

# The Bible Part 4

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[ 0 : 00 ] Please turn in your Bibles to Deuteronomy chapter 6, Deuteronomy chapter 6. Well, welcome and good morning.

Thank you. I'm glad we're all friendly because I have to have a heavy talk with you. And it could explain why some of you people might be feeling a little bit of grumpiness today. We need a coffee person. We are looking for someone who'd be willing to be trained by our brother Sabian in the ways of coffee.

So, if you'd be willing to give up some time in the morning, please see Sabian. He's at the back.

Sabian, give us a wave. Sabian's been doing it for 30 years, if you can believe it.

And he's now willing to pass on the baton to a helpful servant. So, if you would like to do that, that would be great. That would be a blessing to you guys. I don't drink coffee. I'm all about Diet Coke.

[ 1 : 02 ] So, I'm free. Free of that poison you guys drink. Another area that we're looking for assistance is, and you guys probably don't know this, but when I first arrived here six years ago, and this is no comment on y'all, but outside was a mess.

Weeds growing everywhere. I think there was bamboo trees. It was just an utter horrid mess. And someone took this job on, and she's now retiring.

So, if you don't know Rose, Rose in the back. Rose has wonderfully, and thank you so much, Rose, for lending her hand to beautify our church. She's gone, picked every single weed for over these last five years to turn it into the beautiful garden that we have now.

But now, she would like to retire from that. I guess it's not like she has. So, she's forcing her hand. So, we're hoping that some of you who've got the green thumb would like to come, and we're thinking about maybe dividing the garden into certain times where you can come and take care of that part of your garden.

That would be a wonderful and absolute blessing for us here at the church. Let's pray. We are getting into two things that I want to cover today.

[ 2 : 32 ] If you're new, welcome. Thank you for joining us on this worship. Sunday, we've been going through a series on the Bible, the Bible itself, what the Bible has to say about itself. And we're doing this so that you would know what we anchor our beliefs and our teachings to.

So, we've gone through different aspects of what the Bible says about itself. So, this morning, we're going to end with that last part of the sessions on the inerrancy of Scripture.

We're going to look at what the Bible has to say or what that doctrine teaches. But I also want to use this Sunday and also next Sunday to give you guys some practical application points for not only understanding God's Word, but for studying God's Word for yourself.

And I'm hoping that this will be a blessing. This is kind of what people have taught me, my different pastors and teachers, over years of being a Christian.

And so, I thought I would download those tips to you. Listen, I started really taking God's Word seriously when I was the summer between grade 10 and 11, where the Word of God started becoming real to me.

[ 3 : 46 ] Not that it wasn't real before, but I started to understand it and started developing certain habits that really were effectual for me. So, I wanted to share those with you.

So, before I go any further, let's pray. Dear Holy God, Father, we just thank you for every story that is represented here this morning.

No story is the same, whether we're married to one another or we're related by birth, whether it's brother or sister, or some people have grown up in the same households, some people the same neighborhoods as friends, went to the same churches.

But every story is different, oh Father. We are uniquely created just as our DNA is uniquely ours. And Father, just how we approach your Word, there is no perfect system that works for every person.

But I just pray as we go through these words that describe your Word, that you would develop in us such an utter confidence in it, but not only that, an utter ultimate desire to want to learn it, want to study it.

[ 5 : 07 ] I pray that we'd become deep worshipers of the Word, which is ultimately not just your Word, but it's you, it's a reflection. It's the chosen means you have given us to reveal yourself to us.

So, I just pray just over this Sunday and even going into next Sunday that there would be some practical lessons that would speak to us to help us in our time of worship when we come to the Word.

We take our time personally to study in our devotions and also to take that time to just a personal study and come to this place of worship.

And I pray that many here would become teachers of your Word, disciple makers. As we know, Father, your Son commanded his disciples to teach everything that you said, and we all have that ability and command as well, just as we learned from Deuteronomy, just Moses' words that were spoken to God of how much we are to impart this wisdom to our children.

Sometimes it seems such an ominous task, but all things are possible with you, O God. It just begins with a humble heart.

[ 6 : 38 ] So we ask these things as we come to you this morning, as we learn about your Word. May you fill us with a spirit of worship and a desire to mold our lives to you in your Word.

