

The Origin of Scripture: Part 2

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[0 : 0 0] Well, let's just go ahead and get started. We'll just start off in a prayer and then we'll just go ahead and get right to it. Let's bow our heads and pray.

Heavenly Father, we are so grateful that we are here tonight as we are opening your Word. We're reading your Word. We're studying your Word. We're learning more about who you are. We're learning more about the Holy Spirit, the origin of scriptures. And tonight we're going to learn more about the authors and more about the idea of divine inspiration. And these are not the easiest of topics, but they're important. And we just ask for your clarity. We ask for your guidance. We ask that you will reveal yourself to us. You will reveal your wisdom, your insight, your knowledge. And we're just so grateful that we have the Bible with us. We're so grateful that we can open the Bible, that we live in a place where we can read and study the Bible without much fear, like in other places. And whatever have your way with us tonight, we ask that we will learn and grow together. There's so much that we can learn that certainly we can have a lifetime of dedication of learning your Word. And every time we read the pages of scripture, we might learn something different. And I just pray for everyone here tonight that we will just grow together. Be with us. For as your Word says, where two or three are gathered in your name, there you are with us. So be with us tonight. It is in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. Well, I'm really glad that you guys are all here tonight as we're doing part two. We're doing the origin of scripture. I did mention last week that we were gonna go into another section, but I had forgotten that we only did part one. So this is part two of the origins of scripture. So the title of the series we're doing is The

Nature, the Purpose, and the Power of Scripture. And it's very important to do a Bible study on the Bible because sometimes it's good for us as Christians to know where did we get our Bible and what does the role of the Holy Spirit have in scripture. So last week we talked about how the Holy Spirit carried along the writers, and it's just been a very, it's very deep. It's very spiritual.

It's the idea, look, the Word of God is a gift from God. It's a gift from heaven, if you will, right? Being the pages of this book being divinely inspired is just when we think of God breathing out his breath of life into the words that were written and that we have this book together. It's just something that's inspiring, and I think it really helps me with my faith journey, and I hope it helps you with your faith journey. And the first question, I have a question I want you to think about this as we start off here, is I know it says how many of you feel like the Bible has impacted your walk with God, but I guess it's the question of do you feel that the Bible has impacted your walk with God? Do you feel that way? I hope everyone can say yes, right? That the Bible, it influences us, right? It helps us with coming to know who God is, what God has done for us, right? And we think of the Word of God, the Word of life, right? That it breathes life into us, if you will. You know, we learn about how... we're gonna learn about the authors of Scripture, and I want us to keep in mind the idea of the Holy Spirit carrying along with those authors like we did last week. We learned about the connection with a boat on the water, right? When we're talking about the overwhelm power of the ocean, when a boat is there on the water, right?

A boat, it needs wind, it needs the water, it needs an engine to move around, and that's how we think of the Holy Spirit. And yeah, we're continuing with... we're gonna focus on what the Bible reveals to us about the authors. I want us to know we're not going over every individual name. We're focusing on the origins and the authors that brought forth the Word of God. So you'll see in your notes the outline of what we have here, the authors of Scripture, and you'll see on here it says the Old Testament through Moses and the prophets. Now we're not going through every single name of the prophets, we're not going through every single name of the apostles. This is more of an overview and you'll see why. It's very beautiful how everything is connected. When we go through the New Testament, we'll see in the same way that the Holy Spirit guided the prophets when they're

writing the Old Testament, is the same way that the Holy Spirit worked with the apostles, right? When you think of Peter, when you think of Paul, when you think of John or [5 : 48] Matthew, and you think of all of these writers, the book of James, the book of Jude, all of them being divinely inspired. And I want us to remember that this, knowing all of this, is it's foundational to our faith, right? It helps us from when we're a baby Christian to when we're an adult, when we're a mature adult. I want us to think of, when we think of the Bible, it is not one book, it is many books, it is a collection of books. And I want to ask, I'm gonna put this on the screen, it's how does seeing the Bible as a library rather than one book, how does that help you with your understanding of the Bible? It's a good question, you know? The Bible is a library of God's Word. We have the prophets, right, who are prophesizing about things that are coming in the future. We think of prophecy as the coming of Jesus Christ, and how Christ is the fulfillment of the many, many prophecies that are there. We also think of the wisdom literature, and we think of ecclesiasties, or we think of Job, we think of the beautiful poetic language of Psalms, right? We think of the love story of song of Solomon, right?

We think of the letters of the Pauline letters, where Paul is talking about, you know, how churches should conduct themselves, and you know, guiding them the early church. We learn about the Acts of the Apostles, the beginning, if you will, of the early church. And then of course, let's not forget the Gospel, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John talking about the miracles of Jesus, the life of Jesus Christ, and how significant his life is. We think of the miracles of Jesus. We think of him turning water into wine, right? The wedding feast at Cana.

