

# The Bible

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[ 0 : 00 ] As you notice, just for the last several months, we've been building a theology of church from the letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

However, for the next couple of weeks, I've decided to just step out of it for a little bit, give us a chance to catch our breath, and discuss on some other related issues.

You'll notice in your bulletin, the series is what the Bible has to say about the Bible. What's interesting about this subject is sometimes people, well, we already know the Bible, we believe the Bible, that's all we want to know and understand, but our understanding of the Bible actually comes from a great understanding of God.

So as we work through several different texts this morning, I want you to also keep in mind what these qualities say about God himself, because it was God himself who penned this Bible for us.

I understand the last couple of weeks we have some friends who are mourning quite deeply.

They're hurting.

[ 1 : 30 ] You can turn that light down a little bit, that's a little bit bright. Yeah. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

God.

God, you were called the great comforter, your spirit, which comes in, which holds us and reminds us of these eternal truths.

Pray for the hows right now, just as they are in a midst of seeking you out, what your future looks like, oh Father. Father, sometimes it's these simple little tragedies which can spin our world out of control.

[ 3 : 38 ] And Father, we desperately need to lean on you, hold on you. Sometimes just simply kneel down before you, not knowing what to say but to cry.

But God, we lean on your character. We're going to lean how good you are, how great you are, how clear you are, how perfect you are, how unchangeable you are.

And these are all the promises that we lean upon to guide us through these times of pain, of asking questions. These are your mercies towards us, oh Father.

So Lord, may your words be a soothing balm. May our hugs and loves of affection be that as well. May you hold up our loved ones.

For you love them more intimately than we do. And you care for them even more greatly than we can. So God, we ask you these things as we come into your word today.

[ 4 : 46 ] May you bless this word. May you make it strong. May you redeem my mistakes and misunderstandings. And prepare our hearts.

In your most holy and precious name. Amen. As you know, I want to talk to you about the Bible. Every Sunday, just as you heard today, when Carl got up here, he simply stated that the Bible is a pretty big deal to us.

Before every sermon, you are called to open your Bibles to turn to a text of Scripture. The reason is, we believe that God has a word today for us.

And it's not just a word or a suggestion or a medical balm that's supposed to make us feel better. But that we believe that God, as creator of all, has an authoritative word for us.

I think that makes it a pretty big deal. And ever since the beginning of time, as Adam and Eve walked in the garden, the first words from the serpent were, has God really said these things?

[ 6 : 07 ] The world, the flesh, the enemy, continuously wants to corrupt the actual words of God.

It was interesting. When I graduated out of seminary, there was about 12 different churches that I was canning in. I did not know where my future would be. It could be up in Canada, down to Florida, Bora Bora.

No, I'm just kidding. I would have been gone there in a second. Different parts of the world. But it didn't really matter. Some were very exciting, glorious places to be from a physical, geographical, and now I know nothing taught Squamish.

But the one that I chose to be at was in the middle of mid-America. And it was simply because they had the strongest statement in regard to the Bible and how it is to be preached.

They simply stated, we preach the authority of God's word without apology. We don't make excuses. We don't try to cover for God. Or we don't try to make up for his wisdom.

[ 7 : 16 ] They simply believe that the God's word has the power for truth and life. That was an easy decision for me to make at that time. The reality is there's a lot of people who thought throughout all of time that this was so important.

That God's word was of utmost importance that everybody should have it. How many of you guys have, when I say guys, I'm talking about you girls as well, have been upstairs to where the pastor's office is?

Who's been up there? You've noticed along the hallways are pictures of old, fuddy, duddy men, right? Kind of look like Steve Whiten's relatives, you know, big beards.

Right? There's actually a purpose to that. It's a reminder of the men who've come before us, and many of them literally died so we could have a translation in our own language.

So let's just talk about the book itself, and I'll tell you about a story of one of the men that is up there. The Bible itself is made up of 66 different parts, 66 books of the Bible.

[ 8 : 32 ] We find 39 in the Old Testament, 27 in the New. It was written over a period of 1,600 years by over 40 different authors, primarily Old Testament in the Hebrew.

In Daniel, there's a little bit of Aramaic in there, and in the New Testament, it is Greek. The authors were made up of rich, poor, young, old, those who are educated, those who are not educated. Some people were single, some people were married. It's not surprising that the Bible is considered to be the most powerful book in the history of the world.

Not only is the greatest selling book of all time, no other book can compare. It is estimated that there is between 6 to 8 billion copies of the Bible that have been placed in circulation in more than 2,000 different languages.

