Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Doctrine of Scripture
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
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1982

This series, I think, is going to be very helpful. There are certain categories of theology, certain categories into which the truth of the Bible can be divided. All of the truth of Scripture can fit into about ten categories. And you'll be learning those categories and following through this series I trust really be able to study your Bible with a greater amount of effectiveness as you understand where things fit. In fact, one of the most helpful things you can do as a student of Scripture is that when you learn a truth, identify it in a category. If you have a notebook as you go through this series with us, you might begin to identify these categories, bibliology, theology proper--which is the study of God, hamartiology--the study of sin, anthropology--the study of man, soteriology--the study of salvation, ecclesiology--the church, angelology--the angels, eschatology--the last things, and so forth.

But as you go through all of these various doctrines, as you study the Word of God, fit the Scriptures that you're learning and the principles you're learning into the theological categories and it will help you really systematize the truth that you're learning in your study of the Word of God.

What I'm going to do tonight is not preach a sermon at you but this is going to be a lot like a classroom in a Bible college or a seminary, so hang in there. But I want to share with you on the doctrine of Scripture.

And just to call your attention to two passages to begin with and you want to write these down because these are the key passages in the Bible on this subject. Second Timothy 2..well, let me give you three Scriptures...2 Timothy 2 verse 15 is the first one that I would point to you. "Study or be diligent to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." Now there's a very important statement about Scripture, it is called...what?...the Word of...what?...truth...the Word of truth. It is the Word of God but it's called in that verse the Word of truth.

Now what does that say about it? It says it's...what?...good, class. It's true. And that is the basic substance of what bibliology sets out to prove...that the Bible is true. And believe it or not, for some people it is the word of doubt or the word of confusion or the word of semi-truth or the word of experience. But for us it is the word of truth. And that is a great title for it.

And you might compare with that another Scripture, John 17:17...John 17:17. Does anybody know what that says? Thy Word is...what?...what does that tell us about the Bible?...good, you're getting it, that's terrific. The Bible is true. And that's very very basic and very essential to our view of holy Scripture, it is the truth.

Now I want to call your attention to another passage of Scripture, 2 Timothy 3:16, going forward. And it says here, and this is why the Bible is true, 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is God breathed," pasa graphe theopneustos in Greek, all writing, God breathed...all Scripture is breathed out by God and thus is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness.

So, Paul says that this is the Word of truth. Jesus said it is the Word of truth. And then Paul tells us that the reason it is true is because it is...what?...God breathed. Now that is the priority claim that the Bible makes for itself. It is true and it is God breathed.

Just to identify one other essential passage on this subject that you'd want to have in your preliminary thinking, in that 2 Peter. And it says in verse 20 that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private origin, that's really what it means rather than interpretation. Scripture is not from private origin and that is it isn't the result of some individual dreaming it up or postulating it or whatever. So 2 Petersays that Scripture does not come out of a private origination.

Verse 21, "For the prophecy...that's speaking of that which came forth, that which came out of God's mouth...came not at any time by the will of man." So the Scripture is true, it is true because God breathed it, it did not come from any private origination, it did not come at any time by the will of man, "But holy men of God spoke as they were moved along by the Holy Spirit." It's the word used for a ship moved along with the wind in the water. As they were moved along by the Holy Spirit. Now that basically gives you a summation of the basic biblical doctrine of inspiration. It is true, it is true because God breathed it and He breathed it into men who were moved along by the Holy Spirit to write the very breath of God, not something of their own origination.

Now let me give you a basic definition of the doctrine of biblical authority or inspiration. Just listen to it and then if you want to jot it down I'll repeat it again. Here is how we can sum up the basic doctrine. God superintending human authors so that using their own individual personalities, experiences, thought processes and vocabulary they composed and recorded without error His revelation in the original copies of Scripture. Now I'm going to say that again cause I didn't think you got it all. Okay? Now think it through. God superintending human authors so that using their own individual personalities, experiences, thought processes and vocabulary they composed and recorded without error His revelation in the original copies of Scripture.

Now what that is saying is very simple. God spoke through men without violating their own thought processes and their own vocabulary and yet they were able to produce the Scripture without violating His truth. Now there is a good analogy of this to help you understand it. How could God use human agents without getting a corrupt product? Right? Some people say, "Well, He'd have to dictate it." In other words, He dictated every single word to those guys and they wrote down the dictation. But that does not account for the distinctiveness of the books because each book say Paul or Peter or John or you go to the Old Testament, any writer in the Old Testament, the books carries distinctiveness. They talk about their own experience. They talk even about their own feeling. They use their own vocabulary. If you read say Amos the herdsman of Tekoa, you get a whole different flavor in the writing. You get the flavor of one who is a man of the earth. Whereas if you read the writer of the book of Hebrews you get this very erudite religious highly intense ceremonial sort of sacerdotal approach. If you read Paul, you get a very logical flow. Whereas if you read Peter you get a very impassioned appeal.

And so you see the personality there but if it isn't dictation, how then can God use these human authors without adulterating His Word. And the perfect analogy to that is the virgin birth because in the virgin birth you have God and God is the agency by which the Lord Jesus Christ is born, right? But God brought Christ to earth through Mary, right? Was Mary a sinner? Of course she was a sinner. And yet she gave birth to the Son of God and none of her sinfulness tainted Him whatsoever. And yet He was her child, right? She carried Him in her womb for ninth months, she gave birth to that child. He was in human terms the flesh of Mary. And so you have that as an analogy to the Scripture, whereas God plants the seed in Mary and Mary fully womaned gives birth to that child, fully her child, that child yet is not touched with any of the sinfulness or frailty of Mary...and so the Word of God. God using a human author produces a perfect Scripture untainted by the human instrument He uses, see. And that's basically what we believe to be true about Scripture. And that is in the case of its original copies. Through the years as has been copied and recopied and recopied and recopied and so forth, we know where the copyists have brought into the situation certain errors. Those, by the way, are obvious because of the other utter divine character of Scripture we can pinpoint for the most part where men have wrongly written a word or something like that. So we know that the original autographs were inspired by God.

