

## THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" II Timothy 3:16.

The Bible is greatest Book in the world. It is the inspired Word of God. We have great reverence for it because it is God-breathed. Men of God recorded God's revelation to men under the direct leadership of the Holy Spirit. It is the one infallible guide in things pertaining to God and man.

The Author of the Bible is the Holy Spirit. The Bible is an inspired revelation from God. It reveals God's will for man.

The Bible is unique and incomparable. There is no other book like it in all the world, and there never will be. God being its author accounts for the fact that it stands alone. The scriptures are unique in their:---

### 1. Pronouncements.

It is the Word of God.

#### (1) It claims inspiration.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" II Timothy 3:16.

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." II Peter 1:21.

It claims divine inspiration for every portion of it.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God." Twenty-six hundred times the Old Testament writers and five hundred twenty-five times the New Testament writers assert that their words are the words of God.

#### (2) It claims sufficiency.

Nothing is to be added to nor taken from the Word of God. It contains all that God wants us to know about Him and the way of approach to Him.

### 2. Perpetuity.

Multitudes of other books have gone down in uselessness or forgetfulness. Efforts to destroy the Bible have been as persistent as they have been relentless. Jehoiakim set the example when he cut the prophecy of Jeremiah from the sacred record. But, God put it back, with a terrible anathema upon the name of the sacrilegious king. In the gloom of the Dark Ages they gathered all the Bibles of the world together, in their vain imagination, put them in a vast heap in the streets of Rome, and made them a pile of ashes. But the Word of God is as indestructible as its Author. Voltaire prophesied that within one hundred years the Bible would be extinct. Today the very house in which that prophecy was written is a place where the Bible is being published. Printed in more than a thousand tongues, there are over a billion copies of this Book read by men around the world. Despite all that has been done to discredit it and to destroy it, this book stands as the best loved of all literature, more read and more trusted than any and all the books of time.

"Last eve I paused before a blacksmith's door  
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;  
Then, looking in, I saw upon the floor  
Old hammers worn by beating years of time.

'How many anvils have you had?' said I,  
'To wear and batter all these hammers so!'  
'Just one,' said he: then with twinkling eye,  
'The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.'

And so, I thought, the anvil of God's Word  
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;  
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,  
The anvil is unharmed--the hammers gone."

The Bible deals with things that are vital to all ages and to all classes of people. What it says will never be outgrown. Its message contains the solution of all individual and social problems.

3. Power.

No one can compute the power of this glorious Book. When God speaks, every law in the universe moves in submission and acts in obedience. It accomplishes that which He pleases. God does everything by His mighty Word. He creates, He destroys and He recreates all by the infinite power of His Word.

4. Predictions.

The Bible is a book of vision and this vision is threefold in character. It involves hindsight, insight and foresight.

5. Precepts.

It sets before us that which is right. One need not hesitate to believe that its precepts are right.

"The Bible has its chief conflict with the mediocre intelligence. The child mind instinctively grasps its golden precepts; the most profound scholarship bows before its unsearchable wisdom. Only those puffed up with a little knowledge fail to accept the benediction of its saving truth."

Woodrow Wilson said, "A man has deprived himself of the best there is in the world who has deprived himself of a knowledge of the scriptures."

The Bible is for all. The right of individual interpretation is an inalienable right. No one has a right to add to or to take from it. Any departure from its teachings is fraught with evil. It is the final authority.

I. Characteristics Of The Bible.

It is:

1. Supernatural in origin.
2. Divine in authorship.
3. Inspired in totality.
4. Infallible in authority.
5. Human in penmanship.
6. Infinite in scope.
7. Universal in interest.
8. Personal in application.
9. Inexpressible in value.
10. Immeasurable in influence.
11. Eternal in duration.

II. Facts About The Bible.

1. It is settled in its source.  
"For ever, O Lord, thy Word is settled in heaven." Psalm 119:89.
2. It is sure in its promises.  
"Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it." Jeremiah 1:12.

