

THE BIBLE

SERIES: DOCTRINE | WEEK 2 | 9.5.2021

[Teaching today: Pastor Lee Wiggins]

Good morning. Thanks for being here. I was just looking out while we were singing, looking at all your faces—turn and look around, look at someone's face and smile at them right now. And if there's someone sitting alone, maybe you can just look for them afterwards and just say hello to them, just share with them the love of Jesus. Maybe they want to be alone. If you're one of those people that want to be alone, just go like that [FIGURE 1—OUTSTRETCHES BOTH ARMS –NO!]. But we want to be a loving church that cares for each other, and I just love seeing your smiles. So welcome, thanks for being here, up in the balcony, good to see you all up there, those of you online. It's been quite a week here in Downingtown with the floods, and God has been good. And our church has just been amazing and serving, so we're thankful to be here this morning. Thanks for being in church this morning. Thanks for worshiping together.



FIGURE 1.



We are going to continue in our DOCTRINE series and we are going to talk about the doctrine of the Bible one more time. It's such an important doctrine because if we get that then the rest of the series makes sense. If we don't believe the Bible is true, then the rest of what we're going to talk about, what the Bible teaches about God, doesn't matter. Let me just take a moment and let's pray.

Lord God,



I pray this morning for each person listening on here in this room, online, in the future, I pray right now that your Spirit would answer their questions, fill in the blanks, and that your Holy Spirit would be our teacher this morning. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

So this is different than normal messages, sermons, this is a teaching series that we're going to be going through, the teaching of doctrine. So if you're new with us, welcome, this isn't how we normally do it but we just feel that it's important that we go what are the major doctrines of the Bible and do we know them, and how can we make sure that we teach through them while we're here. And so I don't know any other place where we can get this kind of information, and so we're going to just dig through it. This week—we started on this last Sunday talking about the doctrine of revelation, the doctrine of the Bible, how God reveals Himself to us—and this week we're going to continue on that, talking about the Bible. One Book with 66 books inside of it—in the Old Testament, Genesis to Malachi; in the New Testament, Matthew to Revelation. I would encourage you if you still like paper, we have free Bibles in the very back in the center, feel free to grab one. If you know someone that needs a Bible that would read it, grab one and give it to them, put their name in the front of it and give that to them.

We use the English Standard Version here at Calvary, so if you wish you can grab that, but we also encourage you, [YouVersion](#) is an awesome version of the Bible, a lot of people use it as a way to read on a daily basis. There's tons of plans in there and there's ways to connect with other people. I would even recommend that. If you're just digging in online, [Biblegateway.com](#) is very helpful. I personally use [Audible](#) a lot. I have the Bible on Audible and I find that just to be a great way to work.

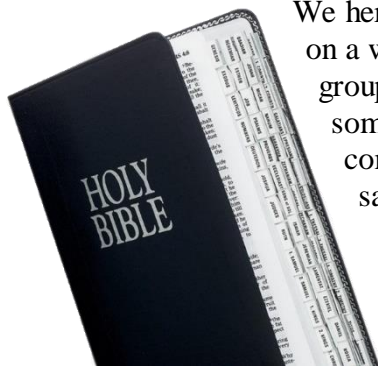
Last week we considered the authority and the validity of Scripture, how it was written. We then had a podcast on Tuesday, I noticed that a ton of you have downloaded that and listened to it. Pastor John along with Josh, who works with our students, and Adam and Eli had an amazing discussion on this

THE BIBLE

SERIES: DOCTRINE | WEEK 2 | 9.5.2021

topic. I would highly encourage you to look at that. If you go to cfdowntown.com/doctrine you'll see all of the things that we're doing—the podcast, the Thursday night where I go on online and do a video at 9:00 p.m. live online, you can get there through the ways you normally get to all of our stuff or [Bible Study Hub](#). Like last week I did it with my daughter, this coming week I'll be doing it at 9 o'clock on Thursday with my wife. We're going to be going into the subject of The Trinity next week. So be involved in that, and if you're not in a group yet, you know, I just say we're doing life together, having someone to talk this back and forth with is a huge deal. I believe that if you'll engage in every way possible on this during these weeks that we're going through doctrine, what you're going to find is that you're going to know this information.

So today I want to focus on the Word of God and how God chooses to reveal Himself to us, and I'm going to be communicating today in a little different way. Last week I communicated to those who maybe aren't even sure if this is God's Word, this week I think many of you might be a little bit closer and I'm going to be speaking to those of you who tend to believe that this is God's Word, and we're going to be talking about that it was verbally spoken, every word was spoken by God, it was inspired, it was God breathed, it's inerrant, it was without error in the original, and I would just continue to remind you that if you ever move and you are looking for another church this is one of the key doctrines you need to make sure that they get right.



