

#1 “HOLDING FAST OUR CONFIDENCE...”
IN THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES (Heb 3:6, 14 10:35)

- A. They are legion who want nothing more than to tear down our confidence in the authority of the Scriptures.
1. Did you ever notice that the word “Author” is found in “Authority”?
 2. Why is that? It is because authority is based in authorship.
 3. If it can be determined that the Bible is authored by God, then its authority over us will speak for itself – it is, then, the Holy Scriptures.
- B. Let’s begin by addressing two questions:
1. Why does man require a standard of authority for his conduct?
 - a. Why does man need to hear from God (revelation)?
 2. How do the Scriptures meet the criteria for such a standard?
 - a. What does the Bible contain that proves it to be a worthy standard (God’s revelation to man)?

[First of all]

- C. We would all agree that knowledge & truth are important?
1. Through knowledge we overcome ignorance, & through truth...error.

D. **Knowledge & truth** are essential to a well-planned life, & yet in reality most people live as though they don't believe this to be true.

1. For example, in most matters of life people insist on *objectivity*:
 - a. If someone's civil rights are violated, you can be sure that he/she will appeal to the rule of law on that matter.

2. But when it comes to religion in general & Christianity in particular, *subjectivity* rules the day.

- a. Have you ever noticed that people can be so certain in their beliefs about life, & yet so vague in their beliefs about God & His word?

[Well, the time has come for Christians to “*hold fast their confidence in the authority of the Scriptures*” – to embolden themselves with the same high regard for knowledge & truth as expressed in the Scriptures.]

Prov 1:7 – The fear of the Lord in the beginning of *knowledge*, but fools despise wisdom & instruction.

Prov 23:23 – Buy the *truth*, & do not sell it, also wisdom & instruction & understanding.

John 8:31-32 – If you abide in **My word**, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall *know the truth*, & the *truth* shall make you free.

I. THE NEED FOR REVELATION FROM GOD

[I'm going to proceed on the **knowledge** that the God of the Bible exists, that He is the Eternal One – the Living & True God, that He is the Grand Designer of Heaven, the Universe & all things in it, & that He wishes to communicate to His intelligent & rational creatures (that is expected).]

A. **What is “revelation” from God? & how did it come about?**

1. “Revelation” – means *a laying bare*.

a. Revelation (apokalupsis): “the disclosure of truth, instruction concerning divine things before unknown by mankind” (Thayer’s).

B. **“Revelation” came by “inspiration”** – meaning, “God breathed” (**2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:20-21**) – these passages indicate that inspired revelation is *complete & final*.

2 Tim 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 1:16-21

16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. 19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

1. Paul explained the process of inspiration (**1 Cor 2:6-13**).

1 Cor 2:6-13

6 However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written:

"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard,
Nor have entered into the heart of man
The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." (Isa 64:4)

10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

- a. God ensured that the writings were correct & consistent with His will by employing verbal (word-for-word), plenary (full) inspiration.

Statements Concerning Biblical Inspiration From Within Scripture:

2. Old Testament example (2 Sam 23:3; Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16).

Three sources concerning David: David, Jesus, Peter

2 Sam 23:2

2 The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me,
And His word was on my tongue.

Mark 12:36

36 For David himself said by the Holy Spirit:

"The LORD said to my Lord,
"Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

Acts 1:16-17

16 Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus;

3. Apostles of Christ (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; Matt 10:18-20).

John 15:26-27

26 But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

John 16:13-14

13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

Matt 10:16-20

16 Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. 17 But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. 18 You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; 20 for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

4. Apostolic writings (**Eph 3:3-5**).

Eph 3:3-5

3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

C. 1st question: Why did God need to speak to us?

1) **To Explain His Character** (**Exo 34:5-8**)

Exodus 34:5-8

5 Now the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. 6 And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, 7 keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." 8 So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.

- a. We see God's eternal power in the creation, but His words were needed to teach us about His character & nature.

2) To Explain The Origin Of Evil (Gen 3; John 8:44)

John 8:44

44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

- a. We want to know why there is so much pain & suffering in the world, & why so many people are cruel & self-centered.

3) To Explain Our Origin (Gen 1-2; John 1:3)

John 1:3

3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

- a. Apart from revelation we might conclude that we are just a force of nature, rather than emanating from an omnipotent Creator.

4) To Explain Our Purpose (Ecc 12:13; Matt 22:37)

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:
Fear God and keep His commandments,
For this is man's all.

Matthew 22:37

37 Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

- a. If we had no specifically defined role, & no immediate or future goals, we would wander aimlessly throughout life.

5) To Explain Our Destiny (Ecc 12:14; Matt 7:13-14)

Ecclesiastes 12:14

14 For God will bring every work into judgment,
Including every secret thing,
Whether good or evil.

Matthew 7:13-14

13 Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. 14 Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

- a. Apart from revelation we might conclude incorrectly, as many have, that this life is all there is to enjoy.

[God revealed the Scriptures for the purpose of “laying bare” or removing the covering of man’s ignorance & bridging the gap between human wisdom & divine wisdom.

Revelation by inspiration is meant to light up the darkness – To pull back the curtains & show man these things.

We could not have known any of these things by mere natural means (Psa 19:1-4; Rom 1:20; Rom 1:25; Acts 17:23) – Nor by human intuition (Jer 10:23; Prov 16:25) – Nor by human wisdom (1 Cor 1:21; 3:19; Jer 8:9).

Jer 8:9

The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken. Behold, they have rejected the word of the LORD; so what wisdom do they have?