

The Word Of God
The Authority, Finality and Sufficiency of the Word of God
(Understanding Scriptures In The Light Of Scriptures)

Introduction: The Doctrine of the Word of God as it applies to teachers:

- A. Personal Responsibility Timothy 2:15; Matthew 28:19 & 20
 - 1. Our personal response - Ephesians 4:14; Colossians 2:4 & 8;
 - 2. The response of others II Timothy 4:3
- B. The Word of God II Timothy 3:16
 - 1. Inspired – is the actual “God breathed” Word; not as written but as nature
 - 2. Sufficient – if there were no other recourses, the Word would be sufficient

I. Views of Scripture: Understanding and Interpreting The Word of God

A. Cults – “*The Word of God is understood in the light of our new religion*”

- 1. Examples: Islam; Mormons; Jehovah’s Witnesses; Christian Science;
- 2. Issues
 - a. One God – Deuteronomy 6:4 (Idols)
 - 1. Other gods – Deut. 6:12 – 16; 30:15 – 20
 - 2. Materialism – Col. 3:5; Eph. 5:5
 - 3. Knowledge – II Cor. 10:3 - 5
 - b. One Mediator I Timothy 2:5
 - c. One Revelation – Revelation 22:18 & 19

B. Apostolic/Patriarchal Christians – “*The Word of God is understood and interpreted in light of continuing Apostolic authority and revelation.*”

- 1. Example:
 - a. Catholic – Church Fathers; papal Decrees
 - b. Orthodox – Church Fathers; Church Councils; Mystics
 - c. Pentecostal/Charismatic – Prophecy, Word of Wisdom/Knowledge; Tongues and their interpretation
 - d. Evangelical Extra-biblical Revelation – After death experiences; visions; messianic appearances; messages from God.
 - 1.) Even if results are seemingly good
 - 2.) Drunk driver has wreck; survivors are so shaken they receive Christ, this does not establish drunkenness as evangelistic tool
 - 3.) In same way, vision of Christ resulting in salvation does not substantiate that is was Christ or extra-biblical revelation.
 - 4.) In both cases satan seeks to cloud issue
- 2. Issues:
 - a. We reject any new information – that which either adds to or takes away from the Word of God. Rev. 22:18 & 19
 - b. We reject that which causes those who rely upon the Word of God to have incomplete information. Deut. 29:29; 30:11 – 14; II Tim. 3:16; Titus 2:1
 - c. We reject that which is revelatory in knowledge or experience. (Example: II Peter 2:20,21; Revelation 1:9 – 12)
 - d. We reject other mediators, whether dead or alive. I Timothy 2:5

C. Red Letter Evangelicals – “*The Word of God is understood and interpreted by the Words of Christ*”

1. Example: Christian Church; Church of Christ; Southern Baptists
2. Issues:
 - a. The revelation of all members of the Trinity is equal – II Timothy 3:16
 - 1.) Revelation of God the Father – Deuteronomy 6:1 – 3
 - 2.) Revelation of God the Son – John 10:30; 14:10
 - 3.) Revelation of God the Holy Spirit – II Peter 1:20,21

D. Evangelical Mysticism – “*The Word of God is understood and interpreted by mine or other’s spiritual experiences.*” Romans 10:2

1. Examples: Charismatic movement in the U.S.. “I don’t know what the Bible says, but I know what I have experienced.”
 - a. The evangelicals are partly to blame for emphasizing the “testimony” as the ultimate proof of their faith, rather than the doctrines of the Word of God.
 - b. The evangelicals are partly to blame for rejecting Evangelical Mysticism on cultural and social grounds rather than doctrines of the Word of God.
 - c. “We are conservatives, we don’t believe in miracles, we have boring worship, we reject spiritual gifts, even if raising hands in worship is in the Bible, we still reject it...”
2. Equating spiritual experiences / miracles with the Holy Spirit
 - a. Again, even if results are seemingly good
 - b. When Moses threw down his rod, what were satan’s magicians able to do as well?
 - c. Even if proclaim Jesus as Lord – Mark 1:24; 3:11; 5:7; Matt 7:21-23; Acts 16:17; James 2:19
 - d. In all cases satan seeks to cloud issue
3. We reject any teaching that makes the watershed experience of the Christian something other than the cross of Christ.
4. We reject any teaching that allows for a segment of the Body of Christ to be second hand Christians because all they have is Christ.