In your most holy and precious name, amen. Last week, if you remember, we kind of covered the section or the doctrine of the authority of Scripture.

It is the authority of the Word of God. And it goes simply that God, as the Bible tells us right from the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. He is the ultimate creator.

And because He is the creator over us and all creation, He has authority over us. He has every right to be in authority over us.

And the way He has chosen to communicate His will to us is found in our Bibles. That that is the place where He has chosen to reveal His Word to us, these inspired writings.

[ 7 : 45 ] But the Word of God just isn't given to be read, but it's given to be shared as well. And we learned a couple of weekends ago that theologians call this the doctrine of the preservation of Scripture.

That in every word that God gave to His people, He asked man to record it and protect it. We've looked at different aspects of the inspiration of how God used 40 men over 1,600 years inspired by the Holy Spirit to write out the words that we find in our Bibles.

Well, this morning I want to take a look at one specific area of the doctrine of the Bible. And as I said, it's this proper application of God's Word. So if you look into your bulletins, I have what is written in our statement of faith, our affirmation of faith.

And like I've done for the last couple of weeks, I'm going to read it to you again. This is the foundation. If you want to know about us, this is teaching you what we believe. These are the, and the scriptural verses which underpin this explanation of what we read.

Simply it says the Bible. Throughout history, God has revealed Himself in a variety of ways. And God has preserved the substance of this revelation in the Bible.

[ 9 : 16 ] When we say the Bible, we mean the 66 books of the Old Testament and the New Testament. And if you're wondering, my first sermon on this, I explain why and how we know there's 66 books.

So I would encourage you to go back and listen to that sermon if you weren't here for that.

Continuing on, these books were written by divinely chosen authors as they were prompted and guided by the Spirit of God.

Although those writers were genuine authors and in most cases, not just secretaries taking dictation, the work of the Spirit was so complete that everything written in the biblical books taught the truth without any errors.

Strictly speaking, this inerrancy, which is we're going to speak a bit about this morning, of the Bible applies to its books as originally written.

But we can be confident that we have the original text of the Bible in the copies and translations we possess today because God has preserved those writings. In any attempt to define what we ought to believe or how we ought to live, only the Bible, because of its absolute authority, can be used as a final authority.

[ 10 : 35 ] Traditional interpretations of the Bible and confessions of faith, and I'll explain a little bit about that this morning, are useful guides, but they are always open to correction based on further study of the Bible.

Any cooperation with others who profess to be Christians must be based on a shared commitment to the unique authority and complete truthfulness of the Bible.

So the two areas I want to cover are, one, the inerrancy of Scripture, and two, how we can interpret for ourselves. So this word, inerrancy, what does it mean? Literally means to be without error.

When we apply it to God's word, the Bible, it means that the Bible is without error in the original copies. And what we're talking about, if you remember going back, when God instructed and used the Holy Spirit upon the men of God, when they wrote that first copy out, it was without errors.

Now, some people can point to some of the errors. There's certain things in Scripture, and in fact, there's a note. If you have a King James Version Bible, in the book of Revelations, when they were copying this note, one of the scribes wrote some notes on the margins of his paper that he was writing.

[ 11 : 56 ] And then the next guy took over to copy that and inserted that guy's notes into that chapter. And I think it was the recipe for a lemon meringue pie.

I'm not sure. But it was just something as easy as that. It was just as he was being diligent in copying, he wasn't sure. So we know that there was errors, but we know that's an error because we have other copies, and we see in the other copies that doesn't appear, so we're able to edit that out. You with me on that? So some people may have gotten. Another thing that they used to do, the King James Version, when a cop used to be writing out, it says prayer and fasting.

You guys have read that a lot. But actually, it said that once, and any time when that scribe was writing out prayer, he would always write and fasting.

He was correcting because he knew it the first time. It said that, so every time we pray, we should fast. So when you're looking at King James Version of the Bible, fasting appears a lot more than in your other versions of the Bible.

[ 13 : 04 ] You with me on that? So there's some of those kind of inconsistencies, but those aren't the errors that we're talking about. We're talking about errors in relation to the doctrine. But when we talk about inerrant, we're talking about in the original autographs, and we are able, through the different variant copies, to come down to almost a 99.9% certainty, every single word in the Bible.

