

## Do you really trust the Bible?

### 2 Timothy 3:12-17

#### Our Church's Confession of Faith concerning the Scriptures

"We believe Scripture is the sole infallible rule of faith for the church. The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and that it is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. The Old and New Testaments are a perfect treasure of divine instruction. The Bible was simultaneously authored by men and by God Himself, without obliterating the human contribution and without any mixture of error, according to the power and intention of divine revelation. It reveals the principles by which God judges us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. The Bible is to be interpreted through its own clear teaching and through the person of Jesus Christ. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy."<sup>1</sup>

One man arguing against the trustworthiness of the Bible said,

"It's pathetic to see many Christians today, especially of the neo-Evangelical stripe who disregard inerrancy or treat it as a minor and peripheral doctrine. This is a horrible mistake.... I am convinced that biblical inerrancy is axiomatic for the Christian faith [that is, biblical inerrancy is an easily understood and basic truth that is critical to the foundation of everything Christianity is]. It's not a secondary, consequential belief of Christians nor should it be. Rather, biblical inerrancy is of prime importance, and should be considered the doctrine of all doctrines."<sup>2</sup>

\*There are resources available to those with greater interest. The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy (cited below), an explanation of that statement by Dr. RC Sproul<sup>3</sup>, articles and books concerned with textual variants and manuscript copies<sup>4</sup>, a marvelous article by John MacArthur that builds the case and announces the implications of biblical authority<sup>5</sup>, and an article citing several 'tests' of biblical reliability<sup>6</sup> are all examples of the plethora of resources available for the diligent and inquisitive mind.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fbcdiana.org/we-believe-at-fbc/>

<sup>2</sup> This quote was taken from a comment by 'Matthew' posted beneath the blog article found here: [http://debunkingchristianity.blogspot.com/2006/07/why-i-dont-believe-bible-is-gods-word\\_12.html](http://debunkingchristianity.blogspot.com/2006/07/why-i-dont-believe-bible-is-gods-word_12.html)

<sup>3</sup> Sproul, R. C. *Can I Trust the Bible?* Lake Mary, FL: Reformation Trust, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> See the following article by Justin Holcomb for The Gospel Coalition: <http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/why-you-can-trust-your-bible> and see the helpful and thorough work of Dr. Archer in his book: Archer, Gleason L. *New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties: Based on the NIV and the NASB*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.gty.org/resources/positions/P10/you-can-trust-the-bible>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.rzim.eu/why-trust-the-bible>

“Is the Bible trustworthy?” is definitely a good question worth asking... and I believe the answer is YES!

But, this is not the question I am asking today. I am asking you, “Do you really trust the Bible?”

Do you really trust, lean upon, cling to, base your life’s decisions and your daily thoughts, words, and deeds upon the foundation laid by this divine revelation from God?

If we are honest, the answer is NO; at least not completely or consistently YES.

## **12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,**

### **○ Persecution is inevitable for those who desire godly submission to Christ.**

- Gill said, “[Persecution] is the will of God, and the appointment of heaven; Christ has foretold it, that so it shall be; and he the head has suffered it himself, and it is necessary that his members should [as well]... [It] is the way Christ himself went to glory, and through many tribulations his people must enter the kingdom; and this is the common lot and certain case of all the saints, in one shape or another... and since such suffer as Christians, and not as evildoers; and this is the common condition of the people of God, in this world, it should not be thought strange, but be cheerfully endured.”<sup>7</sup>

## **13 while evil people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.**

### **○ Persecution for godly submission, but deception abounds for worldly gain.**

- The two principles go hand in hand. On the right, diligent and submissive Christians will suffer scorn and loss; on the left, those who profess the name of Christ and yet live as lords unto themselves progressively increase in their craftiness to avoid such persecution and somehow remain counted among the faithful.<sup>8</sup>

## **14a But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed,**

### **○ But as for you; you have learned and become convinced**

- This explicitly implies at least 3 things:

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<sup>7</sup> See “Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible” for this passage at [http://biblehub.com/commentaries/2\\_timothy/3-12.htm](http://biblehub.com/commentaries/2_timothy/3-12.htm)

<sup>8</sup> See “Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary” on this passage at [http://biblehub.com/commentaries/2\\_timothy/3-13.htm](http://biblehub.com/commentaries/2_timothy/3-13.htm)

