

Chapter 2

THE WORD OF GOD

Part I--God's Self-Revelation

In chapter 1 the argument for the existence of God was clearly advanced--the majority of mankind concludes that God exists as the Creator of all things. Once one agrees that there exists a God who is the creator of ALL things, it is only logical to conclude that this God must be all-powerful and sovereign.

It is also clear that the secular world is doing everything in its power to prove that God does not exist. They believe that if they can prove that something can come from nothing, they have won the day. The irony in this comes from the secular world refuting Scripture's claim that God created the world from nothing. Both sides of the argument agree that at one time in eternity past nothing material existed.

In this treatise I do not directly challenge the views of the secular world on these subjects one-on-one, as it is an exercise in futility because of the biases that prevent a rational debate. My approach is to provide the evidence that is available to everyone, and let that evidence speak for itself.

This chapter deals with how God made Himself known to man. Part I is about God's self-revelation through His creation and the written Word. Part II is about God's greatest and final revelation to man through the Incarnation in His Son Jesus Christ.

The Bible contains everything man needs to know about God. Where do the theologians get their knowledge if not from Holy Scripture as the prime source? They study Scripture, then they put their own spin on it. Too often, they offer opinions without nearly enough knowledge, but imagine it to be so. Many of their opinions are without value because they are based on bias, guesswork, and out and out ignorance. Those opinions represent the source of most of the confusion people encounter as they try to find their own way to God. I've often thought how beneficial it would be if these theologians who express opinions or give out information would take the time to identify their sources from which they speak. Many do not speak from Scripture, but present themselves as the fount of intelligence..

You might think that was a just a tad extreme. And, yes, it would seem to be. Still, the lesson is there, isn't it? Knowing from where we are getting our information and, while we're at it, to communicate the source. We should ask theologians, "what are you basing that on?" or "From where did you learn that?" or "How did you reach that conclusion?" People who study scripture on their own as I am doing, are usually treated with suspicion and marginalized by the mainstream scholars. It has to do with credibility. There can be a huge disconnect between academic theology and theology from a layman such as myself. But I don't have an ax to grind, I'm not debating with anyone else to prove a point. I'm merely searching out available evidence and following what God has said in Holy Scripture period! If He said it, I believe it.

Since I believe the Bible is truly the Word of God, I also believe it is the final authority for all matters of faith, religious practice, and morals.

The question we must ask ourselves is how can we know that the Bible is the Word of God? What is the evidence that the Bible is truly God's Word? There is no doubt that the Bible itself does claim to be the very Word of God. Scoffers do not believe this is the Word of God because of what they call circular reasoning.

God-Breathed Scriptures-The Bible

The only hard source citing God's contact with man is the Bible. The Bible itself claims to have come from the Most High, from God Himself (2 Timothy 3:16). While there were approximately forty men who physically put the text onto the pages, Scripture claims the true author of the Bible is God. In

almost every book of the Bible, the human authors assert that their words are the words of God. It is at this point where the secular world argues the case for circular reasoning. The statement “I believe the Bible is true because the Bible says it is true” .is circular reasoning when held to the rules of logic within the framework of modern philosophy.

But the Bible is proven by believers in other ways besides circular reasoning. If it was only an intellectual problem, other arguments might be better, but since it is a volitional one, only spiritual weaponry will do. God is glorified in this methodology, but unbelievers are not convinced since their view of the world revolves around themselves. So, circular reasoning is a valid argument as long as the premises are true.

There is a modicum of irony here. Both sides argue from circular reasoning. Christians argue with validity. The secular world argues fallaciously, and assume that all circular reasoning is wrong. The irony is they themselves use circular reasoning to do so.

An unbeliever decries circular reasoning with reasoning. By what does he reason? The laws of logic. He assumes the laws of logic to argue his position. How does one prove the laws of logic without logic? Hence, the one complaining of circular reasoning depends on circular reasoning for his argument against it. One proves the laws of logic by using the laws of logic.

The accusation of circular reasoning proceeds from a false claim of neutrality from the accuser. He assumes laws. That isn't neutral. That starts with assumptions. Everyone begins with assumptions. All reasoning arises from presuppositions. The allegation of circular reason refutes itself, because it begins with laws no matter what the presupposition.

Recorded history and the total of God’s inspired Word in the Bible makes a mockery of Circular reasoning. **“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.”** (1 Corinthians 3:19).

The Bible

The first books of the Bible begin with Moses’s account of the creation of the universe followed by the creation of Adam and Eve currently based on Scripture to be approximately 6000 years ago, and moves throughout the history of man until it fades into eternity future.

According to Scripture, about 400 years before Abraham comes on the scene we have the flood of Noah. From Adam to the flood is a period of about 1600 years during which time the whole human race was given an opportunity to have a knowledge of God after the format that He gave to Cain and Abel, that if they would bring a blood sacrifice when they sinned, God would accept them on the basis of their faith, but for the most part the human race at that time was no different than it is now, and so the Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. God did not make a mistake in creating mankind. He was sorry because of the wretched state rebellious man had achieved by the time of Noah. Does God make mistakes? No. No fault lay with God. He did not feel He had made a mistake in creating man, nor was He bewildered. On the contrary, subsequent passages show that He continued to work with humans and specifically with Noah, who “found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (verse 8). Noah, contrary to society around him, was a just man who walked with God (Genesis 6:9). we are free to choose whether we will obey God or not. And just like in Noah’s day, God will either be pleased or sorry for the choices we make. Today we are free to choose whether we will obey God or not. And just like in Noah’s day, God will either be pleased or sorry for the choices we make.

So the Lord said, **“I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth - men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air - for I am grieved that I have made them.”** (Genesis 6:5-7). All died except those who permitted to survive the Ark. God’s perfect justice is applied to those who perished during the Flood in the same manner as it is for everyone who has ever lived.

After the flood God ordered mankind to scatter and repopulate the world, but they did not. That group of people was determined to find an alternative way to approach God which led to a metaphorical

event in Scripture called the Tower of Babel. The Tower of Babel metaphorically represents a time and place when every false religion, every pagan religion, every cult, every mythological, every idolatrous religion, has its roots. It was a place of false worship. So from the Tower of Babel for the next 200 years the human race just goes deeper and deeper in false religions so that by the time you get to the call of Abraham at about 2000 BC, there wasn't a single believer in the true God left on earth. Once again the whole human race had succumbed to Satan's counterfeit religions which began at Babel. In other words, they were all idolaters including Abraham himself.

God had promised that He would send a Deliverer to undo the curse of sin that befell the human race when Adam and Eve sinned.(Gen. 3:15) After Cain killed Abel, God gave them another son whose name, Seth, meant "the appointed one". God later chose Noah, a descendent of Seth and a righteous man, to save mankind when God judged the wicked men on the earth in the Great Flood. Through Noah's son Shem, in the ninth generation, God chose another man named Abram (meaning "exalted father") to be in the lineage of Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God had promised that He would send a Savior and salvation to man. His plan was to call this man Abram, and from him make a great nation of people who would be not only the people from whom the Messiah would come, but also they would be God's chosen nation, a witness of God to all the earth. (See Deut. 7:7-8, 28:37, Isa. 43:9-10)

In Genesis 12:1-3 God called Abram (Abraham) to be the father of a new nation that God would create. God did not choose an existing nation on earth, but brought into being a special nation to carry out His plan for the redemption of mankind.

It All Began With God's Chosen People

God chooses Abraham and his descendants freely from all the peoples of the world to bless with his covenant and promise. Deuteronomy 14:2 says about the whole Jewish people, "***The LORD has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.***" And Amos 3:2 says, "***You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth.***" In Romans 11:28-29, Paul says, "***From the standpoint of the gospel they [the Jews] are enemies for your sake [you Gentiles], but from the standpoint of [election, or] God's choice, they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.***"

He set his favor on them and set them apart from all the peoples. Freely! Not because of any virtue or special value in them, but simply on the basis of his free choice: "***The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers***" (Deuteronomy 7:7-8). The Jews have a priority over Gentiles as the guardians of God's special revelation, the Old Testament Scriptures. The Jews have a priority over the Gentiles in that the Messiah himself, Jesus Christ, came first as a Jew to the Jews. The Jews have a priority over the Gentiles in that salvation is from the Jews. Jesus in John 4:22. Jesus says to the Samaritan woman at the well, "***You worship what you do not know; we [Jews] worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.***" This simply sums up all that we have seen so far. They are the chosen nation; the nation with God's special revelation; and the nation with the Messiah, the Savior. So, clearly, salvation is "from the Jews."

In Romans 11:17-24 where Paul compares the Jewish nation to an olive tree. He says that natural branches are broken off and unnatural branches were grafted in, meaning that Jews by birth were unbelieving and so cut off from the covenant of promise; and Gentiles who were believing were grafted in and saved by the covenant of promise. Verses 17-18 are crucial for us: "***If some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, [then] do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.***" In other words, salvation comes to us Gentiles from the root of God's covenant with the Jews. We are simply grafted in like wild olive branches that have no historical claim at all on being God's people. And God saves us by reckoning us children of Abraham by faith, as Paul says in Galatians 3:7, "***It is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.***" So Jews have priority because "***salvation is from the Jews.***" All salvation is salvation

through God's covenant with Abraham!

The Jews have a priority over the Gentiles in that Paul evangelized Jews first when he brought the gospel to a new place. For example, in Acts 13:46 Paul and Barnabas are preaching in Antioch of Pisidia, and the Jews will not listen to the gospel, so they say, "***It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.***" In other words, just as God chose Israel and revealed himself to Israel and sent the Messiah and Savior to Israel so that salvation is from Israel, it is fitting that in the spread of the Gospel to new places, the Jews hear first of their Messiah and the good news of his salvation. So Jews have a priority in the order of frontier missions when the gospel comes to a new place.

The Jews have a priority over the Gentiles in final judgment and final blessing.

In Romans 2:9-10, Paul says, amazingly, "***There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.***" In other words, the priority that the Jews have, if it is rejected and squandered will result in a priority in judgment. And if they are grateful for their priority and trust in the mercy of their Messiah, then they will go first into the final blessing of God. There are definite dangers in having this priority. "***From everyone who has been given much, much will be required***" (Luke 12:48). So when Paul says in Romans 1:16, "***The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek,***" we should call to mind these six ways that the Jews have a priority over the Gentiles.

They are the historic chosen people of God.

They are the guardians of God's special revelation, the Old Testament Scriptures.

The Messiah and Savior, Jesus, comes to the world as a Jew to Jews.

Salvation is from the Jews, since everyone who is saved is saved by being connected to the covenant with Abraham by faith.

The Jews are to be evangelized first when the gospel penetrates a new region. The Jews will enter first into final judgment and final blessing.

In What Ways Do the Jews Not Have Priority?

Now before we ask why Paul says this and what effect it should have on us, let's be sure we see several ways that the Jews do not have priority. This is extremely important.

1. The Jews do not have priority in righteousness or merit. Nor do Gentiles. We are on the same footing. That is one of the main points of the first two chapters of Romans. Paul concludes in Romans 3:9-10, "***What then? Are we [Jews] better than they [Gentiles]? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, 'THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE.'***" He makes the same point in Romans 3:22-23, "***There is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.***"

2. The Jews do not have priority in how they are saved. They are saved exactly the way Gentiles are. This is clear from Romans 3: 29-30, "***Is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also . . . God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.***" And from Romans 10:12, "***There is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; (13) for 'WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.'***" So neither Jews nor Gentiles have priority in how they are saved: both are saved by faith in Christ, not in any ethnic or religious distinctives.

3. The Jews do not have priority in participation in God's covenant blessings. The mystery of the gospel that Paul preaches, he says, is that Gentiles now are full partners in the blessings of Jewish salvation. Listen to Ephesians 2:12-13 and 18-19, "***You [Gentiles] were . . . separate from Christ [the Messiah], excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ . . . (18) for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household.***" Again in Ephesians 3:4-6, "***When you read you can***

understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, . . . that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus [the Messiah Jesus] through the gospel."

So Jews do not have priority in participation in God's covenant blessings. Gentiles are full fellow heirs of all the promises of God.

Why Paul Mentioned the Priority of the Jews

Why did Paul mention this priority of the Jews in Romans 1:16? "***The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first and also to the Greek***"? What effect should it have?

Being influenced by Romans 11:17-32, I think the answer is that Paul wants to humble both Jew and Greek and make them deeply aware that they depend entirely on mercy, not on themselves or their tradition or ethnic connections. To the Gentiles he says, in essence, salvation is of the Jews. You are not being saved by your Greek culture – or any other culture. You are being saved by a salvation that comes through the despised Semitic people called the Jews. "***You do not support the root [of the Abrahamic covenant], the root supports you.***" So do not boast over the branches (Romans 11:18). We Gentiles are saved by becoming, as it were, spiritual Jews (Romans 2:28-29). This should humble us and strip us of any arrogance and boasting in any presumed ethnic superiority. It also should vanquish anti-Semitism and fill us with zeal for evangelism to Jews.

Similarly, Paul says to the Jews, your salvation is not your own. It is God's and he gives it to whom he pleases. He can raise up from stones – even Gentile stones! – children to Abraham (Matthew 3:9). The words "also to the Greek" in Romans 1:16 would have been as offensive to the Jews as the words "to the Jew first" were to the Gentiles. What they thought were Jewish prerogatives are, in fact, shared by the lowliest Gentiles who believe. Both of us are being humbled. We Gentiles must humble ourselves to be saved through a Jewish Messiah and a Jewish covenant. Jews must humble themselves to receive unclean Gentiles into full covenant membership and share all the blessings of the promise of Abraham.

The whole point is that God is the One who has mercy. Ethnicity is not decisive here. There is no merit with him. We are all sinners. So the real emphasis falls back on that wonderful word "everyone" : "***The Gospel is the power of God to everyone who believes.***" So, whether Jew or Gentile, believe! And receive the power of God to save you from your sins and guilt and death and judgment and hell, and bring you home to ever-increasing joy in his presence forever and ever.

God made an unconditional covenant with Israel that He would make them a great nation (Gen. 12:2). God's promise was not conditional on the Jews believing or obeying God. God said this was His will and He would bring it into fruition regardless of Israel's disobedience. God promised to give them the land of Canaan for Abraham and his descendants forever. (Gen. 12:7, 13:14-15, 15:18-21, 17:8) God promised the Abrahamic covenant was an everlasting covenantmeaning it would never end. (Gen. 17:7, 19) God restated the covenant to Isaac and to Jacob Abraham's son and grandson. (Gen. 26:1-4, 28:1-14, 35:9-12, 48:4) This meant that the covenant God made with Abraham was everlasting and would be passed on to his descendants forever. Clearly God stated plainly that He would never forsake or reject the nation of Israel. So much for replacement theology.

How does Abraham teach us about faith?

In Hebrews Paul uses two critical issues in Abraham's life to help us understand biblical faith: the promised land and the promised son. When God called Abraham, he was living in Haran. God simply called him to go west to a land he would show him (12:1). Heb.12:4,5 provides us with our first insight into biblical faith. Heb. 11:8 ("By faith Abraham" . . . obeyed by going . . .) the first insight into biblical faith that we learn is that it is active rather than passive. It involves a willingness to act on God's truth.

The same God who had said "***Go to the land***" had also said "***I will give you the land.***" Faith depends on God to perform his will for you instead of taking matters into your own hands. It isn't because God has decided to accomplish his will through human beings who freely choose to cooperate with him, he always calls on us to do something (action). But because God is the One who is ultimately supplying

the power and resources to do what will glorify him, we will always need to depend on him because his will is humanly impossible.

The most important part of God's promise to Abraham was that through his descendants God would bless all the people-groups of the world. But how? Sarah was 65 and had always been barren, and Abraham was 75 and sexually weak. What would it look like for Abraham and Sarah to exercise faith in this situation? The action side of their faith involved continuing to have sex until they had a son (from 75/65 to 99/89)! After 14 years without a son, God gave Abraham a couple more actions through which to express his faith. He called on him to change his name from Abram ("exalted father") to Abraham ("father of a multitude of nations").

To have stopped having sex would be to stop having faith. He was also asked to get circumcised. His faith involved radical dependence on God to perform his will through and for them--because they knew they couldn't pull this off by themselves. They had no human power to conceive a child, and God had rejected their attempt to fulfill his will by their own ingenuity and power. In Rom. 4:19-21, Paul says that Abraham thought long and hard about the utter human impossibility of them pulling this off by themselves. But he continued to look at the situation in light of God's power, and decided (rationally) that "what God had promised, he was also able to perform." In spite of their contrary thoughts and feelings which they expressed to God, it is important to note they never rejected God's veracity.

After Abraham and Sarah finally had their son named Isaac, why did God continue to test Abraham's loyalty by asking him to sacrifice Isaac? It does not seem to make sense, since God knows everything about us and even our intentions. Do you not think it was absurd to ask for something from Abraham if we assume that God knew beforehand how faithful Abraham was?

At first glance, it seems that God's request to Abraham was unreasonable and possibly even cruel. What a horrifying test he put Abraham through, one might ask. Possibly, this was not a test of loyalty, but of faith. In the New Testament (and in the Old Testament) Abraham is the penultimate example of a person of faith. Romans chapter 4 describes Abraham, in his faith, as the father of all who are saved by faith. The testing of Abraham (and of Isaac as well, by the way) may be a prophetic foreshadow of what God the Father asked God the Son to do. Abraham was asked to sacrifice his one and only son, just like God sacrificed his one and only son. The place of the sacrifice was Mount Moriah, which is probably the exact same mountain where Jerusalem is built. The prophetic implication is great. Abraham received his son back from "the dead" on the third day. Isaac, like Jesus, carried the wood up Mt. Moriah which was to be used for the sacrifice.

Was this an astounding request? Yes. Did it require an almost superhuman amount of faith for Abraham to complete the task? Yes! Hebrews 11:17-19 offers a useful commentary on this test of Abraham. Here we see that Abraham reasoned in his mind that God could raise Isaac from the dead. Abraham's faith was so great that he trusted God's promise that a great nation would be built through Isaac, even in the face of what appears to be a terrible request. God honored the faith of Abraham. He provided a ram for the sacrifice. As promised, a great nation arose from the seed of Isaac, and in the end the Messiah came through that seed. All part of God's plan.

