

WHAT IS GOD'S WORD?

1. Losing confidence in the Bible
2. The Bible is ... God's Word



²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

2 Peter 1:20-21

¹⁶ All Scripture is ... God-breathed." 2 Timothy 3:14-16

Reflection:

If we have the very words of God, what are some implications for how to read the Bible?

HOW TO READ GOD'S WORD?

Implication 1: We can't know God without the Bible – it is necessary

"No one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:11-13

Reflection:

"God is himself the source of human language. He is the first speaker and invests language with a deep significance for generating and nourishing personal relationships. Far from being an unsuitable or inadequate vehicle for God's revelation of himself and his purposes, the first use of human language has precisely this function." - A Clear and Present Word, Mark Thompson

With the person next to you, thank God for speaking to us, so we can know and teach about him and his purposes.

Implication 2: God's word stands above all – it is authoritative

"This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word." Isaiah 66:2

- The Bible is our supreme authority

Example 1: Culture

Example 2: Reason

Example 3: Experience

- No interpretation of the Bible is authoritative

Reflection:

"[The Bible] is read not only in the presence of God but in the presence too of human repudiation of God, a repudiation that continues to echo, however faintly, in every individual reader and corporate audience." - A Clear and Present Word, Mark Thompson

How does sin - in the world and our own hearts – make it hard to obey and teach what the Bible says?

Implication 3: God's word is enough – it's sufficient

- The Bible is all we need for this life (salvation & godliness)

...are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3:15

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16

"The sufficiency of Scripture means we don't need any more special revelation. We don't need any more inspired, inerrant words. The Bible is enough. We don't need to look beyond the Scriptures."

John Piper¹

- Does God speak new words today?

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, [prophets, writing on a wall, through a donkey] ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

Hebrews 1:1

¹ <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/thoughts-on-the-sufficiency-of-scripture>

[God] speaks through his Son by the revelation of the Son's redeeming work that we find first predicted and prefigured in the Old Testament, then recorded in the Gospels, and finally unpacked by the Spirit through the apostles in the rest of the New Testament." - Kevin de Young²

Reflection:

"Scripture is enough because the work of Christ is enough." Taking God at His Word, Kevin DeYoung

How does this understanding 'free us' as we teach the Bible week by week?

Implication 4: God's Word is understandable – it is clear

[Paul] writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. 2 Peter 3:16

"A confession of the clarity of Scripture is an aspect of faith in a generous God who is willing and able to make himself and his purposes known. God has something to say and he is very good at saying it."

"Christ has not so enlightened us to deliberately leave some part of His word obscure while commanding us to give heed to it, for he commands us in vain to give heed if it does not give light." - Martin Luther

¹¹ Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach...¹⁴ No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.

Deuteronomy 30

- **We should expect to understand the Bible.**

"God does not bestow the Spirit on His people in order to set aside the use of His Word, but rather to render it fruitful" - John Calvin³

- **When we hold different views, the problem is with us not God.**

5: My own Reformation

² p.593.

³ Gospel Synopsis III.375.

Like Martin Luther, I'm absolutely convinced that I can say:

"Let the man who would hear God speak, read Holy Scriptures."

When threatened by a Roman Catholic priest for wanting to translate the Bible into English, William Tyndale said:

"If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy who drives a plough to know more of the scriptures than you do."

Reflection:

"God has something to say and he is very good at saying it." – A Clear and Present Word, Mark Thompson

With the person next to you, share a point of encouragement, discuss any remaining questions (for a short Q&A to follow), and pray together.

Recommended books:

Taking God At His Word, Why the Bible is knowable, necessary, and enough and what it means for you and me - Kevin De Young, Crossway

The Good Portion: Scripture, The Doctrine of Scripture for Every Woman – Keri Folmar, Christian Focus

Words of Life, Scripture as the living and active word of God – Timothy Ward, Inter-varsity Press

A Clear and Present Word, The clarity of Scripture – Mark D. Thompson, New Studies in Biblical Theology

The Bible in an Hour

A Sunday Arvo Seminar for Women



A unique book

“Defend the Bible? I would as soon defend a lion! Unchain it and it will defend itself.” (Paraphrase, Spurgeon, 2/1/1888)

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12



Q1 Who wrote it?

- **Human writers x 35+**

Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy), ? (Josh, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel), **Ezra** (1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra), Nehemiah, ? (Esther, Job), **David/Solomon** (Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon), Isaiah, **Jeremiah** (Jeremiah, Lamentations), Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

Matthew, Mark, **Luke** (Luke Acts), **John** (John, 1,2,& 3 John, Revelation) **Paul** (Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon), ? (Hebrews), James, **Peter** (1 & 2 Peter), Jude

- **God**

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20

Q2 What's it about?

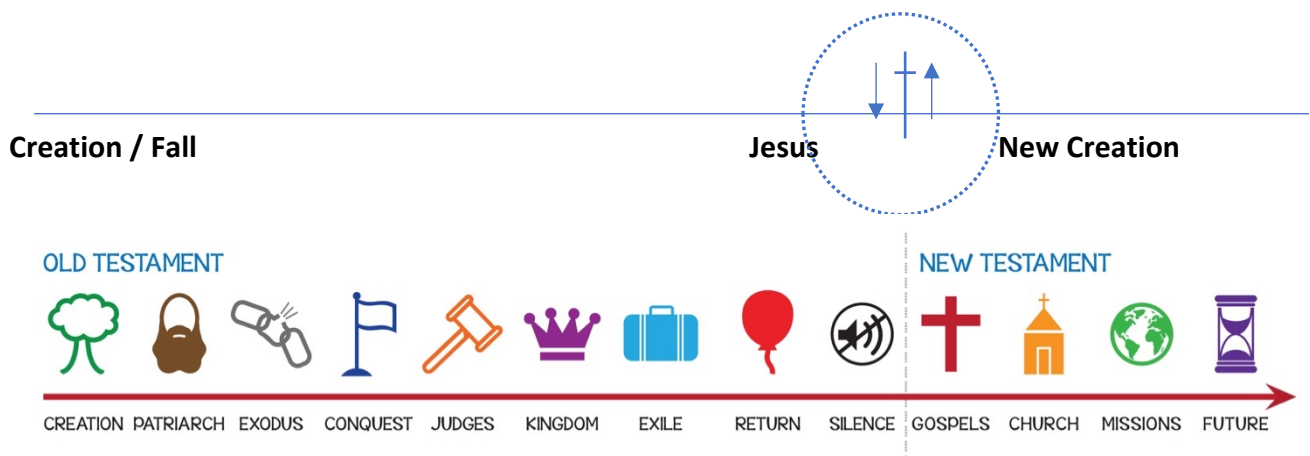
- **One message = Jesus**

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. Luke 24:26-27

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. 2 Corinthians 1:20

- **Creation to New Creation**



Q3 How should we read it?

2 Timothy 3:16

*All Scripture is **God-breathed***

*and is useful for **teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,**
so that the servant of God may be **thoroughly equipped** for every good work.*

Isaiah 66:2

These are the ones I look on with favour: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who **tremble at my word.**

Hosea 11:10

They shall walk after the LORD: **he shall roar like a lion:** when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west.

Questions?

More reading 😊

- The Bible
- elliotritzema.com/2012/07/31/spurgeons-let-the-lion-out-of-the-cage-quote/
- <https://overviewbible.com/timeline/>