We here at Calvary are people of The Book, it's essential to everything that we do on a weekend and it's essential to our small groups. When you go to a small group you're going to talk about the Bible, you're not going to talk about someone else's book. Jude, in the back end of our New Testament, makes this comment, he says he's talking about the faith once for all delivered to the saints:

³ Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

– JUDE 1:3 (ESV)

When we talk about doctrine that's what we're gonna be talking about in these weeks, a faith once for all delivered. This Book – it's all here, it's final, it's complete. And the big thing that fights against this is what Genesis 3:1 says, "Did God really say..." – that's what the enemy said, that's what Satan said in the garden. And that's the big lie.

¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"

– GENESIS 3:1 (ESV)

So (1) you have a choice: This is the faith [HE HOLDS OUT HIS BIBLE] once for all delivered to the saints, and we're gonna try to figure out what that is in these weeks; (2) I don't know [HE SHRUGS], did God really say this? And you're gonna have to make a decision which way you're gonna land: I wanna know the faith once we're all delivered—or— I don't know, did God really say that? And that's a choice that we're all making in this room, and I'm hoping that you're going to take it as "**faith that once for all delivered**" that I want to get to know and I want to follow. If God had not chosen to somehow reveal Himself to us through this Book we would have never known Him. When He speaks He tells us who He is, how we can know Him, how we can have a relationship with Him, how to best order our

lives, and how we can speak to Him. That's why the subject of revelation is so important, it's how is the God of eternity going to speak to you, going to speak to me.

So in order to teach this this morning I feel like it's important to take three very important words and just talk through those three words. Those words are *revelation*, and I told you this is the doctrine of

3 Important Words

Revelation - God wants to communicate with us, and goes to incredible ends to accomplish that task.

(Exodus 3:2, Matthew 1:20, Genesis 32:30, Genesis 3:9, Romans 1:20, Psalm 19:1, Genesis 46:2)

revelation, it's a doctrine of the Bible, *inspiration* and *illumination*. Those will be the three words that if you're taking notes you want to make as your outline.

By the way, on that cfdowntown.com slash doctrine you'll see Week 2

WEEK 2 (BIBLE)

[SERMON](#)

[DISCUSSION GUIDE](#)

[TRANSCRIPT](#)

[SERMON NOTES](#)

[PODCAST](#)

[BIBLE STUDY HUB](#)

[SERMON \(SPANISH\)](#)

and you'll see teaching outline ["SERMON NOTES"] on there, you can click on that, you can print that out. A lot of people are printing out the transcripts on there. There's tons of material on there. You can have a full notebook when this is done of all of these doctrines and your notes along with that.



Revelation—I just said it, I'm going to say it again—it's God's revealing Himself to us in all sorts of ways as He shows Himself to us in His revealed Word, and the best way for us to hear God speak is to read His Word. I hear a lot of people, "I heard from God." Now where'd you hear from God? They tell you something that God told them. I go, "Where'd you get that?" I want to see that it is verifiable from the Word of God because you and I have a lot of noise in our heads, we hear a lot of things. If we acted on all the things that we heard in our heads, yeah, that would be a really bad thing. Am I right? Yeaah. So that's why we have to be careful that if a good little thought comes in or a thought that what we should do tomorrow, just because it comes into our head doesn't mean that it's God telling us. I bet you God's told some of you to buy things before [LAUGHTER]. And when you got a really good deal you were *sure* God told you—but we don't know that, and how do you know that? We need to hear God speak before we respond to Him.

That's why we've been doing this thing where we start out where we preach first and sing next. We're gonna have a time of prayer after this, we're gonna have a time of worship after this, because we believe here at Calvary that theology, what we're dealing with here, a study of God, leads to doxology, the praise of God. When we know Him—think about this—God chose to reveal Himself to us, that ought to cause us to go Wow! That ought to cause us to be excited. We ought to be going, "Oh, my goodness! I really – that had not sunk in that that was God choosing to say, *Hey, I'm God, I want to get my thoughts to you.*" I'm going to dig into this, and this should cause us to praise Him and to rejoice in Him.

Now when we look at the Bible and we think of this word *revelation*, how did God choose to reveal Himself to the people here in the Bible that we now read what they have shared with us? And I'm just going to throw out just a number of verses, I'm just going to go through these verses quickly. They're also in your notes but I think it would just be helpful to see some of the different ways He spoke here in the Bible to the people there. Genesis 3:9:

⁹ But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"
– GENESIS 3:9 (ESV)

Remember that with Adam? "**Where are you?**" That's a loud voice when God looks at you and says where are you.

Exodus 3:2:

² And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed.