Pretty cool, eh? So, but there's something about this word, inerrant, that bothers people.

Now, I believe it's really inerrant to come to the conclusion that the Bible is inerrant, because we, as we learned, it was written by divinely chosen authors.

These authors were moved by the power of the Holy Spirit. We know that God is perfect. God does not lie.

And anything that God is going to do is without error, which is why our affirmation of faith says, strictly speaking, the inerrancy of the Bible applies to its books as originally written.

[ 14 : 22 ] So, some people argue that we should not use that word, error. And remember, as we talked about a couple of weeks ago, there is this thing called the preservation of God's Word.

And just like I said, we know what's in there. We know what we can substantiate it. So, if I'm to tell you that God's Word is without error, some of you aren't really going to argue.

Some of you are going to argue the opposite. You're going to be like, BK, why are you wasting our time talking about this thing called inerrancy? Because I get it.

And the reason I want to share that is because there are Christians today that support the idea that there are errors in the Bible. And they usually do so from two points of attack.

And I'm going to say attack because it's a critical action. And I want you guys to know these things because people are going to bring up these questions to you. They're going to create these problems.

[ 15 : 31 ] The first issue they're going to bring up is language. And what they're going to say is, God is so high. He's so above us. He's so great and majestic. Which, of course, we're never going to argue with.

But that God had to accommodate himself to silly, stupid people like us. And he had to use a language. And we had to write it down. And God really wasn't able to communicate perfectly to us because we're infallible people.

We make mistakes. So that's kind of the basis of their first argument. Which I think is kind of silly. Because that's like saying, God the creator who rules on high, who created the heavens and the earth, can't really figure out how to speak with us.

Really? That's really what the argument comes down to. That God couldn't figure out all these silly, stupid people. How on earth am I ever going to communicate clearly? Well, first of all, God created language.

He knows what language to use. He knows how he did this. Language is a creation. The fact is, special revelation came through the process of inspiration, which is fully accurate, fully truthful, fully sufficient, and reliable communication from God the creator to man the creation.

[16:58] And the reality is, God does speak through symbols. Psalm tells us that the mountains are clapping. Who here in Squamish has ever heard a mountain clap?

We haven't, right? But some people point to that. It's a figure of speech that all creation rejoices with God. So the Bible does use symbols.

It uses figures of speech. It gives objects, human characteristics, which is called anthropomorphic expressions. And that's the first time in my life I've been able to say that without stuttering.

You know, so God uses those things to communicate us to understand. Now, the problem, they argue, is us.

That we're not perfect. That somehow, when God gives us that message, we can mess it up. The question I always ask is, can we write a perfect sentence?

[18:06] Yeah, we can. We can actually write a sentence that has no sin in it. It's true. God, especially with the power of the Holy Spirit, can give us these things.

And especially with the Spirit's direct involvement, and I'll just read you as what it says in 2 Peter 1, 20 to 21. And it says, and we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed to which we will do well to pay attention as to a lamp and shining in a dark place till the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Knowing this, first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man.

But men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. So I believe that whole argument that we somehow can't write something down without error I believe is bupkis.

It's not a good sound argument. The second argument that they will say is that the Bible in itself doesn't use the word inerrancy like it uses the word inspired.

[19:28] So that's why in a lot of different churches they will make a statement about the word of God and they're going to say we believe the word of God is the inspired word of God. They don't feel comfortable using that word inerrant and they argue that that word inerrant isn't used in and they would argue that that word the Bible doesn't use that word nor in church history is that word used and they would actually be correct.

If you go in your concordance you look for inerrancy it's not going to be there and if you were to study church history it's kind of interesting there's a group of guys that I know when we were talking about this many years ago and some of my brothers are from Europe and they say this is mostly an American convention they say.