We think of Jesus walking on water. I always love the story when people thought Jesus was a ghost when he was walking on the water in the storm. I also think of how Jesus healing the sick, right? Raising Lazarus from the dead, the feeding of the 5,000. All of these miracles, I can't imagine what it, it must have been really incredible to see how the bread and the fish and how it multiplied and it fed the 5,000. That would have been incredible to see. Seeing someone put mud on their eyes and being able to see. I remember watching a movie once where you see mud being put in the blind man's eyes. He's like, what are you doing? Why are you doing this? And then he's clearing his eyes out and he can see. And it's like, I've never seen before and it's just something that is incredible. And so when we look at that question, I want you to always remember that it's not one book. It's many books and this library of the Bible is all connected to each other. And that should help all of us. The more we read, the more we look at the pages of Scripture. It should help us in our faith seeing that pieces and

Psalms is, you know, it's over here in the Gospel or when Jesus is referring to the prophets or the prophets are talking about the coming of Jesus Christ. There's so much of that. And that is very different than a regular textbook, if you will. You think of science and history or you think of Lord of the Rings or you think of Harry Potter or whatever book it is. And it's just not the same with the connections here. And so I want us to turn our Bibles. We're gonna turn, it's on the screen. It's gonna be John chapter 1 verse 17. And in these ESV Bibles, it's gonna be page 1053. So feel free to use whatever Bible you want to use, whether that's the Pew Bible or not. And you'll see why we're talking specifically about

Moses, the prophets, and Christ being a writer. That's interesting. What does that have to do with this? And then of course the apostles. So we'll see what this says.

[10 : 49] So let's go to John chapter 1 verse 17. It says, for the law was given through Moses. We know the law, the Pentateuch, the Torah, came through Moses.

Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. And I want you to, some of us are aware of the Gospel of John, right? It has a rich language about Jesus Christ existing before the creation of the universe. And I want us to think about this before we go further into this. Jesus being there before the creation of the universe. You can answer this if you want or you don't have to. But what feelings or thoughts come to your mind when you think Jesus being there with the Holy Spirit, with God, the Trinity all being there, with the creation of the universe? I know we think of God, the Father, being there, right? In the beginning God, he spoke. God said, let there be light. Jesus being there though. Feel free to answer. Like what thoughts come into your mind? It's kind of a great mystery.

We have the idea that Jesus is the Logos, right? Or Logos, known as the word.

Right? You'll see in your notes, this will be on the back page. If there's any verse that's not in the outline, it says, referenced verses for reflection. So, let us make man in our image after our likeness. And we think about how we are made in the image of God. So, in the beginning was the

word. When we think of John, and there's a connection here. There's an important part here. John chapter 1 verses 1 through 18, it piggybacks off of this idea that Jesus, that Christ is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. And that's very beautiful language describing who Christ is. I'm gonna put this on the screen here. And we can look at this together. It might be a little hard to read. I'll read it so we can kind of see this together. And this is all connected here. In your notes, you'll see it just shows the verses. I put up the more of the verses on here. There's a verse in Colossians, which goes on to say, he is the image of the invisible God. For by him, he's talking about Jesus, all things were created in heaven and on earth. All things were created through him and for him. So, Jesus as Creator. Okay? So, this helps us with the understanding of that John chapter 1 verse 17, our first verse, right? The Creator. It also goes on as Redeemer. He is the head of the body, so I'm still in Colossians. Through him to reconcile to himself all things, making peace by the blood of the cross. It is Christ and his redemption for us by the shedding of his blood, by his death on the cross, Redeemer.

[14:41] And then sustainer. He is before all things and I love this. In him, all things hold together. Why am I bringing this up? Because there's a connection with John, which leads us to understand just that one verse, John chapter 1 verse 17. In the beginning was the word, right? All things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made. So, Christ being the word, right? The Creator.

Redeemer. And it goes on in John chapter 1 verse 12. But to all who did receive him, the word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. It's talking about Christ being Redeemer. Maybe not exactly like how it is in the Colossians passage, but there we're talking about he is becoming flesh. The word becoming flesh, Jesus becoming flesh. And sustainer. In him was life and the life was the light of men. The light that shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. Sustainer because light is always going to shine in the darkness. So, what is in the world does this have to do with verse 17? Well, it helps us to understand when we look at our notes, when we look at these verses that, well, part of the origin of Scripture is Christ being the word made flesh. Part of it is Christ being there from the creation of the world. So, it is connected here. And we have this idea of the law being given through Moses, like I said those first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch, the Torah, right? And we know, obviously, you know, right, we should know Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. I know the law is one of the hardest books, five books to go over. Hearing a, doing a sermon series on Leviticus is not going to be a rather difficult, right? But it goes on saying that God's grace, right? Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. Well, God's grace came through Jesus Christ. God provided a way for salvation through faith, right? For all who believe in Him, right? Having that faith in Jesus Christ. I love giving the example in, in sermons and just anyone that I talk to. Well, how do I get to heaven? Well, what must I do? Well, let's look at the Bible. I always think of the thief on the cross.