- EXODUS 3:2 (ESV)

Imagine that. An angel of the Lord, we oftentimes refer to those in the Bible as *Christophanies*. When you read that word in the Old Testament, "angel of the Lord" is normally Jesus Christ. And after the incarnation you don't read that again. Also in the Old Testament you have these things called *theophanies*, where there is appearance of God and in those times you see an angel showing up and the person falls down as dead, they're fearful because they have come into the very presence of God.

Genesis 32 30:

³⁰ So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered."

- GENESIS 32:30 (ESV)

In Matthew Chapter 1 we read:

²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit,"

- MATTHEW 1:20 (ESV)

Last week we talked about creation showing God, Romans 1:20:

²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

- ROMANS 1:20 (ESV)

God's actually revealing Himself even through creation. That's not enough to save us but it's enough for us to cause us to say, "There is a God. How do I find that God?" Look out and go, "There must be a God. How do I find Him?" And that's when we move from the general revelation of creation to the special revelation of His Book where we dig in and we find how to get saved. When we learn more about God, when we see that He exists through general revelation through creation, we go, "I need to know more." And that's why we as a people say we're a people of The Book, we want to dig in to find out what He said to us in this revelation.

Did you ever get that letter in the mail and you see the return address on it and you see who it's from and everything stops as you tear that thing open and you start reading and you can't read it fast enough? And have you ever been in that spot where you read it fast enough because you want to know the general gist of what's being said and then when you're finally done you know what the sort of the conclusion is and you stop and you step back and you go, "Oh, that's good news. Wait a minute, I need to read that a little closer, I think I missed some things because I just sort of blew over that."

And that's the way it is with the Bible, we find out wow, here's God's plan for us. This is His experience of sharing with us Jesus and what Jesus did for us." And then when we find that out and we put our trust in Jesus, our mind is opened to this Book and we go, "Wait a minute, I gotta go back and learn a little bit more." And every time you go back it's like God tells you more and more, and it's like this is always new. The thing that amazes me about studying the Bible, oftentimes when I preach a

book of the Bible for the second time or the third time and I go through it again I think, *Oh, man, I've learned all of this.* I start over again and I'm like, *It's as if I knew nothing.* It's like there's so much there I can hardly grasp all of it.

I love Psalm 19:1:

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

– PSALM 19:1 (ESV)



So that we look out and we say, "Wow, God!" and we're reminded that He's revealing Himself to us. That's why vacation should just be an amazing time. We start to get used to the world around us here, but when we go out from here and we see something else we just keep on going, "This is amazing."

In 1st Kings Chapter 18 & 19 you read the story of Elijah and he had just had this massive victory, and after that victory – they often say after great victories come great defeat. You have to be careful when you've had a great day. When God's moved a lot in your life you gotta keep your eyes open. He had won a victory over the prophets of Baal with what God had done, but then he's told by God that Jezebel, who's the wife of King Ahab, was seeking to kill him. Elijah runs and collapses with exhaustion in the desert and God sends an angel to him and takes care of his need. And God tells him here's what I want you to do, I want you to go to the mountain and I want you to stand in my presence. Stop and be with Me.

1 KINGS 19:1-5 (ESV)

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers." And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat."

And so as he does that very thing and the Lord sends wind and He sends fire and He sends an earthquake and each time it's like this drama is building, there's this response and God's not in any of them. And then all of a sudden there is this response you hear this still small voice. And the ESV translation refers to it as a low whisper:

¹² . . . And after the fire the sound of a low whisper.

– 1 KINGS 19:12b (ESV)

And Elijah heard it. I was thinking about where do we hear that? We hear that whisper as we are in the presence of God, when we go to that mountain, when we go to this Word, when we go before Him. Yes, there are earthquakes and there's wind and there's fire and

there's all sorts of loud noisy things making stuff happen, but when we spend our time with God in His Word, He begins to speak to us ever so quietly. So here's the key to this doctrine of revelation, doctrine of the Bible: God speaks. Aren't you glad? God speaks.

Hebrews 1 says:

¹ Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets,

— and that's the Old Testament. We'll talk about that in a little bit:

² 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 (ESV)

Jesus is speaking to us.

I think on some of the slides behind me you'll see a place where you can text in questions. I think we



*Text your questions throughout this series to (610) 756-9644

gave you one of those codes last week and some people told me it didn't

work, so we were technologically poor. We think we've made it better so when you get a chance and you see that phone number thrown up on the screen, if you'll text in your question what that'll do is throughout the week, whether it's our podcast or whether it's our Bible Study Hub video at 9 o'clock on Thursday night, we'll try to answer those. We'll answer them in our small groups, but we want to know your questions, we want to know what you're thinking. We'd love to just sort of have it go both ways here, but our time is limited in doing that. But one of the biggest questions that I've gotten asked when I talk about this Book is how did it get written, how did the books within it get written, who chose them to be in this Book, and who, like, who finally said okay, these are the ones to go in between this cover? Why these? So I want to try to help us with that a little bit here today.

