



"We need to read it (the Bible) in light of its cultural background; its historical setting. What those words meant at the time. That is vital to understand Scripture to the fullest." —

Dr. Daniel Wallace



# Arguments for Inerrancy



Thesis:

Since Scripture is "God-breathed," representing the voice of God, and God is without error, therefore the Scriptures are without error.



# Arguments for Inerrancy

Premise 1: God is truthful and therefore beyond error.

## Proof Texts

2 Samuel 7.28; Titus 1.2;  
Hebrews 6.17-18



# Arguments for Inerrancy

Premise 2: God is the ultimate author of Scripture.

Proof Texts

2 Timothy 3.16; 2 Peter 1.20-21



# Arguments for Inerrancy

Conclusion: Scripture is  
therefore truthful and beyond  
error.



# HOWEVER...

The entire Bible was written by a group of very human authors.

The only way fallible humans could have written an inerrant text requires them to have been inspired by God.



# THEREFORE...

Given Biblical inerrancy, one can assume that God must have overseen the creation of the Bible's text, and proactively prevented the authors from committing any error.



Conservative Christians still follow this traditional belief.

Many major denominations and liberal Christians have generally abandoned belief in both the inerrancy and the inspiration of the Bible.



# Biblical Authority

Most now analyze the Bible as an historical document using techniques of "higher criticism."

- According to a 2022 survey done by Ligonier Ministries in conjunction with Lifeway Research, 44% of American adults do not believe that the Bible is accurate in all that it teaches.



# Biblical Authority

- The survey, conducted every 2 years, discovered that the number of people who agree with the statement "The Bible, like all sacred writings, contains helpful accounts of ancient myths but is not literally true" has increased by 12% since 2020.



# Biblical Authority

- Since 2014 the trend shows that those responding to the survey increasingly reject the divine authorship of the Bible.



# Biblical Authority

Other results of the survey reveal that:

- 60% think that religious belief is a matter of personal opinion; it is not about objective truth.
- 40% reject the idea that it is faith in Jesus Christ alone that is the only way to receive the gift of salvation.



# Biblical Authority

- 67% of US adults believe that God accepts the worship of all religions.
- 40% of US adults believe that modern science disproves the Bible.



# A Circular Problem

As Christians, we accept the Bible as the ultimate and final authority.

Because there is no higher authority we accept the words of Scripture as self attesting.



# A Circular Problem

That is to say, since we are unable to appeal to any higher authority, Scripture cannot be "proved" to be the word of God.

We accept that it is the word of God because it claims to be the word of God.





# A Circular Argument

Some may object that this is a circular argument, and it must be admitted that this is true to a point.

"That does not make its use invalid, for all arguments for an absolute authority must ultimately appeal to that authority for proof: otherwise the authority would not be an absolute or highest authority."

Dr. Wayne Grudem



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- We must acknowledge that the Bible makes the claim that it is the word of God.
- With this acknowledgment, we must address this claim, because it could be either true or false.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- However, in addressing the claim we must find a way to avoid the circular argument.
- For the first step in this process, can we go to the NT and examine it as a basically reliable historical source?



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- If we can demonstrate it is reliable, as reliable as Josephus or Eusebius or other ancient historians we avoid having to overcome skepticism and cynicism.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- This is making no claim of infallibility, inerrancy or inspiration. Only that the NT is a historically accurate document.
- Even secular scholars now have been forced to admit the NT is a reliable historical document.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

In the New Testament, the names of various cities, political officials, and events have been repeatedly confirmed by historians and archaeologists. Luke, the writer of that gospel and the book of Acts, has been described as a first-rate historian for his attention to detail and accurate reporting. In both the Old and New Testament writings, the Bible proves reliable wherever it can be checked.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

Accurate copying is also an important factor in the Bible's reliability. New Testament writings were composed within a few decades of the events they describe, far too early for legend or myth to overtake actual history. In fact, the basic framework of the gospel can be dated to a formal creed just a few years after the crucifixion of Jesus, according to Paul's description in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8



