

# **Why Should I Trust and Believe the Bible?**

## **A. Why insist on inerrancy (the full truthfulness of the Bible)?**

1. The nature and character of God. (If the Bible is God's Word and God is a God of truth, the Bible must be true). This is a deductive argument.
2. The witness of Scripture to itself (Matt. 5:17-18; John 10:35; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21). The Bible testifies to its own truthfulness. This is an inductive argument.
3. The analogy of the living Word (Christ) and the written Word (the Bible). Both are fully human and fully divine. Both are perfect.
4. Fulfilled prophecy. (There are multiple fulfilled prophecies concerning Christ alone).
5. Archeological confirmation that has repeatedly demonstrated the accuracy of the Bible.
6. The testimony of Jesus. His view of Scripture must be our view if we are to live under His Lordship (Matt. 5:17-18; Luke 24:25-27; John 10:35; 17:17).
7. The need of a certain word from God. If the Bible contains error, it cannot be the Word of God.

## **B. What are some principles to guide our study of the Bible?**

1. All Scripture is of equal inspiration, but not of equal importance or applicability. All of it, however, is profitable (2 Tim. 3:16).
2. We should interpret the Bible "naturally," recognizing for example the historical context, different types of literature and figures of speech.
3. Inerrancy means that the Bible is true in what it says in all areas. Further, it has a single meaning with many applications.
4. Inerrancy does not deny the use in Scripture of summation, approximation, phenomenal language (the language of how things appear) or cultural linguistic devices common to the time of writing (an example is how New Testament authors cite Old Testament passages and sometimes paraphrase.)
5. While recognizing the epistemological (how we come to know what we know) contributions of reason, experience, tradition, and the Church, inerrancy affirms that the ultimate religious and spiritual authority for the Christian is Scripture interpreted by the historical/grammatical hermeneutic. The plain sense of Scripture is to be sought, affirmed, and obeyed.

### **Recommended Sources for Additional Study:**

- Archer, Gleason. *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*. Zondervan, 1982.  
Blomberg, Craig. *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels*. IVP, 1987.  
Dockery, David. *Christian Scripture*. Broadman, 1995.  
Geisler, Norman, ed. *Inerrancy*. Zondervan, 1979.  
Nash, Ronald. *The Word of God and the Mind of Man*. Zondervan, 1982.

## Bibliology

### Key Word and Concept

*what*

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| REVELATION<br>“THE ACT OF GOD BY WHICH HE HAS MADE KNOWN WHAT WAS OTHERWISE UNKNOWABLE.”<br>APOKALUPSIS – “TO UNVEIL, TO UNCOVER” |
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| GENERAL<br>“GOD’S WITNESS TO HIMSELF THROUGH CREATION, HISTORY, AND THE CONSCIENCE OF MAN.” | SPECIAL<br>“GOD’S DISCLOSURE OF HIMSELF IN SALVATION HISTORY (REVELATION IN A PERSON) AND IN THE INTERPRETIVE WORD OF SCRIPTURE (REVELATION IN A PROPOSITION).” |
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| HISTORY<br>JUDGES<br>RUTH | CREATION<br>PSALM 19:1-3<br>ROMANS 1:18-20 | CONSCIENCE<br>ROMANS 1:19<br>ROMANS 2:14-15 | WRITTEN<br>I CORINTHIANS<br>2:10-13<br>II PETER 1:19-21 | LIVING<br>JOHN 1:18<br>HEBREWS<br>1:1-3 |
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*how*

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| INSPIRATION<br>“THE ACT OF GOD BY WHICH HE SUPERINTENDED/CONTROLLED THE HUMAN AUTHORS OF THE 66 BOOKS OF THE BIBLE SO THAT USING THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITIES THEY COMPOSED AND RECORDED WITHOUT ERROR, HIS REVELATION TO MAN IN THE WORDS OF THE ORIGINAL.”<br>II TIMOTHY 3:15-16; II PETER 1:16-21 |
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*result*

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| INERRANCY<br>“THE QUALITY OF BEING FREE FROM ALL FALSEHOOD OR MISTAKE WHICH SAFEGUARDS THE TRUTH THAT HOLY SCRIPTURE IS ENTIRELY TRUE AND TRUSTWORTHY IN ALL ITS ASSERTIONS.”<br>MATTHEW 5:17-18; JOHN 10:35; 17:17 |
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*result*

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| INFALLIBILITY<br>“THE QUALITY OF NEITHER MISLEADING OR BEING MISLED WHICH SAFEGUARDS THE TRUTH THAT HOLY SCRIPTURE IS A SURE, SAFE AND RELIABLE GUIDE IN ALL MATTERS.” |
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*responsibility*

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| INTERPRETATION<br>“THE PROCESS OF DETERMINING THE BIBLICAL AUTHOR’S INTENDED MEANING.” |
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| ILLUMINATION<br>“THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHICH ASSISTS THE READER IN GAINING BOTH THE SENSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF GOD’S WRITTEN REVELATION.”<br>JOHN 16:12-15; I CORINTHIANS 2:9-16 |
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*response*

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| APPLICATION<br>“THE PROCESS OF DETERMINING THE CURRENT RELEVANCE OF SCRIPTURE AND THEN ACTIVELY RESPONDING.”<br>JAMES 1:19-27 |
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**“What Did Jesus Believe About the Bible?”**  
(Matthew 5:17-18)

**I. Jesus believed all the Scriptures point to Him. 5:17**

- 1) He did not come to destroy the Scriptures.
- 2) He came to fulfill the Scriptures.