And so I told you we were gonna have three words, the first word was *revelation*. The second word is going to be *inspiration*, and that's the process where God gets across to His people that He's moving His message along to them. So how does God get His Word to us? Some say inspiration happens just like when you read a great author and all of a sudden you feel inspired, or you watch this amazing movie and you come out of that and all of a sudden you're ready to take on the world because it's just, like, super inspired you. Others would say that the authors of this Book actually took dictation from God and just wrote down exactly what God said. There are others who say that God just merely inspired the ideas, that the authors of the Scripture there were certain ideas coming into their mind and they sort of fleshed that out, God was only inspiring the ideas. Some would say that all God inspired were the spiritual ideas or spiritual things in this Book, and the problem with that is they would say that historically then you can't depend on the Bible, and scientifically you can't depend on the Bible and that's problematic.

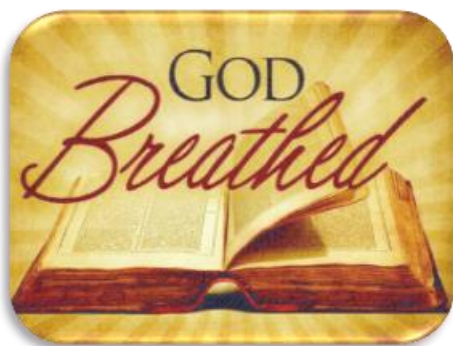
In fact, in some other books of other religious organizations like the Book of Mormon you're gonna find all sorts of historical errors and scientific errors, you do not find those in the Bible. In fact, as they continue to do more and more archaeological digs, more and more study and research they continue to find that the things that we even wondered at one time, *Is that how it really happened in history?* – sure enough what this Bible records is exactly how it took place. So this isn't a science textbook, it's not a history textbook, but it is scientifically and historically correct always.

I told you last week there are a couple verses that I would love for you to have burned into your brain before we move on to the next doctrine on the subject of the Bible, and the first one I've used it a number of times so far is 2nd Timothy Chapter 3, verses 14-17, and the most important piece of this thing is it says, "**All Scripture is breathed out by God.**"

¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

– 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17 (ESV)

You talk about the very breath of God. So Scripture means writing, breathed out is the word for inspiration, it means that God has spoken, truth has come from God with authority and it has come through the means of mortal men who wrote it down without the message—the authoritative message that God was trying to get out—being tainted in any way. And I love what the rest of that verse says, it says, "**and profitable for...**" Quite truthfully, if you read that there in that verse behind me [ON THE BIG SCREEN BEHIND HIM] here's the thing that I would want you to hear, it's what we want for you. What do I want is that your life is guided by the God of the universe, that He's revealed Himself to you.



Can you imagine if all of a sudden you were to be in this moment where you had this great dream where you were like God showed up and talked to you, you'd come running in here screaming to me, "God showed up and He told me this!" You'd be like "Wow!" We want some sort of this revelation of God to us. [HOLDS UP HIS BIBLE] Well, He's done that. You see, I have a lot of people come to me and tell me, "Oh, God told me this," "God told me that," and there's a little question mark that comes into my mind because I'm like, I'm not sure that that lines up with what this says. You see, if we could all just say that and throw

that around then anything would go and any noise in our head would become gospel. Instead, we know that God revealed Himself through this Book and what we want for you is that this would change and impact your life.

Second verse that I have mentioned and like I said, there's two key ones, we've thrown out a lot of verses but this 2nd Timothy 3:16 is really the first one. The second one is 2nd Peter Chapter 1, verses 19-21, and he says:

¹⁹ And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed,

— I love this —

to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place,

— Is this world dark? He's saying you have this prophetic word as a lamp shining in a dark place:

until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, ²⁰ knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

– 2 PETER 1:19-21 (ESV)

