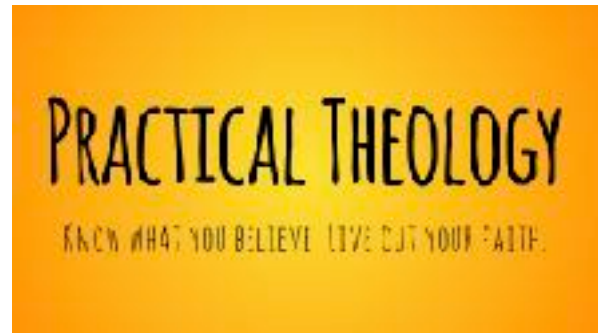


# Lesson 4:

## Doctrine of the Scriptures:

### BIBLIOLOGY



The study of what the Bible teaches about itself is called Bibliology. The Bible claims to be a revelation from God about Himself. Our English word Bible comes from the Greek word "biblos," which means book.

## I. Forms of Divine Revelation

Man, who has the capacity to recognise and have fellowship with the Creator, is God's highest order of creation. It is therefore reasonable to expect that God would communicate to mankind His purpose and will.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

The natural world, being a work of God, discloses that God possesses infinite power and wisdom (Rom. 1:20). However, this revelation of God has its limitations because creation does not give us a clear understanding of His love or holiness. It does not reveal a way of salvation by which sinners can be reconciled to a holy God.

B. \_\_\_\_\_

According to Scripture, miracles occurred in three major periods: 1) Moses and Joshua, 2) Elijah and Elisha, 3) Christ and Apostles. Each period lasted less than 100 years. However, a clear revelation of God Himself is not found in the miracle itself and most of the world did not live in the times when miracles were performed nor did they witness one themselves. (1 Kings 17:23; John 10:24, 25; Acts 14:3)

C. \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus Christ came into the world to reveal God to men in terms which they could understand. Jesus said, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." Although we have not seen the Christ, one who knows Christ, knows God the Father (Jn. 1:18; 14:9; 1 Tm. 3:16)

D. \_\_\_\_\_

The Bible reveals God in even more explicit terms than can be observed in nature, miracles, or the person of Christ. The written Word is all-inclusive, giving us details about Christ but also revealing His program and purposes. The Bible is the complete and final revelation of God. (Dt. 29:29)

## II. Evidence that the Bible is God's Word

A. From \_\_\_\_\_ itself:

In hundreds of passages the Bible declares or assumes itself to be the Word of God. In the OT the phrase, "The Lord said", or similar phrases are found 3,808 times.

B. From its \_\_\_\_\_ :

The Bible has been an object of never ending persecution. Rulers have tried to destroy it as well as those who translated it.

The Roman emperor Diocletian demanded every copy of the Bible be destroyed by fire in 303 AD. During the time of the Reformation, the Roman Catholic Church put severe restrictions on the reading of the Bible.

Voltaire, the noted French infidel who died in 1778, predicted that in 100 years from his time Christianity would be extinct. Twenty-five years after his death the very presses that printed Voltaire's literature were used to print Bibles. (I Pet. 1:23)

C. From its \_\_\_\_\_ :

It was written by more than forty men living over a period of about 1,600 years. Its writers came from all walks of life: kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, physicians, statesmen, scholars, poets, and farmers. They lived in different cultures, different experiences and yet the Bible is nevertheless one book with the same theme and purpose. It has one doctrinal system, one moral standard, one plan of salvation, one Author.

D. From its \_\_\_\_\_ :

The Koran, Book of Mormon, as well as other religious writings have had a tremendous influence in the world; however, there is a vast difference in the kind of influence they have exerted when compared with that of the Bible. Other books have led to a low view of God and sin, even to ignoring it.

The Bible has produced the highest results in all walks of life; the arts, government, social reforms, but especially the spiritual changes brought about through conversion. Man who

is basically proud, would not have written such a Book that repeatedly describes man's wicked depraved corrupt nature.

## E. From its answers to \_\_\_\_\_ :

The Bible alone answers life's greatest questions that have troubled man for centuries:

1. Who is God, and what is He like?
2. Who am I, and where did I come from?
3. Why am I here, and where am I going?
4. How can I be right with God?