- One, there is a stark contrast between the disciple of Christ and those desiring the kind words of men.
  - But as for you! You are not like these, and you are to act accordingly!
  - “God gave us the spirit of power and love and self-control” (2 Tim. 1:7).
  - “Do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord” (2 Tim. 1:8).
  - Be prepared to “share in the suffering of the Gospel by the power of God” (2 Tim. 1:8).
  - “By the Holy Spirit,” “guard the good deposit” of the Gospel message entrusted to you (2 Tim. 1:14)
  - “Be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ” (2 Tim. 2:1).
  - “Entrust” this same good message of Christ to other “faithful men” (2 Tim. 2:2).
  - Again, be ready to “share in suffering” and aim to “please the one who” called you into the fight for the Gospel (2 Tim. 2:3-4).
  - This way of life, faithfulness and persecution, is exactly as God has planned; just as an “athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules” (2 Tim. 2:5).
- Two, the disciple of Christ is a student of God’s Word.
  - Continue in what you have learned!
  - 2 Timothy 2:15 – “Do your best to present yourself to God as *one approved, a worker* who has no need to be ashamed, *rightly handling the word of truth*”.
- Three, the disciple of Christ may not be a genius, but he/she is converted, convinced, and committed.
  - Christianity does not require blind faith or ignorant trust; rather all of Christianity rests on the person of Christ and trustworthy truth claims.
  - 2 Timothy 1:12-13 – “*I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard... what has been entrusted to me. Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*”

## 14b knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings...

- **The obligation of parents to their children cannot be overstated.**
  - God places the discipleship of children squarely on the shoulders of parents.
    - Speaking of the 10 Commandments of God, the Bible says, “These words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall *teach them diligently* to your children, and shall *talk of them* when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall *bind them as a sign* on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall *write them* on the doorposts of your house and on your gates” (Deut. 6:6-9).

## 15b the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

- **The Scriptures themselves are that which bring about salvation!**
  - If a person is born again, it is only “through the living and abiding word of God” (1 Peter 1:23).
  - During the first century (early Church days), the rapid spread of the Gospel and the salvation of many sinners is attributed to the “increase” and “multiplication” of the “word of God” (Acts 12:24).
  - People cannot trust in Christ if they have not heard of Him, and faith only comes by hearing the word of God proclaimed (Romans 10:14-17).
  - The word of God alone is able to save you soul (James 1:21).

## 16a All Scripture is breathed out by God

- **The ultimate origin of Scripture is God Himself, and He has spoken!**
  - *theopneustos* – the breath of God or the voice of God
    - The word of God or the voice of God is supremely authoritative. By the word of God, even the nothing which once was listened and came into being at His divine command (Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24; 2 Peter 3:5).

This is authority and power beyond human comprehension; the word of God is to be revered, respected, and regarded with the upmost diligence and humility.

## 16b and profitable for *teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness...*

### ○ **It is profitable for:**

- Teaching – the instruction of God’s word is for our great joy and benefit
  - The fool disregards, avoids, and neglects God’s word
- Reproof – a rebuke from God’s word is welcomed discipline for it comes from the all-wise and perfectly loving Father of our salvation
  - The fool arrogantly imagines him/herself to be above reproof
- Correction – the truths of the word of God help the wise disciple of Christ understand his/her own errors, and it also corrects them
  - The fool childishly believes he/she is beyond the days of mistakes
- Training in Righteousness – the ultimate goal of God’s word is righteousness; first, that we are made righteous in Christ, and, second, that we are made like Christ by the Holy Spirit – both of these are through or by the word of God
  - The fool makes his/her effort in the area of temporal happiness and the preservation of his/her pride

## 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

### ○ **We are simply incomplete and unequipped without God’s word.**

- Proverbs 30:5 – “Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.”
- John 8:31 – Jesus said, “if you abide in [keep, remain faithful to] my word, you are truly my disciples.”
- Jesus prays that all His disciples will be made holy by God washing them with His word (John 17:17).
- 1 John 2:3-5 – “by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected.”

“The authority of Scripture is a key issue for the Christian church in this and every age. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are called to show the reality of their discipleship by humbly and faithfully obeying God's written Word. To stray from Scripture in faith or conduct is disloyalty to our Master.”<sup>9</sup>

### **Takeaway:**

#### **The Bible is NOT**

“a good book”

“the most lovely decoration I own”

“something that will help me live more successfully”

“suggestions about what is best, but one can survive without them”

“only pertinent to religious matters”

#### **The Bible IS**

The very word of God

“This Book [is] the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is Wisdom; this is the royal Law; these are the lively Oracles of God.”<sup>10</sup>

### **Questions to Consider:**

Are we seeking to be conformed to this holy word – today?

Do we suffer distress at the thought that we may not taste of its goodness today?

Do our hearts break when we think of the various ways in which we are not now conformed to the clear commands of our loving God?

Will we all be more concerned with asking, “What does God’s Word say about this?” rather than asking, “What is expedient, practical, preferable, or easiest?”

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<sup>9</sup> This line is a portion of the Preface of the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy. See full PDF statement at the following link: [http://www.etsjets.org/files/documents/Chicago\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.etsjets.org/files/documents/Chicago_Statement.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> The Preface of *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. 2001. Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.