Let me just add as a footnote to that that God has also marvelously preserved the Scripture with very few errors. But like anything else that man uses, it will bear the mark of man eventually. And yet it's maintained its purity. And one of the great proofs of that was the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls which dated from before the time of Christ and show that the existing Bibles that we have today have not changed at all since then. So God has truly superintended His Word.

Now let me just give you three things, three terms to keep in mind whenever you look at Scripture. One is revelation, the other is inspiration, and the other is illumination. And I don't want to get too bogged down in all of this but I would like to give you those terms.

The first term is revelation. That is the body of truth that God wants to communicate. That's the message. That is God's truth that He desires to communicate. The second word is inspiration, that is the method by which He communicates it. You got that? The third is illumination and that is the method by which you understand it. So God has a body of truth, that's His revelation, the revealing of Himself, that's the message. Inspiration is how He communicates it. He breathes it out through human authors. Illumination is how you understand it. And whom do you depend upon in illumination? The Holy Spirit...the Holy Spirit. And who is the agent by which inspiration took place? The Holy Spirit. So uniquely the Holy Spirit is the agent in the revelation being transmitted to us and illumined to us as we study Scripture.

Now those are just some basic thoughts as we get started. The Word is true. It is true because it is breathed out from God and it is not of any private origin, it is not a result of the will of man. That's basic. It is God superintending human authors so that using their own individual personalities, experiences, thought processes and vocabulary they compose and recorded without error His revelation in the original copies of Scripture. Revelation is the body of truth, inspiration is the process by which its communicated and illumination is the manner in which we understand it.

Now it's important at the beginning of any study of theology to start with the Bible because if you don't have the Bible you don't have anything else, right? If you deny the truth of the Bible, what do you have left? Absolutely nothing. And there are always people who come along and say, "Well, part of the Bible isn't true." The current fad is to say that the Bible is true when it speaks on spiritual issues, but not true when it speaks on historical or geographical issues...which I have a problem with basically because why should we believe the Bible to be true when we can't verify it in the spiritual dimension if it isn't true where we can verify it in the geographical/historical dimension? And why should we argue that way when it has been verified historically and geographically and in every other way anyway? And we'll see that in a minute.

All right, I want to basically share with you several points. Point number one, that was just kind of an introduction, number one, the claims of Scripture...the claims of Scripture. Now if we're going to understand the Bible to be the Word of God, how we going to do that? First of all, we're going to have to hear what it says about itself. Does it make that claim? You know, there are Jehovah's Witnesses who have said for years, along with others, that Jesus never claimed to be God. They say that, that He did not claim to be God. And there are those who would say that the Scripture does not make a legitimate claim to be God's inerrant Word, that that's pushing the point too far. Well, let's find out.

Here's what the Bible claims. First of all, it claims to be infallible. And that's another word you might want to write down, infallible. What does that mean? Makes no mistakes, right? Errorless. Let's call it...let's say it's errorless in total. Infallible speaks of the total. And there are many passages that refer to this. For example, "Thy Word is very pure. Thy law is truth. All Thy commandments are truth. The

sum of Thy Word is truth." And that's a marked one. The sum of Thy Word is truth. The total of it. "And every one of the righteous ordinances endures forever for all of Thy commandments are righteous." Now that's just out of Psalm 19, Psalm 119. There's one key verse in Psalm 19:7 and it sums it up and says this, "The law of the Lord is...what?...perfect...perfect." And the law being a term for the total of God's self-disclosure and revelation.

Paul in Romans 7 verse 12 says, "The law is holy, righteous and good." And again a sweeping statement of the infallibility of Scripture. In Matthew chapter 5 verses 18 and 19, verse 17 Jesus said He came to fulfill the whole law and He said there wouldn't be one part of the law altered at all, till all was fulfilled. And in John 10:35 He says the Scripture can't be broken. So...and that's a sample of literally myriads of verses that make the same claim. The Bible says it is infallible. That is what it claims.

Secondly, it claims to be inerrant. And if infallible speaks of the totality, inerrant speaks of the parts. It is infallible as the old reformers used to say as a rule of faith and practice. It is also inerrant in every several part so that it is not only, watch now, infallible in the truth it conveys, but is inerrant in every word. And that means it is without error.

Proverbs 30 verse 5 says, "Every word of God is flawless." Now you can't get much more specific than that. Every word of God is flawless. Back in 1978 in October I had the privilege of being on the committee of what was known as the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy. Some of you may know about them because in March...is it March?...yes...May? or March?...March they're going to be having a congress in San Diego and it's going to be a monumental event, part of a ten-year plan to bring the church across America and around the world to the awakening of the fact that the Scriptures are authoritative, infallible and inerrant. And they're bringing in devout inerrantists and those who hold to the truthfulness of Scripture to that conference. And that really is the result of the congress we had in 1978 in Chicago in which a statement was made by these great men basically affirming the inerrancy of Scripture. And one part of that particular statement that we drafted at that summit says this, "Infallible signifies the quality of neither misleading nor being mislead and so safeguards in categorical terms the truth that holy Scripture is a sure, safe and reliable rule and guide in all matters. Similarly, inerrant signifies the quality of being free from all falsehood or mistake and safeguards the truth that holy Scripture is entirely true and trustworthy in all its assertions."

That's hard sometimes to distinguish those two terms. But one means it's a reliable guide and the other says that's because every word is true. So in totality it can be trusted because every individual part is utterly true. And we could take those two words, infallible and inerrant, and sum them up into one word, true. It's true. That's simply it.