God knew what Abraham would do. He had absolutely no intention of letting Abraham kill Isaac. God does not force our decisions. God does not remove our free will, but God is omniscient. God knows what will happen before it happens. God predestined Jesus to die on the cross. God knew that his Son would rise from the dead. He foreshadowed this in the events surrounding the request for Abraham to offer up his son.

From our human perspective, living in a universe in which time is a linear thing, it is hard to understand how God can foreknow something and not predetermine it, but God is not subject to our limitations. No, it is not absurd for God to ask something of Abraham when, in principle, he knows the answer. For us humans in a linear time situation, it is hard to think about this, but God exists outside of time and God gives us free will. We are not his puppets. God's plan was to bless all nations through the man of faith: Abraham. Biblically, our faith is proven by our deeds (James 2:14-26) and Abraham is no exception to this rule. Personally, I like this plan. I am inspired by the faith of Abraham, and I am encouraged by God's willingness to justify Abraham by faith. Like James said, "**Abraham believed God**

and it was credited to him as righteousness." (Gal. 3:6).

Yet we find this potentially confusing. Why would God ask a person to do something to prove the faith which God already knew he had? I believe it is us, not God, who needs proof of our faith. However, we complete our faith by what we do and from a human perspective. This makes perfect sense.

God's covenant with Abram promised him that he would have many descendants and Canaan would be their "everlasting possession" if they remained faithful to God (Genesis 17:4-8). Later on God contacted Moses on Mount Sinai where He Himself inscribed his first written words on two stone tablets, which He then gave to Moses. God then went on to inspire Moses to write five books of Scripture that became known as the Pentateuch.

Jesus is a Proof Against Circular Reasoning

Jesus is the key to our belief in God, the Bible, and unshakable faith. It is no exaggeration to say that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is the key to everything. If you remove the resurrection of Jesus Christ from Christianity, you don't have Christianity, and the Bible is of no value.

In the Bible it is not circular to use Matthew to prove Genesis (Matthew 19:3-6, cf. Genesis 1:27, 2:24), or Paul to prove Luke (1 Timothy 5:18, cf. Luke 10:7) or Peter to prove Paul (2 Peter 3:15-16).

It is also not circular to use Jesus' clear statements to prove the Bible. His statements such as, ***'Scripture cannot be broken'*** (John 10:35) and the repeated ***'It is written ...'*** show that for Jesus, what Scripture said is what God said. Indeed, Jesus defended many of the doctrines that skeptics love to scoff at. Is Jesus the authority we need to prove the Bible is the Word of God? Yes, Jesus, an authenticated historical figure, proved His credentials (the Son of God) beyond doubt by rising from the dead (cf. Acts 17:31). This independent historical evidence breaks the circle. The biblical accounts of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, are independent of any connection with circular reasoning, and cannot be refuted.

Recorded history is our proof for the life of Jesus. Are you willing to put your faith in something outside of yourself? Just in case you are not willing to take this step, I will give you some reasons why you should trust the Bible: In the New Testament times there were many opponents of the Christian faith, yet none of them claimed that Jesus did not exist, that He was not crucified, or that His tomb was not empty. They all historically confirm these events, even though they opposed the faith! They proved the historical reliability of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus recorded in the bible. Here are some examples:

"Consequently, to get rid of the report Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus..."

-Cornelius Tacitus. Roman historian (55-120 A.D.)

Notice, first, that Tacitus reports Christians derived their name from a historical person called Christus (from the Latin), or Christ. He is said to have "suffered the extreme penalty," obviously alluding to the Roman method of execution known as crucifixion. This is said to have occurred during the reign of Tiberius and by the sentence of Pontius Pilatus. This confirms much of what the Gospels tell us about the death of Jesus. But what are we to make of Tacitus' rather enigmatic statement that Christ's death briefly checked "a most mischievous superstition," which subsequently arose not only in Judaea, but also in Rome? One historian suggests that Tacitus is here "bearing indirect . . . testimony to the conviction of the early church that the Christ who had been crucified had risen from the grave." While this interpretation is admittedly speculative, it does help explain the otherwise bizarre occurrence of a rapidly growing religion based on the worship of a man who had been crucified as a criminal. How else might one explain *that*?

"At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good and was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship. They reported that he had appeared to them three days after this crucifixion and that he was alive; accordingly, he was perhaps the messiah concerning whom the prophets have recounted wonders." - Josephus, Jewish historian (37-97 A.D.) Arabic version of Antiquities

"You have sent chosen and ordained men throughout all the world to proclaim that 'a godless and lawless heresy had sprung from one Jesus, a Galilean deceiver, whom we crucified, but His disciples stole Him by night from the tomb, where He was laid when unfastened from the cross, and now deceive men by asserting that He has risen from the dead and ascended to heaven.'" - Justin Martyr in Dialogue with Trypho, about 150 AD

Now my response to this objection from Trypho would be this: why would the apostles all die for something they knew was a lie? Since all but one did,! If they stole His body why would they die for it? It leaves us with the conclusion that the bible is true, and that Jesus did truly die and resurrect!

There are over 20,000 existing manuscripts; one of the oldest being the Dead Sea Scrolls, which match almost exactly the Hebrew text in KJV. What the original authors wrote, who were inspired, is in fact preserved in our bibles.

So although we could stand on the circular reasoning argument, because we trust what Scripture says, it is also true that the Bible proves itself to be true. I will submit to the authority of the Word of God, and put my faith in the God that is revealed from Scripture, because I truly believe that God spoke through the prophets, and Jesus gave the apostles authority and spoke through them.

The Old Testament specifically made many prophecies about the future; what is amazing is that ALL of them have come true notwithstanding those dealing with the end times which are yet to come. There are many prophecies, specifically from Daniel, that completely came true in the historic nations, and it is proved through history! Also, there are prophecies about Jesus that directly came true, and again history confirms that these things happened to Jesus! Read Isaiah 53, and realize this was written at least 733 years before Jesus death. The bible predicted the exact details of Jesus death.

The findings of human sensory experiences are the ultimate authority for discovering what is real and what is not, because our human senses have never discovered anything else: thus, human sense experience tells me that my principle is true.

So why does the Bible's authority surpass the circular reasoning of other authorities? Because the Bible IS fully in accord with what we know about the world around us. Science is confirmed by the Bible, and the Bible is confirmed by science. The Bible proves itself to be a reliable ultimate authority.

The Word is Absolute Truth

The ultimate standard for absolute truth is like this; any attempt to refute the Bible must assume things about the world that could only be true if the Bible were true in order to get started. The Bible not only provides the criteria for itself, but it does so for all other facts, therefore, the reasoning is not viciously circular. It gives us a foundation (the Biblical God) for rational reasoning (including laws of logic), science, morality, reliability of our senses and memory, and so on.

Indeed, ***"in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."*** Colossians 2:3

Circular reasoning is exactly what God did within the text of the Bible to prove it is His Word. However, circular reasoning as carried out by God in Holy Scripture must not be defined in the same context as circular reasoning as found in secular texts.

When we are talking about an ultimate intellectual criterion, a certain amount of circularity is unavoidable. So, when we begin with the Bible to defend the Bible, this is done with the conviction that the Word of God is the ultimate criterion for absolute truth. We say that the Bible is self-authenticating. It has no higher authenticating or verifying authority. When a five-year old says to his daddy, "Why do I have to do what you say?" The father need not answer with anything other than, "Because I said so!" For the child, there is no higher authority. And for the Christian, or anyone else for that matter, there is no higher authority than the Word of God. In fact, God Himself cannot refer to an authority greater than Himself.

Secular man's thinking on this subject is not neutral; it's darkened, fallen, and hostile to God. In the following pages I have included verse after verse of Scripture where God lets us know unequivocally how we should deal with this. These men, by nature, hate God and do everything in their power to hide from Him. Therefore, man must repent of his autonomous sinful thinking and rely upon God's revelation in order to come to a knowledge of the truth. Evidence, in itself, is not able to bring a sinful man to

salvation or the truth. He will interpret all facts sinfully rather than submit to God's interpretation of those facts. If Christianity is true, and it is, then we must argue from the basis of it. We cannot grant sinful, rebellious men neutral ground upon which to weigh the evidence for God since there is no such neutral ground.

Secular society backs itself into a corner when it places human reason above the Bible. It accuses those who turn to the Bible for an answer, of reasoning in a circle. But the question is, whether this boogie of 'circular reasoning' should prevent us from accepting the Bible as the inerrant Word of God. We cannot give a *normative* definition of religion without reasoning in a circle: It is doubtful our actual reasoning can ever quite avoid the 'circle,' except when our reasoning is purely formal and sterile. The same objection arises in connection with any discussion of the doctrine of inspiration. One could use the argument: God declares that He is true; therefore God is true. Here God's truth would be proved by His truth. Would that be a vicious reasoning in a circle?

Presupposing God exists to argue that God exists is a reasonable circular argument because without the God of the Bible, we have no basis for assuming the laws of logic and their properties, let alone absolute morality or the uniformity of nature.

While this argument is circular, it is a non-fallacious use of circular reasoning. Since we couldn't prove anything apart from the laws of logic, we must presuppose the laws of logic even to prove they exist. In fact, if someone were trying to *disprove* that laws of logic exist, he'd have to use the laws of logic in his attempt, thereby refuting himself. There are certain standards that can be proven with circular reasoning.

Also, much of what we accept about the Bible we accept by faith. Faith does not render reason invalid, but the Holy Spirit helps us believe what our sinful human minds will not accept. Therefore, I do not believe that an unbeliever—one who does not have the Spirit's help—can accept the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy. But this line of reasoning ought to be sufficient for the believer. I hold that all Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God. But what the unbeliever cannot do is accept that Jesus is the Son of God and that He is thus an inerrant authority.

Still, many wonder, why doesn't God reveal Himself to us in a manner that should erase any doubt concerning these questions? If God accepted the challenge of always having to prove His existence, what would it take? Would it have been necessary for Him to personally appear to and perform miracles to every human being ever born? But even that might not be enough to satisfy everyone.

Instead, God's self-revelation is provided by solid evidence in the form of His handiwork, human testimony and fulfilled prophecy that He is the living, intelligent Creator of the universe. This evidence is compelling, powerful and reasonable to those with an ear to hear and an eye to see.

Through the written word we find there is a personal God who actively communicates knowledge. That knowledge consists of facts and truths, events and their evaluation which man cannot know by himself. God created man in such a way that he's able to receive the speech of God which comes to him.

According to Scriptures God has spoken to us from the beginning. Adam and Eve heard the voice of God in the Garden of Eden.

The importance of God's speech as a fundamental means of His self-disclosure cannot be overemphasized. Doubtless He reveals Himself to us in many ways, but word is not the least of them. Creation itself is the product of God's speech: God speaks, and the worlds leap into being. Many of God's most dramatic deeds of revelation would not have been understandable apart from God's accompanying speech.

When Scripture makes reference to the fact that we can know God, we must not conclude that we know God exhaustively. We know God to the limit that He has revealed himself to humanity – through Scripture and Nature (Eph. 4.6; Rom. 1.19-20). ***Beyond His revelation, we cannot search*** (Isa. 40.28; 1 Cor. 2.10-16).

Eyewitness accounts of human interaction and conversations with Him have been duly recorded and preserved for us in the Bible. But does such documented testimony satisfy skeptics and scoffers? It never has, and it never will.

The “wise of the world”

God does not explicitly identify who the “wise” of this world are, but as we search the Scriptures it becomes quite clear who He is talking about. These would include scientists, atheists, evolutionists, gnostics and agnostics. There are those who are deeply educated in world history and philosophy. There are those of other religions that have studied all kinds of material for decades; their roots are deep and still growing. These people are, no doubt, brilliant, intelligent and typically those with which I need not contend.

These not only include the best of debaters, but religious leaders, too! Because of their so-called “wisdom” they do not come to know God! Actually, those who feel they must “know” all they can about worldly wisdom in order to “prove” the existence of God end up shooting themselves in the foot. The more they “know”, the less they understand. Very few of them would ever “boast in their weakness” or dare to be considered a “fool” to their peers of like mind, because of their prideful nature.

Fools For Christ

If the intellectual elite— the rich and powerful became believers, the common people might think Christianity was an elitist religion. But on the contrary, it has always been the case, that most of the people who have been Christians have been poor, uneducated people, not because they are the only ones who “fall for it,” but because God, by the power of the Holy Spirit has revealed to them the truth.

Fools for Christ are exhibited to the “wise world” as men condemned to death, spectacles and weak without honor. The message preached of Jesus Christ and Him crucified is deemed foolish by them, yet it is the power of God unto salvation to those who believe! Godly wisdom gladly receives this “foolish message” and the “fools for Christ” who bring it. On the last day, those who have believed in Christ will be seen as those who are wise.

The Apostle Paul said, “...*I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil* (Rom 16:19).”

The wise of the world, contrary to fools for Christ, are those who speak with cleverness and attempt to nullify the message of the cross. In the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 4:10, which famously says: “*We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.*” (KJV). And also: “*For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: "He catches the wise in their craftiness."* (1 Corinthians 3:19) “*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*” (1 Corinthians 1:18) “*For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.*” (1 Corinthians 1:21)

The wisdom of God in believers rejoices in weakness because this is how the power of Christ Jesus is made manifest! “*We are weak, but He is strong*”; Jeremiah in 8:9: “*The wise men are put to shame, they are dismayed and caught; behold, they have rejected the word of the LORD, and what kind of wisdom do they have?*” And who does God use to shame them? The “*foolish*” ones to the world; *the wise in Christ* (1 Cor 1:27).

Two things we need to remember when dealing with the “wise of the world”:

First, the Word of God says in Mat 5:11-12, “*Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*”

Second, Heb 4:12 tells us “*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*” These people do not know they have sin, for they have no spiritual “law” written in their hearts as believers do. John 12:48 “*He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke will judge him at the last day.*”

We don't "**wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places**" (Eph 6:12) and "**the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds**" (2 Cor 10:4, "**The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'**" (Ps 14:1) ---So who is the fool?

The following scriptures show the basic contents of "godly wisdom" and "worldly wisdom"; "godly foolishness" and "worldly foolishness".

Paul wrote some words of wisdom to the church at Corinth:

1 Cor 1:17-20 "**For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not in cleverness of speech, so that the cross of Christ would not be made void. For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, 'I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE, AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE.'** Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

1 Cor 1:21-22 "**For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified.**"

1 Cor 1:25 "**Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.** 1 Cor 1:27 "**God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong."**

1 Cor 2:1-3 "**And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God."**

1 Cor 3:18-20 "**Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise lower in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become wise [higher wisdom]. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written, 'He is **THE ONE WHO CATCHES THE WISE IN THEIR CRAFTINESS**'; and again, '**THE LORD KNOWS THE REASONINGS of the wise, THAT THEY ARE USELESS.**'"**

1 Cor 4:9-10 "**For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake ...we are weak... we are without honor."**

2 Cor 11:19 "**For you, being so wise, tolerate the foolish gladly.**"

2 Cor 11:30 "**If I have to boast, I will boast of what pertains to my weakness.**"

2 Cor 12:9 "**And He has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.' Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.**"

2 Cor 13:19 "**For we rejoice when we ourselves are weak...**

All those that witnessed the testimony of the apostles of the Lord were amazed because these men were unlearned. They could tell though that they had been with Christ. Truly the Holy Spirit displayed to the world that wisdom of the Lord. And that wisdom was used to witness to kings, queens, philosophers, sages, the geniuses of the day. The same is true today. The wisdom of the Bible is undeniable. Yet, to the secular world it remains a mystery.

Personally, I hold to the doctrine of clarity or perspicuity which means the Bible is understandable, it is not too mysterious to learn, and it is not just for the elite or the seminary graduate. As the scholar Tyndale said in 1500, 'any plowboy can understand it.' Lay people can interpret and understand God's Word on their own. I hold to a more literal approach to understanding God. Simply take God at His Word and believe. No believer is totally dependent on human teachers to comprehend God's Word. The clarity of Scripture means that the Bible is written in such a way that its teachings can be

understood by all who will read it seeking God's help and being willing to follow it.

Evidence of God's Written Word

There are both internal and external evidences that the Bible is truly God's Word. The internal evidences are those things within the Bible that testify of its divine origin. One of the first internal evidences that the Bible is truly God's Word is seen in its unity. Even though it is really sixty-six individual books, written on three continents, in three different languages, over a period of approximately 1500 years, by more than 40 authors who came from many walks of life, the Bible remains one unified book from beginning to end without contradiction. This unity is unique from all other books and is evidence of the divine origin of the words which God moved men to record.

Another of the internal evidences that indicates the Bible is truly God's Word is the prophecies contained within its pages. The Bible contains hundreds of detailed prophecies relating to the future of individual nations including Israel, certain cities, and mankind. Other prophecies concern the coming of One who would be the Messiah, the Savior of all who would believe in Him. Unlike the prophecies found in other religious books or those by men such as Nostradamus, biblical prophecies are extremely detailed. There are over three hundred prophecies concerning Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. Not only was it foretold where He would be born and His lineage, but also how He would die and that He would rise again. There simply is no logical way to explain the fulfilled prophecies in the Bible other than by divine origin. There is no other religious book with the extent or type of predictive prophecy that the Bible contains.

A third internal evidence of the divine origin of the Bible is its unique authority and power. While this evidence is more subjective than the first two, it is no less a powerful testimony of the divine origin of the Bible. The Bible's authority is unlike any other book ever written. This authority and power are best seen in the way countless lives have been transformed by the supernatural power of God's Word. Drug addicts have been cured by it, homosexuals set free by it, derelicts and deadbeats transformed by it, hardened criminals reformed by it, sinners rebuked by it, and hate turned to love by it. The Bible does possess a dynamic and transforming power that is only possible because it is truly God's Word.