E. Evangelical Pragmatism – “*The Word of God is understood and interpreted by what works*”

1. Examples: Modern “Mega Churches” and the para-church movements. “I know what the Bible says but the reality is if we do it that way we will be a small player in the modern church movement and needlessly marginalize ourselves over a non-issue.” (Women in leadership, Divorce and remarriage, Spanking, Homosexuality, etc.)
2. Issues
 - a. Definition of success – John 6:66
 - b. View of God’s Word – Hebrews 4:12

F. Classic Evangelical Reformation Theology – “*The Word of God is understood and interpreted by the Word of God.*”

1. It is recognized as a single Revelation, having both a beginning and an end Moses-John
2. Church Councils did not determine the Word of God but rather were used by God to protect the Word of God.
3. We do not judge the Word of God, it judges us. – John 12:48; James 4:11; Hebrews 4:12
4. We do not manipulate the Word of God. – Mark 7:3; II Corinthians 4:2

II. Attributes Of The Word Of God

- A. **The Actual Word of God** – I Thess 2:13; Hebrews 4:12 I Thess 4:8; Psalm 119:4, 13-16; Isaiah 1:10
1. “God said” 572x’s;
 2. ‘Word of Lord’ 253x’s;
 3. “Word of God” 47x’s
- B. **Inspired** – II Timothy 3:16; I Thessalonians 2:13; 4:2 & 8; I John 4:6
1. **How** – II Peter 1:20 & 21; I Peter 1:10; II Samuel 23:2; I Chronicles 28:19
 2. **Old Testament** – Exodus 31:18; 32:16; 34:1; I Kings 2:3; Romans 15:4; Galatians 3:19; Acts 7:53; Hebrews 9:8; Luke 24:27, 49; II Peter 3:2
 3. **The Apostles were aware they were a part of continuing revelation** – I Timothy 3:16; II Peter 3:15 & 16;
 4. **Paul** – I Thessalonians 2:13; 4:2,8; Acts 22:14, 15; I Corinthians 14:37,38; 15:3,4; Galatians 1:12, 16,17; 2:2; Eph 3:3,4; II Pt 3:15 & 16
 5. **With the death of the Apostle John, the last living Apostle, Revelation ceased for the Church** Age Rev 22:18 & 19; It will begin again at our death or at the return of Christ.
- C. **Eternal** – Psalm 12:6 & 7; 33:11; 102:18; 105:8; 117:2; 119:89, 152; Matthew 5:18; 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 16:17; I Peter 1:24, 25; II John 2
- D. **Inerrant**: Every book of the O.T. save Esther had been found and translated in Qumran. They predate Christ by 500 years and they match the Bible, without error, that you hold in your hand today. 2,500 years!!!
1. **Pure** (tried, perfect, sure, pure, true, upright) – Psalm 12:6; 18:30; 33:4; 19:8, 9; 111:7;
 2. **Perfect** Psalm 19:7; James 1:25
 3. **Eternal/Imperishable** I Peter 1:22 - 25
 4. **Unbroken** – John 10:35
 5. **Authoritative** – I Thessalonians 4:8; 2:13
 6. **Sacred** – II Timothy 3:14
 7. **Holy** – II Peter 2:21; Jeremiah 23:9
- E. **Dynamic**
1. **Accomplishes its purposes** – Isaiah 55:11; II Timothy 2:19
 2. **Alive, active** – Hebrews 4:12
 3. **Creative Power** – Hebrews 11:3; I Peter 1:23; Psalm 33:6
 4. **Empowers** – Joel 2:11
 5. **Instructs** – Romans 15:41
 6. **Judges** – Hebrews 4:12; Romans 7:13; John 12:48
 7. **Powerful** – Hebrews 4:12; Jeremiah 5:14; 23:29
 8. **Sanctifies** – John 17:17
 9. **Spiritual** – Romans 7:14
 - a. **Spiritual Light** – Psalm 119:105; II Peter 1:19
 - b. **Spiritual Food** – Jeremiah 15:16; I Timothy 4:6; 1 Peter 2:2
 10. **Tests** – Psalm 105:19
- F. **Sword of the Spirit** – Ephesians 6:17; Hosea 6:5
1. What is the weapon of choice of the Holy Spirit?
 2. What is your weapon of choice?
 3. “Satan desires that you choose any other weapon, in fact he will even supply it” Udobong Idemeter, Nigeria

III. Application # 1: Subjection

A. Culture is subject to the Word of God

1. The Word of God is not subject to majority assent.
2. The Word of God is not subject to Church Councils.
 - a. Over the years Church Councils may have affirmed what was not the Word of God, but God thy Holy Spirit created, compiled and closed the canon of Scriptures in the lifetime of the Apostles.
 - b. If someone comes to our meeting with a Book of Mormon, we have the authority to reject this as a spurious teaching (Galatians 1:8) but the Bible stands by the authority of the Holy Spirit.
3. The Word of God is not subject to culture.
 - a. Culture, existing only as a compilation of the actions of men, is in itself, inherently sinful.
 - b. When culture clashes with the Word, culture is seen to be wrong.
 - c. The Word of God redeems culture
 - d. When the prevailing culture rejects the Word of God its authority and sufficiency remain unchanged.
 - e. God's Word was neither determined nor limited by Greco/Roman/Hebrew culture.
 - f. In recording the Word of God the Holy Spirit spoke with eternity in mind and was not limited by prevailing cultural and social norms.