We don't use that word it doesn't figure in there but there's a problem with this and let me use I'm going to read from you what's called the London Baptist Confession of Faith from 1689 so this is what the Christian church back then which we find our roots in this is how they define the Bible they said the Holy Scriptures is the only sufficient certain and infallible rule of all saving knowledge faith and obedience now they didn't use that word inerrant they used that word infallible you with me on that and back then the word inerrant and infallible actually meant the same thing but later on in the 1960s there was liberal theologians within the Orthodox Christian churches started to change the meaning of the word infallible what they said is the Bible is only infallible in matters of faith and worship so anything we learn about God it's perfect but when it talks about geography or history or math the Bible is not so good and we know we talked about this a couple of times ago archaeology as archaeology continues to expand we start to get more and more proof in regards to the history of God and remember

I told you about Nebuchadnezzar a lot of people point to the book of Daniel Nebuchadnezzar was one of the pillars that critics came over after God's word saying we have no record it doesn't show up in history we don't know who this guy Nebuchadnezzar is then all of a sudden they found this archaeological dig site and Nebuchadnezzar is literally on every brick on every building in that area so it's not just infallible because I think the argument is that God's really good on faith but not too good on math that doesn't really wash with me that I believe because God's word is inspired we can trust it to know it's true amen the idea that God may be inspired but we aren't we know is a lie of scripture critics will say the Bible itself doesn't say it's inerrant so why should we so what happened is in the in the 70s there was a council of pastors very renowned pastors who got together it's called the Chicago statement on the inerrancy of scripture and they basically recognized that the word infallible had changed so they started saying it's inerrant what infallibility means is inerrant and just several years ago there was another it wasn't a council but it's like a church council and I was able to go to that and what we did is we became signatories to a document stating that we affirmed that the

Bible is inerrant in everything that it says and does so once in a while church councils groups of pastors have to get together understanding that there's certain movements that are trying to change the meaning of the word and we need to correct that meaning so when our statement says inerrant it does mean inerrancy it means it's without error and it also means it is infallible so in short we know that the Bible is absolutely without error and because it is without error it is the final authority amen trying to find the direct quote that came from the council oh this is the statement that they wrote they believe that the Bible speaks with infallible defined authority in all matters upon which it touches in short the Bible is the final authority inerrancy is the natural companion to the doctrine of inspiration so if you believe that God or through inspired the word is inspired word of

[ 25 : 02 ] God not only is it infallible but it has to be inerrant all right that's all I got to say on inerrancy pretty easy guys feel like you're in a good seminary class you're taking it all in all right I've given you guys all the head stuff now I want to take you down to the ground level practical what does that all mean to us what does it mean to know God's word for the last four weeks I have not only provided you evidence from God's word that God doesn't only provide revelation through himself but that God uses special revelation in his Bible that this Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit that this Bible is without error that this Bible has been protected and preserved for us over centuries that this Bible also demonstrates to us that the Lord's God authority is over us so the question that I ask you is how important is it for us to know

God's word if I just told you that God has done all these things to make sure we have his word how important is it for you to know what God has to say but I was to ask you on a scale of one to ten where does it measure up let me repeat the words that Dave read for us this morning not all of them but he begins in Deuteronomy as he's taken his people away from Egypt and he's protected them he's preserved them he's answered the promise that he gave to Abraham over 500 years before he says this is the commandment the statutes and the rules that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you that you may do them in the land to which you are going to possess it that you may fear the

Lord your God and your son and your son's son by keeping all his statutes and his commandments which I command you verse three begins with hear therefore O Israel verse four hear O Israel the Lord God is one you shall love the Lord your God verse six and these words that I command you today shall be on your heart verse seven you shall teach them teach them diligently to your children verse eight you shall bind them verse nine you shall write them and and and and in what is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the Lord our God has commanded you and remember those words statutes and testimonies and statues those are words that the psalmist in Psalm 19 and Psalm 119 uses describe what

God's words are said what is the meaning and the rules that the Lord our God has commanded you then you shall say to your son we were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and the Lord showed signs and wonders great and grievous against Egypt and against Pharaoh and all his household before our eyes and he brought us out of there and he might bring us and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers you might be saying right now well you know I wasn't in Egypt my question is you weren't you mean to tell me you weren't lost did you need to be found were you blind but now you see were you a captive to your sin and your wrong decisions of living life and that God rescued you that he uncovered your eyes he opened the

shackle to your prison your kids need to know those stories they need to know who you were before and the difference