There are also external evidences that indicate the Bible is truly the Word of God. One is the historicity of the Bible. Because the Bible details historical events, its truthfulness and accuracy are subject to verification like any other historical document. Through both archaeological evidences and other writings, the historical accounts of the Bible have been proven time and time again to be accurate and true. In fact, all the archaeological and manuscript evidence supporting the Bible makes it the best-documented book from the ancient world. The fact that the Bible accurately and truthfully records historically verifiable events is a great indication of its truthfulness when dealing with religious subjects and doctrines and helps substantiate its claim to be the very Word of God.

Another external evidence that the Bible is truly God's Word is the integrity of its human authors. As mentioned earlier, God used men from many walks of life to record His words. In studying the lives of these men, we find them to be honest and sincere. The fact that they were willing to die often excruciating deaths for what they believed testifies that these ordinary yet honest men truly believed God had spoken to them. The men who wrote the New Testament and many hundreds of other believers (1 Corinthians 15:6) knew the truth of their message because they had seen and spent time with Jesus Christ after He had risen from the dead. Seeing the risen Christ had a tremendous impact on them. They went from hiding in fear to being willing to die for the message God had revealed to them. Their lives and deaths testify to the fact that the Bible truly is God's Word.

A final external evidence that the Bible is truly God's Word is the indestructibility of the Bible. Because of its importance and its claim to be the very Word of God, the Bible has suffered more vicious attacks and attempts to destroy it than any other book in history. From early Roman Emperors like Diocletian, through communist dictators and on to modern-day atheists and agnostics, the Bible has withstood and outlasted all of its attackers and is still today the most widely published book in the world.

Throughout time, skeptics have regarded the Bible as mythological, but archeology has confirmed it as historical. Opponents have attacked its teaching as primitive and outdated, but its moral

and legal concepts and teachings have had a positive influence on societies and cultures throughout the world. It continues to be attacked by pseudo-science, psychology, and political movements, yet it remains just as true and relevant today as it was when it was first written. It is a book that has transformed countless lives and cultures throughout the last 2000 years. No matter how its opponents try to attack, destroy, or discredit it, the Bible remains; its veracity and impact on lives is unmistakable. The accuracy which has been preserved despite every attempt to corrupt, attack, or destroy it is clear testimony to the fact that the Bible is truly God's Word and is supernaturally protected by Him. It should not surprise us that, no matter how the Bible is attacked, it always comes out unchanged and unscathed. After all, Jesus said, **"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away"** (Mark 13:31). After looking at the evidence, one can say without a doubt that, yes, the Bible is truly God's Word.

What makes one wise in the eyes of God?

Consider the issues of education, intelligence and wisdom. What makes a person wise? Some of us are smart; but not as smart as we think, and others are smarter than they seem, which makes me wonder, how do we define smart? What makes one person smarter than another?

Go to 1 Corinthians 2:1-16. There are a lot of people searching for 'human wisdom'. Whether it is through the education system or human philosophy. Whatever it may be, it's all foolishness in God's eyes, as 1 Corinthians 3:18-20 says. That's not to say we don't bother with education, but just to recognize that Godly wisdom is more desirable. What should we be running after, and desiring above all else? Proverbs 8:10-11 speaks of wisdom being better than rubies or pearls, and there is nothing to be compared. You cannot learn Godly wisdom in a University and get a degree in it. It can only come to a heart in right relationship with God, and is seeking it. The Holy Spirit that dwells within us leads us into all truth. '... For the [Holy] Spirit searches diligently, exploring and examining everything, even sounding the profound and bottomless things of God [the divine counsels, and things hidden and beyond man's scrutiny]. (V:10).

His teachings must be spiritually discerned. A person cannot possibly understand spiritual truths, unless they have the Holy Spirit within, teaching them the hidden meanings, (1 Cor.2:13-14). The human mind, no matter how intelligent can comprehend spiritual truths without the Holy Spirit.

God raises up what the world considers foolish to shame the wise 1 Cor.1:25-28. This really stood out for me, as I was what the world would have considered foolish, not being well educated in spiritual things. But God chose me, and He chose you too. He can fill us with His wisdom and put worldly wisdom to shame. Let us desire and run after Godly wisdom. By doing so we will never be disappointed.

"For it is written, I will baffle and render useless and destroy the learning of the learned and the philosophy of the philosophers and the cleverness of the clever and the discernment of the discerning; I will frustrate and nullify them and bring them to nothing. Where is the wise man (the philosopher)? Where is the scribe (the scholar)? Where is the investigator (the logician, the debater) of this present time and age? Has not God shown up the nonsense and the folly of this world's wisdom?" (1 Corinthians 1:19-20)

God reveals Himself through His Creation

One sign of God's revelation is found in the realm of nature. The natural things we observe are only visible to us because God has revealed them to us. In Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe*, one footprint on the sand showed to the marooned hero that another person was on his island. In the same way, the heavens and the earth are filled with the countless footprints of God. These footprints we call intelligent design.

In chapter 1 we came to a knowledge and belief in God's existence by an examination of the basis for our own existence. This can be described as "natural" or "general" revelation. This does not mean that it merely comes naturally. Rather, it means that it is revelation that takes place within the realm of

nature observing God's creation. Man is unique in all of God's creation in that only he has a God-consciousness. You have never seen a rooster pray. A tiger does not ask a blessing for the food he is about to eat. Even the so-called praying mantis makes no intercession toward God. Man only was created to receive and understand the revelation of God.

It's not that nature tells Man all about God, but what it does tell Man about God, it tells abundantly. The sun is awesome in its vitality (rising or coming out from a cloud), strength (traversing the whole sky every day), and penetrating presence (its heat penetrating into every nook and cranny). The One who made the sun must be greater in all of these ways. All mankind can visualize personal examples all day long. Some of us are particularly struck by the immensity and order of the universe; others by the incredible order and complexity on the molecular, atomic, and sub-atomic level. All of these things teach us that there must be a Creator who is incredibly powerful, amazingly intelligent, eternal—and personal at least in that he has a mind and will.

This evidence of God is available to all humanity, all over the world. It is not a message given through human language, but nevertheless its "utterances" have been "sounded" all over the world. If it is true that there is a single, unifying principle eternally at work in the universe, through which all things come into being and by which all things are ordered, one would expect that it would be attested to by other sources. This is why theologians call this part of God's revelation "general"—it is generally available rather than accessible to just a special group. —this is what He is for Man throughout the world. That is in fact the case. We find every civilization (throughout the world) from time immemorial, attests to the existence of a creator God. Much as God manifests Himself in the individual human's intellect or reason, I believe that these worldwide sources reflect a valid yet severely limited comprehension of the God of the universe. However, God did not leave us wanting, and has provided a much more personal venue for His revelation via Holy Scripture.

The Case for Biblical History

I maintain history is the bedrock of the Bible. Genesis is the perfect example of this. From the first to the last chapter, it is a book of history that records what happened from the beginning of the world up to the death of Joseph in Egypt. It doesn't treat any of the events any differently from any of the other events: the creation of the world in six days, to the fall of Adam, to the growth of humanity, to the global flood, to the tower of Babel, to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. And the genealogies of historical personages. It's a record of people and events.

Consider the creation of man. The historicity of Adam is abundantly clear from both the Old and New Testaments. Right from the beginning, the text describes real time and names people and places. Genesis 1 speaks of years and seasons and days with evenings and mornings governed by the sun, moon, and stars. Genesis 2 describes the location of the Garden of Eden and names four rivers. Genesis 4 names the city that Cain built. Genesis 6–8 describes certain events on specific days of different months of the 600th and 601st years of Noah's life. The eleven occurrences of the Hebrew word *toledoth* scattered through Genesis (in *Genesis 2:4, 5:1, 6:9, 10:1*, and so on) meaning "generations" or "descendants" and translated as "**this the account of**" or "**these are the generations of**" tie the whole book together as one historical record. Few evangelicals doubt the historicity of Genesis 12–50, but there is no break in the literary style between chapters Genesis 11 and Genesis 12. The Abraham and Terah of Genesis 11 are the same men in Genesis 12. The genealogies of Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 connect Adam to Noah to Abraham so that all of the men named were equally historical. The Hebrew verb forms in Genesis 1, which is often claimed to be a unique genre, show conclusively that the first chapter of the Bible is historical narrative just like the rest of Genesis.

Outside of Genesis, the genealogies of 1 Chronicles 1:1–9:44 show that the ancestries of the tribes of Israel go back to Abraham and then to Adam. *Luke 3:23–38* traces the lineage of Jesus back through David and Abraham to Adam. All those named in Jesus' genealogy must be real historical people or else Jesus is descended from a metaphor or myth. Paul treats as historical fact that Adam brought sin and death into the world (*Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:21–22*) and that Eve was created from Adam and was deceived by Satan (*1 Corinthians 11:8–9; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13–14*). Although

John and Peter don't mention Adam or Eve directly, John refers to Cain's murder of Abel as historical (*1 John 3:11–12*). And Peter believed that the account of the Flood was just as historical as the account of the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah, even emphasizing that only eight people were saved in the Ark (*1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:4–9*), and that people who deny the Second Coming and the Flood and Creation are deliberate scoffers (*2 Peter 3:3–7*). Jude says that Enoch was in the seventh generation after Adam (*Jude 14*).

Jesus certainly believed that Noah, the Ark, and the Flood were historical (*Matthew 24:37–39*), as were the accounts of the murder of Abel (*Luke 11:50–51*) and the transformation of Lot's wife into salt (*Luke 17:28–32*). Quoting from Genesis 1–2 as historical fact, Jesus insisted that God created marriage to be a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman (*Matthew 19:3–6*). There is no question that the biblical writers and Jesus took Genesis 1–11 as straightforward history and that Moses intended it to be understood that way.

So Adam and Eve were literal, historical people who literally fell in sin in the Garden of Eden after Eve listened to the deceiving words of the serpent. But that is not all that we must affirm if we are faithful to God's Word.

Adam Was God's Model for Man

Scripture is crystal clear that Adam was the first man (*1 Corinthians 15:45*) and that Eve was the first woman, the mother of the human race (*Genesis 3:20*). There were no humans before them. God is also clear that He created Adam and Eve supernaturally. In *Genesis 1* there is a clear distinction between the supernatural creation of the first plants, animals, and man and woman (by God's Word: "let there be . . .") and the natural procreation of all the subsequent plants, animals and people (from the "seed" in the first creatures as they were fruitful and multiplied).

The Bible also absolutely rules out the idea that Adam and Eve's bodies evolved from some pre-existing ape-like creature. In *Genesis 1* the first two humans were made distinct from the plants and land, sea, and flying creatures. They were all intended and designed to reproduce "after their kind," not to change from one kind to another kind. So mankind was categorically distinct. *Genesis 2:7* informs us that God made Adam from dust, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a "living being." These two words are a translation of the Hebrew *nephesh chayyah*. Those same two Hebrew words are used in *Genesis 1:21, 24, 30; 2:19; and 9:10* to describe sea creatures, land animals, and birds. They also are living beings, though they are not made in the image of God. So God did not make a living creature, breathe into it, and transform it into man. God did not make Adam from a pre-existing living creature.

In contrast, *Genesis 2:22* tells us that Eve was made from a pre-existing living creature: Adam. But there is no legitimate way to interpret "from his rib" to mean "from a pre-existing hominid distinct from Adam." This verse cannot possibly be harmonized with the evolution story without doing great violence to the text. It describes supernatural surgery. Scripture could not be clearer: God did not use evolution to create Adam and Eve from some ape-like ancestors.

Not only does the Bible teach us that Adam and Eve were supernaturally created as the first two humans who rebelled against God resulting in death. This has also been orthodox Christian teaching from the beginning of the church.

When Adam was Created

The Bible also makes it clear that Adam was created on the sixth literal day of history. *Exodus 20:8–11* says that God created heaven, Earth, and the seas, and *all that is in them* in six days, the very same kind of days as in a human workweek. God didn't create anything before the six days because those days began in *Genesis 1:1*.

Jesus understood Genesis this way. In *Mark 10:6 and 13:19* He reveals His belief that Adam and Eve were at the beginning of creation, not billions of years after the beginning, as in an evolutionary view. Paul believed the same, for in *Romans 1:20* he says that people have seen the witness of the creation to the existence and nature of the Creator "since the creation of the world." This only makes sense if Adam were created on the sixth day of Creation Week.

The Bible also teaches that death, disease, and other natural evils were brought into the original “very good” creation when God cursed the creation because of Adam’s rebellion. Therefore the geological record of rock layers and fossils cannot represent an earth history of hundreds of millions of years before man, as evolutionists assert. Furthermore, if there really were millions of years before Adam, then most of the animals lived and died before Adam and Eve could rule over them, as God commanded (*Genesis 1:26*), and for most of their existence the sun, moon, and stars could not serve one of the three divine purposes for which they were created: for man to tell time (as well as for dividing night and day and for giving light on the Earth; *Genesis 1:14*).

The Satanic Lie of Creation

The Apostle Paul inseparably connects Jesus to Adam. Jesus came to rectify the damage done by Adam (*Romans 5:12–19*; *1 Corinthians 15:21–22* and *1 Corinthians 15:45*). Adam brought sin and death into the world; Jesus brought righteousness and life into the world. The good news of the gospel cannot be properly understood without understanding the bad news of *Genesis 3*. We are all sinners in need of a Savior because we inherited our sin nature from Adam and continue to rebel against God just as he did. No Adam: no gospel. If Satan can convince us that Adam and the Fall are not historical, then Jesus died for a mythological problem and He is a mythological savior offering us a mythological hope. Satan has already conscripted a large number of atheists who understand this better than many Christians: No Adam and Eve means no need for a savior. It also means that the Bible cannot be trusted as a source of unambiguous, literal truth. It is completely unreliable, because it all begins with a myth, and builds on that as a basis. No fall of man means no need for atonement and no need for a redeemer.

Because of Satan’s lies many professing Christians are beginning to reason in a similar way and radically change the meaning of the death of Jesus. For example, the challenge of taking “God’s Two Books” (nature and the Bible) seriously has grown dramatically in recent years as genetic evidence has convinced many that Adam and Eve cannot have been historical figures, at least as described in the Bible. Those of us who are scientifically informed are already aware that the evidence is seriously undermining Creation-Fall-Redemption theology.

The evolutionist claim that scientists have proved that the genomes of chimpanzees and humans are 96–98% identical and that chimp chromosomes 2A and 2B fused end-to-end to form human chromosome 2, confirming evolution. Both of these claims have been thoroughly refuted by credible geneticists. The fossil evidence lacks the certitude to support human evolution. Rather the public is being deceived by incorrect assumptions and artistic imagination masquerading as scientific fact.

As with so many other truths in *Genesis 1–11*, one of Satan’s greatest ploys is the denial of a literal Adam which is an assault on the authority and inerrancy of the Word of God and therefore a subtle way of calling God a liar. But as *Romans 3:4* says, “**Let God be true but every man a liar.**” As evidenced by the Supreme Court’s recent decision to legalize same-sex “marriage,” God’s truth is under attack as never before in America. The atheist dogma of evolution and millions of years is the foundation of those attacks and just as Scripture warns repeatedly, those attacks are coming both from those outside the church and from professing Christian leaders inside the church (*Acts 20:28–32*; *2 Peter 2:1–3*).

We must cling to God’s inerrant, authoritative Word and equip ourselves and our children and grandchildren with the apologetic tools to boldly, humbly, and graciously defend the truth and expose the Satanic lies and deceptions imputed in nonbelievers and false teachers.

As awesome and widespread is our knowledge and our physical senses and our intellect, it is not enough to overcome the likes of Satan without God. The Apostle John received the KEY to overcoming Satan. Jesus told John that the “brethren” overcame Satan “**by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony**” -- and by completely dedicating themselves to Christ, even if it meant martyrdom (*Rev. 12:11*).

The Mind of God

Even though God has made his existence and presence known to man as revealed through nature and His written Word, He has not revealed completely Who He is to our satisfaction. For this reason scholars, philosophers, and theologians have written thousands upon thousands of books and papers attempting to resolve for themselves exactly what they think is in the “mind” of God. It is for this very reason that there are so many completely different views of God. And have you ever wondered why? You’re reading the same Bible, after all, and supposedly interacting with the same God. How can one person have a rigid, black and white view of God while another sees more mystery and ambiguity? How can two intellectual persons have such different views of the same Biblical text?

How incredible it will be when we meet God face to face and understand who He is! In the meantime, to a large degree, it is a mystery. **“For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known”.**(1Cor. 13:12).

He has revealed enough of His nature to man, to know that we will never understand all of Him. It is impossible to define God. He is in all things, but not equated with all that is. He can never be fully grasped with our finite minds and experiences. **“Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor? To whom, then, will you compare God? What image will you compare him to?”** (Isaiah 40:13, 1). The more a believer learns about Him, the more he realizes how little he knows. God has been personally active in the world since its creation and yet He is also set apart from it, superior in nature. Thus, we have the mystery of God’s immanence and transcendence.

God has let us know He is fully aware of the frailty of our human nature. It was He who after all created us. He knows the limitations of man, having set those limits Himself. The fact of creation via an omniscient Creator presupposes that God has a plan and an order for the universe that He has created. In view of this He has personally revealed to man those things concerning His plan that He deems man “needs to know,” and He has kept secret those things we don’t need to know.

The Transcendence of God.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. **“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”** (Isaiah 55:8-9). The transcendence of God is closely related to his sovereignty. It means that God is above, other than, and distinct from all he has made - he transcends it all. Paul says that there is **“one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”** (Ephesians 4:6). Scripture says elsewhere, **“For you, O LORD, are the Most High over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.”** (Psalms 97:9; cf. 108:5).

So how did God carry out this personal revelation of those things He wants us to know? One of the great on-going theological controversies centers on how God first communicated directly with man.

God’s Holy Scripture teaches that it was through the history of the Jewish people that God chose to personally reveal Himself to man. The Israelites were the first to identify and describe God. In the Israelite’s eventful history and through the words she spoke as that history unfolded, God gave us His unique revelation. Out of the Israelites God chose a special cadre of men to actually transmit His Word to mankind.. This first group of men were called prophets. A prophet is an individual who was contacted by God, and served as an intermediary with humanity, delivering this knowledge directly from God to mankind.