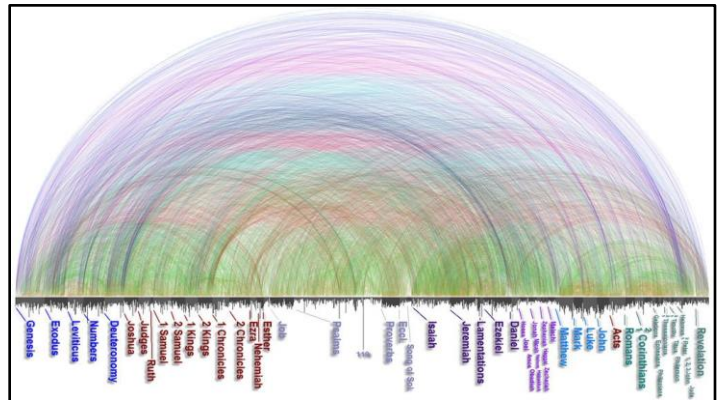
No prophecy was ever produced by the will of man. This is not just something that some people sat down to write and made up. Instead what it says here it's like they were carried along, the picture of a sail of a boat catching the wind and pulling them along. So you have a man being guided along by the wind of the Holy Spirit guiding what they're saying and the very breath of God somehow being written on the page, and yet a human author involved. God moves these human authors along but He uses their personalities, He uses their background, He uses their gifts, their geography, and who they are to be able to write it down what's going on in the world at that moment. It's not based on their own will, they didn't sit down and think, *Okay, I got to write some Bible today. What would I say if I was writing Bible?* Most of the time they don't know that they were writing Bible, but to inspire God breathed to perfectly write down an absolutely trustworthy perfect record.

415 Bible results for "thus says the Lord" from English Standard Version

- Old Testament (415)**
- Exodus (10)
 - Joshua (2)
 - Judges (1)
 - 1 Samuel (3)
 - 2 Samuel (5)
 - 1 Kings (12)
 - 2 Kings (20)
 - 1 Chronicles (4)
 - 2 Chronicles (8)
 - Isaiah (34)
 - Jeremiah (150)
 - Ezekiel (126)
 - Amos (14)
 - Obadiah (1)
 - Micah (2)
 - Nahum (1)
 - Haggai (5)
 - Zechariah (17)

Over 400 times in the Old Testament we read these words, "Thus says the Lord."¹ I always love when I get to those, I think of that prophet that would speak that out, "God said" – these are the prophets. Thirty-eight hundred times in the Old Testament you read the words, "the word of the Lord came to me," 3,800 times – this is God revealing Himself to us and the prophets sitting down and writing it down. This is them saying, *Guys, guys, stop, stop, this is what God is saying to you.* There are 300 direct quotes from the Old Testament in the New Testament. Let me take you even a step further, there are 4,000 allusions that connect the Old Testament with the New Testament, all one revelation from God. This alone should be something that should blow your mind and recognize the unity of the whole of this, that those who were speaking in the New Testament were referring back to the authoritative words of the Old Testament.

I'm gonna throw a chart up on the screen, this is basically a picture that you can see, you can Google this and find this very easily online.² This is, you know, using algorithms and all that kind of stuff to create the picture of every quote or allusion that goes back to the



Cross Reference New Testament ↔ Old Testament

Old Testament from the New Testament. These books of the Bible are so connected with each other and it's one of the major things that lets us know how absolutely true the Scripture is.

Proverbs Chapter 30, verse 5, says

Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.
– PROVERBS 30:5 (ESV)

We go back for just a second to the question that I posed a few moments ago, like, who chose these books? How'd they get in there? So we talked about, okay, the authors wrote these books and they were moved along by God, but there is a given place where you have to have faith that that's the case.

And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.
– HEBREWS 11:6 (ESV)

It's the Bible saying how that happened, and we are talking about a thing the God of the universe getting His message to us. We can look at some external things to say wow, this, you know, this thing gives us historical accuracy, we've finally gotten to a place scientifically, we realized what they wrote so long ago is true, and there's a whole bunch of those. We can look at all of the external stuff, we can look at some of the external clues where

we see that ark that we just saw of how many references back and forth to what they had already determined was from God. But at a given point there's a level of faith that you have to say when God

¹ Source: [https://www.biblegateway.com/quicksearch/?quicksearch="thus+says+the+Lord"&version=ESV](https://www.biblegateway.com/quicksearch/?quicksearch=)
² Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/814799757556255887/>

says this is my word to you, that we believe that and we trust that. But how did that all get put together?

You oftentimes hear people speaking and referring to something known as the "canon of Scripture" and the word *canon* just specifically means "measuring rod." As Scripture was being written it would be sent to the different churches, so there was a letter sent to the church in Ephesus by the Apostle Paul and they read it and they realized this is legit, this is true. And they began to realize that this is Scripture, this is words from God. And there was a measuring rod and that measuring rod that would help them know if this is legit God's Word, had three things that were part of it and you'll see those three things on the screen right now. One, it had to be written by an Old Testament prophet or someone in the prophetic tradition or an apostle or close associate with an apostle, that was the first thing; it had to have – second thing – had to have internal tone of Scripture; and third, it had to be universally accepted or read by the churches.