Number two is actually Chairman Mao's Little Red Book. They estimate about a billion of these were printed, not even close compared to the Bible, especially considered when for over a decade, if you were caught without Mao's book, you'd be punished by the Chinese authorities.

[ 9 : 55 ] And the main theme of Scripture is Jesus, and more books have been written about Jesus than anyone else in history. So not only is the Bible the greatest selling book, but it remarkably remains so, despite the fact that no other book has been more opposed.

There have been relentless and continual attempted attacks to keep you and me from having a Bible in our own language. Those who look to translate the world into the common language have faced persecution, have faced death, and gave us the opportunity to carry a Bible around.

And many of us at home probably have multiple translations. I'm just going to give you a brief story of William Tyndale. William Tyndale, in the late 1400s and the early 1500s, had a desire that the English people could have a Bible.

You guys remember Luther? Luther began in Germany, wanted his own people to have an own copy of the Bible. Tyndale is what motivated it in England.

His name was Tyndale, and he had to translate it while on the run from bounty hunters. So he had a Greek copy and a Hebrew copy of the scriptures, and he was trying to translate it into English.

[ 11 : 20 ] They had placed a bounty so high on his head that there was no place in England that he could go to escape the bounties. Just imagine, he was doing his translations from a back of a horse with multiple manuscripts, hiding out in friends' homes, grabbing a candle when he could, and he just kept meticulously writing the translation.

At any moment, there'd be a, at the door, Bill, you got to get out of here. They know you're here. When asked why he would risk his life for this cause, he was quoted as saying, I defy the Pope and all his laws.

And if God spares my life, I will cause the boy that drives the plow in England to more of the scriptures than the Pope himself.

When he says more of the scriptures, he's also telling us he wants us to know God. Not as someone else would present him, but how we would know God through these scriptures.

It is said, when they did finally capture him, they strangled him first before they burned him. The reason being, they did not want him to continue preaching the whole time while he was being burned.

[ 12 : 47 ] All of these men and those who followed believe simply that it is important for us to be able to read the word of God for ourselves, not for relying on any religious tradition or leader or organization.

Today, because of men like William Tyndale, we can gather here on a Sunday, pick up a Bible and read it for ourselves, and know God for ourselves. So today, when we take up our Bibles, it tells us a lot about the men.

It also tells us about a God. The God who 2,000 years ago, through a miracle, wants us to know his message. So today, we're going to look at eight characteristics of the Bible.

So if you're taking notes, you can write down simple eight points. I'll try to elaborate what those words are. We'll include some scripture for that. But one of the things that you had to know throughout the church movement, especially the Protestant church movement, it was born out of the idea of an issue called sola scriptura.

Sola scriptura means scripture alone. Okay? Okay? It's not scripture in church tradition. It's not scripture in priestly authority.

[ 14 : 13 ] It's not scripture in church council, or scripture in papal authority. It's simply scripture alone, where we can know God.

The Puritans were known to say that it is scripture alone, for as anything else is added to the foundation of the church, we are adding an inferior element that will lead to cracks and a breaking apart of the foundation.

It is scripture and scripture alone from which we base our authority. Now, if you take out all of your bulletins, I've actually printed in there a statement that I'm going to read.

It is our church's statement. It's from our doctrine of faith. It's the number one point on our doctrine of faith. When you become a member of the church, or you want to know about the church, we want you to know and understand this is what we are all about.

So you'll notice, I think it's on the front first page, but it begins with, throughout history, God has revealed himself in a variety of ways.

[ 15 : 24 ] And God has preserved the substance of this revelation in the Bible. When we say the Bible, we mean the 66 books of the Old Testament and New Testament.

These books were written by divinely chosen authors as they were prompted and guided by the Spirit of God. Although these writers were genuine authors, and in most cases, not just secretaries, dictating dictation, taking dictation, the work of the Spirit was so complete that everything written in the biblical text, biblical books, taught the truth without any errors.

Strictly speaking, this inerrancy of the Bible applied to its books as originally written, but we can be confident that we have the original text of the Bible in the copies, in translations, we possess today because God has preserved these writings.

In any attempt to define what we ought to believe or how we ought to live, only the Bible can be used as a final authority. Traditional interpretations of the Bible and confessions of faith 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.

[ 16 : 49 ] That's what I want to talk to you today. It's kind of interesting. Just the other day, I don't know about you knew, but the Jehovah's Witness have been going to her door and they tried to convert my wife.