He knew he did wrong. And he turns to Jesus saying, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom or when you enter your kingdom, depending on the translation. And it's such a profound thing because I think of some churches, some people will say, well, you need to do the ABCs. You need to do all of these certain prayers and certain classes you must take. But do you though? Well, did the thief get baptized? The thief did not get baptized. Did the thief say a sinner's prayer? I mean, there's nothing wrong with the sinner's prayer. Nothing wrong whatsoever. But did the thief do that? Well, if Christ himself is saying that the thief on the cross is going to be with him in paradise, I think we should take note of that. That's so important for us. So all of that to say, in that verse, John 117, grace and truth, so salvation, right? When we make a decision to have Christ in our lives, we're saying yes to Jesus, right? That grace, that salvation that comes from God. And instead of receiving death, instead of receiving judgment or punishment, we receive life. We receive freedom in him.

It's just like how I say, you know, we are free from sin, not free to sin. I've been reading over and studying over the book of Jude. And one of the things that sticks out so much is, and you'll find this when you talk about false prophets or false teachers, is, well, because I'm saved, I can sin. Because I'm saved, I can do what I want. And Scripture clearly says no. It doesn't mean just because you have said yes to Jesus, doesn't mean you should murder or steal, or doesn't mean you should swindle people or, you know, cheat or whatever. It doesn't mean it doesn't give you the ticket to ride. But unfortunately, that was very common, was okay, I'm saved, therefore I should go

do bad things. No, you shouldn't do bad things. That is a call for you to, you're entering into the new covenant, right? We are part of the new covenant. We think of how Jesus Christ fulfilled the law. In the back of your notes, this is in your future reading, right? Further reading, 2 Corinthians chapter 3 is all about the new covenant. We could have a whole series just on that. But that's for you to read in your spare time about that. But it's all about how we are ministers of the new covenant. Then we have this idea of truth, right? Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. The idea of truth is, we know Jesus Christ as the way and the truth and the life. And that's also the reference on the back of your page, right? I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. You know, it's very interesting. When I was a kid, I used to watch, you know, the old Bible movies where you saw a Pontius Pilate. He's dressed in his Roman costume, if you will. And I always loved Pilate. He seemed like, you know, a military guy. He was a government official, right? He was a very powerful man. And it's very interesting when, and this isn't in your notes, but it's just thinking about this. When Pilate asks the question, what is truth? And then he goes out and he's saying, I find no guilt in this person. He doesn't answer it, but you can kind of gather from that. [21 : 40] That Pilate's like, oh, maybe this guy is the truth. And so when we're talking about going back to the John passage, grace and truth came from Christ. It's very powerful, very powerful language. So I want us to go to our next verse. It's going to be on, it's going to be Luke chapter 24 verse 27. And it's one page before in our ESV study Bibles, or it's right before Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

So it's just right at the end of Luke. And you'll see there's a connection with this. When you use Pew Bibles, you start getting used to the page number instead of, that's the thing I've noticed coming here. And that's okay.

That's okay. So in Luke chapter 24 verse 27, it says in here, and beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. Okay, well, it's clear beginning with Moses and the prophets. We see that, okay, there's mention of these authors and the divine inspiration of it. But what's interesting in the context of this verse is this is after the resurrection of Christ, Jesus is appearing to two disciples and they don't know who Jesus is at that time. So they're walking with him, right? They're on the road to Emmaus. And it says that Jesus interpreted them scripture. So what that means is he's explaining to them how the Word of God pointed to Christ.

And I'm like, oh, that's really beautiful when we're talking about the reference of the authors of the scripture, the origins of the scripture, how Christ was part of the origins of the scripture. So Jesus is explaining to the disciples how he is supposed to suffer. And I know we always have a hard time with the fact that Christ had to suffer and I'm sure they did too. They were probably wondering, why does he have to suffer? Well, I would have loved to be there on the road to Emmaus and hearing him explain it to his disciples and them not knowing who it is. That's always amazing to me when you think of, you know, if Christ came back in bodily form and you didn't recognize him, that must have been very interesting. In verse 25, Jesus is saying how foolish they are, but he explains that they should pay attention to the scriptures.