So we talked a moment ago about the Old Testament about these prophets, "Thus saith the Lord," so in the Old Testament it had to be written by a prophet or someone in the prophetic tradition. They knew who those people were, it was very clear and they were accepted early on. New Testament had to be written by an apostle or someone close to an apostle, so you see the apostles here but then you see some names like Mark and Luke. Mark was a close associate to Peter, he was his personal assistant, he saw and he heard everything that was going on and what Peter had taught in his recollections. Luke is a doctor who traveled with Paul and he had heard the stories of Jesus so when he wrote those down he was that close associate that this speaks of. And as these books started circulating they would start reading them and if they were written by an Old Testament prophet they would start accepting them; if it was written by an apostle they would quickly start accepting those.

By the way, I don't know if you've ever heard this mentioned before, but an apostle defined in the New Testament was defined as three things: (1) Someone who had witnessed the resurrection of Jesus, and if you're taking notes you can look at that in 1st Corinthians 9:1; (2) someone who was chosen of God

by the Holy Spirit, Acts 9:15; and (3) someone who performed signs and wonders to lay the foundation of the church, Acts 2:43. I mention that because there were those who would come along that were not true apostles. There were many books circulating. It's like our time, there's lots of books, the Scripture even says at the end of writing, there's no end. Solomon said that, there's always books, there's always stuff being written.³ And so again, that's why there has to be a canon, a measuring rod. How do you know? Well, this begins to narrow it down pretty quickly. There's a prophet who recognizes a prophet known as a legit prophet, that makes that a lot easier. Was it an apostle or a close associated apostle? And that begins to make a lot of others fall off very quickly.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:1 (ESV)
Am I not free? Am I not an apostle?
Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are
not you my workmanship in the Lord?

ACTS 9:15 (ESV)
But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is
a chosen instrument of mine to carry
my name before the Gentiles and
children and the children of Israel."

ACTS 2:43 (ESV)
And awe came upon every soul, and
many wonders and signs were being
done through the apostles.

Second of all, it had to have the internal evidence of divine revelation, and this one's a little bit interesting to wrap our arms around. When you read the Bible it has a certain tone to it—and I want to warn us there's a tendency to think maybe the way some of us were raised, sort of the King James' thee's and thou's, and when I was a kid people used to pray like that so that sounded like church, that sounded like God, but that was just because that's what their

³ See [Ecclesiastes 12:13b](#)

Bible sounded like. We're not talking about Old English or old way of talking, we're talking about there is a different tone to Scripture and if you ever read any of the other ancient writings the sound is very different. But even beyond this, and I'll talk about this in just a moment, there is a spiritual authority, there's a spiritual power, there's something that when you read this something begins to change within you and people sensed that and they knew that right away of God's Spirit moving through this. So God's Spirit had moved that sail of the ship to move the writer to write it down, so even in that there's power in this book that God's Spirit is moving when you read it aloud in our times.

And then finally, it had to be universally accepted by the churches. Again, these were sent to the churches and the churches knew, the early church knew the authors, knew the events, knew the circumstances. There were books that were written and you can even read about them. Oftentimes the books that you hear on one of those TV specials talking about "the lost books" of, you know, of the New Testament or the "secret books" and this kind of stuff. As you begin to read some of those books really quickly you'll find that they have information in them that is not correct. And so when the church is in those early days, I mean, they can be written, people can read them, but they go, "That's not true. We were there." "We were there when Paul said that." "We heard Jesus say that." "What this guy's saying has never, never been said." Or it wasn't an apostle. We have one book that is written that oftentimes comes up in these kinds of documentaries. It was written in 150 and claiming that he had been with Jesus in 30 A.D. Yeah, probably not. And so right away those got canceled off and put off to the side and quickly go away.

These books, this wasn't something they got together in a dark, smoky room and voted on as to whether they were Scripture, these had general acceptance and recognition by the believers because they knew the events, they knew the authors. And so early on the local churches would keep a list of books that they knew were correct and ultimately those were affirmed by individuals, by churches, by church councils, and were ultimately affirmed by all those councils. This was not something as you're oftentimes told was affirmed or put together at a much later time. Right from the beginning they knew these were Scripture.

I told you I had three words, I'm gonna go to the third word. Third word – first one was revelation, second one was inspiration – and the third one is *illumination*. And as we wrap up this doctrine of revelation, this doctrine of God's Bible, illumination I believe is something really important. It's God's Word lighting our path. It's God's Word doing something for us. It's God speaking to you. It's God speaking to me. It's God showing me where to walk and how to walk there.