God communicated with us through these chosen men called prophets. The original use of the term prophet applied to those who brought the word to the nation of Israel. As a mouthpiece or spokesman for God, the prophet’s primary duty was to speak forth God’s message to God’s people in the historical context of what was happening among God’s people. Their message can be seen in a three-fold function they had among the people of God in the Old Testament: *First, they functioned as preachers* who expounded and interpreted the Mosaic law to the nation of Israel. *Second, they functioned as predictors* who announced coming judgment, deliverance, and events relating to the Messiah and His kingdom. Predicting the future was never intended merely to satisfy man’s curiosity, but was designed to

demonstrate that God knows and controls the future, and to give purposeful revelation. The prediction given by a true prophet would be visibly fulfilled. *Finally, they functioned as watchmen* over the people of Israel. The prophet Ezekiel stood as a watchman on the walls of Zion ready to trumpet a warning against religious apostasy. He warned the people against political and military alliances with foreign powers, the temptation to become involved in idolatry and Canaanite cultic worship, and the danger of placing excessive confidence in religious formalism and sacrificial ritual.

The first time the word "prophet" is used in the Bible is Genesis 20:7 where in a dream, God tells the King of Gerar that Abraham is a prophet. Then Moses, according to the Bible, was the first prophet to see God and to hear Him speak. John The Baptist was the last prophet of the Old Testament, and the first in the New Testament.

During the first 2500 years of human history, it is generally believed there was no written revelation, although this may be in error (see cuneiform writing on pp. 39). Even without the written language, oral transmission of knowledge in those ancient times was taken very seriously and was done very accurately (assisted by the Holy Spirit even then). So how was the actual Bible written? The Bible was physically produced by men. It was penned by men -- but these men were totally controlled by a Sovereign God as they wrote. These men, about 40 in number, chosen by God, are identified as the holy prophets, evangelists, and apostles. The introduction of the written Word of God began in the time of Moses., but the finished canon of Scripture as we know it today was not completed until about 300 AD.

Initially, these Israelite prophets recorded the Word of God, resulting in what they termed "The Torah." The Old Testament is accepted as the Torah in Judaism and as the older part of the Bible (Old Testament) by Christians. We now believe the complete extant record of God's revelation to man resides in this book we call the Bible. We believe the Bible and the Word of God are one and the same.

Of the 40 or so authors of the books of the Bible. Most of them we know, but there were anonymous writers too. Some of the authors wrote one book, some wrote several.

Moses is credited with the first five books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy which are called the Pentateuch. These books cover creation to his own death at the end of Deuteronomy. It's been suggested that another person, who took over the spiritual leadership of the Israelites, completed Deuteronomy.

The Prophet Moses

It has become fashionable for modern scholars to believe that the Pentateuch is a result of a compilation of various documents labeled J, E, D, P, which were eventually put together by an editor in its present form about 400 BC. This fanciful and elaborate theory, however, has little to recommend it and is based upon erroneous methods of investigation.

As C. S. Lewis (A noted Christian apologist and scholar) illustrates from personal experience, when he writes about the critics' application of their methods to his words: "What forearms me against all these reconstructions is the fact that I have seen it all from the other end of the stick. I have watched reviewers reconstructing the genesis of my own books in just this way."

"Until you come to be reviewed yourself you would never believe how little of an ordinary review is taken up by criticism in the strict sense: by evaluation, praise or censure of the book actually written. Most of it is taken up with imaginary histories of the process by which you wrote it."

"The very terms which the reviewers use in praising or dispraising often imply such a history. They praise a passage as 'spontaneous' and censure another as 'labored'; that is, they think they know that you wrote the one *currente calamo* and the other *invita Minerva*."

"What the value of such reconstructions is I learned very early in my career. I had published a book of essays; and the one into which I had put most of my heart, the one I really cared about and in which I discharged a keen enthusiasm, was on William Morris. And in almost the first review I was told that this was obviously the only one in the book in which I had felt no interest."

"Now don't mistake. The critic was, I now believe, quite right in thinking it the worst essay in the book; at least everyone agreed with him. Where he was totally wrong was in his imaginary history of the causes which produced its dullness."

"Well, this made me prick up my ears. Since then I have watched with some care imaginary histories both of my own books and of books by friends whose real history I knew.

"Reviewers, both friendly and hostile, will dash you off such histories with great confidence; will tell you what public events had directed the author's mind to this or that, what other authors had influenced him, what his over-all intention was, what sort of audience he principally addressed, why—and when—he did everything."

"Now I must first record my impression; then, distinct from it, what I can say with certainty. My impression is that in the whole of my experience not one of these guesses has on any one point been right; that the method shows a record of 100 percent failure."

"You would expect that by mere chance they would hit as often as they miss. But it is my impression that they do no such thing. I can't remember a single hit. But as I have not kept a careful record, my mere impressions may be mistaken. What I think I can say with certainty is that they are usually wrong..." (Christian Reflections, p. 159–160).

It must be initially stated that Moses was in a position to write the Pentateuch. He was educated in the royal court of Egypt, which was highly advanced academically. He had firsthand knowledge of the geography of Egypt and the Sinai, with plenty of time—forty years in wandering and forty more years beyond that—to compose his work. At the same time that Moses lived, there were uneducated slaves working in the Egyptian turquoise mines writing on the walls, thus demonstrating the extent of writing in Moses' day.

The evidence within the Pentateuch points to Mosaic authorship, since it clearly portrays Moses as the author of certain portions. "**And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD**" (Exodus 24:4, KJV). "**And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people**" (Exodus 24:7, KJV). "And the Lord said to Moses, **'Write these words; in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel'**" (Exodus 34:27, RSV). To these references many others could be added.

Not only does the internal evidence of the Scriptures make it clear that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, but other Old Testament books make Mosaic authorship clear. Joshua 8:32 (KJV) refers to "**the law of Moses, which he wrote.**" Additional Old Testament references include I Kings 2:3, II Kings 14:6, and Joshua 23:6, which attribute to Moses the authorship of the Pentateuch.

Jewish tradition is firm in its belief in Mosaic authorship. Ecclesiasticus, one of the books of the apocrypha, written about 180 b.c., states, "**All this is the covenant-book of God Most High, the Law which Moses enacted to be the heritage of the assemblies of Jacob**" (Ecclesiasticus 24:23). The Talmud, in Baba Bathra, 146, which is a Jewish commentary on the first five books (around 200 b.c.), along with the writings of Flavius Josephus (born a.d. 37) and Philo (a.d. 20) also concur.

Early Christian tradition likewise agrees that Moses composed the Pentateuch. The writings of Junilius (a.d. 527–565) and Leontius of Byzantium (sixth century a.d.) along with Church fathers Melito (a.d. 175), Cyril of Jerusalem (a.d. 348–386), and Hilary (a.d. 366) teach that Moses wrote the Pentateuch.

Add to this the testimony of the New Testament. The apostles believed that "**Moses wrote unto us**" (Mark 12:19, KJV) as did the apostle Paul, who when speaking of a passage in the Pentateuch said, "**Moses describeth**" (Romans 10:5, KJV). However, the issue as to the authorship of the first five books is once-and-for-all solved by the testimony of the God-man Jesus Christ. Jesus made it clear that Moses wrote these books (Mark 7:10; 10:3–5; 12:26; Luke 5:14; 16:29–31; 24:27, 44; John 7:19, 23).

In Matthew 17:3 "**And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah talking with him.**" Here Moses appeared with the transfigured Jesus.

In John 5:45–47, Jesus states, "**Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?**"

Those are the words of Jesus Christ--the Son of God! What else does one need? If one does not accept the words of Jesus Christ in the literal sense, then there is no room for debate.

Two other considerations to be taken into account when examining the evidence with regard to those who do not believe that Moses wrote the Pentateuch are their view of the world and archaeology.

Those who advocate that Moses is not the author usually hold to the idea that there is no supernatural work of God in the world, nor has there ever been. Thus, it would be foolish to believe all the historical information written about the creation of the world, the crossing of the Red Sea, God speaking to Moses, or even the historical evidence that Moses, a prophet of God, wrote the account in the first place. The whole idea is more of a story.

What they fail to do is consider the evidence because of their view of the world. This type of reasoning is faulty. First, one examines the evidence and then decides his case. Simply examining the evidence doesn't mean one will agree with someone else's conclusions, but it does mean he is not rejecting the conclusions out of ignorance.

Second, in the past fifty years archaeological finds have vindicated many of the Old Testament claims supporting the probability of Mosaic authorship. This is because most all of the finds demonstrate that only someone who lived during the time the Bible purports that Moses lived could have known and written about the things in these books.

When all this evidence is considered together, the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is shown to be a fact. Such primary evidence would be accepted without hesitation in a court of law, and any theory of multiple documents would be ruled out as inadmissible. There is simply no evidence to support that theory which cannot be very reasonably answered.

End of C.S. Lewis article.

We can ask, where did Moses get the information to write the Book of Genesis? He wasn't present for any of the events mentioned in it. So there still remains the question as to the method by which he received and transmitted it. There are three possibilities: (a) he received it all by direct revelation from God, either in the form of audible words dictated by God and transcribed by him, or else by visions given him of the great events of the past, which he then put down in his own words, as guided subconsciously by the Holy Spirit; (b) he received it all by oral traditions, passed down over the centuries from father to son, which he then collected and wrote down, again as guided by the Holy Spirit; (c) he took actual written records of the past, collected them, and brought them together into a final form, again as guided by the Holy Spirit.

Evidently any of these methods would be consistent with both the doctrine of plenary verbal inspiration and that of Mosaic authorship. However, neither of the first two methods has a parallel anywhere in the canon of Scripture. "Visions and revelations of the Lord" normally have to do with prophetic revelations of the future (as in Daniel, Ezekiel, Revelation, etc.). The direct dictation method of inspiration was used mainly for promulgation of specific laws and ordinances (as in the Ten Commandments, the Book of Leviticus, etc.). The Book of Genesis, however, is entirely in the form of narrative records of historical events. Biblical parallels to Genesis are found in such books as Kings, Chronicles, Acts, and so forth. In all of these, the writer either collected previous documents and edited them (e.g., I and II Kings, I and II Chronicles), or else recorded the events which he had either seen himself or had ascertained from others who were witnesses (e.g., Luke, Acts).

It is also significant that, although the Book of Genesis is quoted from or alluded to at least two hundred times in the New Testament, in none of these references is it ever stated that Moses was the actual author. That being said, it is especially significant that Moses is mentioned by name at least eighty times in the New Testament, approximately twenty-five of which refer to specific passages attributed to Moses in the other books of the Pentateuch.

While this evidence is not conclusive, it does favor the explanation that, while Moses actually wrote the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, he served mainly as compiler and editor of the material in the Book of Genesis. This in no way minimizes the work of the Holy Spirit, who infallibly guided him in this process of compilation and editing, just as He later did the unknown compiler

and editor of the Book of Kings and Chronicles. It would still be appropriate to include Genesis as one of the books of Moses, since he is the human writer responsible for its present form. In fact, this explanation gives further testimony to the authenticity of the events recorded in Genesis, since we can now recognize them all as firsthand testimony.

Most likely Moses compiled and edited earlier written records that had been handed down from father to son via the line of the patriarchs listed in Genesis. That is, Adam, Noah, Shem, Terah, and others each wrote down an individual account of events which had occurred in his own lifetime, or concerning which he in some way had direct knowledge. These records were kept, possibly on tablets of stone, in such a way that they would be preserved until they finally came into Moses' possession. He then selected those that were relevant to his own purpose (as guided by the Holy Spirit), added his own explanatory editorial comments and transitional sections, and finally compiled them into the form now known as the Book of Genesis.

After many excavations in the Middle East, archaeologists have found Ancient writings called "cuneiform" writings that date back all the way to 3500 B.C. We do not know exactly when writing was first invented, but the oldest writing samples that still exist today date from around 3500 B.C. They come from Sumeria, a land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in modern Iraq. Egyptian writings from about the same time have also survived. Adam was still alive at that time, and so writing could have gone back even farther. It is even conceivable that Adam could have composed his own eyewitness account of creation!

This may be a surprise to some people, but a reference to writing is found in Genesis 5:1 which says: "***This is the book of the generations of Adam.***" This might suggest that the art of writing was known within the lifetime of Adam, which could make writing as old as the human race itself!

Cuneiform writing became the system used by all civilized countries east of the Mediterranean-Assyrian, Babylonia, Persia, and the Hittites. Cuneiform writing consists of wedge-shape impressions ("cuneia" means "wedge") made in plastic clay. The Hebrew word for "to write" means "to cut in" or "to dig." Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would have used this system of writing.

Although papyrus was the common writing material in Egypt. Cuneiform writing was used in the Tell-el-Amarna tablets found in Egypt in 1888. Among these clay tablets were letters, dated about 1400 B.C., from Palestinian officials to the Egyptian government—all written in Cuneiform.

It is no wonder that God allowed Pharaoh's daughter to raise Moses. He could have easily learned cuneiform writing, and so readily translate the Hebrew cuneiform tablets of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, and Adam for the Israelites in the wilderness. Even in the book of Acts, in chapter 7 verses 21-22 Stephen says: "***And when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son...And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.***"

The Remaining Books of The Bible

The books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth are historical documents written before or during the reign of King David presumably by priestly historians.

The Psalms were written by King David, Moses, Solomon, the sons of Korah, the sons of Asaph and Ethan the Ezrahite. There are also some Psalms that were written anonymously.

Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes were written by King Solomon, though chapters 30 and 31 of Proverbs were written by Agur and Lemuel respectively.

Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Nahum and Zephaniah were the prophets who penned the books with their names.

The writers of Samuel, Kings, Esther, and Job are unnamed.

Habakkuk, Joel, Obadiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were written by the prophets' named respectively.

Jeremiah wrote both Lamentations and Jeremiah while Ezra wrote Ezra, Nehemiah and possibly Chronicles.

In the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote what we call the Synoptic gospels,

and Luke also wrote the book of Acts. Paul is responsible for more than a third of the New Testament in the Pauline Letters which are Romans, 1st Corinthians, 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st Thessalonians, 2nd Thessalonians, 1st Timothy, 2nd Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews (which I ascribe to the Apostle Paul, but questioned by some scholars).

Peter of the Twelve Disciples wrote 1st and 2nd Peter. John, the Disciple that Jesus loved, wrote 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John and also the book of Revelation.

The book of James has been credited to James the brother of Jesus and the book of Jude was written by Jude the brother of James.

God inspired these men to write down what He wanted to reveal to mankind. One of the reasons we can know that God inspired them is that nothing any of them wrote down disagrees with anything the others wrote. It is amazing that those men from different walks of life wrote the scriptures in different countries over a time span of about 4,000 years. None of them met or knew more than a few of the others. When many of the Old Testament prophets were writing down God's word, they did not even understand the words themselves. They especially did not understand many of the prophecies about future events.

Divine Inspiration becomes more and more obvious, as we study the Bible, the Word of God. Each verse, backs up another verse; each truth, is further explained by another truth. For the Bible to be penned by so many different people, from different walks of life, over such an expanse of time, and for it to happen that each part backs up another part, fitting together like puzzle pieces, is only possible through Divine Inspiration.

God's Hired Men

There is but one source in the Bible, and that is God Himself. We must keep focused on that point and avoid the distraction of focusing on the men God chose to transmit His Word. In the vernacular of today we could say these are God's hired men. They were chosen to carry out a specific job and nothing more. We don't know what God's job-description was for these men, but whatever it was, we believe God knew what He wanted when He picked them out, and there is no use in second guessing either the men or the process. We must believe and rely on God in this respect instead of depending on our own ingenuity, and this means that we must turn to the context of the Bible to discern the authoritative word. God speaks to us through the Scriptures not to make us scholars, but to reveal His plan to man.

Too many scholars dwell on the personalities of the men who penned the Scriptures, rather than concentrate on the content. I have observed they spend an inordinate amount of time analyzing the minds of men when they should be concentrating on the mind of God. They fail to see the forest for the trees; they fail to see the big picture. I hope to avoid this error as I compose this treatise.---[Foss]

What is the Word of God?

Does the Bible claim to be the Word of God? *Absolutely!* It only takes a simple search of Scripture to discover the phrase "***Thus saith the Lord***" throughout the Bible. That's a claim to being God's Word. Then there's that whole "God-breathed" thing (so often minimized incorrectly as "inspired"). And if it is God's Word, can God err? Of course not. "The Spirit testifies that it's the Word of God."

Only about one-third of the American adult population believes the Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally word for word. The rest (including many noted theologians) either feel that the Bible is the inspired word of God, but not literally so, or that it is a book of ancient fables, legends, and history as recorded by man.

One's view of the authority of the Bible has been and remains a key focal point for arriving at an answer to Pilate's question "what is truth?". All discussion on the nature of God and man's place in the universe must center on the Bible being the ultimate reference.

Once you accept the Bible as the Word of God, everything else concerning our eternal destiny becomes moot. Therefore, the key to the question, "what is truth?" is found only by searching the Scriptures, and believing it.

The literally "God-breathed" Words of Scripture.

I'm sure most of you who have lived in the northern climes have breathed on a pane of glass in the winter and seen your breath take form as the glass fogged up. Well, that's what happened with the Bible. We can say **God breathed out** words – and those words took form on the pages of the Bible.

In 2 Timothy 3:16, it says, "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...*"

The phrase "*given by inspiration of God,*" is one word in the Greek text. It is the word *theopneustos*, which means "**God-breathed.**" *Theopneustos* is a compound word, with *theo* the Greek word for **God**, attached to the word *pneustos* which means "**wind, or spirit, or breath.**" We have this word in our English word *pneumonia* – a disease of the breath, or lungs.

So, Timothy literally says that all scripture is "**God-breathed.**" When you think about it, that's what words are. They are breath resonated over the vocal chords and shaped by the tongue and lips and teeth. When we speak – it is our breath.

Therefore, we can say all Scripture is God's breath, or God's Holy Spirit. When the human authors like Moses, or David, or Isaiah, or Paul, wrote Scripture – that Scripture was God's inspired Word. These men were guided in such a way that what they wrote was exactly what God wanted them to write. God actually spoke through them so that the result was a book that was really written by God. "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.*" It is "**God-breathed.**"

So – The next time you see your breath on a cold day, think about this verse. The very words of the Bible is like seeing the effects of God's breath.