God made in your life and how you live it now is a testimony to that event why you lead them the way you do sadly we live in a culture which expects us the church Sunday school youth leaders to do the discipling which is the act of making your children more like Jesus or as Chris Hamilton said our role is to teach our children to fear the Lord amen we can't control that they get saved and they accept the Lord Jesus Christ but they can know the truth of the reality and they can know that Lord is real and he is to be feared that is our calling verse 24 and the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes to fear the Lord our God for our good always that he might preserve us alive as we are his day this day and it will be righteous for us if we are capable careful to do all the commandment before the

[ 30 : 46 ] Lord our God as he has commanded us what now what are we to do with such a book which is called the word of God we're to read it to study it to know it to share it to live it everything that God wants us to know about him and ourselves is found within the pages of these books amen there is no guesswork there is no mystery that we need to figure out how to raise our kids or love our spouses or how to conduct ourselves at work it's here so why don't we study it why do we still struggle well there's two primary reasons people give the first reason is the

Bible is too difficult to understand the Bible is too difficult to understand and the only way to understand God's word is if you have some sort of training sadly this myth has been told so often when people or someone expresses that sentiment to you you agree yes it's complex well it is hard when you start reading a revelation or Ezekiel there are certain books of the Bible which are difficult to some degree but before I answer that the second reason people give for not reading their Bibles it's it's too boring it's not interesting the question is this is a book about God is

God boring if you're familiar with the writer R.C. Sproul he has this cute little story he says he was a young man and he was starting teaching at this college and the president told him he wanted him to make the Bible more exciting he wanted it to become alive R.C.'s response is you want me to make the Bible come alive I didn't know that it died I never even heard once that it was ill who was the attending physician at the Bible's demise he asked he says I can't make the Bible come alive for anyone the Bible is already alive it makes me come alive if you've been with us through any of the sermons that I've taught or especially through the life of Christ the Bible is anything but dull and lifeless is it not we read about drama there's great passion there's betrayal there's lust there's crime there's devotion there's compromise there's rebuke remorse forgiveness there's expressions of joy there's practical wisdom there's philosophical reflections the

Bible has it all and even the stories we don't understand tend to be the most exciting stories of all there is a term that reformed theologians used it's called the clarity of scripture you see what happens and if you don't know about the reformation is we are a part of the reformation we're Protestants back in the day in the late 1500s late 1500s and the late 1500s the Catholics ruled the day there was a man named Martin Luther who started to question some of the tenets that the Roman church was preaching so he started posting these theses on the door which seems really weird to us but it's like today going on Facebook and ranting about something right he put these out and he started this discussion and one of the things he said he said my soul has to be captive by God's word because they believed that tradition in the Pope's word could sometimes supersede God's word and then the biggest argument fight that happened that the day is that the church which also ruled countries did not want the Bible in the language that the people spoke so Luther being in Germany started translating the Bible in German and they were trying to stop them because they did not want God's people to have God's word in England there's a lot of stories Tyndale and I think it was Tyndale who made this statement that he wanted to make sure that every young boy who plowed the farms could know the Bible just as well as the Pope some of these people died so we could have God's word in our language so the reformed theologians beginning with

[ 36 : 24 ] Luther believed in the clarity of scripture and let me read it to you it's a technical term and it means that the Bible is basically clear and simple enough for any literate person to understand its basic meaning so basically you gotta be able to read but even we know with young kids we can tell the stories and they will understand the stories and like I said I know that not all parts of the Bible are actually clear and that sometimes there are difficult passages to understand and one of the reasons I went to seminary is I wanted to understand it even more so that I could communicate it better but what's interesting is the essential content and it's interesting when I went to seminary

none of my beliefs changed not a single one I went to a good Bible teaching church there was nothing in the Bible itself just helped me understand it better if that makes any sense but what's interesting about the difficult sections we struggle with

God knows these things and he often repeats himself over and over and over again and there's other parts of scripture that make it much more easier for us to understand and what's amazing about the Christian faith is that our faith is based on historical truth you know that it's based on historical truth the Christian faith is what we learn from the Bible it's God's special revelation about our faith Christianity the Bible never tells us to check our minds out at the door notice when you come in we don't say there's a big sign stop thinking and just listen to BK it's not there in fact you hear it every morning grab your Bibles we want you to know and have God's word for yourself our Christian faith the