Now why is it true? Because it is breathed out by God. And the Bible saysthat God cannot...what?...lie. If Scripture emphasizes anything, it emphasizes the truthfulness of God. And the

reason I emphasize this to you is because it is behind the truthfulness of Scripture. And if you let go of the truthfulness of Scripture, you have abandoned the truthfulness of God. You say, "Oh no, no, God could still be true but man could corrupt His truthfulness." All right, then you've got an impotent God who can't communicate a true message through a human instrument. So you either come up with God as not true or as impotent. And is either of those the case? Of course not. You've altered God.

The third claim the Bible makes for itself, and I think this an important one, is that it is authoritative...that it is authoritative. And by that we simply mean that the Bible affirms that it is to be heard. And Isaiah says, "Hear O heavens and give ear, O earth, for the Lord has spoken." It's like that commercial, when God speaks, everybody listens. It is authoritative. And it makes that claim for itself. In fact, in Revelation 19:9 it says, "These are the true sayings of God." And in Revelation 21:5, "These words are true and faithful." They reflect again that truthfulness of God and they are authoritative. If it is infallible, if it is inerrant, then it must be authoritative.

So many times, you know, you read in the New Testament, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke to me," and you read in the Old Testament, "The Word of the Lord came unto so-and-so and he spoke," and this is just all over the Scripture. Even the tiniest part, I think of God's Word, the tiniest part, the jot and the tittle cannot be removed, right? Why? James says it in James 2:10, "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is...what?...guilty of violating all of it." Every minute part is true.

A fourth thing the Bible claims for itself is that it is complete...it is complete. Deuteronomy 4:2 says this, "Ye shall not add unto the Word which I commanded you, neither shall you take away from it." You shall not add to it, you shall not take away from it. And you know what it says, don't you, at the end of Revelation? Verses 18 and 19 of the last chapter, chapter 22, "I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in the book and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of the prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life in the holy city the things written in the book." You can't add, you can't take away. That's not just Revelation 22:18, that's Deuteronomy 4:2, that is a comment that appears in the Old Testament and the New Testament. It is not to be added to, it is not to be diminished. It is complete. There's no Scripture running around loose.

I always remember the lady down in Australia who had received all the visions and she kept them stacked beside her. And when anybody in her cult asked her what the truth was, she went through her previous visions to find out what God had said on that. There is no additional truth. The Word of God is complete. You don't add to it without being in danger of judgment.

And then a fifth principle that the Bible claims for itself is that it is effective...it is effective. That it dramatically effects people. And that's best expressed and that's again...I'm just giving you

illustrations, but Isaiah 55:10 and 11, "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so it yields forth seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is My Word that goes forth from My mouth. It will not return to Me empty but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it," Isaiah 55:10 and 11. God says when I send My Word out it is effective, it does what I send it to do.

Now those are some marvelous claims that the Bible makes, infallible, inerrant, authoritative, complete and effective. Amazing claims. That leads us to the second point. What do you think the second point is? How do we know it's true, right? I mean, those are astounding claims. The Bible claims to be the only word that God ever spoke, that He ever left. It claims all of those things and the critics come along and deny it and so we are left with the responsibility of answering the question, how do we know its claims are true, and that's the second major point. How can we know the claims of the Bible are true? How do we know all this?

I've written two books basically on the Bible. One is called FOCUS ON FACT, have any of you seen that little book? Why you can trust the Bible? And another one is called WHY BELIEVE THE BIBLE, and it has a smaller edition called TAKE GOD'S WORD FOR IT. And I cover all this stuff in much more detail. But there's a preface that I wrote for the book FOCUS ON FACT and I'd like to quote myself, if I can, at this point because I think it will explain something that you need to understand as we talk about this concept of how do we know the Bible's claims are really true because people are always asking the question, does the Bible prove itself true. Listen and see if this helps.

"Is it easy to convince someone that the Bible is the Word of God on the basis of its unity, its scientific, historical accuracy, its miracles, its archaeological evidence? I haven't found that to be the case. In a special series spread over a three-week period I presented such data at a private college in California. I felt the proof was overwhelming and not one person became a believer. Why doesn't it convince all unbelievers when it's so convincing to us? Paul said it when he wrote, `The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. Only when the Holy Spirit does His regenerating work, only as He opens the mind, tears off the scales of blindness, gives life where there is death and plants the marvelous understanding of the revelation of God, only then do people come to believe and trust in the Bible. The reason I know the Bible is true is that the Spirit of God has convinced me of it."

You must grab that thought because that's the key to everything.

"In light of this, I suggest a change in our approach. We have been saying prophecy has been fulfilled, the Bible is scientifically accurate, miracles occurred, the Bible produces radical revolutionary changes in lives therefore it is the Word of God. Instead I propose that we declare the Bible is the Word of God therefore prophecy has been fulfilled, miracles have taken place, scientific statements

are correct and lives have been transformed."

In other words, I don't think the burden of proof is external, I think it's internal. I think the Bible is true therefore these things happen. And I hope that maybe gives you a little bit of a distinction. That means then, now watch this, that the Bible is primarily for you who already believe it to be true. And what we try to do is to reaffirm and secure the faith of those who are already committed to that by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Do you see that? It is the Holy Spirit's ministry to bring us to confident trust in the Word of God. And we can only undergird that trust because you can convince somebody intellectually about a lot of things but unless the Spirit of God turns their heart to faith and trust, they're not going to believe down deep. So, because the Bible is true it verifies its truthfulness. I mean, its nature is true so it will speak truly.

But let's look with that in mind at the evidence the Bible gives to show itself true and I'll give you maybe six or seven lines of evidence. And we obviously can't cover this whole subject, this is a semester course, believe me, in seminary, I'm going as fast as I can. I'm going to give you some internal evidence, some external evidence, okay?