God Speaks Through Jesus Christ

If one yields to the authority of Jesus Christ as the creator God, we must, in turn, yield to Christ's view of Scripture itself. Anyone and everyone who claims to be a Christian (a believer under the authority of Christ) must hold to the same view He did. This is God speaking to us through the man Jesus.

Jesus never belittled Scripture, or set it aside (as the Jewish leaders of His day had done with their oral traditions), or criticized it (although He criticized those who misused it), or contradicted it (although He rejected many interpretations of it), or opposed it (although He sometimes was free or interpretive with it), nor spoke in any way as "higher" critics do of the Old Testament..

When we hear the Son of God quote the Scriptures—we need no further testimony

1. He knew the Scriptures thoroughly, even to words and verb tenses. He obviously had either memorized vast portions or knew it instinctively: John 7:15.

2. He believed every word of Scripture. All the prophecies concerning Himself were fulfilled, and He believed beforehand they would be.

3. He believed the Old Testament was historical fact. This is very clear, even though from the Creation (cf. Gn 2:24 and Mt 19:4–5) onward, much of what He believed has long been under fire by critics, as being mere fiction. Here are some examples of historical facts:

Luke 11:51—Abel was a real individual

Matthew 24:37–39—Noah and the Flood (Lk 17:26–27)

John 8:56–58—Abraham

Matthew 10:15; 11:23–24 (Lk 10:12)—Sodom and Gomorrah

Luke 17:28–32—Lot (and wife!)

Matthew 8:11—Isaac and Jacob (Lk 13:28)

John 6:31, 49, 58—Manna

John 3:14—Serpent

Matthew 12:39–41—Jonah (v. 42—Sheba)

Matthew 24:15—Daniel and Isaiah

Jesus knew the Old Testament Scriptures down to individual words and even verb tenses. As a child he memorized it. He believed in the historical truth of the passages from the Old Testament that modern day critics openly deny...including the early chapters of Genesis and the books of Jonah and

Daniel. Jesus also believed that the books of the Old Testament were written by the men whose names they bear: Isaiah, Jonah, Daniel...and that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. Those who claim that Moses did not write the Pentateuch are openly contradicting what Jesus believed. Critics and their skepticism stand against Jesus Christ and what He believed and taught about the Scriptures.

4. He believed the books were written by the men whose names they bear:

Moses wrote the Pentateuch (Torah): Matthew 19:7, 8; Mark 7:10, 12:26 (“Book of Moses”—the Torah); Luke 5:14;16:29, 31; 24:27, 44 (“Christ’s Canon”); John 1:17; 5:45, 46;7:19 (“The Law [Torah] was given by Moses; Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ”).

Isaiah wrote “both” Isaiahs: Mark 7:6–13; John 12:37–41.

Jonah wrote Jonah: Matthew 12:39–41.

Daniel wrote Daniel: Matthew 24:15

5. He believed the OT was spoken by God Himself, or written by the Holy Spirit’s inspiration, even though the pen was held by men: Matthew 19:4–5; 22:31–32, 43; Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37.

6. He believed Scripture was more powerful than His miracles: Luke 16:29, 31.

. He actually quoted it in overthrowing Satan! The OT Scriptures were the arbiter in every dispute: Matthew 4; Luke 16:29, 31.

8. He quoted Scripture as the basis for his own teaching. His ethics were the same as what we find already written in Scripture: Matthew 7:12; 19:18–19; 22:40; Mark 7:9, 13; 10:19; 12:24, 29–31; Luke 18:20.

9. He warned against replacing it with something else, or adding or subtracting from it. The Jewish leaders in His day had added to it with their oral traditions: Matthew 5:17; 15:1–9; 22:29 (cf. 5:43–44); Mark 7:1–12. (Destroying faith in the Bible as God’s Word will open the door today to a “new” tradition.)

10. He will judge all men in the last day, as Messiah and King, on the basis of His infallible Word committed to writing by fallible men, guided by the infallible Holy Spirit: Matthew 25:31; John 5:22, 27; 12:48; Romans 2:16.

11. He made provision for the New Testament by sending the Holy Spirit. We must note that He Himself never wrote one word of Scripture, although He is the Word of God Himself (the living Word in flesh and blood; see John, chapter 1). He committed the task of all writing of the Word of God to fallible men—guided by the infallible Holy Spirit. The apostles’ words had the same authority as Christ’s: Matthew 10:14, 15; Luke 10:16; John 13:20; 14:22; 15:26, 27; 16:12–14.

12. He not only was not jealous of the attention men paid to the Bible (denounced as “bibliolatry” by some), He reviled them for their ignorance of it: Matthew 22:29; Mark 12:24.

13. Nor did Jesus worship Scripture. He honored it—even though written by men.

The above leaves no room but to conclude that our Lord Jesus Christ considered the canon of Scripture as God’s Word, written by the hand of men.

The following is an excellent example of the deity of Jesus and how this event manifests itself in the inerrancy of Scripture. Here we find how Jesus went into the synagogue as was his custom on the Sabbath day (Saturday) because He was a Law keeping Jew. And now, the most important point. Jesus stood up in the synagogue at Nazareth and read from the scroll of Isaiah,

“...and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book (or the scroll); he found the place where it was written,” (Luke 4:16b,17)

Now when He uses the words, ***“He found the place,”*** what does that indicate? He looked for it. He had this portion of Scripture on His mind and for a purpose. So He went through the scroll until He came to this portion of the Scripture which was Isaiah 61. He found where it was written and He reads to the synagogue audience:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord (that's what He read out loud, out of Isaiah). And he closed the book (or the scroll), and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them (as they sat there, marveling at what He had said and done.), This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4:18-21)

Clearly, Jesus believed this scroll copy He was reading from was the inspired and authoritative Word of God. Now turn to Isaiah Chapter 61 to see what He did. Those Jews in the synagogue knew what He had done. They were all conversant with Scripture, and they knew Jesus wasn't supposed to stop at the place he did.

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,..." (Isaiah 61:1,2)

Notice in the Old Testament the punctuation mark is a comma after the word Lord. But what did Jesus put there? A period. See that. That's where He stopped. He stopped after reading ***"To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."*** But, what part of the Scripture didn't He read? ***the brokenhearted, to proclaim "...and the day of vengeance of our God;..."*** (Isaiah 61:2)

That is in reference to the Tribulation, or the 70th week of Daniel. This is the prophecy. In the Book of Isaiah there is no period, or no break. Isaiah didn't know that the seven years was going to be pushed out 1,900 years into the future. But Jesus knew. So He stopped exactly where this much prophecy would be fulfilled. And everything beyond that, Jesus knew would be in the future. But the twelve didn't know it. The Jews of Jesus' day didn't know it. The prophets that wrote it didn't know it. And this is what we have to be aware of. That the things that Paul wrote, were hidden in the mind of God. God wasn't caught off balance and then all of a sudden had to shift gears, and change His program. He knew the end from the beginning, but He didn't reveal it. He kept it secret from the whole human race until it was time for it to be revealed. This is what we have to understand. The prophecy said the day of vengeance (the Tribulation) of our God:

"...to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vine dressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord:..." (Isaiah 61:2a-6).

What does Exodus 19 promise the nation of Israel? As they came out of Egypt, they're camped around Sinai. The Lord told Moses if Israel would keep the commandments, they would be a kingdom of Priests. And here it is. Now what's the program? Christ would come. He would present salvation, the acceptable year of the Lord. Then would come the day of Tribulation, Daniel's 70th week. And what would follow Daniel's 70th week? The Kingdom. What's left out? 1,900 plus years of the Church Age. It's not in here, but everything else is.

So what we have here In Luke 4 is that when Jesus stopped in the middle of Isaiah chapter 60 verse 2, when He said, ***"And today this has been fulfilled in your ears."*** He stopped just ahead of the description of the Tribulation. But no one else had any clue that this was going to be interrupted and that these things were not going to be finished.

Here Jesus in His earthly ministry gave us an indication that indeed that prophetic timeline was going to be stopped. It was going to be interrupted and rather than go on into the Tribulation and the

Second Coming and so forth, God was going to allow Paul to become the Apostle for the Church Age which has now been going on for over 1900 years, and Jesus makes it very clear, known as the Creator of everything, exactly what's going to happen. He knew the prophetic timeline was going to stop.

Always keep in mind that Jesus was truly God and truly man. How God was able to keep these two aspects of His nature reconciled is beyond our comprehension. The word transcendence comes into play here once again.

The earthly Jesus obeyed the Word of God, not man. While on earth He was subject to the will of God. However, in all the details of His acts of redemption, Jesus was subject to Scripture as God's Word. He obeyed it. It was His authority, the rule by which He lived. He came to do God's will, not His own, and not man's. Note how all of His life He did things because they were written—as if God had directly commanded. He fulfilled Old Testament prophecies about Himself. The passages are found all over the Old Testament. We cite here only a very few quoted in the New Testament: Matthew 11:10; 26:24, 53–56; Mark 9:12, 13; Luke 4:17–21; 18:31–33; 22:37; 24:44–47.

He Himself IS the Word of God. All the words from His lips were the Word of God (Jn 3:34). If He had desired, He could have written a new set of rules and they would have been the Word of God. But, He did not. He followed without question the Old Testament already penned by men. This is the sensible thing for every believer to do. May all who read this adopt Jesus' attitude and become subject BOTH to Him as Living Word (living Torah) AND to the Bible as the infallible, written Word of God.

Jesus did not need to verify every passage in the Canon, or else we would find the whole Old Testament requoted in the New Testament, which is unnecessary. He verified enough of it to assure us of complete approval of it all, including passages from all but a few books. Yet those also were in His canon. He did not refute any of them. Christ's reference to any part of Genesis as written by Moses infers He believed it was all written by Moses.

Inerrancy refers to truthfulness and not precision. The Bible claims to be perfectly true, but nowhere does it claim to contain perfect precision. For instance, the Bible may round numbers, speak in human terms and contain odd grammatical constructions and still be inerrant. The word "Trinity" does not appear within the pages of Scripture, yet the doctrine of the Trinity is clearly affirmed in the Bible and the term is very useful in summarizing the doctrines of the persons of the Godhead. The doctrine of inerrancy is taught within the pages of the Bible as clearly as if the word "inerrancy" was used.

We must believe the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God. That the Scriptures are the supreme written norm by which God binds the conscience, and that the authority of the Church is subordinate to that of Scripture. That the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God. That God who made mankind in His image has used language as a means of revelation. That God's revelation in the Holy Scriptures was progressive. That the whole of Scripture and all its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration. That inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us. That God in His Work of inspiration utilized the distinctive personalities and literary styles of the writers whom He had chosen and prepared. That inspiration, though not conferring omniscience, guaranteed true and trustworthy utterance on all matters of which the Biblical authors were moved to speak and write. That inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. Further we must believe that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original. That Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses. That Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit. The propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture. The unity and internal consistency of Scripture. That the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration. That the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church's faith throughout its history. That the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God's written Word. That the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to

interpret Scripture. That a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. Further, I affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ. But I do not believe that such confession is necessary for salvation. However, I further deny that inerrancy can be rejected without grave consequences .

Divine Preservation

Just as Divine Inspiration is the belief that God authored the Bible, giving His Exact Words to be written on paper by men of all types, Divine Preservation is the belief that God did not stop there, but through His guiding hand and through His Divine Power, He preserved His Words. Divine Preservation is very important. Anyone can believe in Divine Inspiration of Scripture, but if one does not also believe in Divine Preservation, then we haven't the Perfect Word of God with us now. Divine Preservation shows that God not only gave people His Perfect Word, but has protected and preserved it through the many, many generations! On the bottom of page 29 recall "Jesus believed even the scroll copy He was reading from was the inspired and authoritative Word of God."

When it is said, "We believe in the Perfect inspired Word of God, in the Original Autographs/Manuscripts." is the belief that God gave us His Word only in the original writings. However, many scholars argue that, though God is Perfect, Man is not, and over the years the original manuscripts which contained the Words of God would age and deteriorate. Then as man copied them to other scripts, little by little, changes were made, and errors crept into the transition. These men hold that the Perfect original Word of God is now lost to us,.

Some call this argument the "Dumb God Theory." According to that argument God in His infinite wisdom and Power, gave us His Perfect Word, and then suddenly became dumb and lost power, and as a consequence so were His words. Also, God did not hand man all of His Word at one Time. Rather, it was over such a long period of time! Therefore, with age the "first originals" would have been lost, before the arrival of the "last originals!" We would have lost Genesis, before we even received Revelation! In addition, that the Word of God never tells us anything about God preserving His Words.

Then again, much used, is that the "scripture" spoken of in 2 Timothy 3:16, is speaking of the Original Manuscripts, or only those in the Original Hebrew and Greek and bits of Aramaic in which the originals were written. All these things, have no basis of fact in the Bible, but rather are personal beliefs based on nothing but opinions (if there were truth, found within the Word of God, it would be another story). But let's look at the verse 2 Timothy 3:16. ***All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*** Look at the word "Scripture" in context, and we see in verse 15, another mention of it: 2 Timothy 3:15 ***"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."***

In addition to taking our turn with the "argument of silence," we may safely assert that the scripture of verse sixteen cannot possibly be limited to the autographs because of its providential usage in the preceding verse. . How could any thinking person suppose that Timothy ever saw the Old Testament originals? Obviously, Timothy was reared on copies of copies. Now consider verse sixteen. The opening, three-letter adjective all clarifies how much Scripture is given by inspiration of God. This is precisely why Timothy's copies were described as "holy" Scriptures. That this position of limiting the word scriptures to the originals is a private interpretation is also borne out by a 100 percent context check of the entire Bible. Not once in any of the fifty-three verses where the word scriptures is found is the object in question an original. (The indirect reference in II Peter 3:16 represents the only possible example). If the "Scripture" Jesus read in the Nazareth synagogue was Isaiah's original (Luke 4:16, 17, 21), we are forced to conclude that the Ethiopian eunuch must have broken in and stolen it on his way back to Egypt (Acts 8:29-30). . . .But like Timothy, Jesus was reading from a copy. Therefore, we can say with certitude that Jesus (being God) knew he was reading the true WORD OF GOD in spite of the fact it was a copy.

The Greek word for scripture in verse fifteen (grammata [gramma]) differs from the Greek of verse sixteen (graphe). The American Standard Version committee of 1901 twisted verse sixteen into:

"Every scripture inspired of God is profitable." These scholars attempted to invent two classes of Scriptures--one inspired and the other not. Their mis-translation possessed two serious flaws. First, if Timothy's Scripture was separated from the all scripture of verse sixteen, what of the other fifty-one references where the Scripture is also an obvious reference to copies but employs the same Greek word as verse sixteen? Second, they forgot to follow a basic law of Greek syntax: The question is where to supply the understood verb. Sound grammar would demand that if one adjective is placed in the predicate, the other should be, since they agree in case, number and gender, and are connected by the simple conjunctive and. This erroneous interpretation is no longer in vogue. God gave us His exact Words in the Original Manuscripts, but didn't stop there. God continued to keep His Words, preserving them perfectly throughout the years. He also Preserved His Words divinely. He chose certain people to give His Word to, and then chose special divine means of preserving them.

These people chosen by God, took special care when penning and copying His Word. They took great care and provision to keep from mistakes. This included the destroying of the older manuscripts as they aged. This was done to ensure that the aged manuscripts, which would many times have indistinguishable words, would not be misunderstood or mistranslated at a later time. With all this in mind, we can rest assured, that we have the Perfect Word of God today with us. God has not neglected us, nor left us, nor decided He doesn't care for us enough to give us His Word today.

For these reasons, I believe the Bible is the very Word of God!! And since the Bible is the Word of God, whenever we say "Scripture teaches", it is the same thing as saying God teaches, or has revealed.

My Bible of Preference

There was a time when you heard someone talk about "The Bible," or the "Word of God," that you knew (except for Roman Catholics) that they were referring to the Authorized Version of the King James Bible.

An epidemic of new Bible versions has been sweeping the world. During the interval between 1900-2011 more than 50 new versions have been published.

Up until the late 1800's there was, generally speaking, only one acceptable English translation, the Authorized Version. There had been others, but the translation instituted by King James I in 1603 A.D. and published in 1611 A.D., had become known not just in England, but throughout the entire world as the "Authorized Version." It is a historical fact that the King James Bible had become known as the "Authorized" version due to its universal acceptance among Christians of the world (with the exception of Roman Catholics) and not due to a proclamation from King James himself.

In January of 1604, King James called the Hampton Court Conference in order to hear of things "pretended to be amiss" in the church. At this conference, Dr. John Reynolds, a Puritan, requested of the King a new translation of the Bible because those that were allowed during the reign of Henry VII and Edward the VI were corrupt.

The King loved the idea and by July of 1604 the King had appointed 54 men to the translation committee. These men were not only the best linguists and scholars in the kingdom but in the world. Much of their work on the King James Bible formed the basis for our linguistic studies of today.

The biographical sketches of the translators of the King James Bible can be found in Dr. McClure's book, "Translators Revived," and is recommended for an in-depth study of the lives of these men.

Modern versions have been marketed extensively as being easier to read than the archaic, old fashioned KJV Bible. However, recent computerized document analysis programs have objectively revealed that the King James Version of the Bible is far easier to read than the NIV or the NASB. The Fleisch-Kincaid research firm has, through computerized analysis, shown that the KJV vocabulary has fewer syllables per word than the NIV or the NASB. Furthermore, the KJV has less complex sentences than the NIV or NASB. In reality, the KJV is easier to read than its modern counterparts in the manner of

vocabulary and syntax.

There is undisputed eloquence and beauty in the King James Version. One outstanding example is found in the 23rd Psalm. Compare it with any other translation. Moreover, the English language was at its zenith in the early 17th century for poetic beauty and eloquence. Interestingly, one of the major criticisms of the King James Version is actually a strength. People unacquainted with proper English complain about the use of "thee" and "thou" etc. in the King James text. However, as anyone who knows linguistics will attest, many languages have at one time had a common level which was spoken on the street and a higher or formal level that was used in reference to royalty and God. The usage of "thee" and "thou" etc. in old English is a form of higher English that no longer is commonly used. It originally was used in formal situations where deference and respect to nobility, royalty and Deity were appropriate.