B. Experience is subject to the Word of God.

1. If God's Word says "No" and we experience "Yes" then we hold "No" to be true and our experience to be false.
 - a. If God's Word says "No, do not commit adultery, do not love anyone other than your wife" and we experience "Yes, I am attracted to my secretary, I am falling in love with her"
 - b. Then we hold "No" to be true and our experience to be false, we fire our secretary and all the things we were doing for her we do for our wife and more.
2. If God's Word says "Yes" and we experience "No" then we hold "Yes" to be true and our experience to be false.
 - a. If God's Word says, "Yes, I am coming soon" and we experience "No, it has been 2,000 years"
 - b. Then we hold, "Yes" to be true and reject our experience in terms of both time and space.
3. The Word of God is not subject to or tested by results
4. The Word of God is not subject to the scientific method.
 - a. The Word of God always "works" – its authority and sufficiency are without question.
 - b. If in its application it seems not to "work" then we must change our perception and definition of what it means for it to "work" vs. not "work".

C. Feelings (emotions) are subject to the Word of God

1. If God's Word makes us feel bad, it is still God's Word. (God wants me to be happy doesn't He? Hebrews 12:11)
2. If God's Word feels wrong, then our feelings are wrong and God's Word is right.
3. If we read something in God's Word and we do not feel right about it, if we do not feel our God would do or say this, then we must subject our emotions to the Word of God.
4. Existential methodology.
 - a. The highest good is personal peace and affluence
 - b. All decisions are weighed against these two values
5. The Christian Existentialist: Closed door / Open Door Theology
 - a. "God closed the door" – I do not have peace, something bad will happen to me.
 - b. "God opened the door" – I have a peace about it and something good will happen to me.
6. II Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1; 4:12; 13:7; Romans 10:17 – Our decisions are ultimately based on invisible realities as revealed in the Word of God.

IV. Application # 2: Interpreting the Word of God by the Word of God.

A. The Law of Language: Interpretation is subject to definition.

1. Two crucial aspects of our relationship with God are introduced without explanation...
 - a. Language: God communicating with man through both oral and written mediums.
 - b. In the garden God ordained oral communication
 - c. On Sinai, God ordained written communication
 - d. Both forms are dependant upon the Law of Language
2. In the Church Age God has chosen to communicate Himself and His will to man through the medium of the written word, thus we subject ourselves to the laws of language as decided by God.
3. Words Have Meaning: The most basic foundational law of language has two immediate applications
 - a. Interpretation is subject to definition.
 - b. Rule of 1st Meaning: In all healthy communication we assume the clear rather than the obscure.

B. Old Covenant Heb. 9:1-7, 16-22

vs.

New Covenant – Hebrews 8: 6, 7, 13; 9:15

1. Not Testament, which is a chronological division but rather covenant, which is a doctrinal division.
2. Although there are many sub-covenants we speak of the “big two”, much like there are many disciples, but then there are “the twelve”.

C. Historical Narrative – I Cor. 10:11; II Chron. 20:34; Acts 15:12; Revelation

vs.

Doctrine – Titus 1:9; 2:1, 7, 10

1. Compare and contrast
2. Only doctrine transcends time and culture.
3. Over rides narrative revelation even when an historical theme.

D. Revealed

vs.

Hidden

1. Things hidden – Deuteronomy 29:29
2. Things higher – Isaiah 55:8 & 9
3. Prophecy – II Peter 1:20;
 - a. Example Jer. 31:15 vs. Matt. 4:12 – 16
4. Parables – Mark 4:9 – 13
 - a. Conventional wisdom: Parables are an aid to truth
 - b. Truth: Parables are meant to hide truth
 - c. Differentiate between
 - 1.) illustrations Matt. 6:19 – 21; 7:24-27
 - 2.) parables Matt. 15:24 - 53

E. Authoritative

vs.

Devotional

1. Authoritative – Chapter, verse; “The Bible says”
2. Devotional – “I think”, “From my study I conclude”
3. Illustrated
 - a. Principle – A Doctrinal Truth (II Tim. 3:16)
 - b. Means – A Biblically Sanctioned Application (Joshua 1:8)
 - c. Method – An Application Who’s Origin Is In Man (B.St. Book)

F. The strongest argument from Scripture

1. New Covenant Doctrine
2. Supported by Historical Revelation
3. Whose application is a Doctrinal Principal with Biblical Means

V. Application # 3 Extra Biblical Revelation

A. Definition of Revelation

1. II Timothy 3:16; I Peter 1:10; II Peter 1:20 & 21
2. Deuteronomy 29:29

B. Revelation 22:18 & 19 – Direct revelation

C. II Corinthians 11:14 – Indirect revelation

D. Ezra 7:5; Proverbs 3:5,6 – God can give leadership without it being revelation

E. Spurious forms of revelation: We reject all forms of Extra-biblical Revelation

1. Revelatory gifts
2. Visions
3. Appearances
4. After death experiences
5. Automatic writing
6. Being caught up into heaven
7. Demonic information (I Timothy 4:1,2)
8. We reject any doctrine that sends Christians to experiences rather than the Word of God