If you go to any secular university you could probably take a course on the New Testament and you might get a professor that says, "I don't believe that this is God's Word. I don't believe in God," and then he'll begin to teach you a historical overview of the New Testament. It's possible to do that. Many, many have done that, it's possible to learn this information. I know some really, really smart people that know this Bible very, very well. I want you to hear 1st Corinthians 2:14, I think it's an important passage to hear:

¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

– I CORINTHIANS 2:14 (ESV)

Remember our word *illumination*. Information is one thing; transformation, a changed life is a radically different thing. We don't want to just be a group of people just grabbing a bunch of information so we're smarter than everyone else so we can talk really intellectually, and I've met those

kinds of churches, they sort of argue with each other over stuff and get mad at each other over different passages of Scripture. The Scripture is brought to us to transform our lives, to change us radically.

What if it was dark in here and everything just went black [THE LIGHTS DIM UNTIL THE ROOM BECOMES TOTALLY DARK] and if I were to move in in the slightest I would wonder, like, how are we going to pull this off? I mean, if I move forward I might step off this edge of the stage. [HE TURNS A FLASHLIGHT ON AND ILLUMINATES A VERY SMALL AREA ON THE FLOOR, SEE FIGURE 2] It's the world that we live in, it's the life that we find ourselves seeing right now, a world of darkness where we cannot see our way, where nothing seems to make sense, and the Scripture tells us that it is a light [HE ILLUMINATES A LARGER AREA, SEE FIGURE 3] to illuminate. In fact, Scripture says it is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. We want to know where to go, we want to know where the pitfalls are, where the edge of the cliff is, how to move on through the course of life. [HE WALKS ALONG THE EDGE OF THE STAGE, THEN SHINES THE FLASHLIGHT OUT AT THE AUDIENCE] Don't you hate when people shine the lights like that? And all of a sudden you can see that path. Let's turn the lights back on; I imagine people online are going crazy right now.



FIGURE 2.



FIGURE 3.

Listen to this Scripture, Psalm 119:

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

– PSALM 119:105 (ESV)

You understand all these words and all these concepts and how we got here and all this kind of stuff and it doesn't change your life, it doesn't much matter. My hope today is that it is a lamp to your feet and a light to your path, that it will light a way in this dark world. This is what Scripture says it will do for you. Reading our Bible is not one of those things that's gonna magically make everything come together, may not even jump out and scream at you today, but here's what I know. When life happens, when I know this Book, when I have heard from God, and I keep on going back to this Book, yeah, the Elijah thing of the earthquake and fire, all of a sudden when I've come to that place where I'm in the midst of that darkness—and some of you are in the midst of that darkness—to be able to stop and hear that still voice. When life happens to already know the voice of God and be hearing the voice of God, that's what I want for you. That goes back to that passage in 2nd Timothy 3, "**and is profitable for.**"

What we want for you—that this Book would change your life. To do that you gotta read it, you just gotta read it. You gotta decide how, when, how it works for you, like I said, I use Audible a lot because for me that's one of the easiest ways to hear it and I process verbally so that works out pretty well for me. Get a hard copy. I'm the type I write in mine a lot because as I understand things I just write it in the edges, and so my Bible has, there's a lot of written stuff in it of notes I've taken. Download YouVersion on your phone and just follow one of their reading plans. Let the Word of God come. Just remember this is God revealing Himself to you, be part of that.

A lot of people ask me, "Okay, what translation should I read? What should I read?" And one of the blessings of our day and of living in America is we have a lot of wonderful translations, so I'm not going to stand up here and say you can only read this one translation. Understand there's two different types of translations, there's what we call a *formal equivalent* and there's a *dynamic equivalent*. Formal equivalent is just very much wonderfully translated from the original languages of Greek and Hebrew, so the word that is spoken is the word that is translated, the word in Hebrew is translated into that same

word in English, very carefully written to the best of their ability as a team of people whose science is interpreting other languages. That's what we would call formal equivalent.

2 Kinds of Translations

Formal Equivalent - ESV, NASB
Dynamic Equivalent - Living, The Message, Amplified

Dynamic equivalents are like The Message and The Message is sort of like, oftentimes on Sunday when I try to summarize a verse and I go, "This is the Lee version," it's just sort of me putting it in my own

words. So The Message was a man saying, *I'm going to put it in my words*, and he actually does a pretty good job at that. We oftentimes refer to those as *paraphrases*. When I was a kid there was The Living Bible, some of you have read from that and it just makes it more understandable. It's not as accurate, it's not as perfect to the original text. If I was looking today at a formal equivalent, we've chosen ESV, English Standard Version, a highly researched, a highly attested translation, that's what we speak out of here at Calvary, but it's not the only one. It's not the only one that you should have. If you have a good translation, that is fine.