First of all, internal...how do we know the Bible is what it claims? I mean, it goes around saying its effective, or authoritative, infallible, inerrant and so forth, how do we know this? First of all is the testimony of the writers...the testimony of the writers. And that is an internal testimony. And one of the things that strikes me right off the bat as I read the Bible is the...what I call, and this is point number one under the testimony of the writers, what I call the air of infallibility...the air of infallibility...a-i-r. There just seems to be a sort of an air of infallibility. I mean, the Bible writers were common every day, as we learn in our studies of the Apostles, unqualified people. They weren't particularly erudite, they weren't particularly educated...just common people. And for the average common person to just say "Thus saith the Lord" you'd feel a little self-conscious, wouldn't you? I mean, if you were to just come up here right now and say, "I now am speaking to you the Word of God and...burr....." just pumped it out, I mean, you'd feel...I'd feel like I'd have to preface it with something like, "I know this sounds ridiculous, I mean, you all know me and I'm just me and I mean, I don't know how this happened but this is the Word of God." See, I mean, you'd...you'd sort of have a natural tendency to put a disclaimer on it, wouldn't you?

There's none of that in the Scripture. There's no sense of self-consciousness about being the mouthpiece of God. There's no disclaimer, there's no "Well, I know I'm not all I ought to be and I don't really have any right to do this and I really can't tell you how it all happened, but I mean you've got to believe me...I know in spite of who I am..." There's none of that. Just flat out they say it. They write it. They make direct claims to inspiration without any comment. And that's what I like to see as the air of infallibility. And they are all that way. You've got 40 different writers over 1500 years writing 66 books and none of them is self-conscious about what he's doing. And the high quality of profound truth in their writing and the virtue and the goodness speaks of them as good men.

By the way, I don't know if you ever thought about it but there are no women writers in the Bible, only men. And all of them have this sense of infallibility, this profound sense of writing the Word of God and they are all good people. And so, they were...they're considered, well I think the whole world, for the most part, considers them moral men. We don't assume that 40 different men over a period of 1500 years would write 66 books and all be liars, not the way they write because what they say is filled with virtue. So there's that air of infallibility.

Then secondly, under this testimony of the writers, there are direct claims to the inspiration of the Scripture. I mean, they actually claim to be inspired by God. You want to know how many times? Three thousand eight-hundred and eight times in the Scripture, and that's the Old Testament only, 3,808 times in the Old Testament the writers say what they're saying is the Word of God. Now how many times do they have to say it before we believe it? Three thousand eight hundred and eight. There are 2600 direct claims to inspiration. Somebody calculated 680 in the Pentateuch, 1307 in the prophets, 418 in the history books and 195 in the poets. So 2600 times they claim inspiration, 3808 times they identify themselves as speaking the Word of God.

In the New Testament there are at least 1,000 references to the Old Testament. Now what does that tell us the New Testament writers believed? That the Old Testament was...what? True, and the Word of God. Three hundred and twenty times they quote the Old Testament. James, I think, sums it up beautifully in James 4:5, "Think ye that the Scriptures speak in vain," and any time you see the term "the Scriptures" unless it's qualified somehow, it's referring to the Old Testament...the Scriptures. And the writers of the Old Testament realized they were speaking God's Word. The writers of the New Testament as well.

Illustration, Acts 1:16, Peter stood up and said, "Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled...watch this...which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spoke." Isn't that good? What does that tell you about the Old Testament? The Holy Spirit by the mouth of David...what?...spoke. That is a classic statement as to the meaning of inspiration...the Holy Spirit speaking through the mouth of David. In chapter 4 of the books of Acts, and these again are just some suggested Scriptures, there are others, "Why by the mouth of David hast said," and you have many other such Scriptures.

So, you have the Old Testament writers, now follow my thinking, the Old Testament writers claiming to be inspired, you have the New Testament writers claiming that the Old Testament writers are inspired by 320 quotes and 1,000 references and direct statements like those. Then you have New Testament writers claiming that they too are inspired. For example, Galatians 1 where Paul says in verse 11, "I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not from man, I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Now where did he get his message? From Christ. Verse 15, "When it pleased God He separated me from

my mother's womb, called me by His grace to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." He got his message directly from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now look at 1 Timothy 5 verse 18. If you want to really get all the detail on this, those books are available and so are other good books on the subject. But I'll show you something interesting in 1 Timothy 5:18. Paul does a wonderful thing here. "For the Scripture saith...get that, see that there in verse 18?...the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treads out the grain." That basically means pay the preacher because you shouldn't muzzle him while he's working. "And the laborer is worthy of his reward."

Now do you know what's interesting about that verse? The first quote "thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treads out the grain" comes from Deuteronomy 25:4, the second quote "the laborer is worthy of his reward" comes from Luke 10:7. What is Paul saying about Luke? That Luke wrote what? Scripture. You see it in verse 18? The Scripture saith...and then he quotes Luke. So there you have New Testament writer corroborating another New Testament writer. In a sense then you have the Apostle Paul affirming the scriptural reality of the gospel records, in this case Luke is the example.

Paul calls the gospel writers Scripture. Look at 2 Peter 3:15 and he talks here about our beloved brother Paul according to the wisdom given unto him hath written to you...Paul has written to you, he says, in all his epistles and he's speaking in them of these things, some things hard to be understood which they that are unlearned and unstable rest as they do also the other...what?...Scriptures. What does Peter say about Paul? Paul writes what? Scripture....Scripture. So Paul corroborates the gospels, Peter corroborates the Pauline epistles.