Bible never tells us to base our faith on a feeling it's not there or even a moment in time the Christian faith is not some esoteric type of religion where we need to understand vague symbols to find out the secret code to unlock its meaning in fact the Bible is the exact opposite we don't need any special intellectual ability or a special spiritual gift to understand its basic meaning it is simple that anyone who can read can understand its meaning so those are the reasons now there's two personal things I think we need to do before coming to study God's word you might want to write these down two things one we need to overcome our laziness we need to overcome our laziness don't be insulted laziness started right in the garden we are all lazy if you want to know how many times my wife has to ask me to take out the garbage

I'd be really embarrassed right and part of it is just because I'm doing something else and I don't want to do it it's the same thing with God's word there's something that's going to occupy your time and if they say you don't have the time to do it let me ask you when's the last time you binged a series on Netflix right we can sit there for hours knocking off a whole season I'm proud to say I knocked off an episode of 24 season of 24 in only 22 hours so the first thing is we need to overcome our laziness it is part of our DNA we need to fight it we need to develop healthy habits we need to pray the second personal thing we need to do to study God's word is we need to come to God's word to be edified it means

I'm not coming just to accumulate the knowledge I'm coming to God's word because I want God to speak to me what that means is I approach it with a humble heart too many people come to God's word to study God's word to support their hobby horse right they know everything about that one thing you'll find some people they love Calvinism they love everything that support that it's about and they'll learn all the verses that support Calvinism but about anything else they really don't know or you'll find the guy who's really into prophecy knows everything that revelation and can tie it to all the different books of the Bible but anything else he's a complete blank piece of paper and what I mean by being edified is we need to be open and honest and humble with God subjecting one self to scripture means we're asking ourselves to be taught when we're taught we're reprov'd we're corrected and we're taught the proper way to do things it's a wonderful place to be at the foot of the [ 42 : 19 ] Lord your God and having him instruct you so if you can deal with those things before you come confess your laziness and pray for the humility to learn I think you're in a really good place the greatest danger to proper biblical interpretation and biblical living and that is one's own devotional personal interpretation what that means is and I'm going to talk more about this next week so if this doesn't seem all that clear there's a lot of mistakes we make when we come to the Bible and I remember someone coming to me to this passage I forget what passage it was and he was talking about him and he was putting himself into every single verse that he was reading then we you know I had to teach him about context so like even Deuteronomy 6 which I just talked about the instruction is to

God's people to remember what God did in Egypt we haven't been to Egypt has anybody been to Egypt here maybe one or two of you maybe right so do we say this doesn't apply to us of course not there is an application application that application is like I said what is our testimony what Egypt did God take us out of you see sometimes people will come up with interpretations either to justify their own theological positions or they want to live a certain way that is not coherent with the Christian faith and I'm sad to say that probably in this day and age this exists more than any other time in church history and we will meet a lot of really good Christians that are lost you know how they're lost often you can tell they're not committed to a local church and you might be saying hey

BK you're just trying to sell memberships right because you know my pay goes up with more people that buy memberships here that's not true at all but there's a reason that we need a church we need someone to teach us we need pastors elders disciples is because we need some help in understanding God's word why did we get here it's kind of interesting we can actually track it back in history you guys want a quick history lesson yeah all right world war two after world war two we didn't have enough people to teach there was this development of things called para church ministries Billy Graham's ministry started to explode across the world young life youth for christ those type of ministries started to happen youth groups all these things these other ministries started to grow because a lot of the churches started getting liberal they weren't teaching God's word but some people were like hey I can teach God's word and then they started doing these things and one of the things they would do and

I would meet with some students and I would eventually get to a point and ask if they accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal savior but what would happen is they would concentrate on that personal savior and what really opened my eyes to it was we did this and I think I told you guys briefly we did a mission down in the hardest part of the world to reach people which was Daytona Beach Florida you know during spring break so we went down on the beach and I used to play beach volleyball and we go into tournaments and we get an opportunity to meet and connect with people and share Jesus with them and it really hit me after it all and there was a couple of guys that I remember building into spending time they wanted to know about Jesus I share it then after the end it's bye I got to go back to Canada we didn't work through any of the local churches in the area and it our group had led to