They didn't get her. All right? But one of the things that she kept asking them is, well, what does the Bible say? What does the Bible say? And if you don't know, the Jehovah's Witness have actually corrupted their translation of the Bible.

They use a faulty Bible. It is not the Bible. So when they talk to you about Jesus or any other aspect of the faith, you actually have to go to your version of the Bible.

They're going to read you their Bible and it's going to say some things, but they actually have a mistranslation that they use. A lot of them, they're very ignorantly, just don't know.

Really? I thought it was the same Bible. For some of us who know some of the Greek, no, no, no. Actually, totally wrong. You're using a bad copy.

[17:47] It's universally accepted. So some of the people know, most of them that don't know. But it's so important. So the first thing that we need to understand about the Bible, the first point is the Bible is inspired by God.

The Bible is inspired by God. My first day in seminary to my last day in seminary, they beat us over the head with 2 Timothy 3, 16 and 17, which simply says all scripture is breathed out by God.

And because of this is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

This means every jot, every tittle, every chapter, every verse within this book, on this book of the canon of God is breathed out and comes out of the mouth of God.

Matthew 4, for Jesus Christ, when answering his critics says, it is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

[19:11] John 6, 33 says, it is the spirit who gives life. The flesh is of no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

Now, I want you to understand it's not the authors that were inspired, but the scriptures that they wrote were inspired. And what I mean by this is Paul wasn't inspired in himself that any letter that he would write would automatically be inspired by the Holy Spirit.

You understand that point? There were certain times the spirit came upon him to write those specific texts. Because I imagine there's a pretty nasty letter written to Timothy's mom or Mark's parents, what a horribly undisciplined kid you sent me on my first missionary journey.

Right? That's not inspired, right? I'm sure, as you all know, Mark wanted to go with Timothy and Barnabas and him had a fight over it. So anything that he could write, some people could totally blow up.

It doesn't work that way. But it's interesting that as the authors were the mere instruments, they weren't robots either. God used their temperaments, their personalities, their vocabularies.

[20:28] We can go through and see actually their vocabularies grow through time in Scripture, the vernaculars that they use. God used different backgrounds, different experiences, but they wrote precisely what God wanted them to write.

What Paul affirms in 1 Timothy is that these Scriptures, the Old and New Testament, were indeed God speaking. In over 4,000 locations, the writers claim to be writing the Word of God.

When God says in many of the prophetic books, the Lord has spoken, Yahweh says, those are His direct words.

In the New Testament alone, there are over 300 direct quotes plus over 1,000 references to the Old Testament. What's interesting is later in 2 Peter 2, as the church is gone, Peter affirms Paul's writings as being from God as well.

Because a lot of people will argue the New Testament was too young, so when Paul was writing that, he was only talking about the Old Testament Scriptures. But we understand in church history, historians knew and verified that these words were indeed of the Lord.

[22:01] Peter adds in 2 Peter 20, 21, 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 that is 2 Peter 20, 21.

That is the inspiration of God. The second one is an interesting claim that the Bible is without error. In our statement, we use the word inerrant.

That's the technical word that it is without error. Now, a lot of critics say, hey, hey, hey, the Bible actually doesn't claim for itself to be inerrant. Well, if the Bible is God-breathed by a holy and perfect God, are we going to have errors?

No, we're not. But some people are able to point to some of those errors and some of them you have to wrestle through. And usually they're more transcription errors. But the issue of inerrancy actually came about in the late 70s, actually.

[23:09] And there was a conference. It was called the Chicago Summit on Inerrancy. And many of the evangelical great minds of the time came about and they wrote up this document.

And they wanted the people, you're either in or you're out on this inerrancy. Now, when he's talking about inerrancy, he's talking about the scriptures in the original manuscript had no errors.

Just so you know, we do not have a copy of any of the original manuscripts. A lot of people think it might be hidden away in the Vatican or somebody's dark basement in England.

It's not true. We have no original copies. What we have are copies of copies of copies of copies. When correctly interpreted, the Bible, we understand, is completely truthful and accurate in all and every respect from the original autographs or the writings are free from error.

John 17, 17 says, sanctify them in truth. Your word is true. And Titus 1, 2 says, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began.

[ 24 : 29 ] So we know that God's word must be without errors. Now, some contest this by saying the Bible does not claim this for itself, as I said.