Second Peter 3:2 would be a good thought, too. He says, "To be mindful of the words spoken before by the holy prophets and the commandment of us the...what?...the Apostles." So he equates the Apostles' writings and commandments with the holy prophets of the Old Testament. So the New Testament claims to be Scripture.

So you've got Paul corroborating the gospels, Peter corroborating Paul. Would you like to have somebody corroborate Peter? Try Jude 17, "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before by the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, how they told you there should be mockers in the last time who should walk after their own ungodly lust." You know who he's referring to? Peter...2 Peter, the Apostles of our Lord who spoke the words of God.

And so it goes and in John's revelation, by the way, at least three places he claims to be writing the very direct Word of God. So the first line of internal testimony to the validity of Scripture is the testimony of the writers themselves.

Second is the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. And I think this is the heart and soul of the whole argument. All I really want to know is one thing, what was Jesus' view of the Bible, right? Because if I know what He thought of it, that's what I want to think of it, right? If He is God and He is deity, what was His view of Scripture? And it's summed up in John 10:35 very clearly, "The Scripture cannot be broken." What He means is it cannot be violated, it is absolute. In Matthew 5:17 to 19 where He says, "Not one jot or tittle"...if I had a blackboard I'd show you what it is. A yod is a dot, it's just a...it's a dot that goes at the top of a Hebrew word and a tittle is a yod's subscript. That doesn't mean anything to you but when they combined words they'd take an "i" out of the word itself and put it underneath another word. You see that sometimes in a foreign language, a little squiggly underneath. He says don't mess with the dots and the squigglies...every bit of it.

Now Christ said you search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life and they are they that bear witness to Me, right? So His view of Scripture was that it was a true testimony about Himself. In Matthew 5:17 He says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law of the prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfill." In Matthew 26:24 He looked at the cross and said, "The Son of Man goeth as it is written of Him." And a few verses later in verse 54 He told Peter He didn't need the protection of Peter's sword because if He wanted to He could call down a legend of angels. But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled?

In other words, the Lord knew that every single word, every single letter of Scripture had to be fulfilled. He believed it to be the Word of God. In fact, in Luke 16:17 He said, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than one tittle of the law to fail." Easier for Scripture...or for heaven and earth to pass away.

I don't want to take too much time with this but the Lord even did some amazing things with Scripture. He...He made a point strictly on the tense of a verb quoting an Old Testament passage and even the tense of the verb being accurate to make the point He wanted to make. In His own death He knew that the prophecy of Psalm 22 said that the Messiah would say certain things on the cross like, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" That is exactly what He said verbatim from the Old Testament. And He cried, "I thirst." He confirmed the creation of Adam and Eve. He said, "Have you not read that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife and the twain shall be one flesh." If you want to deny the creation account of Genesis, then you're going to have to deal with Jesus because He believed it. He believed in the creation account and He sustained it.

He talked in Mark 12 about those who erred because they did not know the Scripture. And I don't want to take any more time other than to say of the 1800 quotations of Jesus in the New Testament, 180 or one out of ten come from the Old Testament. So it's very clear what He believed. And He believed what He said was truth, that He spoke only that which the Father gave Him to speak and His

word was truth.

Now when you deal with people on this subject, there are only three options. And they are these. One, there are errors in the Bible but Jesus didn't know about them. Okay? That's one option. Two, there are errors in the Bible, Jesus knew about them but covered it up. Or three, there are no errors. The first two do disservice to Christ, right? If there are errors in the Bible and He didn't know about them, He's not God. If there are errors in the Bible and He didn't let us know, He covered them up, then He's not a holy God. The other alternative is there are no errors.

Third line of testimony is the testimony of the Holy Spirit. And this is really what we talked about at the very beginning. This is the real key. And I think the best text that you can jot down is 2 Corinthians 2...1 Corinthians 2, I'm sorry, verses 7 to 14. It talks about the Scripture, the truth of God in this text, starting at verse 9, "Eye hath not seen, ear heard, neither entered the heart of a man the things that God loved, prepared for them that love Him, but God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit...by His Spirit." And he goes on to say we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is of God that we might know the things freely given to us by God which things we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth but which the Holy Spirit teacheth comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and so forth. So that the Spirit of God gives testimony to the Word.

Now watch this. The testimony of the writers was objective, it's right in the text. The testimony of Christ is objective, it's right in the text. The testimony of the Spirit is what? Subjective, it's internal in the believer. It is the confirming ministry of the Holy Spirit to affirm to our hearts the truthfulness of Scripture. And so God hits us from the objective and from the subjective. And by the way, as people deny the truth of Scripture, they are simply following up on the original temptation. You know what chapter 3 of Genesis begins, of course, with the Fall of man, and do you know what Satan said? First, "Hath God...what?...said?" because if he can get you to deny the truth of what God said then the cat is out of the bag, believe me. Now those are internal areas of testimony.

Let's look at external...external. And we'll go from the worst to the best. The first that I would give you is the testimony of experience. One of the great proofs of Scripture is experience. You know, when somebody comes to a baptismal service and I always think those are really great and we always have people saved and they come to the baptism and they sit there. And maybe they're agnostic, maybe they're...you know what agnostic means...agagnosko(?), one who doesn't know, they're proud to say that. The Latin equivalent is ignoramus. But they're not sure and they're not interested in arguments and all that stuff...and maybe they're even atheistic, or maybe they just don't really know, they have no opinion and they sit there and they hear one person after another talk about how the truth of Scripture led them to Christ and totally transformed their life. All intellectual arguments aside, that's very difficult for them to deal with...very difficult. It's the overwhelming impact of a transformed life. And I would daresay that in your case, for the most part, because you're not swirling around in the intellectual world, the real reason, gut level, that you believe the Bible is not because you've figured

out all these arguments, but because you know what it does in your life when you respond to it, right? Because you've seen God at work. That's experience.