## F. From its consistency with \_\_\_\_\_ :

The Bible is not a textbook on science. However, whenever it touches upon the subject it is accurate.

1. The earth is round (Job 26:7; Isa. 40:22).

Job lived 2,000 years before Christ. The earth hanging upon nothing was an idea far in advance of his day. The Egyptians said the earth rested upon pillars while the Greeks thought it was carried on the back of Atlas.

2. The "life" is in the blood (Lev. 17:11).

Moses (3,500 years ago) was informed and understood about the necessity of the circulation of blood. Medical science did not find out until 350 years ago. In 1799 George Washington was bled to death in an effort to cure him of "bad blood."

## G. From its consistency with \_\_\_\_\_ :

Many have discredited the Bible because of 'inconsistencies' with archaeology. However, new discoveries are continually reaffirming the accuracy of the Bible's historical data. Some examples:

1. Dr. Melvin Kyle, great archaeologist said, "There has never been found anything that discredits statements of facts in the Bible." Almost the entire list of names, places and events of the Bible have been confirmed by the findings of archaeology.
2. Sir William Ramsay, the famous Oxford scholar and archaeologist, came to Christ as a result of his own research. He said, "The longer I study the NT the more convinced I become of its absolute trustworthiness... Christianity is the religion of truth; it is founded on truth, absolute and perfect truth." (See Josh. 6:20-24)

## H. From its testimony of \_\_\_\_\_ :

Christ often quoted Scripture and He did it as though it had authority. Jesus affirmed that not one jot or tittle of the law would remain unfulfilled. (Mt. 5:18) Jot is the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet and tittle is the smallest part of a letter which would change the meaning. If accuracy and inspiration extended to the very letter, then Christ was obviously affirming the inspiration of the entire OT. (Lu. 24:25, 27; 16:31; Jn. 5:46, 47; Mt. 4:4, 7, 10)

## I. From its fulfilled \_\_\_\_\_ :

The Word of God contains hundreds of prophecies of which many of these have already been fulfilled. Prophecies are evidences of the supernatural character of the Bible. That a prophecy had come to pass was one of the tests of a prophet of God. (Deut. 18:20-22)

Prophecy is something which is strikingly absent from all other religious writings including those of Buddha, Confucius, and Koran. There are over 2,000 specific prophecies in the Bible which have already been fulfilled. There are over 300 distinct prophecies of Christ and their fulfilment is miraculous. Psalm 22 was written 1000 years before Christ and it gives us a description of His death by crucifixion. The Jewish method of capital punishment was by stoning, and they knew nothing about death by crucifixion which was a Roman institution introduced hundreds of years later. (John 19:36)

## III. Key Words

### A. \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation has to do with the impartation of new \_\_\_\_\_;  
God directly communicating to the human mind truth not previously known. The NT word "reveal" means to uncover or unveil; revelation discovers new truth. The NT writers testified that they received this revelation from God. After the 66 books of the Bible were completed, this special revelation ceased—the Bible is the complete and final revelation from God (I Cor. 13:8-10; Rev. 22:18, 19).

Although God gives direction and understanding, no one today receives a direct revelation from God. Many today claim that the Bible is not our final source of God's revelation, but simply a witness to additional revelation that He is giving today. Many declare in public meetings, "Thus saith the Lord," and prophecy additional truth. In the OT, men were stoned who professed to speak for God but spoke rather their own opinions. (II Sam. 23:2; Jer. 1:9; Dt. 18:20)

### B. \_\_\_\_\_

Inspiration has to do with the accurate \_\_\_\_\_ of revealed truth. Every word in the original manuscripts, known as “autographs”, was inspired by God. No one today is inspired to record truth as the writers of the Old and New Testaments were. God in His wisdom has allowed the “autographs” to be lost, no doubt to avoid the worship of objects (II Kings 18:4). However, God has preserved His Word down through the ages to insure that we have a trustworthy copy of His revealed Truth. (Mt. 24:35)

C. \_\_\_\_\_

Illumination has to do with the clarification of the text of Scripture as it stands revealed and inspired of God. This does not deal with the transmission of the truth, but with the \_\_\_\_\_ of truth already revealed. Spiritual illumination refers to the influence of the Holy Spirit common to all Christians. Truth about God or spiritual things cannot be understood by a man unless the Holy Spirit takes it and opens his mind to understand and receive it. (I Cor. 2:14)