They need to pay attention to what the prophets have to say. And that's also good language. So it's interesting how all of that is connected, right? Christ had to explain to his disciples how he had to suffer. He had to suffer to fulfill the Old Testament prophecy. And in the back of your notes in Acts chapter 3 verse 18, it says, God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets that Christ would suffer.

[25 : 26] So this reference in Luke is referencing Acts here. And if you go ahead, let's stay on that page. I need to turn it to it again. 1,052. Look at verse 44. Verse 44. So he finally, let's even go back further. Jesus appears to his disciples, right? Peace to you, right? And there's doubts that arose with the disciples. Verse 39. See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself, touch me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see that I have.

And he's going on. Verse 44. 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. This is not in your notes, but let's go to that next verse. Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures and said to them, thus it is written that Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead. And that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations beginning from Jerusalem.

You are witnesses to these things and behold, I'm sending the promise of my father upon you. Stay in the city until you're clothed with power from on high, referencing the Holy Spirit. Wow. So there's

a lot in there. These are the words that I've spoke to you. Everything written about me. So this is all connected to Christ. This is all that's why it's kind of like I said, we're not going over every author, but we're going over how is this? How are the prophets and the apostles? How are they all divinely inspired? Right? Remember, let's think of the big idea, the origin of scripture, the breath of God, the carrying along of the Holy Spirit and how Moses and the prophets and the apostles and the Psalms through Christ, how it's all connected to each other. That's, I know it's a lot to think about, but it's very, it's wonderful that we get to see these connections. We find that Moses, the prophets and the Psalms in that verse, the verse 44 of Luke 24, verse 44, it's pointing to Christ. It's all connected to the divine inspiration of the Word of God and the carrying along of the Holy Spirit to the writers. And this is to show that Christ came to fulfill what was written. I love that Jesus had to explain to his disciples, right? I mean, I can't imagine how humbling that must be to be a disciple of Jesus and to have it explained to me. Oh, that's a ghost. I mean, what are you saying here? Feel my sides, feel my wounds. I think of, I think sometimes we give doubting Thomas a bad rap because I think, would you question it? Because they didn't know that he was, they didn't have the full context that we have. So I think that when Christ is saying here, here I am, look, this, and now I'm gonna explain how all of this is connected. I am a fulfillment of the prophecies from the, from the law of Moses, from the prophets and even from the Psalms and I think, man, the Psalms, that would be a really good study, study the Psalms and see how that points to Christ. But we know that it points to Christ. Christ came to fulfill what was written and many of you may know the famous, it's just on the back of your notes, Matthew chapter 5 verse 17 verse that says, I have not come to abolish the law or the prophets but to fulfill them. So it's all connected. Let's go to Hebrews. It's gonna be, it's on the screen here, Hebrews chapter 1 verses 1 through 2. I know we're going over a lot of verses here, so you guys have any questions? I guess before we continue, I know it's a lot of information.

[30 : 33] Alright, in Hebrews, long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets. Well, there we have it, right? Divine inspiration, right?

The leading of the Holy Spirit through the prophets. But in these last days, he has spoken to us by his son. So that's where Christ has to do with the divine inspiration of Scripture. That's how Christ is an author, if you will, whom he appointed the heir of all things through whom also he created the world.

Remember, we're talking about Jesus as the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. There's one about the Creator. You don't really learn this as an early Christian. Maybe you do. We think of the creation of the world by God the Father, right? Let there be light and there was light. We don't think of Jesus necessarily all the time and even for me, sometimes I'm like, I think it's just one of those things that is meant to puzzle us, right? My mother being a devout Christian as she is, she would always say, there's some great mysteries that we just don't understand. And that's a mystery I don't understand and we have to be okay with that when we think about that. But isn't that interesting? He appointed the heir of all things through whom also he created the world. That's why I showed you Jesus as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. That you'll find passages that support this part of the attributes, part of the qualities of the character even of who

Jesus is. The writer of Hebrews, he is speaking to the early Christians. He's speaking of the Jews, right? He's speaking to the Jews about their fathers. That God spoke to the Jewish people through all of the prophets, right? We know that when we look at the Old Testament, we hear about God's people, the Jewish people, right? We think of, gosh, the whole history out in the scripture where the cycle, they obey God and then they get a little overboard, they disobey God, there's repentance, right? Think of 40 days in the wilderness, I think of the promised land. We can just think about all of the, just how the Old Testament was connected to the Jewish people. Now here's the thing though and I want this to really resonate, I want this to really stick out to you here. So God spoke to the Jewish people through the prophets. In this time period, God spoke to us, the Gentiles, the Church by Christ. Let me go on. It goes on talking about how Christ was their heir of all things, right? So Jesus has authority and power over all creation because we learn about Christ as Creator. So Jesus is the Lord of all not man and not angels and I say that because it goes on talking about angels.