Unfortunately, our contemporary American English usage of "you" and "yours" etc. makes no allowance for such deference and brings all of our language back to the lower level. The King James Version respectfully and appropriately refers to God and other notables as "thee" or "thou" in accordance with their due respect. Most modern language translations have diluted that deference.

The translation of the 1611 King James Bible (Authorized Version) was achieved at a "parenthesis of purity" in English history. It was produced during a brief period following the overthrow of Roman authority and prior to the apostasy of the Church of England. It was translated in the era when the still young English language was at its height of purity.

I do not have a problem with the old English used in the KJV translation - in fact, the strangeness of it reminds me that I am not just reading another religious tract., and I have uncovered so many arguments favoring the King James Version as being nearest by far to the originals and far more accurate and authoritative than all of the modern versions combined.

Therefore, I am a proponent of the King James version of the Bible. I have chosen to use the literal wording of the old King James Authorized Version of the Bible (based on the original translation work of 1611), because it predates today's denominational Christian movements. Thus it is a translation free from contamination by modern "Christian Scholarship" and textual bias. It is also a translation free of scientific contamination, as it predates all works of the geological sciences, and predates the inception of Darwin's "Theory of Evolution" by over 200 years. If the written words of the English language Bible of 1611 were truth back in 1611, then I hold those same written words will still be truth, in English, today. It is from this standard of written authority that I base my written thesis.

Although the King James Version of the Holy Scriptures is just one of many "translations" of the Scriptures, it is a self-interpreting whole with its own internal set of terminology and concepts. Additional insight into the choice of English wording can be gained from reviewing the Hebrew and Greek definitions and/or comparing translations in other languages, and I recommend doing so. Understanding of it all is provided by the Holy Spirit of Truth.

I Believe the Scriptures are self-interpreting when correctly translated. Every single word, tense, and phrase is structured to convey precise meaning. I admit there are translations of a few specific words by the King James authors that require examination, but these are not detrimental overall. Things that are different are NOT the same. Things that are the same ARE the same. There are NO real contradictions in the Scriptures. ([see: John 10:35) For every apparent contradiction there is a Scriptural resolution.

In Preservation, We Have the Originals

What we hold in our hands today in the form of the King James Bible is the PRESERVED inspired originals, which means the King James Bible has to be inspired. Here God's Word has been preserved. If the King James Bible is not inspired, then God did not preserve His Word, because His Word is inspired. Preservation MUST include inspiration if it is genuine preservation.

The word "preserve" in Psalm 12:7 means "to maintain." So God has maintained His inspired Word unto all generations, as He so promised, which means that those Words must remain inspired.

Notice that the originals are in Heaven. "**Forever, O LORD, Thy word is settled in heaven.**" (Psalm 119:89). Before God ever spoke the universe into existence, the final Word of Revelation was already recorded in Heaven. Some Biblical scholars claim that the original manuscripts are only existent

in the Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic languages; but it is not a language that God promised to inspire, it is HIS WORDS. It is the “Words” of the Lord that are pure. God Words are inspired, no matter what language they are translated into. The text of the King James Bible are the inspired Words of God.

The Bible doesn't say that the man of God needs the “preserved” Words of God to profit him; but rather, the “Scripture given by inspiration of God.” People talk about the “originals,” but according to Psalm 12:6,7 we have the originals. Psalm 12:6,7, ***“The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.”*** God didn't promise in Psalm 12:6,7 to renew or republish His Words. No, rather, God promised to PRESERVE His Words, ***“as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.”***

In 1st Corinthians 7:6 the Apostle Paul said, ***“But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.”*** Paul felt that he was not merely giving his personal opinion in this portion of Scripture, rather, writing what God had commanded him to; yet we know from 2nd Timothy 3:16 that, ***“ALL SCRIPTURE is given by inspiration of God.”*** Paul's writings in the Bible are all inspired by God, because Paul was only the pen which God used to give us His Words. God is the Author of the entire Bible. God used imperfect men to write His perfect Word, by putting His Words into their mouth. So it matters not that Moses was not eloquent in speech, nor that Paul gave his personal opinion in 1st Corinthians chapter 7, nor that the King James translators acknowledged that they were only imperfect men—What's important is that God's Words will forever be inspired, incorruptible, settled in Heaven and preserved.

The King James translators humbly stated that their work may contain “imperfections and blemishes.” Remember, this is THEIR opinion of THEIR best efforts to better the Word of God in English. We must not forget that GOD PROMISED TO PRESERVE HIS WORD and was overseeing the work . . .

“No cause therefore why the word translated should be denied to be the word, or forbidden to be current, notwithstanding that some imperfections and blemishes may be noted in the setting forth of it. For whatever was perfect under the Sun, where Apostles or Apostolic men, that is, men endued with an extraordinary measure of God's spirit, and privileged with the privilege of infallibility, had not their hand?”

In Exodus 4:10 we find Moses lacking confidence in his own communication skills, and yet God used Moses to author the first five books of the Old Testament, ***“And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.”*** Clearly, Moses did not feel qualified to relay God's Word to the people. The humility of the King James translators does not in any way mean that God wasn't in complete control of the work they did. They prayerfully and diligently labored to give us the King James Bible.

We must begin with the Scriptures themselves, for Jesus commanded in John 5:39... ***SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!*** 2nd Timothy 3:16 proclaims, ***“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.”*** Some teachers lift out the words “is given,” claiming that only the original autographs given by God were inspired. I have a serious problem with that, because God promised to PRESERVE His Word in Psalm 12:6,7, ***“The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified SEVEN TIMES. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.”*** For someone to say that God preserves His Word without inspiration is akin to saying that God preserves our salvation without the Holy Spirit. It just doesn't set right. The very notion that a translation does not contain the inspired Words of God is disturbing indeed. And if a translation DOES contain the inspired Words of God, then it is divinely inspired.

The King James Bible is BOTH inspired and preserved. God has preserved His inspired Word for us. It is preserved in the Hebrew Masoretic text and in the Greek Textus Receptus. It is also preserved for us in the English in the King James Bible. What He at first inspired, the Lord God has now preserved. Therefore, when I hold the King James Bible in my hand, I hold the inspired text. It was inspired and now

that inspired Word has been protected, preserved and provided for us!

The question "is the Bible the voice of God" is a legitimate question that requires an accurate, comprehensive answer.

Is the Bible true? This is a crucial question to answer. If it can be proven that we have God's revelation for man, then we should actively investigate its contents, and learn what God wants us to know. Many brilliant people deny that the Bible is true, so obviously sheer intelligence is not the key to faith in the Bible.

"And(Jesus) said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3) what does it mean to be "like little children"? In order for us to be God's children, we must put all of our trust and faith in Him. Childlike faith and trust. Open, loving, true faith. To have such faith that you trust God to be your loving father, in every sense of the word...just like a little child trusts his/her own mother and father. Jesus is not calling people to believe things without asking questions(blind faith), He is calling people to have a certain kind of attitude. Faith is beyond reason but not contrary to reason. As Blaise Pascal said, **"The heart has its reasons which reason knows nothing of... We know the truth not only by the reason, but by the heart."**

We can never be certain that God had chosen the actual words in the King James Bible. And while I strongly believe that God guided that translation, I do not believe God "re-inspired" a new Bible, rather, I prefer to believe that He guided the translation of the Words He gave centuries before into English.

I do not believe the King James Bible is inspired in that manner like the original manuscripts, rather the correct way of viewing it is in the manner of "Transferred Authority." When the holy men of old penned the original Autographs under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, those words were inspired by God, but once the Book of Revelation was completed in the Greek, inspiration ended and illumination began.

It is also interesting to note the timing of the King James translation. The English language was going through a major change. If the King James Bible was translated 100 years earlier, we would not be able to understand it. By the early 17th century, the English language had undergone a major revision and was actually simplified. What we have in our possession today is the 1769 4th edition. There was no manuscript changes but just an updating of the English wording as the language still continued its evolution to simplicity. I have provided one example using Mark 3:28:

Wycliffe Bible of 1382

Mark 3:28) Treuli Y seie to you, that alle synnes and blasfemyes, bi whiche thei han blasfemed, schulen be foryouun to the sones of men.

1611 KJV

(Mark 3:28) Uerely I say vnto you, All sinnes shalbe forgiuen vnto the sonnes of men, and blasphemies, wherewith soeuer they shall blaspheme:

1769 Revised Language 4th Edition

(Mark 3:28 KJV) Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith so ever they shall blaspheme:

Preservation of the Text

(Psa 12:6-7 KJV) The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. {7} Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. Here is one promise that God is going to preserve His words for all generations. Notice, He did not say there would be another set of inspirational writings, rather He was going to preserve what already has been written. Today, we have this perpetual promise fulfilled in the King James Bible. The two preserved manuscripts which are the most purest are the 1524-5 Bomberg edition of the Masoretic Text

(also known as the Ben Chayyim text) of the Hebrew in the Old Testament and the Received Text (Textus Receptus) in the Greek New Testament. Both of these manuscripts have escaped the ungodly scissors of the Textual Critic who gave us such masterpieces as the NIV and Living Bible, which I contend butcher the true meanings of Scripture and omit words, phrases, and sentences. This is my main reason for subscribing to the KJV.

Preservation Vs. Inspiration

The trouble starts when these two words are used interchangeably when they should not be because they are two different entities. The Inspiration was when God penned the Bible through holy men of old and preservation is the keeping of those manuscripts down through time for posterity. The preservation part applies to translations. The Textus Receptus has been translated into many different languages from the time of its birth in the inspired autographs. Two of them are the Old Latin Vulgate (90-150 AD) [not Jerome's 4th century Vulgate] and Martin Luther's 1534 translation into the German language. Both of these were translated from the pure line of manuscripts owing to God's promise of preservation and both were in the lineage of the King James Bible.

Total Acceptance of the Bible

MY RULE OF FAITH IS BASED ON THE BIBLE AS THE TRUE WORD OF GOD. I believe: "The Word of God, as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments(KJV) is the only infallible rule of faith and practice."

I hold to the total belief in God's Word as our full and sole authority in *every* matter it deals with—including relationships, history, science, etc. When we accept the claim of the Bible for itself that it is a revelation from the infinite Creator God, then we understand this Word must be the *absolute* and sole authority to enable us to build our worldview (the way we think about everything). That's what it means to have "the Bible as axiom." The root of the word *axiom* is the same used for the word *axle*. Just as the axle is the central point around which things rotate, the Bible, as our axiom, is to be the central starting point around which all of our beliefs and convictions must revolve.

Once we stand on the authority of the Word of God, the Scriptures become foundational to all of our thinking in every area, the axiom of all our beliefs. In most situations, however, we have the choice to either follow in the legacy of Darwin or the legacy of Luther, who stood on the Word of God alone. Whenever the two are mixed, the fallible and the infallible, truth is polluted with error, and they both become fallible.

How do we know Scripture is Word of God?

The answer is the Bible itself. It tells us why it is we believe the Bible to be God's Word and this fact has to be embedded in all our thinking about the complex relationship between faith and evidence, that it was inspired by the Holy Spirit. The work of the Spirit does not lead us to have the conviction that the Bible is the Word of God without any reasons whatsoever, as if it were a kind of 'holy brainwashing'. This is what could lead to the statement '*The Bible is the Word of God because it is the Word of God.*' OK. So how do we know it was inspired by the Holy Spirit? The only answer is because Scripture itself is its own proof. This we recognize is a circular argument, but in the following pages we will show that circular reasoning in relation to Holy Scripture is not fallacious, and our conclusion that the Bible is the Word of God is true.

It cannot be proved with absolute certitude that the Bible is the Word of God. It is only by faith, by faith in the Scriptures as the very word of God, that we receive them as the very word of God. And we are taught that this faith is not grounded on rationalistic human arguments but on the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. The Bible must be approached in faith and received as the inspired, inerrant word of God before we can begin to deal with its contents.

When we open ourselves to faith, we overcome the obsession with certitude. Faith is more than

intellectual assent to propositions. It is a personal acceptance of God. Therefore, faith involves more than knowledge. It involves trust, risk, and commitment. One cannot ignore certain objective facts. We seek to understand our faith through the posing of questions, without, however, trying to measure the certitude of all our answers. Faith does give us certitude, but the certitude is at a personal, not intellectual, level.

Faith and certitude is beset by all manner of obstacles: of circumstance, such as the prevailing skepticism and relativism of our time; of individual and collective ignorance through error and laziness; and of conflicting advice. These difficulties can and must be overcome if an individual is to reach the fulfillment promised by a secure faith in his Creator. Faith, characterized by certitude, is not merely a defensible position for the individual; it is in fact the only truly sensible position a thoughtful individual can take.

What is Meant by faith?

There is no true faith that does not begin with the recognition of God as Creator. We must believe that before we can believe anything else.

Again, for the answer we consult Holy Scripture itself. One of the absolutes of Scripture states, **"But without faith it is impossible to please him (God);..."** [Hebrews 11:6]. So what does God look for first and foremost? Faith! And when God doesn't see faith there is nothing that He can do. By faith, we believe the Bible is the written word of God.

For many people, faith is simply one's ability to believe something. They might say, "I have faith because I believe it is so." Therefore, faith for them depends on their ability to believe something. Many in our day use the word faith in this context, but this is not what the Bible means when it uses the word faith. Biblical belief is the result of hearing a clear Word from God. What is the point here? Your faith is not in proportion to your ability to believe anything about God or anything God has said. God does not do anything just because you believe it can or will happen. Instead, God does everything He said He would do. Therefore, if God says something, you can believe it, and that is faith. Faith is taking God at His word!

If faith is taking God at His Word, then without God's Word one cannot have biblical faith at all.

All the people mentioned in Hebrews 11 had one thing in common: No matter what the Apostle Paul was writing about in Hebrews, each person had simply taken God at His word and obeyed His command. And they were remembered by God for their faith.

For example, God told Noah to build an ark because He was going to bring a massive flood. Noah took God at His word and built the ark.

God told Abraham to go out to a place that he would receive as an inheritance. Abraham took God at His word, left his familiar surroundings, and he went.

God told Sarah, who was long past the age of childbearing, that she would conceive a son. The Scripture states: **"She considered Him faithful who had promised."** She took God at His word.

Regardless of circumstances, despite arguments of logic and reason, and regardless of how he or she felt, each person mentioned in Hebrews 11 believed God and His word and chose to be obedient.

What does God say about His word?

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words shall not pass away."⁹

"The word of the Lord abides forever."

"The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."

Everything in life may change, but God's Word remains constant. His truth never changes. Why? Because heaven and earth will pass away, but God's Word will not. This means that no matter how I feel or what I experience, I can depend on the Word of God as the unchanging reality of my life.

You can go all the way back to Cain and Abel, and I imagine that Cain may have been a better guy than Abel was. He probably had a more noble personality, and a harder worker, but what was his problem? No Faith! He didn't believe what God said. Abel did! Esau and Jacob are another perfect example. Esau was probably a better man than Jacob, so far as worldly views were concerned, but why couldn't God use Esau? No Faith! He didn't believe a thing concerning what God had said. What was

God's constant controversy with the Nation of Israel? They wouldn't believe Him. After all that He had done on their behalf, and the visible manifestation of His power, yet they just couldn't believe. He said, "Why didn't they enter into their rest? Because of unbelief!" And when there is no faith, you cannot even get close to pleasing God! It's impossible.

The Scriptures say that ***“faith, comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”*** Faith does not come by physically hearing. Faith comes when we hear spiritually, with spiritual ears and see with spiritual eyes. Paul means by telling us that "Hearing comes by the word of God" it tells us that Christ's words are spirit, and the natural man does not hear them as such.

Mat 13:9 ***Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.***

Mat 13:11 ***He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given [ears to hear].***

Mat 13:13 ***Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.***

As Paul states it, ***“the natural does not receive the things of God.”*** So any attempt to convince unbelieving men of the truth of Christianity by rational argument is condemned by the Scriptures themselves.

It is by proclaiming the word of God as the word of God that God brings his elect to faith in Christ. The Bible makes it clear that men have hearts of stone. The Scriptures clearly teach that natural man has his understanding darkened and that when he is confronted with inescapable testimony to the existence and goodness of God he suppresses it in unrighteousness. As the Apostle Peter put it the seed by which we are born again is the word of God. It is not the words of men.

The Veracity of Scripture

As we saw in chapter 1, It's not that nature tells us all about God, but that what it does tell us about God, it tells us abundantly. God has made this information available to all humanity, all over the world. It is not a message given through human language, but nevertheless its "utterances" have been "sounded" all over the world. This is why theologians call it "general"—it is generally available rather than accessible to just a special group. —this is what he is for us throughout the world.

But God has also revealed Himself as a Person. It means that God confronts us person-to- person. To receive *God's self-revelation* is to know not something but someone.

It is impossible for us to know with certitude whether God exists and what He is like unless He takes the initiative and reveals Himself. This I believe He has done through Holy Scripture. It becomes a circular argument unless we can establish the veracity of Holy Scripture.

If we can establish the veracity of Scripture, we have once and for all removed the stigma of the “circular argument.” I’m speaking of the truthfulness and inerrancy of Scripture. I believe we ought to realize the reality of the fact that God has spoken. And we’re going to see that He has revealed Himself primarily in His Word. I believe here is a God Who has revealed Himself essentially and explicitly in the pages of Holy Scripture. From that statement I believe you can build everything that we need to know about the entire universe.

Our faith is enough, but we also have extra-biblical proof. The historical record is more than sufficient to prove the veracity of Scripture. The Bible is a record of real people, places, and events such as Jesus Christ being “born into history,” not into mythology.

I believe the Bible is God's Word because it is a reliable collection of historical documents written down by eyewitnesses during the lifetime of other eyewitnesses; they report to us supernatural events that took place in fulfillment of specific prophecies and claim that their writings are divine rather than human in origin

Consider this statement for just a moment. There is no more powerful testimony about anything than one that is backed up by multiple witnesses and substantiated by exact events. Those who wrote the

Bible were actual eyewitnesses to the events they recorded. They were writing in the presence of other eyewitnesses who could and did testify to the veracity of those things they recorded. These witnesses provided an absolute foundation for the veracity of the Bible they wrote.