But what they say is that because it's inspired, it has to be without error. Now, the problem that this is like saying that God, this is where they, I'm going to tell you where they say, this is the argument. A lot of people say, God is perfect with the inspirational and the faithful stuff, but God's not really too good with the numbers and math and stuff. So a lot of them will say, and we're going to get into, it's called Old Testament, they're able to tell where there's some errors on the numbers that we see in the Old Testament.

So we can trust them with the faith, but we can't trust them with history and math. Well, it's interesting. You can write down 2 Kings 18. 2 Kings 18, this is a go-to passage by critics.

And basically this is outlining a trade between the king Hezekiah and the king of Assyria. In the Bible, it lists a financial transaction of 30 talents of gold and 300 talents of silver.

[ 25 : 46 ] Well, later on, archaeologists have been able to dug up in Assyria, they found evidence of that same transaction. That transaction stated 30 talents of gold and 800 talents of silver.

Aha! The Bible is saying there's 300, the Assyrians are saying eight. You know, I would have said one of your kids just probably got in there and completed the three to make it look like an eight. But actually that's not true. Further study has indicated that Judea and Assyria had the same system to measure gold.

But interesting enough, they did not have the same system to measure silver. So what they found out is that 800 talents, which is a weight of Assyrian silver, equals exactly 300 talents of Judean silver.

So those are some of the things that we kind of get caught up. Archaeology in no time has disproved anything. Do you guys know King Nebuchadnezzar? It's one of my favorite stories in Daniel.

[ 27 : 02 ] And historians couldn't find any relation to him until they ended up finding a dig and it pretty much had his name on every single brick in the buildings that he built.

Like not only was he there, but he happened to be one of the most arrogant men that ever lived and just felt like he had to put that name on everything that he ever built. So we know that what the Bible had said is true.

So if one denies the inerrancy of Scripture, the Bible may have some errors, I believe you have four difficulties that you have to deal with. One, if God lies, how can you follow him?

That's the question. Now these aren't people who don't believe. I'm talking to people who are kind of inside the camp, but want to hold to these positions. The number two, if you can't follow God if he lies, how can we trust God in anything that he says?

How can we trust God that he is good, that he truly loves us, that he weeps with those who weeps, that when we draw near to him, he draws near to us.

[ 28 : 09 ] by denying inerrancy, we make our own human minds a higher standard of truth than God's truth.

And the fourth aspect is, if we deny inerrancy, then we must also say that the Bible is wrong, not only in minor details, but in some of its overall teaching as well.

So if we're going to claim that for ourselves, we're on very shaky ground. Wayne Grudem simply writes, for most practical purposes, the current published scholarly texts of the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament are the same as the original manuscripts.

Thus, when we say that the original manuscripts were inerrant, we are also implying that over 99% of the words in our present manuscripts are also inerrant, for they are exact copies of the original. Only God does that. A book written over thousands upon thousands of years would not have the mistakes that many other books would have because why?

[ 29 : 27 ] God hasn't preserved it. The third aspect, so we've got inspiration, then we have inerrant, the third one is the Bible does not fail. The technical term is the Bible is infallible.

And what I mean by infallible is not that it has an error, but it's like a bridge that will never collapse. It's something that is absolutely trustworthy. And that actually points to one of the greatest characteristics of God.

Amen? He is trustworthy. He is someone that we can fully place our life in his hands, even when life does not make sense to us.

This means that all scripture must come to pass. It has to. One of the things that really gums up people when we get into the end of revelation, we start trying to figure out different systems, you have to take a system that actually incorporates all of scripture.

not our favorite parts. Because God who we know is good, is great, he's infallible. If God is infallible, then so will be his word.

[ 30 : 45 ] The doctrine of scripture's infallibility is based on the understanding of God's perfection of character. Notice in Psalm 19.7, what Carl read today, that God's word is perfect, refreshing the soul.

Some translations have reviving the soul. What that means is it brings life. The truth of God's word brings life because God himself is perfect.

Theologically, God is closely associated with his word. That's why in John 1.14, which Jehovah's witness will deny, but it says that simply, Jesus Christ is the word.

Isaiah 48 reads, the grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

Which Matthew repeats in Matthew 5.18, for truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until it is all accomplished.

So we understand that the Bible's inspired, it's infallible, because of that, it's authoritative. Amen? It's from God. It comes with the authority of God himself.

[ 32 : 10 ] Notice again, Psalm 17, 9 and 8, the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

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

When God says does not mean it's suggestive, does not mean it's a helpful hint, does not mean you have an option of choose your own adventure, and it's not for your consideration.