[33 : 58] So let's think about this, the mystery, right? You'll know why I'm saying mystery here when we go further along in here. You'll see when we go to the Ephesians passage, so I'm trying to not give you too much here, but okay, so Jesus is Lord of all, the heir of all things whom He created

the world. So He's spoken to us by His Son, us being the Gentiles, right? So let's go to Ephesians chapter 3 verse 5. You'll see a connection here and it's really good. So I'll put that on the screen. It's Ephesians chapter 3 verse 5 and it's page 1160. Alright, so Ephesians 3 5. Let's just go from chapter 3, okay, just the beginning of chapter 3. For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of the Gentiles, hold on to that. Assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation. So mystery and Gentiles as I have written briefly. Verse 4, when you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ. What is the mystery of Christ? Which was not made known by the sons of men in other generations as it now has been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit. There we go again, divine inspiration through the prophets and the apostles. Verse 6, the mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. So the mystery of Christ, the mystery of the gospel, when you read that what's what are you hiding, right? It's being revealed the truth that the gospel is not just for the Jews, it is for everyone, it is for the Gentile and the

Jew. That's why in verse 6, Gentiles are fellow heirs, right? Remember when we were talking about how Jesus is the heir of all things when we read that in Hebrews?

Well, we talk about the mystery here that we are part of the same body. We are included in the salvation plan, the redemptive story for everyone. Because when we think of the whole context of the Bible, the Bible as a whole, we think of the idea of redemption, we think of restoration, we think of reconciliation, we think of how there is a sin problem, right? We think of the separation from God when sin entered the world. Well, it appears from here that it looked like salvation was only available to the Jews, but because of Jesus Christ, there was the mystery that was revealed, that God had this plan for redemption for everyone.

That is why it's so important when we think of John 3.16, for God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whosoever believes, it doesn't say that only the Jews, it doesn't say only the Gentiles, that whosoever. That's why it's so such beautiful language knowing that, okay, it's available to everyone, but to know that it was hidden and that it was revealed to the prophets, right? It's revealed to the apostles now, this mystery. Well, now we know the mystery, we know the answer to that. We know that Jesus Christ provides salvation to everyone and not just the Jews, and that's such a huge, just a powerful verse to think about. And I want us to think about also of how in, did I put this on the screen? I guess I didn't. Let's go, I don't have a page, I don't have a slide. Let's go to Romans here, okay? It's gonna be in Romans chapter 16 verse 25, because Romans is gonna make mention of the mystery of Christ. Like I said, I don't have a slide for you, but you'll see. Let's read it together.

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, but now has been disclosed through the prophetic writings that have been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God to bring about the obedience of faith to the only wise God, be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ. Amen. It's talking again about the mystery that was revealed. It was hidden and that's something that we learn about scripture so much is that there are things that are hidden in the word of God and as we read and as we study, we will learn more from it. And I think it even talks about in scripture how scripture is protected from those who don't believe.

[40 : 09] And I think there's something to that. Why would God hide things from people, but you can't look at it that way. God is protecting scripture from those who don't believe, which is an encouragement for us to be a believer so that we can be able to read and study and find more inspiration, go in depth into the word of God and really just apply it to our lives. Sometimes things of God, right, it says in scripture that things of God are foolishness, right, to those who don't believe. Think about that. Things that we understand as Christians, other non- believers that are yet to come to faith, they're not ready yet. And that's very difficult language for those who may be on the outside. The atheist or the agnostic or someone who's never made that decision for Christ, how can you make such a connection that doesn't make sense? Isn't the Bible just a book? Well, you're not there yet. That's why scripture is so big about starting from the the milk of the word to going into solid food. Because you know, as

Christians, the word of God is going to mold us. It's going to shape us. It's going to make us into the men and women that God wants us to be. And when we have Bible studies like this, there may be

people who don't understand anything that we're talking about tonight. And maybe they do. Maybe by the grace of God they understand certain components. But I do believe that there are things that will be revealed to those who desire to be close to the Lord, who walk with the Lord and open the word of God and study it. And I know that's a hard thing to really think about. It's like, well, why can't everyone understand the Bible equally? Well, part of it, I would say it's your heart. Where is your heart at when you're reading and studying scripture? So when we think about this mystery that was kept secret, it wasn't the right time for God to reveal it.