D. \_\_\_\_\_

If we believe that the original writings of the Scriptures were verbally inspired by God, then of necessity they must have been \_\_\_\_\_ through the ages. If God has not preserved His Word as He promised, then we do not have the infallible Word of God today. The preservation of God’s Word is taught just as clearly in Scripture as inspiration is. (Ps. 119:89; Isa. 40:8; Mt. 5:17, 18; I Pet. 1:23-25)

From the dawn of creation the Bible has been under constant attack (Gen. 3:1). Even in Paul’s day when much of the Scriptures were being written, there were many who sought to corrupt the Word and use it deceitfully (II Cor. 2:17; 4:2). Within the first 100 years after the deaths of the apostles, some were mutilating the Word. The worst corruption to which the NT has ever been subjected originated within a hundred years after it was composed. God has preserved His Word through certain manuscripts and translations and it has been used in unbroken succession for many centuries. Note some evidences as to God preserving His Word:

God said His Word would last \_\_\_\_\_ (Ps. 119:89; Mt. 24:35).

Through His Word we are \_\_\_\_\_ (I Pet. 1:23-25; Rom. 10:17).

Mankind will be \_\_\_\_\_ by God’s Word (Jn. 12:48; Rev. 19:13).

## IV. Nature of Biblical Inspiration

### A. Definition for Inspiration:

Inspiration is God’s superintending of human authors so that through their own individual personalities they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man in the words of the \_\_\_\_\_.

## B. Explanation of the Term:

In II Tim. 3:16 the word inspired means “\_\_\_\_\_.” The Scriptures are the result of Divine inbreathing—just as human speech is uttered by the breathing through a man’s mouth.

In II Pet. 1:21 we see that the Holy Spirit was the agent by which holy men were able to record revealed truth. The word “moved” here suggests, when moved upon. In other words, the Scriptures were not written by mere men or at their suggestion, but by men moved upon and prompted or driven by the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Scripture did not originate in the minds of men. A better rendering would be “\_\_\_\_\_.”

New Testament writers were conscious of Divine inspiration as they referred to or quoted from NT books as having special authority. (I Cor. 14:37; II Thes. 3:14; II Pet. 3:15, 16)

## C. Key Words:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

This means that the Spirit of God guided in the choice of the words used in the original writings. Although the Bible reflects the writers’ personal characteristics in style and vocabulary, the words are the very words of God.

2. \_\_\_\_\_

This means that all subjects dealt with in Scripture are fully inspired as opposed to views of partial inspiration for the Bible.

3. \_\_\_\_\_

This means that the Bible is free from error and infallible or incapable of error. It is therefore the final authority for Christian faith and practice.

## V. Other Theories of Inspiration

A. \_\_\_\_\_ inspiration:

This theory ignores human instrumentality in the writing of the Scriptures. It states that the writers were passive instruments.

However, if God had dictated the Bible, the style of writing and the vocabulary of the Scriptures would likely be the same throughout.

B. \_\_\_\_\_ inspiration:

This states that God inspired the concept but not the precise words. God imparts the ideas but man expresses them in his own language.

The problem with this is that the human authors may have only partially understood what God was revealing to them, and in restating it in their own words could inject considerable error.

### C. \_\_\_\_\_ inspiration:

This denies that there is anything supernatural about the manner in which the authors were moved to write. It claims that they were no more inspired than Shakespeare, Confucius, or some other writers.

### D. \_\_\_\_\_ inspiration:

This teaches that only parts of the Bible are inspired. Coupled with this idea it is believed that some portions of Scripture are more inspired than others, truth and error become a matter of degrees.

With this view, the authority of the Scriptures becomes the authority of the person reading the Scriptures. And thus, "Which parts are inspired?"

## VI. Canonisation

The word "\_\_\_\_\_" originally meant a rule or measuring stick. As it relates to the Bible, it means the group of books and writings that passed the test of authority and authenticity. Many other books were written close to the same time as the NT books, but they were never considered part of the canon. What books are included in the Word of God? (Heb. 4:12; I Pet. 1:23)

### A. Old Testament canon

The Old Testament canon was written in Hebrew and is comprised of 39 books arranged in a three-fold division: History, poetry, prophecy. The OT was penned over a period of 1,000 years from 1450 to 400 BC. Ezra and Nehemiah were the last books written. The OT was preserved through the Massoretic Text produced by Jewish scribes known as Massorettes.