Christ and they were coming to our worship prayer times and then after we said goodbye and where did they go we don't know and then eventually at university I met a friend and I was involved with athletes in action as well and if you're familiar with athletes in action we bring in professional athletes and I would be with the pros and we play the school teams and we share the gospel and one of my guys came to me it was in a residence and he had heard the gospel and he says I went to one of your events when I was in grade 11 and I accepted you told me about Lord Jesus Christ my need to have him as a savior and I believed and then you left you were gone no one instructed me life over everything he was doing and that's why I was asked to join Campus Crusade to come on for leadership and

[ 47 : 36 ] I said no I believe my calling to God's church that what I know has to happen from God's church God's church has to have authority to bring in these people to be a part of that discipleship people so people aren't lost but what happened is some of these people did grow in some knowledge of the world but they didn't really connect to a church and how important is the church let me explain it to you the book of Ephesians tells us how important the church is and I'm just going to read this passage to you in Ephesians 5 25 our emphasis we place too much is on the individual rather than the group let me read this passage Christ loved the church it wasn't as Christ loved the apostle John as Christ loved the apostle Peter or the apostle would have been Paul saying Paul so that wouldn't make sense but anyway he didn't pick an individual he said

Christ loved the church and what did Jesus Christ do he gave himself up for her that he being Jesus might sanctify the church having cleansed the church by the washing of water with the word so that the church might be present so that he Jesus might present the church to himself in splendor without spot or wrinkle or any such thing that she might be holy and without blemish the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies he who loves his wife loves himself for no one ever hated his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it just as Christ does the church so when we're doing a gospel presentation we do not include the church in that we are disrespecting the gospel message so so now probably more than any other generation we have a group of self affirming

Christians who have very little respect for the church they don't use their gifts and they don't allow others to use their gifts as well you guys have heard me say this when you're not a part of this church you're ripping me off of your gifts do you know that I don't get to experience the unique gifts that God has given you you're just taking mine we need your gifts they tend to have very little respect for elders or pastors or teachers they tend to be lone ranger Christians who like to do things their way why does the church correct all this and let me give you how it shows several years ago quick story I send my nephew off to a wonderful Christian school my nephew used to live with me before I was married and then he started to come back with all these wonky ideas and I went to talk

to the principal and it turns out some of the teachers were teaching my nephew these wonky ideas which

I thought you guys were a Christian church why are all these are Christian school I thought these were these wonky ideas then I started asking who sponsored like who was on the board of this church and where the teachers and none of the teachers were members at any church they were just self attesting Christians and the church just the administration didn't care and it was different prominent people that were on this board but none of them really were connected like I knew a couple of them they're not connected to a church at all like they were very wealthy people and so on well meaning but what happens is the church is supposed to be the one that holds up the truth which makes sure that what is being said is truly right so what had happened this group had formed its own Christianity and their way of thinking so how do we protect ourselves from this and these are kind of guiding principles that

I wrote down the reformers had a principle and it was called sola scriptura sola scripture which meant scripture alone now it might not mean what you think it means a lot of people think if I can just take God's word and the Holy Spirit I can figure things out but the Bible we know teaches us to study and to be studied right teaches us to come under prophets Ephesians 4 elders teachers prophets evangelists God has given them to the church for the edification of the body but what Luther was getting at is councils and popes did not rule over scripture but these councils and we have them and if you read in our statement of faith notice it says traditional interpretations of the Bible and confessions of faith are useful guides and what it's doing they provide guard rails for our faith and essentially what it means is when you read that affirmation of faith the elders just didn't invent that on a

[ 53 : 12 ] Tuesday night we were bored hey let's write up something that we're going to believe in we're a part of a fellowship and all these other churches affirm these things and not only these things are affirmed this generation it goes back centuries millenniums of church history teaching these truths so what you read in our affirmation of faith goes back centuries you with me on that so when we come to confusing passages we look to what does church history tell us how did they deal with this now if you come from a Presbyterian or Lutheran background you're like hey I get confessions they're really highly confessional and there's some strength the problem is those confessions can overrule scripture you with me where we want to make sure God's word is held over the confessions but the confessions are really useful to help us in our