Let me wrap up with these thoughts. According to the International Bible Society, I just looked this up yesterday, there are 7,106 world languages and the entire Bible is translated into 704 of those; 7,106 languages, the Bible's in 704 of those. The New Testament is translated into 1,551 of those languages, and still of those 7,106 languages, 1,106 of them (beyond all those other ones) have little pieces of the Bible translated into them. And when I read that I just thought, *Oh, my, there are people in this world that do not have*. Yeah, and we're going, "Which one should I look at? Should I look at the ESV or the New King James Version or the NASB or the NIV?" How blessed are we that we have all of those translations, that we even have one. There are people in this world they can only get just a little fragment, maybe all they have is the book of John. We are so blessed, we have the revealed revelation of God given to us.

I was looking over in the early days the common man couldn't get a copy of this Book. Remember, you're starting out with scrolls that are being written out, and then finally the printing press comes along and finally it starts being translated. And some of those earliest translators, guys like John Wycliffe and William Tyndale—Wycliffe was considered a heretic for putting this in the language of the common man. William Tyndale was executed because there was such a pushback on him taking this and writing it so that we could get our hands on it. John Rogers, who was Tyndale's associate, was martyred for bringing the Word of God.

This Book, there has been an ongoing effort throughout history to destroy it and take it out of the hands of the people, and we've got it. Most of our homes have many of these in them, and if they don't go grab one in the back. Shoot, grab three, put one on your nightstand and one on your kitchen table. If you're gonna use it, I don't care, we'll buy more. You all have phones, download it, we are so blessed. My hope is that we don't take reading this lightly and that we will share it.

I'm going to call the worship team back up here and I would like to just say this, when we understand that we have God's Word and He has revealed Himself to us that should cause us to just start digging into it this week. Go to the New Testament Bible, get the book of John open and start reading it. And pull down the YouVersion and find out the reading plan and start where it's at for this week and just start reading it. And when you open it up, when you read it say, "God, show yourself to me." And go back to those opening words in Jude verse 3, the once for all delivered faith, once for all delivered faith. Or Genesis 3:1, Did God really say that? If you're in the "did God really say that," say, "God, would You

JUDE 1:3 (ESV)

... contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

THE BIBLE

SERIES: DOCTRINE | WEEK 2 | 9.5.2021

give me faith?" If you're into the once for all delivered faithful, you better know it. I'd encourage you – read it, jump in with us as we continue to study this. It's going to be an awesome time.

Lord Jesus,



Thank You for giving us your Word. Thank you for those who went ahead of us. Thank You for those who have protected it. Thank You for those who faithfully wrote it down. Thank You for all those scribes that faithfully word for word checked every letter were so careful. Thank You that it has been given to us in just incredible form today. Lord, I pray that You'll just inspire each one of us in this room to want to read it, to know it, to dig into it, that it would change our lives. I pray that some in this room, some online, some watching in the future would decide to just make it their life habit to read this every day for the rest of their lives and have a personal relationship with You, know You, hear from You, be able to communicate with You because You have revealed yourself. Lord, as we sing this song we just say Jesus, thank You, thank You, thank You for revealing yourself through your Word. It's in your name we pray. Amen.



Doctrine Series Webpage > <https://www.cfdowningtown.com/doctrine>

Bible Study Hub > <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPKBkIGa949L-J7gKKiYRdQ>

YouVersion online and mobile Bible > <https://youversion.com>

Bible Gateway online Bibles > <https://www.biblegateway.com/>

Audible > <https://www.audible.com>

Scripture quotations marked (ESV) were taken from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version. ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Accessed on [BibleGateway.com](https://www.biblegateway.com)

Images: Images appearing in this transcript were obtained from DuckDuckGo image searches (attributed sources in parentheses). Pg 1 & 13—praying hands (pixabay.com). Pg 1—divider line (clipart-library.com). Pg 2—Tabbed Bible (onestone.com). Pg 5—Sky background (pinterest.se). Pg 6—Question marks (pngimg.com). Pg 7—God Breathed (studylib.net). Pg 8—415 Bible results (BibleGateway.com); Cross Reference (pinterest.com). Additional sources: Pg 1—Figure 1; Pg 3—3 Important Words; Pg 11—Figure 2 & Figure 3; Pg 12—2 Kinds of Translations (sermon video screenshots). Pg 1—The Bible; Pg 3—Week 2; Pg 6—Text your questions; CF logo in the footer (CF website screenshots). Pg 13—"Watch or Listen" buttons—CF (CF website screenshot); YouTube (youtube.com). All other graphics were created by the transcriber.

Keywords: doctrine, reveal, revelation, read, faith

COPYRIGHT © 2021 – LEE WIGGINS – ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.