Around 300 BC a Greek translation of the OT appeared. It was called the "Septuagint" and that was the Bible used in Jesus' day. Jesus called the OT the "scriptures" and He believed it was inspired of God (Luke 24:27, 32; John 5:39).

In Jesus' day, the Jews arranged the OT into three divisions: the \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_, and the \_\_\_\_\_. Josephus, an unsaved Jewish historian of the first century, said that the Law, Prophets, and Psalms were sacred, prophetic and inspired.

The Jewish canon was comprised of only 24 books because a number of their books were combined and treated as one book, but the two canons are identical (the twelve Minor Prophets were treated as one book; see Luke 24:27, 44). The Jews knew clearly which books were inspired, and chose books written by known spokesmen of God which claimed inspiration. They studied carefully each book for errors and the genuine books had to exactly fit history, geography and theology.

1. What about the “\_\_\_\_\_” books?

These are fourteen books written in OT times (around 200 BC). In 1546 the Roman Catholic Council of Trent declared these writings inspired and they are included in their Bible.

We do not believe the Apocrypha is a part of the Canon because the Jews never listed them with their sacred writings nor are they quoted themselves in the NT by Jesus or the apostles. They contain errors. Some are written in a mythical fashion. They do not belong to the OT canon because they were not written by the prophets. They do not belong to the NT canon because they were not written by the apostles (or those directly associated with them).

2. What about the transcribing (copying) of the text?

Jewish scribes were meticulous in their copying of the OT scriptures. Their holy reverence for the sacred Scriptures are seen in the stringent rules they followed in reproducing the OT:

- a. A special kind of ink was used and writing done on specially prepared skins of clean animals called “parchment.”
- b. The scribe would first count every word and every letter in the portion they were copying. After the work had been completed the words and letters were again numbered. If the totals did not correspond exactly, the entire manuscript was destroyed and started over. They destroyed this copy so that no inferior manuscripts would survive.
- c. Each word was pronounced aloud by the scribe and then placed on the page.
- d. Every time the term “God” was written, the quill was first wiped perfectly dry and fresh ink was used.
- e. Before recording the name YAHWEH (Jehovah), the copyist would wash his entire body with water.
- f. After the translation was completed, it was carefully checked. If one mistake was found, the total manuscript was destroyed.



## G. New Testament canon

The NT canon was written in Greek and comprised of 27 books arranged in a three-fold division: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

The Jews became immersed in Greek culture and spoke Greek because it was the language of learning, commerce, and business. The NT was penned in a period of about 50 years. Revelation was the last book to be written (around 95 AD).

### 1. How was the NT formed?

The NT canon was formed spontaneously; not by the action of Church councils. The inspiration and intrinsic authority of each book were the factors that determined their eventual recognition and canonisation. By AD 200, the NT contained essentially the same books as we have today—being regarded with the same authority and finality by Christians then as they are now. God gave to His Church the 27 NT books through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and then through the Spirit also He began to lead the Church into recognition of these books as her canonical NT scripture. The genuine nature of the NT is seen in the fact that the “Church Fathers” who wrote between AD 90-160 often quoted from these sacred documents as possessing special authority (Polycarp, Ignatius, Clement).

### 2. What were the criteria for NT canonisation?

New books appeared later, claiming apostolic authorship, creating some confusion about the inspired NT writings. A church council was called to settle the matter. It declared that no book should be considered inspired until it met the following conditions:

- a. It must be written by an \_\_\_\_\_ or a close associate (Luke was not an apostle, but was the close associate of Paul; James and Jude were not apostles, but were Jesus’ brothers).
- b. Its content must agree with apostolic \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 2:42).
- c. It must be read in all the \_\_\_\_\_ (Did God’s people accept it; using it for worship and make it a part of their lives?).
- d. It must be recognised by the \_\_\_\_\_ (the Church Fathers did write extensively—affirming the inspiration of the NT Canon, but never claiming inspiration for their own writings)