# Straightening the Circular Argument

Historians have access to a tremendous number of manuscripts, proving the New Testament was reliably and quickly copied and distributed. This gives ample confidence that what we read today correctly represents the original writing.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

The Old Testament, as well, shows all evidence of being reliably transmitted. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in the 1940s, they were 800 years older than any other available manuscripts. Comparing earlier and later manuscripts showed a meticulous approach to transmission, once again adding to our confidence that what we have today represents the original texts.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

Those factors all give objective reasons to consider the Bible reliable. At the same time, it's critically important to examine those same factors in other texts we use to write our history books. The Bible has more empirical support, a shorter time between original writing and surviving copies, and a greater number of source manuscripts than any other ancient work, by far.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

In short, we not only have objective reasons to claim the Bible is reliable, but we cannot call it unreliable without throwing out almost everything else we know of ancient history. If the Scriptures don't pass a test for trustworthiness, no records from that era can. The Bible's reliability is proven in both its historical accuracy and its accurate transmission. Historians have access to a tremendous number of manuscripts, proving the New Testament was reliably and quickly copied and distributed. This gives ample confidence that what we read today correctly represents the original writing.

[[GotQuestions.org](https://www.gotquestions.org) retrieved 06-23-23 edited for length.]



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- Now, on the basis of that reliable document we can get reliable information concerning Jesus of Nazareth.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- There is enough sound information from a reliable source (the NT) to convince us that there is reason to believe that he was at least, a prophet of God.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

• Now a prophet of God is someone who teaches the truth of God.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- So Jesus was a prophet of God and prophesied concerning himself that he was more than a prophet.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- If we take the prophet's prophecy seriously, then we have to accept the truth he presents.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- Moving forward, we know His opinion of Scripture. Jesus accepted and taught the prevailing Jewish view that the canon of Scripture was the Word of God.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- Is there a possibility that HE accepted this view because of His humanity and that HE was incorrect?



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- It has been debated whether Messiah laid aside His omniscience to fully accommodate His humanity.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- For the sake of argument, accepting His limited use of His divine attributes, He still declares that He teaches only those things that come from the Father.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- He also claims to be the incarnation of truth.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- If anyone claims to be the truth and then presents an incorrect view of Scripture, then that one has sinned.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- In order to be an atoning substitute for the sins of humanity, He must be sinless.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- Therefore, He must be true in all He claims, otherwise He sins. But we know He was an acceptable sacrifice because on the third day He rose from the dead.



# Straightening the Circular Argument

- The reason the Church believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God is because it is submitting to Messiah's teaching on the matter.



# The Canon

What is meant by "the canon" of  
Scripture?



# The Canon

The term canon comes from an original Greek word meaning measuring rod or rule.



# The Canon

How were the accepted books  
chosen for inclusion in the  
"canon?"



# The Canon

There were five guiding principles for writings to be included in the Old Testament...



# The Canon

1. Was the book written by a prophet of God?



# The Canon

2. Was the writer confirmed by acts of God?



# The Canon

3. Does the message of the book tell the truth about God?



# The Canon

4. Does the book come with the power of God?



# The Canon

5. Was the book accepted by the people of God?



# The Canon

How do we know they got it  
right?

After all, aren't there books in  
the Roman Catholic Bible that  
aren't in ours?



# The Canon

Regarding the Old Testament canon the historian Josephus records:

"From Artaxerxes to our own times a complete history has been written, but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records, because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets."



# The Canon

1 Maccabees 4.45-46 records,  
"So they tore down the altar and  
stored the stones in a  
convenient place on the Temple  
hill until there should come a  
prophet to tell what to do with  
them."



# The Canon

This statement is direct evidence that the Jewish leadership recognized the absence of any God given prophet during the intertestamental period.



# The Canon

Although the writers of the New Testament frequently quoted from various passages of the Old Testament, never once is any passage from these extrabiblical writings quoted as having divine authority.



# The Canon

This omission strongly supports the idea that the writings of what is now called the Old Testament canon are indeed the entirety of the words of God to that point.



The Canon

What about the New  
Testament canon?