Because God had something great in store for his people. To provide salvation from Jesus Christ through Jesus Christ. And so when we think about our lesson for tonight, we have learned, we've gone over this part two of the origins of scripture, and we have learned that God breathed into his word. Because God is the giver of life. To think that he breathed, he used the Holy Spirit to inspire these writers to overwhelm them, to write on, to write these letters and to write, you know, when you're thinking of Moses and the prophets, to... That's beautiful language that really goes to show how much higher the Bible is than really any other book. On a personal note, I've had many people who years of ministry, I've ran into people every so often, they ask me, what books do you read? And it's a common question. Sometimes people ask, hey, do you read Charles Spurgeon? Do you read C.S. Lewis? Do you read, you know, different writers and authors? And certainly reading Christian books or reading, you know, mythological stories or, you know, a good action novel and no different than watching movies, that's fine. But I remember I used to have such a hard time answering that question because one thing I like to answer with other Christians, and they like, when they ask who do you read, I'm like, well, I read the Bible and I feel like that's what you should be reading. And I used to have such a hard time when they're like, well, what about, you know, the great writers, what about St. Augustine? What about origin? What about, and I'm like, I don't, I don't read them and I don't want to read them. And I just, I remember that throughout ministry, the years that I've met different pastors and different Christians, sometimes I was like, well, yeah, I know what you're asking me and the answer is no. And I just, with that situation, I had to learn that it's okay to not read them, but it's certainly okay to read them. When we're reading other books, we have to remember that it should never triumph. It should never be above scripture. And you have to be careful when you have people that are, there's nothing wrong with reading the great theologians and the great pastors. But when it, if you're a Christian and you're finding that you're reading Charles

Spurgeon or you're reading a Wesleyan literature or whatever it is, and you're reading that more than the Bible, that does cause them to question, well, why are you reading these authors more than scripture? And I say all of this because there's nothing wrong with just reading the Word of God and there's also nothing wrong with reading other authors, but keep your priorities straight on what's important to you. So I always think of those days when I would run into other Christians and they talk about those kind of things. It's also no different than when we think of creeds or when we think of book of prayers. I know there's like the Westminster Confessional and there's the different creeds and all of those. They're good if they help you in your walk with the Lord, but the moment they take over the importance of scripture, you have to be very careful.

[46 : 36] And when I say these things, I know sometimes people get very upset. They're thinking, well, why would you tell me not to read Charles Spurgeon? Why would you tell me not to care about the creed? I'm not saying that. There's nothing wrong with creeds. There's nothing wrong with books of prayers. I know Catholics and Lutherans and Anglicans, they have their book of prayers. There's beautiful prayers that have been written throughout the centuries that should not triumph what scripture has to say. And so when we think of God breathing on to the words, like, did God breathe in Harry Potter? Did God breathe in Lord of the Rings? Or did God breathe on these other things? And the answer is no. So why would you elevate these other things above scripture? So our key takeaways. We've learned that the Bible is a library of books inspired by God. Every, you know, to know that all of these authors were led by the Holy Spirit. That's inspirational. I mean, sometimes when we're in our work and we're just getting in the groove and we're, you know, we're working and getting things done, that's just our own. That's our own mind, right? Some people call it flow or getting in the zone when you're working and working and you're just getting things done. Imagine having the overwhelming feeling of the Holy Spirit coming upon you to write things down, to write what would become the Word of God. I can't even, I can't even imagine.

We also have this idea that Jesus existed before the creation of the world and that is something that is very difficult for people to fathom, to understand. How was Jesus there? Well, we think of let us, right? In that verse, let us make man in our image after our likeness. That is part of, yes, there's not a lot of verses on that, but that's one of them. Also, the idea that Jesus is the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sustainer, holding everything together, being there at the creation of the world and then being the redemption, right?

Jesus being the atoning sacrifice, the sacrificial lamb, the lamb that was slain. I think of so many songs that talk about worthy is the lamb that was slain.

I think of what scripture has to say about, I mean, even when we think about God providing a sacrifice, we think of Abraham wanting to sacrifice Isaac. You read that, you think he's really going to do it. God will provide a sacrifice.

