

## WE BELIEVE

# THE Scripture

We believe the Bible to be the very Word of God; that the sixty-six books comprising the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired in all parts and therefore wholly without error as originally given by God; that it is our final authority, our only and all sufficient rule of faith and practice.

### Personal Instructions

9 Do your best to come to me soon. 10 For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. 11 Luke alone with me here. Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry. 12 Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. 13 When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Laodicea. The phrase echoes a common Old Testament expression. 14 Or



## I. WHY YOUR BELIEFS MATTER

• Your beliefs are the CORE of your identity (Gen. 1:26-28). The quality of your life is deeply affected by the beliefs that have been adopted and/or released in your life. Human flourishing is not possible without a perfecting of your beliefs.

• Beliefs unite us as Christians (Phil. 1.27ff).  
“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents.”

• Shared beliefs create and maintain momentum. THE GOSPEL is our momentum (Acts 6:7).

## II. WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS GOD’S WORD

“We believe the Bible to be the very Word of God; that the sixty-six books comprising the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired in all parts and therefore wholly without error as originally given by God; that it is our final authority, our only and all sufficient rule of faith and practice.”

Voddie Baucham makes a great claim about the Bible: “The Bible is a reliable collection of historical documents written by eyewitnesses during the lifetime of other eyewitnesses which report supernatural events in fulfillment of specific prophecies claiming that they are words of divine origin, rather than human in origin.”

## III. WHY CHRISTIANS BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS UNIQUE

### 1. It has a unique STATUS (Gen. 1:3)

“I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing your praise; I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and **your word**. On the day I called, you answered me; my strength of soul you increased” (Ps.138:1-3).

### 2. It has a unique HISTORY

“And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light” (Gen. 1:3; Ex. 20:1ff).

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. **And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart**. You shall teach them diligently to your children” (Deut. 6:4-7).

God’s people, the Jews, are the source and foundation for us as Christians being a Word-based faith. The spoken Word of God was preserved orally and then captured in scrolls.

Eventually, the Christian movement began recording its faith and doctrines as well. The eyewitnesses to Jesus’ life and ministry were dying or growing old. Fraudulent claims were beginning to appear. Believers needed a canon (“rule”) by which to measure truth and defend the faith. The New Testament was the result.

### 3. It has a unique AUTHORITY

“Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35).

“We believe the Bible...is our final authority, our only and all sufficient rule of faith and practice.” Because the Bible reveals the mind and heart of God which is our aim.

*“The Bible is the voice of God in print.”* Tony Evans

Nigel Cameron in Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology, Baker: *“It is vital to understand that this doctrine, far from playing a minor role on the fringes of Christian belief, brings us face to face with the authority of God himself. What is at stake in the authority of Holy Scripture is the authority of its divine author. And, in light of the fact that every doctrine believed by the church is in turn authorized by appeal to Holy Scripture, it is no exaggeration to say that the entire structure of Christian theology stands or falls by the authority of Scripture, the major premise for every theological statement that would claim the allegiance of the church of Jesus Christ.”*

Denominations are the wrappings we choose for the faith we hold closest to our hearts. Denominations can go astray - most have and do! But the Bible is the conviction of our faith. It’s our starting point and our end point.

There is great freedom to believe and practice many different variations of religious persuasions provided they fall within the boundaries of the Bible.

What the Bible says, **properly understood, tested, and applied**, is the final word, for me. PERIOD.

**WARNING:** “Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness, where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years. Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, ‘They always go astray in their heart; they have not known my ways.’ As I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter my rest.’ Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God” (Heb. 3:7-12).

#### 4. It has a unique AUTHOR

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16).

“And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:19-21).

#### 5. It has a unique POWER

“For the **word of God** is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account” (Heb. 4:12-13).

Scripture is animated by God’s life force and authority.

*“The Bible gives me peace in fear, calm in crisis, power and strength in weakness and light in darkness.”*  
-Kay Arthur

#### 6. It has a unique NARRATIVE (SALVATION)

“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God” (2 Tim. 3:14-16).

#### 7. It has a unique WITNESS

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was both the **Word of God** Incarnate and the infallible Witness to its power and authority (John 1:1-14).

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away” (Luke 21:33).

“I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world” (John 17:14).

#### A few examples of historical references that Jesus utilized:

- Creation is the literal beginning for the world (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-5)
- Abel was a real individual (Luke 11:51)
- Noah and the flood are historical facts (Luke 17:26,27)
- Abraham is the real “father” of the Jewish nation (John 8:56-58)
- Sodom & Gomorrah were actual places (Matt. 10:15, Luke 10:12)
- Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish (Matt. 12:39-41)

#### 8. It has a unique PURPOSE

##### Rebirth, resurrection, regeneration

“Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for “All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.” And this word is the good news that was preached to you” (1 Peter 1:22-25).

#### 9. It has a unique ENEMY

**The devil:** He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” (Gen. 3:1).

Jesus defeated Satan by invoking the **Word of God** three times. He rebuked the devil by engaging the **Word of God** (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10).

#### 10. It has a unique KEY

##### Faith, believing, obedience to the Gospel

“Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem” (Luke 24:44-47).

“For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened” (Heb. 4:2).

“But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart, one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, ‘Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.’ For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?’ So, faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:8-17).

#### Conclusion:

I dare you to read it. I dare you to believe it. I challenge you to live it.

*Pastor Deric*