On top of the witnesses element, there are the numerous supernatural events that were recorded hundreds of years before they were fulfilled. These events were not ambiguous but were very specific. They recorded things like:

- That Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.
- That Jesus would come out of Egypt.
- That Jesus would suffer on the cross.
- That Jesus' bones would be out of joint.
- That not a single bone would be broken in Jesus' body.

These are only a few of the 70 major prophecies concerning the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ that were fulfilled by Him specifically. On top of these, there were over 270 prophetic ramifications that were also fulfilled.

These specific prophecies and the many eyewitnesses that wrote the New Testament provide a level of support and veracity for the biblical text that few defendants or prosecutors in a court of law could produce. The Bible is exactly what it claims to be:

The Word of God contains God's revelation of Himself toward mankind. Though the Word of God we discover things that we could not otherwise know about God and His will for His creation and our lives.

There are about 15,000 manuscripts and fragments of the Old Testament. The most important of these are the Dead Sea Scrolls, of which the earliest manuscripts date from 250 B.C. Among the manuscripts was a complete copy of the Book of Isaiah. When comparing this manuscript with the oldest copy extant at that time (980 A.D.), it was discovered that 95 percent of the texts were word-for-word the same. The other five percent consisted of spelling variations and stenographical errors. As for the New Testament, there are over 5000 manuscripts and fragments. Close to 1000 were made before 1000 A.D. The earliest manuscripts were written no less than 60 years after the originals, and the entire Bible is found in manuscript from 250 years after the originals. Furthermore, there are so many New Testament quotes from the early church fathers and early lectionaries that even if we did not have a Bible, we could reconstruct the entire New Testament with their writings (up to 300 A.D.) save for 11 verses. There is more bibliographic support for The Bible than there is for other ancient writers such as Pliny, Aristotle, and Homer. Most of these secular works have few manuscripts, dated many centuries after the authors wrote. The scribes knew they were recording and preserving what they believed to be the Word of God, so they made sure that the text was rendered faithfully. Jesus—God Himself—quoted the Old Testament as inspired scripture, so must have believed the Old Testament Scriptures were accurate. God, who authored Scripture, would have also made sure inspired Scripture was faithfully transmitted.

Critics point to the fact that among the manuscripts, there are over 100,000 discrepancies. However, it is also true that almost all of them are insignificant, and consist in a missing letter or word, or the reversal of words. Here is an example: "Jesus Christ is the Savior of the whole worl"; "Christ Jesus is the Savior of the whole world"; "Jesus Christ s the Savior of the whole world"; "Jesus Christ is the Savior of the whole world"; "Jesus Christ is the Savior of the whole world". In none of these passages is the meaning changed, which is typical of the other discrepancies. In those passages where there is a significant difference (which number about 50), no doctrine or teaching is affected by the change.

It is also clear that the witnesses of Biblical events the authors and those the authors interviewed—are reliable. Moses, the author of the Pentateuch, witnessed the events he wrote about. Luke "carefully investigated everything" (Luke 1:1-4), recording what the "original eyewitnesses and ministers of the word" had to say, and Peter said that the disciples did not teach "cleverly concocted myths"; rather, they were "eyewitnesses" (2 Pet. 1:16-17). Furthermore, the people (including Jesus), places, and events (including what is recorded in the New Testament) of the Bible, are backed by secular writers such as Josephus, Tacitus, Thallus, and Pliny the Younger (c. 100 A.D.).

Archaeology also proves the veracity of Scripture. Many accounts of Biblical people, places, and events, once thought fictional, are recorded; the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah (now called Bab edh-Dhra

and Numeira) destroyed just as the Bible describes (Gen. 19:24); the names of Gad (the Mesha Inscription), Asher (the inscriptions of Rameses II—king at the time of the Exodus), and Judah (inscription of King Tiglath of Assyria) as tribes; the existence of Balaam (Num. 22-25), as found in the Deir Alla text; the ruins of Jericho show that something similar to, but something other than, an earthquake, flattened the walls, and that the town had been set on fire (Josh. 6); two Philistine temples have been found with two supporting pillars six feet apart, similar to the story of Samson (Judg. 16); the existence of David, according to the Tel Dan Inscription and the Moabite Stone; the revolt of Moab (2 Kgs. 3) on the Mesha inscription; the Hittites' records and capital were discovered in Turkey; King Sargon's existence, and his capture (Isaiah 20) was recorded on his castle walls, as seen after the castle's discovery; also on the palace walls was the account of the fall of Samaria (2 Kgs. 17); The Biblical stories concerning Sennacherib (2 Kgs. 18-19) as recorded on the Taylor Prism, the Lachish reliefs, and the annals of Esarhaddon; Nebuchadnezzar's capture of Jerusalem (2 Kgs. 24) recorded in the Babylonian Chronicles; the freeing of captives by Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-4); and Belshazzar's existence (Dan. 5), who was the son of King Nabonidus, and took over in his absence, according to ancient tablets.

Also, similar stories from other sources tend to confirm Biblical events. The Story of Adapa is similar to the story of Adam and Eve; the epic of Gilgamesh tells a story strikingly similar to the story of Noah and the Great Flood (Gen. 6-9); Sumerian tablets give an account of a common, worldwide language, the destruction of a tower, and the dispersal of people, and the confounding of their speech (Gen. 11); the names of places in Genesis are verified by the Elba archive, dating back to 2300 B.C.

Further evidence includes likenesses and statuary found for Biblical characters such as Shishak (1 Kgs. 14:25); Jehu (2 Kgs. 9-10); Hazael (2 Kgs. 8:7-15); Sargo II (Is. 20:1); Tirhakah (2 Kgs. 19:9); Xerxes (Esther); Darius I (Ezra 4:24); and Augustus (Luke 2:1). Many Biblical structures have been discovered—the palace of Jericho (Jud. 3:15-30); the gate of Shechem (Jud. 9:34-38); the pool of Gibeon (2 Sam. 12-32); the palace at Samaria (1 Kgs 20:43, 22:39); the pool of Samaria (1 Kgs. 22:29-38); the tunnel beneath Jerusalem (2 Kgs. 20:20); and the royal gate and Square at Susa (Est. 2:3, 5, 9, 16, 19, 21).

Another proof of the veracity of Scripture is the prophecies that are found throughout its pages, and the fulfillment of them as recorded by later Biblical writers or by extra-biblical sources. Take for example the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We find in the Old Testament books that He would be a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 12:3; 17:19; Num. 24:21-24); He would be born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2), and of a virgin (Is. 7:14); He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12); He would be crucified with criminals (Isa. 53:12); His hands and feet would be pierced (Ps. 22:16); soldiers would gamble for his clothes (Ps. 22:18); his side would be pierced and not a bone on his body would be broken (Zech. 12:10; Ps. 34:20); He would be buried with the rich (Isa. 53:9); and almost 500 other prophecies. It is known that these prophecies were made and recorded years and even centuries before the events (the Dead Sea Scrolls, for instance, pre-date Christ's birth), contrary to skeptics who say Biblical prophecies were written after the events. These prophecies would have been impossible for Jesus to deliberately fulfill.

Furthermore, there are over 2500 prophecies in the Bible, over 2000 of which have already been fulfilled. Take the example of Tyre. When Tyre was a great city, Ezekiel predicted the unthinkable that many nations would oppose it (26:3); Nebuchadnezzar would attack it first (26:7); its tower and walls would be destroyed (26:4,9); its remains would be tossed into the sea (26:12); it would become a bare rock, a place for fishermen to dry their nets (26:4-5,14); and it would never be rebuilt (26:14). This is exactly what happened. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Tyre, and destroyed the walls and towers; years later, the Greeks, Romans, Muslims, and Crusaders attacked it; Alexander the Great built a causeway from Tyre to his island fortress and scraped it as bare as a rock. And most surprisingly, Tyre has never been rebuilt, despite the fact that it is in a prime location on the Mediterranean Sea, where springs pump a plentitude of fresh water. There are many other prophecies. The great city of Babylon, thought to be indestructible, was predicted to fall according to the Biblical prophecies (Is. 13:17-22; Jer. 51:26,43), that travelers would avoid its ruins, the city would forever remain uninhabited, and its ruins would not be used as building material. Also fulfilled was that the Jews would be conquered twice (Babylon in 607 B.C. and Rome in 70 A.D.) and enslaved, and would be scattered throughout the world before re-establishing their nation (in

1947) (Deut. 29; Is. 11:11-13; Jer. 25:11; Hos. 3:4-5; Luke 21:23-24). Edom, once fertile and in large abundance of water, is now barren and abandoned (Jer. 49:15-20; Ez. 25:12-14).

The Bible itself tells us it is the Word of God. The word “inspiration” is found in 2 Timothy 3:16. Here Paul wrote that all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God. The word translated “inspiration” is a Greek word that literally means that it is a “God exhaled” book. Therefore, it claims to be from God.

Christians believe that the Bible is from God, not because someone told them, but because the Bible claims it. We also believe that because the Bible proves that claim. We recognize that anyone or any group could write a book and claim it was from God. No one should be gullible enough to just take their word for it. In fact, if the Bible did not give convincing evidence to support its claims, it would be foolish to believe it.

The Bible reveals the Person, character and works of the Creator. It makes known His eternal purposes in creating the heavens and earth and all living beings. It records the history of man: his origin, his original innocence and fall from innocence; and it outlines the different ages of God's dealings with him both presently, in the past, and in the future. The Bible unfolds God's plan for Man.

Summary

The Bible is so meticulously put together that the themes are never lost.. It comes all the way through from start to finish, from Genesis to Revelation, everything in its rightful place. How could upwards of 45 men, living over a period of 2000 years do that without the aid of the Supernatural? They couldn't!! The Scriptures exist because that is how God chose to reveal His Plan and His Will to man, and we accept this on faith.

Here is an example of what we are talking about. Back in 2000 B.C. the writers of Scripture had no idea of God the Son going to a Roman cross to purchase mankind's redemption. It was there in latent terms as in Genesis 3:15, where the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. Today we know what God was talking about, but they didn't back then. God so put all these things into His Word that it assures us He knew everything from start to finish before it ever happened. Many more examples like this abound in Scripture which assures us that the Word of God is so true. It is so Supernatural.

I believe the Bible is the literal Word of God and is accurate and says what it means. The very words of Scripture are inspired of God and reveal what God wanted us to know and are inspired of God and are TOTALLY accurate without error as it pertains to our salvation. (2 Tim 3:16, 2 Peter 2:20-21)

We can rest on the Bible. It is letter perfect, that is, in the original. God gave us His Word without error in the original manuscripts, but with years of copying, errors could be expected to creep in from time to time. These errors would have been inadvertently perpetuated in copies made from these copies. However, God commanded that a copy of the Torah be kept beside the Ark of the Covenant, first in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple, where it could be safeguarded by the priests and used to correct inerrant copies. This would ensure that there was always an authoritative copy of the Torah available. I realize what we have today are translations, and there have been some slight errors in the translation. But God hasn't allowed any gross errors to come in, not even in our translations, so that we can rest on this as the inspired, God-breathed, Word of God. As recent as 1947 to 1956 with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, ranging in date from the third century B.C. to the first century A.D., provide a glimpse of the amazing accuracy of the transmission of the text of the *Old Testament* through the millennia.

When we come to the place that we can just believe it without doubting, whether it is the account of creation, the Fall of man, the flood, the call of Abraham, the Covenant with the nation of Israel, the Gospel of the Cross, the writings of Paul, or the Book of Revelation, what do we say? -- It is the Word of God! It is miraculous from start to finish, and we have no room for doubt.

In the history of the patriarchs the persons are historical and many of the features go back to patriarchal times. In Exodus, the main line and many details of it go back to the time in which the Exodus occurred. In the subsequent history, the main movement of the story does in fact correspond to the facts.

When one consults scholarly works, one can find more detailed discussion about the degree of literal accuracy to be attributed to the various narratives.

It is not all that important to know exactly the degree of literal, external accuracy. We can give ourselves over to the story as it stands. We may read it without distracting questions, confident that the authentic truth of the event, the nine-tenths of the iceberg, will come through to us.

The humble believer's confidence(faith) in it is justifiable and substantiated. This sacred volume is -- and always will be--the Book of God.

Part II

Jesus Christ - God's Final Revelation to Man

Jesus Christ-God's Final Revelation

God's greatest and final revelation came through the incarnation. He became incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ, and for three years walked among men and manifested the highest perfections. He showed His power over life and death, over principalities and powers, and finally made complete satisfaction for the deepest need of man: the salvation of his immortal soul.

The story of Jesus has to begin with the Incarnation; without it there would be no story at all. When Jesus came into the world we believe God thought it needful to take on the likeness of a man in order that from then on men might be encouraged to aspire after the likeness of God; reaching out from their mortality to His immortality, from their imperfection to His perfection. The example of Jesus' life was the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose to become human. It is written in the Old Testament that no man may see God and live; at the same time God cannot make man His equal without transforming him into something more than man. The only solution was for God to become man, which He did through the Incarnation in the person of Jesus.

With the Incarnation, Eternity steps into Time, and Time loses itself in Eternity. Therefore, Jesus; in the eyes of God, a man, and in the eyes of men, God. The perfection of Jesus' divinity was expressed in the perfection of his humanity, and vice versa. He was God because he was so sublimely a man, and Man because, in all his sayings and doings, in the grace of his person and words, in the love and compassion that shone out of him, he walked so closely with God. As man alone, Jesus could not have saved us; as God alone, he would not; Incarnated he could and did.

This revelation is a double-edged sword. For, Jesus does not simply reveal to us the nature of God. Jesus also reveals to us the nature of humanity. He shows us what it truly means to be human by showing us a life lived in the image of God and of God alone. Jesus is God's revelation to us of who we are, of how we should live. He is both our savior and our example. For only in Jesus has any one ever completely trusted God and God alone. In God, Jesus received everything he needed, even as he neglected all the usual human means to security. Jesus is the Son of Man, the only person who has ever lived a fully human life, a life of complete fellowship with God. He is God's revelation of what we are meant to be. And may we so be all that God desires.

Jesus is the Creator God from Eternity Past

It imperative that we believe Jesus is the creator God. It is the person of Jesus Christ that sets biblical Christianity apart from cults and other world religions.

The Bible says that all things were created by Him and for Him: ***For by Him [Jesus] all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him*** (Colossians 1:16).

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1)[KJV]. This verse clearly reveals the deity of Jesus Christ, the Word, being the Creator God. As such it confirms many other passages in Scripture that teach that Jesus is God.

Hebrews indicates that God calls Jesus, the Son: But to the Son He says: ***“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. You have loved***

righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions" (Hebrews 1:8–9).

The Triune God

Was Jesus a part of the Trinity? Was He God? Was the Holy Spirit, God? Are they all equal? Is the Triune God what we claim it is and how can we show it from Scripture that we have all three as God.

The Holy Spirit has been with our Bible from chapter 1 of Genesis, starting at verse 1. ***"In the beginning*** (whenever it was) ***God created the heaven and the earth.***" (Genesis 1:1). Nobody knows when it was. All the Bible says is that ***"In the beginning God..."*** The Triune God, that's the word Elohim in the Hebrew and Elohim is a plural word. ***"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.*** (In other words, it was covered with water. And now look at the last part of the verse) ***And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.***" (Genesis 1:2). That's the Holy Spirit and so He was already there at Creation. Scripture teaches that the Holy Spirit was a Person of the Godhead. He is One of the Three.

In Exodus chapter 3, we have Moses approaching the burning bush. He notices a bush on fire but it's not burning, it's not being consumed. And so he steps aside as he approaches that burning bush, because the Voice says:

"...Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. (here it comes) 6. ***Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.*** 7. ***And the*** (what's the word?) ***LORD*** (see? Now we've skipped from God to LORD just in a matter of a period) ***said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt,...."*** (Exodus 3:5b-7a). Go to verse 12 or even verse 10, and we come back to the word ***"God."*** Was this just haphazard writing? No. This shows us that these Persons of the Godhead are synonymous and yet they're acting as One; they're separate personalities, and this particular One is going to be God the Son. In Genesis chapter 1, God the Holy Spirit moving on the face of the deep. Here we're dealing with God the Son.

"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? (and how does God answer?) 14. And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. 15. And God said...." (Exodus 3:13-15a). That same personality in the burning bush, He's God, He's LORD, He's I AM, all three.

Go to John's Gospel, chapter 8 - Here we have Christ's earthly ministry. God the Son has taken on human flesh. In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, made under the Law to fulfill the Old Testament promises of being the Messiah and the King of Israel.

In that earthly ministry He's presenting Himself to the nation as their promised Messiah, and especially the Pharisees, in their unbelief, did everything they could to snub Him, to try to embarrass Him.

"Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. 53. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?" (John 8:52-53). And Jesus responds with: ***"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad."*** (John 8:56). In other words, Abraham had an understanding, through faith, that this Son of God would one day be the Messiah and King and Redeemer of Israel. He didn't understand all the ramifications of the work of the cross; he couldn't have. But he did understand that through the promises of these covenants, that out of him, would come a nation of people which would bring about this Messiah, the Son of God.

"Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, (He was only about thirty) and hast thou seen Abraham? 2,000 years ago?) 58. Jesus said unto them,...." (John 8:57-58a). Remember what Exodus 3 said, ***"when the children of Israel ask my name, you tell them I AM hath sent me unto you."*** Now here's the answer to Who is the I AM? It's God the Son. It's Jesus of Nazareth as we know

Him in the New Testament.

"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." (John 8:58). He was the pre-eternal, pre-existent Son of God, right along with the Holy Spirit - and now we've got the third One, which One? The Father. Go to Isaiah chapter 9:6. Remember Isaiah was a Jewish prophet writing to the Nation of Israel, so the 'us' pertains to Israel.