Well, not only does God provide a sacrifice at that moment, but it's also foretelling that there will be a sacrifice. So it's a double whammy, if you will. It's truth being set in motion. And obviously, Moses is the writer of the Torah, right? In the Pentateuch, that the Bible was carried along, written through Moses, the prophets, Jesus and the Apostles. So it might be a strange thing to say, well, Jesus is the author. Well, he is. And it's, I would definitely say that people will struggle with that. I mean, even I have a difficulty with that, but we know that through these verses that Christ was there and that Christ's influence is there as the author, if you will. And I want you to take a moment, reflect on one thing you can apply to your life this week. And I want to ask you any questions you may have or any insight or anything you learn tonight. You've probably heard, Speak, Lord, your servant is listening. Sometimes, when we get so busy with things, it's focusing only on God's word. And it, it gets so easy for us to get distracted by our phones. I mean, even on my tabla right here, I got some notifications. I'm like, get out of here. I don't, I don't want you there. It's definitely becoming a lot more difficult to be able to, when you're, to have that intentionality, to take time to open the word of God and to focus on it. You know, we have so many shouting voices in the world, right? People who like to scream and yell and they like to, you know, I'm louder than you or you're louder than me or whatever. But oftentimes, God will speak to you in peace and quiet. When you're in a room and sometimes you just have to turn your phone off. Sometimes you have to just really make an effort. I'm not gonna have any electronics or, and then if you do that, you got to make sure you're not thinking about things you have to do or things that are in process, right? You can't think about the laundry. You can't think about, you know, what am I cooking tomorrow or, you know, what, what appointments? Sometimes you need to pray just to silence your mind and all of the thoughts that are going on. I know many times that I might be so busy. I feel like I don't have time for God's word and you can't let that happen. You have to really, sometimes there are days where it's easy, you know, like a Saturday. There's other days, man, it's so difficult.

[53 : 00] I always think of how, in scripture where it says, do not be conformed to the patterns of this age or the ways of the world, depending on what translation, but to be transformed by the renewal of your mind. There's so many ways we can look at that passage and definitely asking God to strengthen your mind, to renew your mind so that you can focus on His word. How do you want to speak to me today?

How do you want that, God? And it's, it takes practice. It takes a lot of effort. And I find that sometimes when we're the most distracted is that's the times we need to pray the most or that's the time we need to open the word when we're overwhelmed or when we're filled with anxiety or you know, it's like, man, I did so much today and I just want to go to bed or I just want to do this. But definitely thinking about where your heart is, where your heart is, you could say where your mind is and just sometimes I know for me personally, there have been times I just sit there and I pray, I just close my eyes, I just pray and I ask God to get these thoughts on my head, you know. There's a song out there where it says, it's a song called Why Does the Sky? It's by, I think it's Matt Redman and the chorus is, let all the other names fade away until there is only you. And it's such a powerful verse where they're repeating it over and over. It's a very repeated lyric. But I think there's something to that though, where the names of other people, right? Where you could mean, you know, the people that you're interacting with until you're focusing on God. But it could also mean if we're lifting someone else's name over God, let's battle all fade away.

Singing praises to the Lord, finding different ways to connect with God. How we go about that varies from person to person. I know for, I'm very blessed with my wife. We connect with the Lord in nature. That's always been the way that we, it's kind of how we connect with each other, but also

how we connect with the Lord. You hike up a mountain and just look at all the, I don't know how many trees, I don't even want to try to count them, but you're overwhelmed by the splendor, the grandeur, the sights, the sounds, the sounds of the birds and hearing the wind through the trees. I feel like that's where I connect with the Lord the most. You got to make sure you bring a Bible as well, you know, in those moments. And if you don't, make sure you pray and just appreciate, God, you really made all this for us. I mean, I know there's a lot of people that don't like this world, but there's so much beauty to this world. To come to appreciate, you know, every, every plant that grows. I think it's in Job, the book of Job, where it says that, it might be Job, I'm trying to remember where it's at, but God is asking the question, who grows the crops? And I'm like, who, that's, that's actually really hard if you think about it, because we're giving the seeds to crops or plants. We put it in the ground and we water it and give it sunlight and give it time and do we really grow it though? And it's, it's this idea that is God that allows for these plants to grow. And it's, I just, when I think about that, when I read something like that, I'm like, okay, there's stuff that we have to do, but there's certainly a lot on God's part. And yeah, how, how you connect with God though, asking, singing songs, speak to me, Lord, speak to me, you know, I'm ready to listen. And sometimes we have to be careful when we ask, we're asking God, you know, what do you have for me today? It may not always be the thing we're, we're wanting to hear, but the things we're needing to hear. It's just like the famous,

I'm gonna ask God for patience, well, God, why aren't you giving me an answer? Right? It's no different than when we're asking God to speak to us. I know that next, these next coming weeks, we will be doing the titles and the name of scriptures, as I mentioned, so the word, right? The word of God, the word of Christ, the word of truth, the holy scriptures, the oracles of God, that'll probably be next week. Then there's the name and the characteristics of scripture, how the word is pure, the word is true, it's perfect, it's living and active. And then I'm not sure how long this one, this, there's two other ones. The purpose of scripture, revealing the law of God, understanding humanities, lost state, how Christ is the Savior, there's a lot of depth in there. I don't think we'll be able to do that in one, that'll probably be two or three. And then the truths and the misconceptions about scripture, how, what happens if we ignore scripture or how we need to embrace the word, how we, you know, the Holy Spirit's role in interpretation or what is the consequence for rejecting God's word. I think it's all of that is, you know, it goes with our title, right? The purpose of our scripture, the nature of the scriptures, the power of the scriptures.