Christian walk there are good powers in that so sola scriptura means we need help as well our opinions need to be tested by church history if I can say it that way I'm just reading some of my notes so I don't repeat myself and one of the things that scripture is so brilliant at doing it's giving us principles which can carry on in any culture do you know that you ever thought of that about Christianity it can be lived out in any culture known to man it begins to live out in any culture and there's no conditions or commandments in God's word that would make it difficult to live out in any culture so those are one of the things that continue but what we do is we can look to church history because living out our faith here in BC is different than living it out in Madagascar or living it out in Japan all these things these principles are the same but the practical application of how we do those things differs so when we wonder about what to do and we've talked about this about communion and baptism some people have asked me what is the proof text what is the Bible verse that says you have to be baptized to take communion we look back at church history which helps us with some of the commandments which says when you believe be baptized and when we're baptized that was entrance into the body of Christ it was that outward reflection of an inward reality or as one author says it was a demonstration of a break between the old and the new so when we ask that we're not forbidding someone from taking the table we're asking you to make a priority on your baptism the commandment that when we come together that we are to share these elements together so in case you haven't figured it out we're going to do communion now let me just read for you with what some of the

Christian church wrote in the 1600s about communion says the supper of the Lord Jesus was instituted by him the same night wherein he was betrayed to be observed in his churches unto the end of the world for the perpetual remembrance and showing to all the world the sacrifice of himself in his death kind of the same thing we say eh confirmation of the faith of believers in all the benefits thereof their spiritual nourishment and growth in him their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe to him and to be bond and pledge of their community communion with him and with

each other that means we're part of a fellowship together in this ordinance Christ is not offered up to his father nor any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sin of the quicker dead but only a memorial of that one offering up of himself by himself upon the cross once for all what that means is communion doesn't save us it's a memorial and there's a spiritual obligation of all possible praise unto God for the same and it talks about how in the

Catholic church Christ in their communion had to die every Sunday for them for us that's why we say no the outward elements in this ordinance duly set apart to the use ordained by Christ have such relation to him crucified as that truly although in terms used figuratively they're sometimes called by the names of the things they represent in other words these are the body and blood of Christ but it really isn't it's a symbol of it worthy receivers outwardly partaking of the visible elements of this ordinance do then also inwardly by faith really and indeed yet not carnally and corporately but spiritually receive and feed upon

Christ crucified and all the benefits of his death the body and blood of Christ being then not corporately or carnally but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that ordinance as the elements themselves are their outward senses so we take this in faith not carnally if you are not in the faith of Jesus Christ you do not take these elements if you claim to be a Christian but you're living in sin and outside do not take these symbols and it gives us a warning it says all ignorant and ungodly persons as they are unfit to enjoy communion with Christ so are they unworthy of the Lord's table and cannot without great sin against him while they remain such partake of these holy mysteries or be admitted thereunto yea whosoever shall receive unworthily are guilty of the body and blood of the

[ 60 : 36 ] Lord eating and drinking judgment to themselves that's taken from the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith so I'm going to ask the worship team to come up so if you're new let me explain how we do communion we usually ask you when it's time to come down the middle aisles you pick the water and the bread and then you just take your time spend some time in personal reflection at your seat and after the song is done finishing and all who are meant to come up and partake we will take it together and I will pray just before that and if you're kind of at a loss just follow someone you'll figure it out pretty quickly but let me first just go in prayer dear Lord heavenly father we just thank you for all that you offer us in your word and the instructions through the saints through history father we ask that your hand of blessing would be upon us this church as we even struggle through areas of faith as we desire to reflect you as best we can in this culture that is so far removed from the first century but Lord you have given us this word which is transposed to any cultural known to man and how we live it out

I pray for wisdom for us elders and pastors and shepherds and leaders as we come here desiring to glorify your name in all that we do we pray that this table would truly be seen as a table of fellowship a table of communion with you which leads to a communion with one another I pray we recognize the sanctity of this table and everything that it represents we pray that we'd be obedient to the call that you have given each and every one of us on our individual lives pray for strength to avoid the evil one to withstand temptation and the sins that Satan tries to occupy our times with and robs our life of may we be may we be quick to repent may we be quick to confess and may we be quick to experience the relationship that waits us with you oh father we ask these things your most holy and humble name amen to him what

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