It's interesting, and I don't know if you know many people, but I actually have some friends. They call themselves red-letter Christians. I kind of get a kick out of red-letter Christians. We only really believe that the letters that are read in our Bibles, you know, that Jesus spoke are the real words.

[ 33 : 25 ] Then I always ask him, have you really read those red letters? Those are pretty intense words. It's not like you're getting off on easy believism and some kind of hard believism.

I would argue it's in verse. Jesus' words are tough words to follow. They indict us for our sin. They don't free us. And it's interesting, I was speaking to another friend of mine, he says he's got a guy in his church who says he accepts Jesus' words, but he does not accept the words of Paul.

And perhaps you've heard of him. Paul was a misogynist. Paul was cruel. He was not a nice guy. So I don't like his words, but I like Jesus because Jesus is all about love.

Right? But what's interesting is that I asked him, you know that Jesus wasn't the one who wrote those words, right? It was actually two of his apostles wrote those words of the gospel.

The other one wrote under the direction of another apostle. And those same guys wrote the apostolic letters. So it's actually one group of guys that wrote all those words.

[ 34 : 35 ] It just happens to be in your translation of the Bible, they put those words in red. But this is our problem. And I believe this is a problem that is unique to our day and age.

We like to sit in judgment over the things we like and dislike in scripture, don't we? It's kind of interesting. I'm just reading this book on biblical interpretation from the time of birth, death of Christ to today.

All the different ways that people in church history interpreted the Bible, we happen to live in a very unique social situation. We actually believe in a time that truth is what it means to me.

So when I read that scripture, it's how it affects me is the power. It has nothing to do with what that guy is actually talking about. It's how I understand it.

And I'm sure we all feel this way over certain things, like there's certain books we like because we feel better, it's got a theme that we like, whatever it is. But that's actually very unique in all of history,

how we perceive things.

[ 35 : 48 ] And now we've created this standard of right and wrong that when we read the Bible, we're now weighing it by what we think is right or wrong. We've become this absolutely arrogant society where it's not the message of the original reader or the original writer.

Like, if I want to know something, I want to go to the original writer. What did you mean by this? What I think is totally irrelevant. But that has influenced the church quite a bit.

We read thinking our point of view is the correct one and all other points of view must adhere to ours. So the fifth quality that I want to talk about, it's called the perspicuity of scripture.

Or you can write down, the Bible is clear. The Bible is clear. Notice in Psalm 19 8 it says, the commandment of the Lord is pure.

And what it means is it's like water that is pure. Perfectly pure water you can see really far down. If you've been looking down in a lake, some lakes you can't see too far because they're dirty muddy because there's all those other impediments that are there.

[ 37 : 09 ] But if you've ever found a lake, and I remember being, my friend used to have a cottage in northern Ontario on Lake Superior, we could go out, we could see 40, 50 feet down, which was really unusual.

It was just absolutely clear, absolutely cold as well. That's another point. So what he's talking about, it's clear, it's not opaque, there's not stuff clouding up.

And what he means by that is it's understandable. So when Tyndale is saying that the person in a plow can know more than the Pope, he's saying you don't have to have great education to understand it.

The message of the Bible is clear, it is understandable. As you guys know, when you read the Gospels, we actually hear Jesus confront them. Have you not heard or have you not read? What he's challenging the Pharisees on, you already know the clarity of God's word. You're just not listening to it, following it. You should know this truth.

[ 38 : 16 ] If there's any shortcoming to understand the Bible, it's not the Bible's fault, it's our own fault. And sometimes, yes, we know the illumination of the Holy Spirit to connect certain things for us, but it's simple to see our own sin and to understand the truth of God's word.

Mark Twain, or they claim he said it, he simply said it's not the parts of the Bible I don't understand that frighten me, it's the parts of the Bible that I do understand.

You see, sadly, before the Reformation, the church was forbidden to read the Bible. Roman Catholic Church held to the belief that common man and common woman could never understand it and don't bother it, just trust me at the front to tell you what it is.

That's what set men off like Luther, Tyndale, Wycliffe, to translate the Bible so you could know on your own that the Bible is clear in all matter pertaining to life, salvation, and godly living.

Yes, some of the prophecy is tough to figure out, but overall it can be understood. Now, why are we talking about this? Have you guys heard about the Emergent Church?

[ 39 : 38 ] Emergent Church kind of came out late 90s and it was promulgating an easy faith and if you came from a legalistic background, you might gravitate to the Emergent Church because the legalists didn't have the answers either.