And that's why we have that on our title here, right? The nature, the purpose, and the power of scripture. And I just, I like that a lot. I think it's definitely in depth. I know there's a lot of, there's lots of different styles of Bible study, right? Some will do revelations, some will do a topic, and I just felt, it's definitely a lot, and I do appreciate everyone, you guys all being here tonight. Any other thoughts, any other questions? I mean, well, it's when we think of when the apostle Paul is saying grace and peace from God our Father, right? It's the peace that is surpassing all understanding, right? The peace that is a result, a byproduct from the grace that we receive. It's one of the unique things about being a Christian is how there is a peace, right? It surpasses all understanding. Well, you can lose everything and still have the joy of the

[60 : 37] Lord. And that is something that to an outsider, an unbeliever, or someone hasn't believed, will not understand. How do you still have the joy of the Lord in your house when you just lost everything? Think of the book of Job. That's a perfect example. I mean, in one day he lost everything. Job lost everything, and I can't imagine, maybe that'll be a heavy sermon series one day, but then having your friends say, oh well, you know, are you praying enough or you know, what's wrong with you, Job? Yeah, and it's just thinking about that, but sure, Job got depressed. He felt his human emotions, but he was still faithful. And thinking about that is, although we, it's still very hard to understand. Like, whoa, you have a man who lost everything. I'd hate to lose everything. Would I be like

Job? That's a much more difficult question to answer. Yeah, well, does it when this servants come up to Job one by one, like, oh man, I just, but definitely, yeah, there is that peace that comes from the Lord. There's the wisdom that comes from the Lord. When, you know, the idea is that receiving that peace, receiving that, having that sense of calm, knowing that, knowing where you're going, right? The famous question, do you know where you're gonna go when you die? Well, yeah, there's a peace that comes to that. It's like, I have nothing to fear, right? Yeah, I mean, the only fear we should have is the fear of the Lord. Having that awe and reverence for who God is and his creation,

but also just knowing that no matter what politician, what changes happen in this country, what the wrong people do to us, yeah, it still hurts us absolutely, but it's not. There's something that is beyond. There's a love that's beyond me.

There is peace that is beyond me that comes from God. And I think that's the most powerful thing about being a Christian. It's the most reassuring thing of being a Christian is having that peace. It's, you know, we think of how the world does things, you know, Ecclesiastes, there's nothing new under the Sun. How often do people want to do the eye for an eye thing, right? You stole from me, I'm gonna steal from you, or you did wrong to me, I want to do wrong to you. Yet God's provided a much better way of loving us and forgiving us, even when it's difficult for people to love themselves, even when it's difficult for people to forgive themselves, you know, when you work with teenagers or you work with adults even, sometimes we're harder on ourselves than God is. Knowing that God's going to forgive us, he forgives us of our sins, why are we so hard on ourselves?

Just like when we did the Jonah series, right? When Nineveh was saved, right? It's a wonderful thing. The whole city of Nineveh repents and turns to God, but yet Jonah is angry, and God asks him, why are you angry Jonah? Well, because he was so entrenched, he was so full of anger that he didn't see the good that was happening. So it's just definitely a lot. Well, let's go ahead, let's close in prayer, and Father we thank you for bringing us here tonight. You are the divine author, the inspirer of the writings of scripture. You sent your Holy Spirit to overwhelm the writers, to inspire them to take the pen if you will, and to write down your word. We've learned tonight how in the beginning was the word, learn about Jesus Christ as the word, such complicated language, but beautiful language. We learn more about how your son Jesus is the creator, redeemer, and sustainer. Very beautiful language and how you hold all of us together. We ask that you are with us as we go from this place, and we may grow in faith, continue to grow. We're always learning about you, we're always growing. May we continue to grow closer to you, and we just are in awe and in wonder of your word, who you are, what you have done, and what you continue to do.

Providing a way of salvation through faith in Jesus is the most beautiful thing, and as we've learned tonight, the mystery of Christ, the mystery of the gospel that you had a plan all along to provide salvation for all who believe in you. Be with us as we go from this place. May we live in love like you. May we, our love shine upon others. May the peace of God, may your peace God be with us.

[66 : 36] And as we've read in Romans, you are able, the mystery that was kept for secret so long ago has been disclosed through the prophets, through the apostles. To you be the glory and the honor, and we just are in awe and thankful for your word, for salvation. May we be beacons of hope for others. It is in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.