# The Canon

The basic factor sought  
in examining New  
Testament writings is  
apostolicity.



# The Canon

Apostolicity does not indicate apostolic authorship, but rather apostolic approval.

[Mark and Luke were not apostles.]



# The Canon

The church at Jerusalem  
was said to have  
continued in the  
"apostles teaching"

(Acts 2.42)



# The Canon

Furthermore, the church  
was built upon the  
foundation of the  
"apostles and prophets."

(Ephesians 2.20)



# The Preservation of Scripture

The foundational premise of the concept of the preservation of Scripture is a belief that since God gave the **original Scriptures** in an inspired, infallible and inerrant form, He provided for the preservation of those Scriptures throughout the ages.



# The Preservation of Scripture

This leads to the conclusion that the copies and translations of Scripture as we have them today are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.



# The Proofs of Inspiration

The short answer, scientifically  
there isn't any.

Scientific proof requires that an  
hypothesis is testable, repeatable  
and observable.



# The Proofs of Inspiration

Scientific Proof  
Vs.  
Legal Proof



The Proofs of Inspiration

The Uniqueness of Scripture



# Unique in its Continuity

The Scriptures were written over a period of over 1,500 years, in three different languages, by more than 40 authors, from various walks of life, yet they contain one continuous story.



# Unique in its Circulation

No other book has known anything approaching its constant circulation.

This does not prove it is the Word of God, but it does demonstrate its uniqueness.



# Unique in its Survival

Compared with other ancient writings, the Bible has more manuscript evidence in its support than any other 10 pieces of ancient literature combined.



# Unique in its Teachings

"Whatever one may think of the authority and of the message presented in the book we call the Bible, there is worldwide agreement that in many ways than one it is the most remarkable volume that has ever been produced in the some 5,000 years of writing on the part of the human race." - Josh McDowell



# In Summary

The Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God.

(1 Corinthians 2.7-14; 2 Peter 1.20-21)



# In Summary

The Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Corinthians 2.13; 1 Thessalonians 2.13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Timothy 3.26), absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible and God breathed.



# In Summary

The Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

(Matthew 5.18, 24.35; John 10.35, 16.12-13, 17.17; 1 Corinthians 2.13; 2 Timothy 3.15-17; Hebrews 4.12; 2 Peter 1.20-21)



# In Summary

God spoke His written word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit superintended the human authors so that, through their individual personalities and various styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's written word to humanity (2 Peter 1.20-21) without error in whole or in part (Matthew 5.18; 2 Timothy 3.16).



# Purpose and Revelation

There is one God.

The Bible has one Creator.

It is one book. It has one plan of grace, recorded from initiation, through execution, to completion.

The Bible is the story of God redeeming His people for the praise of His glory.



# Purpose

As God's redemptive purposes and plan unfold in Scripture, five recurring motifs are constantly emphasized:

- † The Character of God
- † The judgment of sin and disobedience
- † The blessing for faith and obedience
- † The Lord, Savior and sacrifice for sin
- † The coming kingdom and glory



# Revelation

God took the initiative to disclose or reveal Himself to humanity (Heb. 1.1). Sometimes it was through the created order, at other times through visions/dreams or speaking prophets.



# Revelation

However, the most complete and understandable self-disclosures were through the propositions of Scripture (1 Cor. 2.6-16). The revealed and written word of God is unique in that it is the only revelation of God that is complete and that so clearly declares man's sinfulness and God's provision of the Savior.



# A Final Word on Biblical Interpretation

Whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit.



# A Final Word on Biblical Interpretation

The historical-grammatical method is a Christian hermeneutical philosophy that strives to determine the Biblical author's original meaning through proper exegesis.



# A Final Word on Biblical Interpretation

The process for determining the original meaning of the text is through examination of the grammatical and syntactical aspects, the historical and cultural background, the literary genre as well as the theological (canonical) considerations.



# Conclusion

It is the responsibility of all believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that the proper application is binding in all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of humanity; never does humanity stand in judgment of Scripture.



Coming Next Session...

Examining  
God