Millions of Christians would support this by the very reality of their transformed life. And as I've said before, a Bible that is falling apart usually belongs to somebody who isn't, and that's basic. You apply the things of Scripture and they work. Now that is a helpful line of evidence for the Scripture but it has weaknesses because whenever you use experience as a verifier of truth you've always got people who've got other experiences, right? So it has limitations. But it's impact, nonetheless, is powerful. In fact, I would venture to say without a doubt most people come to Christ and come to confidence in the Word of God because they see what Christ does through His Word in the life of somebody they know. Far and away that's the issue with most people.

All right, now secondly is the testimony of science...the testimony of science. And I confessed to you at the very beginning that I am not a scientist. I have very little interest in science. I just got through whatever required science I had to take in college...held my breath, took the tests. And I have found since that time a greater interest in science now than I ever had then because I understand how marvelously it manifests the truth of God. And the Bible whenever it speaks related to science is always accurate...it's always accurate. It is a phenomenal verification of Scripture, science.

Now, some of the critics say, "Oh, the Bible is not scientific because the Bible says in Joshua was fighting the battle, the sun stood still." And they say, "See, that isn't scientific. The sun didn't stand still." What really happened? Well, the earth stopped rotating, that's the scientific explanation. Yes, but I mean, give them a break. From their perception the sun stood still. I mean, when those scientists get up in the morning and throw open the window and look to the east they don't say, "Oh what a lovely earth revolving." That's a sunrise. And when they look at the sun in the west, the beautiful, "Oh what a lovely earth revolving." No, that's a sunset. You...it's like the guy who said, "Gastronomical satiety admonishes me that I have arrived at a state of deglutition consistent with dietetic integrity," which means "No thanks, I've had enough." I mean, you don't have to talk like that all the time. And the Bible perceives things from man's perspective.

But just as an illustration or two, and these are illustrations that are familiar to me. Herbert Spencer became a famous scientist, one of the most famous of all scientists. He was the one who discovered really and identified classifications for all knowable matter, all knowable...all knowable period. All that is knowable can be classified, he said. And he was hailed as a genius for this development. He found that all knowable things, or whatever, could be put into five classifications and he listed them for the scientific world. They are these: time, force, action, space and matter, and he put them in those order...that order...time, force, action, space and matter. He said all that exists can fit into one of those categories...time, force, action, space and matter. And the scientific world hailed that as a great discovery.

What he didn't know what that that's exactly how the Bible begins. IN THE BEGINNING--that's time--GOD--that's force-- CREATED--that's action--THE HEAVENS--that's space--AND THE EARTH--that's matter." Right at the very beginning...so he wasn't so smart after all.

There is in science what is called the second law of thermodynamics which some of you know is the basic law that says all matter is breaking down, tends toward dissolution. And it's interesting that that's exactly what the Bible says. Prior to the Fall that wasn't true, but as soon as the Fall came, God cursed the earth, right? And death entered the scene and everything began to follow the law of thermodynamics, it's breaking down. Of course that law utterly and totally 100 percent mitigates against evolution, but scientists would rather juggle the tension of the law of thermodynamics and believe in evolution. Like one scientist said because they reject the idea of a transcendent God, and that's all they're left with. In Romans 8 it says the whole creation groans and travails, right? Waiting for that time of glorification.

Let me give you another illustration. I'm always fascinated by the study of hydrology which is the process of the cycle of water. And, I mean, just from the primitive viewpoint of the Old Testament in terms of scientific sophistication as we would perceive it, and we probably don't perceive it as sophisticated as it was.

You can go back to probably the oldest book in the Bible which is Job chapter 36 and you could do a whole hydrological dissertation on the Bible. It says, "He maketh small the drops of water, they pour down rain according to their vapor which the clouds do drop and distill upon man abundantly." And so he's discussing the rain.

You go to Psalm 135, I think it's there, verse 7, so now you've got the rain coming down and it's going to return, how? Verse 7 of Psalm 135, "He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth," there's the next phase. And you go back to the book of Job again and there's never a mistake. It never says that the earth is held on the back of elephants who produce earthquakes when they shake like the Koran says, that's what the Koran says. And it also, the Vagavageda(?) says it's on honey and butter all squished up and stupid things like that, the Bible never says that. Job 26:8 it says, "He binds the water in the thick clouds and the cloud is not torn." Isn't that marvelous? You've got it coming down, ascending in the vapor, held in the clouds again. You know, it's held that way, isn't it, over the oceans and it's brought over the land and then dropped again.

The twenty-eighth chapter of Job, tenth verse, "He cuts out rivers among the rocks and His eye sees every precious thing. He binds the floods from overflowing. He puts borders, doesn't He, on the oceans." The whole thing is here, marvelous. And I'm just picking and choosing here, but Psalm 33:7, "He gathers the water of the sea together as a heap, He lays up the depth in store houses," He keeps the oceans in their places. And I could on beyond that.

And then you could look at astronomy. Well, there's so many things we could say about that. I don't know where to cut and choose but I'm thinking again back in Isaiah 55, that's a great chapter, verse 9 we didn't read. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts." Now think about that. How high is heaven? Scientists used to think it was pretty high. They used to think it was...we were inside a ball, did you know that? The Ptolemaic view, we were inside some kind of a ball. But He says heaven is as high as God is high above man. Now that's not just a little ways, that's infinity. And we're beginning to discover the infinite heavens.

Do you know that years ago people estimated there were 1,030 stars? Now they know there are a hundred billion in our galaxy and there are billions of galaxies. Jeremiah 31:37, "Thus saith the Lord of heaven above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will cast off all the seed of Israel for all they have done." Can you go down in the earth and search it out? Uh-huh...can't, because it's filled with something you couldn't survive in. Can you find the measure of heaven with all of the telescopes in the world? No, no, and if you ever do than God will move away from the reality of this analogy and His Word wouldn't be true because He says I'll no more do that than you could ever measure heaven. It cannot be measured.