**II. Jesus believed all the Scriptures were perfect in detail. 5:18**

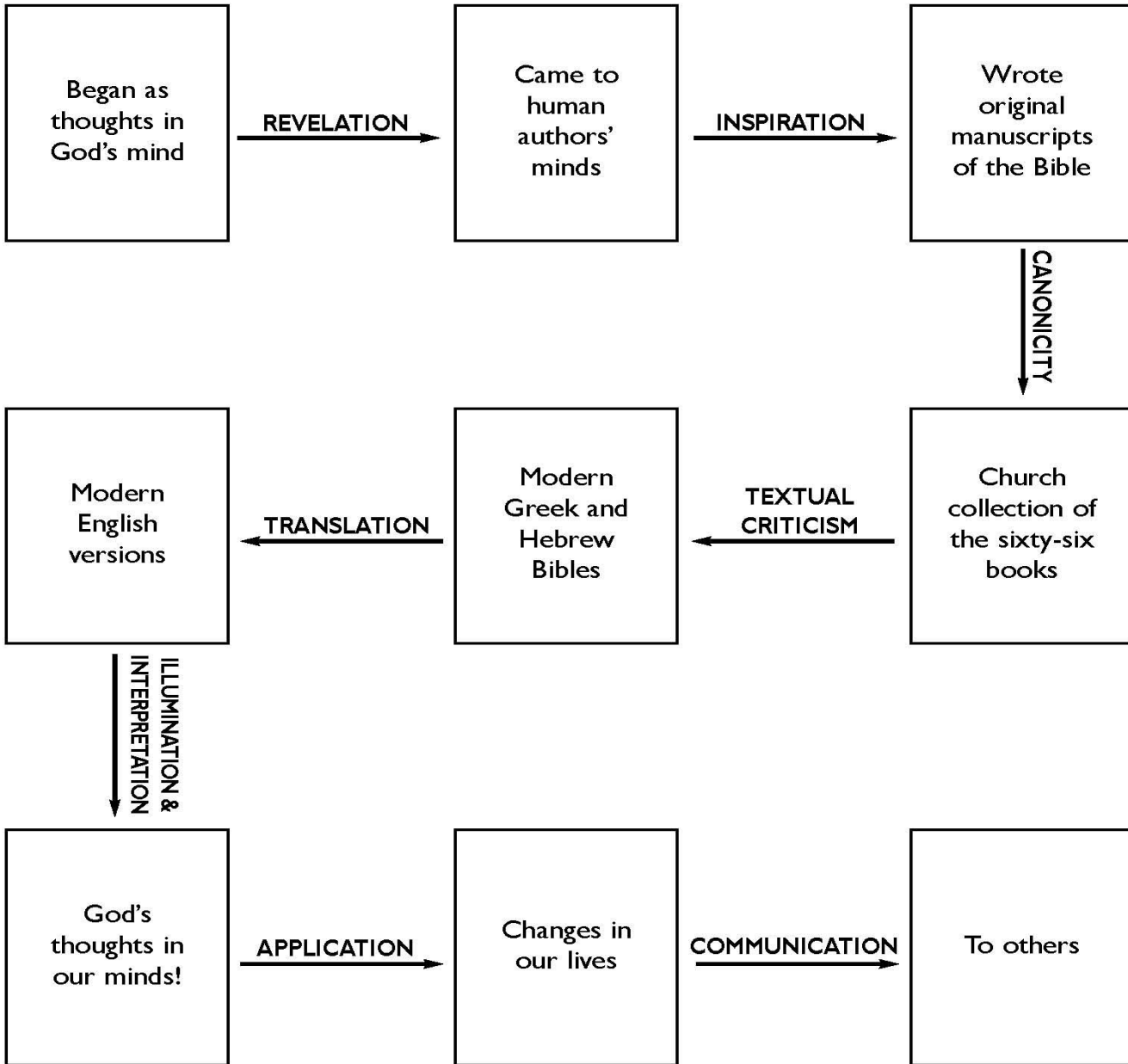
- 1) Jesus affirmed the OT and promised the NT.      John 16:12-15
- 2) Jesus said the Scriptures cannot be broken.      John 10:35
- 3) Jesus said God’s Word is truth.      John 17:17

# **Suggestions for Interpreting the Text of Scripture**

## (A Summation)

- I.     Study the book as a whole.
  - 1) Consider the questions of date, authorship, recipients, and purpose (general matters of introduction).
  - 2) Develop an outline of the entire book (study Bibles and commentaries will be helpful).
  - 3) Examine the relationship of the passage under consideration to the book as a whole.
  
- II.    Establish the best textual base possible.
  - 1) Use the original language if you can.
  - 2) Compare various versions and translations.
  
- III.   Investigate the text linguistically (eg. word by word).
  - 1) Make a lexical (definitional) study of crucial words.
  - 2) Research the passage for key words, phrases, and ideas.
  - 3) Track the verbs!
  
- IV.    Examine the form or forms of the material in the passage.
  - 1) What is the literary type (history, poetry, prophetic, apocalyptic)?
  - 2) Is there any indication of the life situation from which the material came?
  
- V.     Analyze the structure of the passage.
  - 1) Determine if the material constitutes a literary unity.
  - 2) Is there a logical sequence of ideas present?
  - 3) Isolate the basic themes or emphases.
  - 4) Outline the passage you are studying. Use the outline as the framework for your teaching.

# HOW OUR BIBLE CAME TO US



\* God has not really changed your life until He is using you to change others!