"For unto us (the Nation of Israel) a child is born, (now this, of course, is prophecy leaping over to Bethlehem) unto us a son is given:...." (Isaiah 9:6a). Tie that in with John 3:16, **"For God so loved the world that (He what?) He gave...."** Primarily to the Nation of Israel, in His earthly ministry. So He gave to the Nation of Israel Jesus the Christ, the Redeemer, the Messiah, the Son of God.

"...and the government (of this royal family and this King and the Kingdom over Israel,) shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called...." (Isaiah 9:6b). Now here comes what was so intrinsic to Israel's belief system - the name...and his name - when He's King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and has set up His Kingdom and He's ruling from Jerusalem. **"...his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, (The Mighty Elohim!) The everlasting Father,...."** (Isaiah 9:6c). All names of Deity but it's going to be epitomized in God the Son, the King. It's Heaven on earth. It's going to be peace on earth. But not until. **"Of the increase of his government (over this glorious Kingdom) and peace there shall be no end, (He's going to rule from) upon the throne of David,...."** (Isaiah 9:7a). Which was on Mount Zion in Jerusalem. Remember in Zechariah and the Gentiles said to the Jew, **"We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. (Where?) In Jerusalem."** This is all tied together. **"...and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of the hosts will perform this."** (Isaiah 9:7b).

In Isaiah 11 we see again how the other Person of the Trinity is also going to be involved in this Glorious Kingdom, and that'll be the Holy Spirit. **"And there shall come forth (hasn't come yet when Isaiah writes, but it's in the future, prophecy.) a rod out of the stem of Jesse, (Remember Jesse was the father of King David, that royal family) and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:"** (that's God the Son.) (Isaiah 11:1). A Branch. Capitalized. It's another one of the terms for Christ in the Old Testament Now look at verse 2. **"And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,...."** (Isaiah 11:2a). In other words not only will He be the visible, physical King and ruler of Israel, but He will also have the Holy Spirit and all the seven attributes of the Spirit will be on this Branch, or God the Son. **"...the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;"** (Isaiah 11:2b).

Anytime somebody asks you to prove from Scripture that we have three Persons of the Godhead, this is one good place to start, here at Jesus' baptism. **"And Jesus answering said unto him, (that is unto John the Baptist) Suffer (permit) it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness...."** (Matthew 3:15a). In other words, the whole program of God had to be consummated here with Christ's earthly ministry that was just beginning. So John permitted him. **"And Jesus, (Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary, the legal Son of Joseph, out of the line of David) when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:"** (Matthew 3:16). The same Spirit we saw in the Old Testament moving upon the face of the waters in Genesis 1, the same Spirit that comes upon the Branch in Isaiah chapter 11. The same Spirit of God that now makes His appearance "descending" on God the Son in the form of a "dove and lighting upon him." And then here comes the third Person of the Triune God. **"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."** (Matthew 3:17). There you've got all three Persons of the Triune God.

Go to Ephesians, chapter 5, and we certainly know with all the references that Paul makes to the Holy Spirit that He is a Person of the Godhead according to Paul's writings. But now we have these are two terms to tie together. "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;" (Ephesians 5:20). There you have the Father and the Son. You have the Spirit evident throughout the rest of Paul's epistles. And so we prove Scripture supports the claim of a Triune Godhead.

Jesus Christ Possesses the Authority of God

The authority of God in Jesus is seen in Christ taking upon Himself the right to be worshiped. He also claimed authority to resurrect Himself, and He spoke with an awesome authority, as God Himself.

Received Worship

Few subjects are spoken of in Scripture with more clarity than the subject of worship. Both the Old and New Testaments emphasize that God alone should receive worship. Jesus told Satan, you shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only' ' (Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8). No man or angel was ever to receive worship (Matthew 4:10; Revelation 19:20; 22:8, o). God would not give his "glory to another (Isaiah 42-8).

The New Testament uses one word primarily for worship, the Greek word *proskuneo*. It is the word Jesus used in telling Satan to worship God alone; it is used more than any other word in describing worship of God (John 4:24; Revelation 5:14; 7:11; 11:16; etc.).

After Jesus healed a man, the person exclaimed, " 'Lord I believe! ' And he worshiped (past tense form of *proskuneo*) Him " (John 9:38). The same Greek word is used in Matthew 14:33, when the disciples worshiped Jesus after seeing Him walk on water. Another time the disciples, seeing Jesus after the resurrection, "came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped him ' (Matthew 28:9). Thus, before and after the resurrection, Jesus received worship. In all of those instances, the same Jesus who had rebuked Satan for tempting Him to worship wrongly did not recoil in horror because "Only God is to be worshiped.' ' Instead, He received the worship as His due.

In Hebrews 1:6 the angels of God are told to worship (*proskuneo*) Jesus. In Revelation 5:8-14, a whole section of praise and worship is devoted to Jesus the "Lamb" and to God. In a powerful passage, Paul stated that at the name of Jesus every knee in heaven and earth will bow (implying worship) and confess that Jesus is Lord (Philippians . The Son of God was worshiped through numerous acts in the New2:10,11) Testament as He became the object of faith, hope, and adoration.

The united testimony of the New Testament church and, indeed, of the church throughout all centuries, is that worship is due to the Triune God. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Had Authority to Resurrect Himself

Even while Jesus was subject to death as a man, He claimed the power and authority to resurrect Himself, a power only God could have. Some people might ask, ' 'If Jesus Christ is God, how could He resurrect Himself? In John 2:19 Jesus said, Destroy this temple [referring to his body – v. 21], and in three days I will raise it up " Concerning His life He said, ' ***I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again*** (John 10:18).

Spoke as God

Not only did Jesus claim the names, titles, and attributes of God, receive worship, and claim the authority to resurrect Himself, but He also spoke things that only God could rightfully speak. Once when the Pharisees had sent officers to arrest Him, the officers returned empty-handed. When asked why they had not arrested Him all they could reply was, "Never did a man speak the way this man speaks" (John 7:46). It was true.

It is difficult to read the Gospel narratives without being struck by Jesus' divine authority. He called people to Himself, asking them to follow Him even to the extent of laying down their lives. He spoke with a personal authority unique in the experience of His audience. Other teachers of His day, the scribes and Pharisees, quoted the law and the prophets to substantiate their points. Jesus said "Truly, truly, I say.. " Events affirmed His authority. Demons fled at His word. Wind and sea stilled at His command. The dead rose, the crippled walked, the blind saw.

C. S. Lewis wrote, "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or else the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and

kill him as a demon, or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great moral teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

Jesus Christ - The Word

Jesus Christ is the final revelation of God, the only way God will ever deal with men again. Jesus Christ is God in the flesh. This is the heart of the Christian message and the Christian faith. God came into the world in the form of a baby, His name was Jesus and He lived a sinless life and died a substitutionary death and rose from the dead and ascended to heaven where He sits at the Father's right hand waiting someday to return to earth and establish His eternal Kingdom. Jesus is God in human form. That is who He is. This is the great story, the great truth, the great reality of Christianity. There is only one God and He came into this world one time in the form of a man, Jesus Christ. This astounding miraculous reality fills both Old and New Testament but particularly the New.

In Colossians 1 talking about God's Son, verse 15, who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ***"For by Him all things were created both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or rulers, or authorities, all things have been created by Him and for Him and He is before all things and in Him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything."***

"Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world." [Hebrews 1:1-2]

When you come to Christ you're not just talking about another prophet, another person, another holy man. You're talking about God in human flesh in whom God has fully revealed Himself. Everything God wants us to know about Himself is manifest in Jesus Christ. He is God's living and final revelation. And the four gospels give us the record of His arrival and ministry and life and death.

The book of Acts talks about the spread of that message and the institution of the Body of Christ. All the epistles tell us the meaning of His life and death and resurrection and ascension. And the book of Revelation tells us that someday He will come again to establish His eternal Kingdom in a new heaven and a new earth. The whole of the New Testament is about Christ who is the full and final revelation of God.

In Christ the revelation of God is complete. The many and partial revelations are over. And so Christ comes as the fullness of God. That's why 2 Corinthians 1:20 says, ***"All the promises of God in Christ are yes and amen."*** Everything resolves in Him. You're talking about God in human flesh in whom God has fully revealed Himself. Everything God wants us to know about Himself is manifest in Jesus Christ. In Col. 1:15, speaking of Jesus, it says, ***"Who is the image of the invisible God, ..."*** God became visible in the flesh; He became touchable.

He is the end of all things, because He is the beginning of all things and He is also the center of all things. He is the heir of all things, which makes Him the end. He is the creator of all things, which makes Him the beginning. And He is the upholder of all things, which makes Him the middle. So when we talk about the preeminence of Christ, that's what we're talking about.

God spoke progressively. The Old Testament is not going from error to truth, but it is progressive. It goes from incompleteness to completeness. So we see the preparation for Christ in the Old Testament. Then comes the presentation of Christ, ***"God, who did speak, in these last days..."*** That refers to the Messianic time, the time since the coming of Christ. ***"...Has spoken to us in His Son."*** He once spoke through human prophets, and now He's spoken in His Son. No prophet has ever grasped the whole truth, only Jesus is the whole truth. The prophets got a part of it. One prophet a little here, another prophet a little there. None of them got it all. Twelve minor prophets, five major prophets, a total of 17 prophets, you go to those books and you read a little bit here, a little bit there. Samuel was a prophet, Moses was a prophet. Moses got the five books of the Pentateuch and on and on you go, and God was speaking. But

none of them really had it all. They were all, in a sense, given bits and pieces and fragments of the revelation of God. But when Jesus came, He was the full revelation of God, fully revealed. Jesus revealed God by being God, no longer in diverse manners, no longer in diverse ways, no longer in bits and pieces and fragments stretched out over 1500 years, but now God speaks in one person, in one time in history, **"In these last days God has spoken in His Son."** He is the full revelation of God. When He spoke, God spoke. When He acted, God acted. He is the full revelation of God. He even said, **"If you seen Me, you've seen the Father."**

To Noah it was revealed that the Messiah would come out of one of his sons. To Abraham it was revealed that the Messiah would come out of one of his sons. To Jacob it was revealed that the Messiah would come out of one of his sons. To David it was revealed that the Messiah would come from one of his sons. To Micah it was revealed the town. To Daniel it was revealed the time. To Malachi it was revealed the forerunner. And everybody got their bits and pieces, each knew only in part until Christ came and He was God in whole, full of grace and truth. In Christ the revelation of God is complete, and so Christ comes as the fullness of God. That's why 2 Corinthians 1:20 says, **"All the promises of God in Christ are yes and amen."** Everything resolves in Him. He is not just a shadow like Old Testament pictures and images. He is the full revelation, the picture complete. So when you think about Jesus, the One who came into the world, you're thinking of none other than God Himself, the personal nature of God manifest in human flesh. It becomes an absolutely mind-boggling stretching thing to think about God in the fullness of His nature inside a baby. But that's the reality of it.

Not only did God create everything through the agency of Christ, not only did God create everything that exists, but everything that exists is held together by the very same power. In Colossians 1:17, says it as clearly as it could be said, **"In Him all things hold together."** He is the principle of cohesion. The physicist Hawking remains a confused and dispirited man, because as he got down deeper and deeper and deeper and deeper into the fabric that makes up the atomic elements of life, and when he got down to the very bottom, he finds a force and a power that holds it all together, which can't be seen, which can't be measured, and can't be quantified and can't be tested. Why? Because it's the invisible power of the Son of God upholding everything. The reason things stay in orbit, the reason things are predictable, the reason things sustain a pattern that can be trusted is because He upholds everything by the word of His power. The whole universe hangs on the arm of Jesus Christ. His unsearchable wisdom, boundless power are manifested in sustaining and governing and directing all the complicated movements of everything that exists in the created realm. It's really just mind boggling to see the way people treated Him. They had no idea who they were dealing with. Everything is held together by the word of His power. It's held together because He speaks it. It's amazing.

Men must now approach God by faith in Christ. The "new testament" is the complete and final "testament" of Jesus Christ, by which God speaks to man today; it also says that if anyone, even an angel from heaven, preaches **"another" testament (gospel) he shall be cursed of God** [Gal. 1:6-9]. That should settle the matter. This Testament of Jesus Christ Is Complete and Final!

Jesus Christ, The Central Theme Of The Bible

"According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" Ephesians 3:11 This statement by the Apostle Paul confirms that there is such a purpose. It is placed in the midst of a longer statement which deals with a mystery (secret purpose now revealed):

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ: And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him" Ephesians 3:8-12

God's self-disclosure is manifested in various manners, natural and supernatural, personally and

propositionally, historically and perpetually. The main purpose of God's self-disclosure was to reconcile man's original sin in the ultimate salvific act of redemption through Jesus Christ, so that his creation could know and enjoy Him as Scripture attests.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. (John 1:1-3)

The Word-Made-Flesh existed as God and with God before He was born as a man on earth. This verse teaches is that the one we know as Jesus Christ, before he was made flesh, was God, and that the Father was also God. There are two persons and one God. This is part of the truth which we know as the Trinity. This is why we worship Jesus Christ and say with Thomas in John 20:28, ***"My Lord and my God."***

Before He became flesh, John called Him "The Word." Why was he called "the Word"? Because John wanted us to conceive of the Son of God as existing both for the sake of communication between him and the Father, and for the sake of appearing in history as God's communication to us. Calling Jesus "the Word" is John's way of emphasizing that the very existence of the Son of God is for the sake of communication. First, and foremost, he exists, and has always existed, from all eternity for the sake of communication with the Father. Secondly, but infinitely important for us, the Son of God became divine communication to us. Calling Jesus "the Word" implies that he is "God-Expressing-Himself."

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." The Word became a human being, a Jewish man named Jesus. (John 1: 14) God is Spirit, invisible, intangible - He is unable to be comprehended with the senses of man. But in Col. 1:15, speaking of Jesus, it says, ***"Who is the image of the invisible God, ..."*** God became visible in the flesh; He became touchable.

God's Further Disclosure to Man--The transfiguration of Jesus Christ!

On the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew 17, Peter, James, and John were given the opportunity of seeing Jesus literally glorified in their presence. But preceding this walk up the mountain. Jesus had said in Matthew 16, ***"Some of you will not taste death before you see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."*** Here, He was talking about the transfiguration when He told the Twelve that there were some of them that would not die until they saw the Son of Man in all His glory. And that was, of course, Peter, James, and John.

Matthew 16:28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. 17:1 And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, 17:2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. 17:3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. 17:4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 17:5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. 17:6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. 17:7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. 17:8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only

The bible is full of types and shadows. I believe that this particular passage is one such example. I believe it is a picture of the calling out of the saints who will be taken.

The above passage begins with Jesus telling His followers that there would be some who would "not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." History tells us that most of the apostles died a martyr's death, and there is no record of anyone being translated like Enoch either. So it is reasonable to believe that the mount of transfiguration was this glimpse of the coming kingdom that Christ was referring to.

Note that then Christ was "transfigured" before them. This is no doubt symbolic of our "change" that is coming.

I Cor 15:51 *Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

Phillipians 3:20 *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 3:21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself*

I John 3:2 *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

The account of the transfiguration of Jesus Christ as recorded in Mark (parallel passages are found in Matthew 17:1-3 and Luke 9:28-36) is a demonstration to three witnesses that Jesus Christ was who He claimed to be. In all three accounts of the transfiguration of Jesus Christ, we are given the names of the three disciples who accompanied Jesus and who stood as human witnesses to the glory that was Christ's. There were also three heavenly witnesses, Moses, Elijah, and the voice of God from heaven. Therefore, the Old Testament law of three witnesses required to attest to any fact (Deuteronomy 19:15) was satisfied both in earth and in heaven.

"After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There He was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters - one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.) Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud: 'This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!' Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead" (Mark 9:2-9).

The word "transfigured" is a very interesting word. The Greek word is "metamorpho" and it means to transform, to change the outside to match the inside. In the case of the transfiguration of Jesus Christ it means to match the outside with the reality of the inside. To change the outward so that it matches the inward reality. Jesus' divine nature was "veiled" (Hebrews 10:20) in human form and the transfiguration was a glimpse of that glory. Therefore, the transfiguration of Jesus Christ displayed the Shekinah glory of God incarnate in the Son. The voice of God attesting to the truth of Jesus' Sonship was the second time God's voice was heard. The first time was at Jesus' baptism into His public ministry by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:7; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22).

Therefore, the transfiguration of Jesus Christ was a unique display of His divine character and a glimpse of the glory, which Jesus had before He came to earth in human form. The Son of God came to earth in the form of a man to be the true servant of God and to gift mankind with the greatest gift ever given, eternal life. The transfiguration of Jesus Christ was a visible sign in the presence of reliable witnesses of the reality of the power of God and the glory, which is Christ Jesus.

Here the Lord Himself was transfigured with all of His glory for just that moment of time to give us a preview of what it'll be like to be fashioned like His glorious body. In heaven we're going to be covered with that kind of glory, and if pure white clothes are a part of that that's fine, but we know we're going to be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

In this wonderful scene on the mountain top we have three great proofs before us, and they are as follows: We have Moses there to represent all the dead, and he proves the resurrection. In the case of Moses we see that the dead will be resurrected and will stand at the Judgment Bar of God as natural as if

they had never died. We see this proven by Moses, for here is a man that had been dead 1451 years, and we see him as natural as if he had never died. So Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration represents all the dead in Christ. Recall that Elijah never died but was translated, and went up without ever tasting death, but there he stands on the mountain top as natural as if he had just come from Mt. Carmel. In this wonderful transfiguration we see that Elijah represents all the living, for he never died. He still remained the old Prophet, and the moment that Peter flashed his eyes on him he knew him and called him by name. So that proves that we will know and recognize those close to us who are in heaven. We know our loved ones here and we will know them in heaven.

"For he (Christ) received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'" (2 Peter 1:17)

Peter is making reference to the experience on the Mount of Transfiguration. That's when the voice from heaven spoke, and Peter, James, and John were struck with such awe at the events that were taking place. After all it was just beyond human comprehension, as Christ was transfigured right before them; and then to hear the voice from heaven. But Peter goes on to say:

"And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount (that is the Mount of Transfiguration)." "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:" (2 Peter 1:18,19)

Peter is saying that though the event at the Mount of Transfiguration was revealing, we've got something that proves these things more than that, which is Prophecy!