3. It is satisfying in its contents.  
"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts."  
Jeremiah 15:16.
4. It is secure in its guidance.  
"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 119:105.
5. It is supreme in God's estimation.  
"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name." Psalm 138:2

### III. Contents Of The Bible.

It contains:

1. God's history of man's fall.
2. God's method of man's redemption.
3. God's warnings against man's perils.
4. God's will for man's life.
5. God's light for man's guidance.
6. God's food for man's soul.
7. God's armor for man's conflicts.
8. God's comfort for man's sorrows.
9. God's answers to man's questions.
10. God's purposes concerning man's future.

### IV. Wonders Of the Bible.

1. Its Inspiration.  
Holy men wrote it as they were moved by the Spirit of God.
2. Its Formation.  
The way in which the Bible grew is one of the mysteries of time. It came from the pens of approximately forty writers over a period of about 1600 years. The only explanation for its wonderful formation is the fact that God is its author.
3. Its Unification.  
The Bible is the miracle of all literary unity.
4. Its Age.  
The Bible is the most ancient of all books.
5. Its Language.  
The Bible was written largely by uneducated men, and yet from a literary standpoint it is the best that has ever been written.
6. Its Perservation.  
The Bible has been the most hated book. Many have tried to destroy it, but all failed to do so. An Irishman built a fence three feet high and four feet wide. When asked why he did so, he answered, "So that if any one kicks it over, it will be higher than it was in the first place." The Bible has been kicked about by numerous critics, but it has risen higher in the estimation of people.
7. Its Circulation.  
The Bible is the best seller of all books. From twelve to fifteen million new copies are circulated each year.
8. Its Interest.  
The Bible is read by all Classes of people.

### V. Why We Accept The Authority Of the Bible.

1. It is the best standard.  
What we must believe, what we must be and what we must do are set forth in the Bible with a clearness and a completeness found no where else. Not a doctrine, nor an inspiration, nor a duty is omitted.

2. It is a sufficient standard.  
The Scriptures give us enough truth for all religious purposes. In them we have all the truth required for the religious life of men. The Bible alone tells us what our souls need.
3. It is an authoritative standard.  
The Scriptures speak with authority, as does no other literature. The scriptural standard is the only one we are under obligation to accept. The Bible is not subject to addition or development or modification of any kind. It is the absolute and final authority on all questions of faith and morals. "Thus saith the Lord" is the end of all controversy.
4. It is an inspired standard.  
The men to whom God gave the messages which He had placed into permanent form by writing were selected with great care and because of their fitness to do the thing which He wanted done. There was a fitness of character, of intellect, of attainment and of the age and place in which they lived. God selected men who could write. After He had selected them, He did not leave them to themselves. They needed something more than natural endowment and the influence of their age. They needed special illumination and guidance. This special qualification was given directly from God. His Spirit acted continually upon the spirit of the man whom He had selected to write. These holy men of God wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and their message was about eternal life.

The word "inspired" literally means "God-breathed." By inspiration we mean the conscious in-breathing of God which qualified the men to utter the truths which God wanted all men to receive. The Bible was written by men of God, who were qualified and prompted to do so by the Holy Spirit, in obedience to the divine command. The Bible itself declares that it is inspired. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." II Timothy 3:16-17. Not only is the Bible inspired, but it inspires those who study it.

Truly the Bible is a wonderful book:

- (1) It is wonderful in the truth it proclaims.
- (2) It is wonderful in the treasures it contains.
- (3) It is wonderful in the triumphs it reveals.
  - a. Think of its indestructibility.  
"My words shall not pass away." Matthew 24:35.  
"The word of the Lord endureth forever." I Peter 1:25.
  - b. Think of its invincibility.  
"My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please." Isaiah 55:11.
  - c. Think of its indispensability.  
"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matthew 4:4.
  - d. Think of its infallibility.  
"Not one thing hath failed of all his good promises."
  - e. Think of its inexhaustibility.  
Every additional reading will be an increasing revelation.

(4) Wonderful in the trust it invites.

Many precious invitations are found in the scriptures.

Well may we study the contents of the Bible, practice its precepts, proclaim its message, glory in its triumphs and magnify its Master.