But one of their main rally cry is, hey, hey, hey, that Bible that you have, we really can't know what it says. Right?

We're really not sure about it. Why? Because God wrote it and who are we? We're just stupid, simple men. And if we're stupid, how can we really understand what God wants?

So, let's take the humble road. And that's why you notice in our society, knowledge is actually considered to be proud. To actually sure of something is to be prideful.

To not be sure is humble. Right? I'm going to tell you that's so backwards in thinking. Because one, you are right, God wrote it. Are you trying to say God who lives on high that created us can't communicate with us?

[ 40 : 43 ] That he couldn't devise a clear way to get the message to us? That's one of the greatest lies. You know what? Our evangelical churches eats this guy up.

It's nuts. To be clear about something is not to be arrogant. To be clear about something is you're relying on God, not your own wit, intelligence, or memory.

And then when you get asked, well, look at all these conflicting verses. And I had a guy related to Brian McLaren come against me and ask me, look at all these verses. Look at how much conflicting

and contradictions were there.

And I said, well, give me a verse. And he couldn't answer it. And I said, well, is there 10 verses or 10,000 verses? There's a big difference. If there's 10, let's work with those.

Let's really understand if it's 10,000, yeah, throw the thing out. But there's not. Often it can be confusing, but with proper Bible study, we find that those confusing thoughts go away.

[ 41 : 48 ] The sixth point, the Bible is sufficient. Isaiah 55, 11 says, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth. It shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

The thing is the word of God is powerful to convict, it's powerful to convert, to conform, to console and correct. Can anybody speak to that truth? Really, you haven't read anything and been convicted by anything, reading the Bible?

You've not read something saying, my life needs to take an immediate 180 turn? All right, it's me and Sab. All right, we've got a few more, right? That's the power of God doing something in us, convicting us, challenging us.

Steve Lawson writes, there is so much life in this book that when this book is planted within the soil of human hearts, having been prepared by the Holy Spirit of God, when God by sovereign grace causes that seed to germinate, it brings forth eternal life.

It is the source of all eternal truth and the source of all spiritual blessing. Everything we need to know about salvation, sanctification, and the hope of glory within us is found in the Bible.

[ 43 : 14 ] What he's saying is if the Bible is sufficient, we do not need dreams or visions or more prophecies. There is no secret knowledge that we're without. The Bible has it all.

There's no works, no church membership, no baptism, no rituals are needed. The sufficiency of Scripture means that Scripture contains all the words of God he intended all his people to have at every stage of redemption history, that it now contains all the words of God.

We need for salvation, for trusting him perfectly, and for obeying him. Number seven.

One, God's word never changes. This is what's called the immutability of Scripture. Scripture. And it's solely based. God doesn't change.

His word doesn't change. Jeremiah 23, 29 says, it's not my word like fire declares the Lord and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces.

[ 44 : 17 ] Psalm 119, 98, 89 says, forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. What that means is right will always be right.

Wrong will always be wrong. The way of salvation will forever be the way of salvation. Why?

Because God is unchanging, thus his word is unchanging, and it's always trustworthy.

And let me conclude with this final point. God's word is final. There's nothing we need to add.

There's no new revelation to be given to man after the closing of this canon.

John, the last living apostle, writes, in Revelation 22, 18. I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book.

If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of the prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city which are described in the book.

[ 45 : 24 ] That's pretty serious stuff. God wants us to know what his word is. conclusion. God's word matters.

God matters. Perhaps it's going to be your friends, your family members are going to want to attack the foundation of these texts.

Now the question for you is what is the implication of understanding that this is indeed God's word.

Do I trust it?

Do I want to know it? I did this experiment after I graduated seminary. A lot of people ask, how well do you know your Bible?

I thought I knew it pretty good. I could go through and name you every key verse, every key text, every key player, and absolutely every, when they're ordaining you, they're making sure you've got it all. And at the end of it, I got, I went and got this, just this, one of those free handout gospel tracks, and I went and highlighted all the verses that this is the first time I feel like I'm memorizing this, seeing this thing, right?

[ 46 : 40 ] And I, we ran through it about five or six times throughout my seminary from beginning to end. So I just thought the gospels, which I should know better than anything else, every single page

was covered with highlighting.

It's amazing, just new truths jump at you, you just see new things that I need to put into life. It's not like I read it once and I'm done. It's a continued understanding of I want God's riches, his glory, and his power in my life.

And I can only do that by knowing God's word. Let me pray for us.