By the way, the thirty-third chapter of Jeremiah adds another thought to that. It says, "The host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured." I like to think that there are at least as many stars as there are grains of sand on every beach in every place in the entire world. That's a lot of stars. That's what God said.

By the way, Jeremiah 31, I can't resist this one either...31:35, "Thus said the Lord who giveth the sun for a light by day and the ordinance of the moon and the stars for a light by night, He divides the sea when its waves roar, the Lord of hosts is His name. If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever." God will no more overturn His covenant with Israel than the stars will go out, the moon will go out and the sun will go out.

Psalm 19 talks about the sun and it says, "The sun goes forth from the end of heaven and His circuit unto the ends of it." That's just incredible. Because they used to laugh at that and say the sun doesn't go anywhere, the sun stands still and the earth goes around the sun. Now we know the sun is in an orbit that takes billions of years to complete. And we are literally careening through space, not only as we go around the sun but as the sun careens through space at incredible speeds. And it has an exact and precise orbit which they have now discovered...just as Psalm 19 said.

Well, you could talk about geology. You know what the science of isostasy is? It didn't really get started till 1959. It's the study of the balances of the earth. You have to have as much depth in the

sea as you do height in the mountains or the thing will go over like this.... When it rotates we'll all be going through life like this....you take two steps and then up, two steps and then up. So the earth has to rotate perfectly-- perfectly, it has to be in absolute balance. That's the science of isostasy. You have to have the weight perfectly balanced and God has perfectly balanced the globe. And that's exactly what the Bible says and they used to think it was flat, to start with, and that's ridiculous. That's the science of geodesy, now the shape of the earth. But let's see, I think it's Isaiah 40 verse 22, "It's he who sits on the circle of the earth," and they couldn't read that, it was all right there for them. And in chapter 40 verse 12, "He measures the water in the hallow of His hand, He measures the heaven with a span, He measures the dust of the earth, in a measure He weighs the mountains and scales and the hills in a balance."

It says in Job, I mean, it says in Job it's turned like clay to the seal. If you had to sign your name on a piece of parchment, or you wanted to sign your name on a soft pallet, you know, of clay that they would impress, you would have a signature cylinder with two sticks coming out of the end of it. And when you wanted to sign you name, you just roll that across the soft clay. Now what does that say about the earth? It's turned as the clay to the seal. It rotates on what? On an axis, so says Job 38:14, it is a sphere.

Do you know if you read Luke 17 the parable there, you'll find that when Jesus comes some people are going to be sleeping and some people are going to be working? It's going to be night and day at the same time when He comes. What does that tell you? That the earth is what? Round. Spherical, has to be.

And then you have gravity, Job 26:7, "He hangs the earth on nothing." Then you have meteorology, the weight of air, they didn't discover that till rather modern times yet Job, the oldest book in the Bible, says "He imparteth weight to the air." What about physiology? They used to bleed people when they got sick even though it says in Leviticus, "The life of the flesh is in the blood." You're killing them when you do that...and so on and so on and so on.

Well, maybe we have time for just one other thought, and I would just kind of make this the fine in our thinking. That is the testimony of prophecy. And I think without question this is the greatest...the greatest evidence that rises out of a holy inspired text is that the Bible just constantly predicts things that come to pass. And the critics can't do a thing with this. They just can't. I mean, and I'm not going to take the time to develop it cause our time is gone, but you take, for example, the prophecy in Ezekiel 26 to 28 which is a prophecy of the city of Tyre. And it says this, it says, "Tyre will be destroyed." It says, Then many nations will come against Tyre in a series of sort of waves of attack. And then it says the place is going to be made flat and bare and desolate and fishermen will dry their nets cause no more city will be there. And then it says about it that all the rubble will be thrown into the ocean. And then it says it will never be rebuilt.

I mean, that's at least six specifics...destroyed the mainland city, nations rising against it in waves, finally it will be decimated, fishermen dry their nets, the rubble thrown into the sea, never rebuilt. That is exactly what happened, exactly what happened. And it was a great city. I mean, to say that would be like saying, you know, Denver is going to go off the face of the map. I mean, that just doesn't make sense because it was a great great city, it controlled Phoenicia from the time of Hiram the First, it was strongly fortified. It had a wall 150 feet high, 15 feet thick. Had a tremendous fleet protecting it from the ocean side. And Hiram the First began his reign eight years before Solomon...he overlapped David's reign. And David enjoyed help from him in building the palace. You remember when they sent down the cedars from Lebanon that that was from Hiram. And so, he was at that period of time.

But the story is marvelous as it unfolds. And Nebuchadnezzar did destroy the mainland city just as the prophecy said, left it in a total rubble. Only one part of it was destroyed. Later on Alexander the Great came along and in that particular time the people in the mainland city that was destroyed had moved off to an island off the shore. They were living on the island. And Alexander sent a boat out with some of his men and said I want supplies for my army, he was conquering the world at the time. He said I want supplies for my army. And they said forget it, you don't have a navy and we're out here on an island, we're not going to accommodate you.

And so they came back and Alexander got mad. So he took all the rubble of the city and threw it into the ocean and built a causeway and marched out and destroyed the place. Just exactly what the prophet had said, all the rubble would be thrown into the sea. Well who would ever bother to do that? No conqueror would bother to do that. And the place became desolate. Today it's a place where fishermen dry their nets and it's never been rebuilt. Just exactly what the Scripture said.

And there are such prophecies as that all over the Scripture. You have the prophecies relative to Sidon, and I'm just skipping along some things. You have the prophecies relative to Egypt. You have the prophecies relative to Capernaum, right? Chorazin, Bethsaida, cities to this day have never been rebuilt. And there are cities popping up all the way around the area of the Sea of Galilee, but not there, not where those places uniquely were and not in their unique identity. Sidon was like, I don't know, 20 miles away from Tyre and the prophet said in Ezekiel 28, "Tyre...Sidon would be attacked, it would be burned, it would be sacked and it would be rebuilt." That's exactly what happened. And it exists to this very day as the seaport city, it's called today not Sidon but Saida and it still exists. Why did Tyre go away and Sidon stay? Cause that's what God said would happen.

Then you have 330 plus prophecies of Jesus Christ. And it just goes on and on. Read Ezekiel 30 some time and the prophecies of Egypt. And I'm giving you these because we all know about the Messianic prophecies, we all know about the prophecies of the nation Israel. We all know about the prophecies of the Second Coming and the earth and the world around us and we can see all of the Revelation type prophecies, but I think these are others are marvelous, too.

There's one in Nahum. It says that Nineveh will be destroyed by a flood. And that was a marvelous statement because Nineveh was one of the largest of all the ancient cities. Just to give you a little thought on this. It had 100 foot inner wall, 50-foot thick towers, 200 feet high, 15 gates, 150-foot wide moat and seven miles circumference. Just like a fortress. It had...beyond that, an outer wall. So here's this inner wall, get this, 100-feet high, 50-feet thick. Now a half mile off of that is another wall. At its high point in 663 B.C. 51 years later, absolute oblivion. That little obscure prophet Nahum chapter 1 verses 8 to 10 said it would happen, it happened. There is no Nineveh, nor has there been for centuries.

And you know what? Students of history and geography have studied that place in their archaeological studies and they have found that it fell in the month of Ab, A-b, and that is the rainy month. There's a stratum of pebbles and sand around the sight that verify that it was flooded out. Students of history and geography determined either the Tigris or what is called the Khosr, K-h-o-s-r River, probably caused the flood or even the Tibiltu(?) River, but they know it was a flood.

And then Isaiah 13 talks about Babylon. It just goes on and on, just marvelously accurate prophecies.

Well, that's more than you can handle, probably. Let me just sum it up. The Scripture claims to be true. It claims to be the Word of God. It claims to be God-breathed. It verifies those claims by internal evidence that is both objective and subjective. By external evidence that is experiential and that's subjective and scientific and prophetic and that's objective. You see, every way you cut it, inside, outside, objective, subjective the Scripture verifies itself.

Now that just gives me one third point that I want to make and I'll do that in about three minutes. We have then the claims of Scripture, the verification of those claims and now the process of Scripture's inspiration. How did it happen? How did it actually happen? And I just want to summarize the doctrine of inspiration, very quickly. It is God-breathed, right? We're back to Timothy and Peter. It is God-breathed, not from men but from the Holy Spirit breathing on men. Now let me just give you some thoughts carefully. This does not refer to a high level of human achievement. This is what's called natural inspiration. It's like Homer's Odyssey, or Shakespeare's plays, some religious geniuses wrote it. It's not that. Others have talked about what they call thought inspiration, that the Bible is inspired in the sense--and this is the most popular one today among liberals-- that God just gave them religious thoughts and they wrote in response to religious thoughts. But that doesn't square with the Scripture. In the first place, how could you get religious thoughts without words? Did you ever have thoughts without words? Very difficult. In 1 Corinthians 2:13 it says, "We speak in words which the Holy Spirit teaches."

And then some would say that it is inspiration of a spiritual nature, that's spiritual inspiration. They say it only extends to the spiritual truth. And that can't be true because you can verify history and

geography and science and archaeology and everything. And no one's ever disproven it. We wouldn't be here if they had, would we?

And then other say it is what is called existential inspiration. It's just a human book but if it zaps you it's inspired where it zaps you. That's neo-orthodoxy. Wherever you get your spiritual zap, that's inspiration.

And then there's what's called the Jesus ethic inspiration. The only part that's really true and inspired is the part that reflects Jesus ethic. And Jesus ethic, according...this is pretty much the rank liberal view...Jesus is the loving gentle forgiving gracious kind so anyplace there's judgment or wrath or anger or holiness or any of that, that's not inspired. It's just the pats on the head and the nice little things and that's the Jesus ethic.

But all of those are unacceptable. We believe that it is inspired and back to our analogy just like the virgin birth. It is utterly and totally the work of God without the flaw of man though man is the agent.

Let me close by reading a statement from J.I. Packer in his book GOD HAS SPOKEN. "Certainty about the great issues of Christian faith and conduct is lacking today. The outside observer sees us as a staggering...as staggering on from gimmick to gimmick and stunt to stunt like so many drunks in a fog, not knowing at all where we are or which way we are going. Preaching is hazy, heads are muddled, hearts fret, doubts drain our strength, uncertainly paralyzes action. We know the Victorian shibboleth that to travel hopefully is better than to arrive and it leaves us cold. Ecclesiastics of certain type tell us that the wish to be certain is mere weakness of the flesh, a sign of spiritual immaturity, but we do not find ourselves able to believe them. We know in our bones that we were made for eternity and for certainty. We cannot be happy without them. Yet unlike the first Christians who in three centuries won the Roman world and those later Christians who pioneered the Reformation and the Puritan awakening and the evangelical revival and the great missionary movement of the last century, we lack certainty. Why is this? We blame the external pressures of modern secularism but this is like Eve blaming the serpent. The real trouble is not in our circumstances it is in ourselves," end quote.

And I would add a footnote. We are in trouble and we lack certainty and the trouble is in us and it is basically in the fact that the church today in its broad perspective does not believe the Word of God to be the Word of God. And so there's no standard...no standard.

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