

"What We Believe"

Session 3

Revelation: God Speaks

I) INTRODUCTION

- A) Throughout history man has attempted to build either a literal or figurative ladder into the sky: but all have come up short. For man to pass from earth to eternity he must receive divine revelation that comes from heaven to earth. Man needs revelation not speculation.
- B) There are two types of revelation that the Bible speaks of;
- 1) General Revelation
 - (i) **Romans 1:20** *"For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead so that they are without excuse".*
 - (ii) General revelation is not a saving revelation of God, but rather a revelation of God to all of humanity because God is a good God. Anyone who has seen a sunset, held a baby, enjoyed the warmth of the sun or went swimming has experienced the general revelation of God.
 - (iii) The reason general revelation is not a saving revelation is because though it is God's revelation of Himself to humanity, it doesn't tell us we are sinners, or who Jesus Christ is. General revelation is meant to lead us to special revelation.
 - 2) Special Revelation
 - (i) **Hebrews 1:1-2** *"God who at various times and in various ways spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds..."*
 - (ii) The special revelation that God has given is not just general, but specific or special in the Person of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the supreme revelation of God. The Holy Spirit who spoke through Jesus is also the same Person who wrote the Holy Scriptures.
 - (iii) In this session we will focus our time on the special revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ within what we call the Bible.

II) What are the Scriptures?

- A) Scriptures are God speaking His truth to us in human words. The Bible was written in three languages, Hebrew, Greek and a little bit in Aramaic, over a period of more than 1,500 hundred years, by more than forty authors on the three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe.

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- B) The Bible contains 66 separate books and it is broken up into two Testaments, the Old and the New. The Old Testament has 39 books and the New Testament has 27 books.
- C) The Bible is a library of books that are all one book, with amazing continuity, integrity and perfect unity. Within the New Testament there are 300 direct references to the Old Testament and upwards of 4,000 allusions to the Old Testament.
- D) The chapters of the Bible were added in 1240 A.D. by Cardinal Hugo of St. Cher and the verses of the Bible were added by a man named Robert Stephanus giving us 1,189 chapters and 31,173 verses. The chapter and verse breaks within the Bible are not what we call inspired by God, but were added to give us an address to help us refer to certain parts much like the address on our homes.

III) Who Wrote the Bible?

- A) The human authors of the Bible include peasants, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen, a doctor and scholars. The books of the Bible cover history, sermons, letters, songs and love letters. There are geographical surveys, architectural specifications, travel diaries, population statistics, family trees, inventories and numerous legal documents.
- B) Unlike any other book, the Bible was written by both God and man, but it was not coauthored. This is called divine inspiration. It wasn't the authors or the process that was inspired, but rather the physical, literal words which God breathed.
- C) The actual word for this is "Verbal Plenary Inspiration."
 - 1) **2nd Timothy 3:16** *"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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."*
 - 2) **Verbal**=this means that the very words of the Bible were given to us by the breath of God, not just the concepts, but the very words. **Matthew 5:18** *"For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot (the smallest amount) or one tittle (even a little bit) will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."*
 - 3) **Plenary**=this means every part of the Bible is God breathed. Meaning there isn't any part of the Bible we don't believe, we won't teach and we won't trust. **2nd Timothy 3:16** says, *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God..."*
- D) When **2nd Timothy 3:16** says that all scripture is profitable, it doesn't mean that it's accurate and good for us like a phone book is. It means the Bible is good for us like a friend who comforts us, encourages us, cries with us and confronts us.
- E) **2nd Peter 1:20-21** *"...no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."* When Peter talks about the authors were being moved upon by God to write the Holy Scriptures, he is saying that like a boat being moved across the water, the

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authors were moved by God. The boat doesn't move the wind, but the wind moves the boat.

F) Some have said the authors of the Bible didn't know they were writing it at the time.

1) **1st Corinthians 7:10** *"Now to the married I command you, yet not I but the Lord..."*

2) **1st Timothy 5:18** *"For the scriptures says, you shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain, and the laborer is worthy of his wages."*

(i) Paul not only quotes Moses from **Deuteronomy 25:4** but also Luke in **Luke 10:7** and says that both were Holy Scriptures. Paul an author of Scripture is quoting two other human authors that they also were writing the Holy Scriptures and knew it.

3) **2nd Peter 3:15-16** *"...as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, has written to you, as also in all of his epistles (letters) speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand...which people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures."*

(i) Peter is clearly stating that both he and Paul understood that they were writing the Holy Scriptures. Peter compares Paul's writings with the rest of the Holy Scriptures.

G) Here is a look at what the Bible says about its own writings;

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| 1) Given by God's inspiration | 2nd Timothy 3:16; 2nd Peter 1:19-21 |
| 2) The very words of God | 1st Thess. 2:13 |
| 3) All we need to know God | Luke 16:29, 31 |
| 4) A perfect guide for life | Prov. 6:23 |
| 5) Pure | Psalms 12:6, 119:140 |
| 6) Trustworthy | Proverbs 30:5-6 |
| 7) Perfect | Psalms 19:7 |
| 8) Effective | Isaiah 55:11 |
| 9) Powerful | Hebrews 4:12 |
| 10) Not to be taken from | Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32 |
| 11) There for everyone | Romans 16:25-27 |
| 12) The standard all teaching is tested | Acts 17:11 |
| 13) To be obeyed | James 1:22 |

H) Here are a few symbols that the Bible refers to itself as:

- 1) Sweet like honey. A lamp to guide our path. Food for our soul. A fire that purifies. A hammer that breaks. A sword. A seed for salvation that is planted within us. Milk that nourishes us (**Psalms 19:10;119:105; Jeremiah 15:16, 23:29; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:29; 1st Peter 2:2**).

IV) What is the Canon of Scripture?

- A) The word canon means "measuring rod." The canon of Scripture is the collection of these 66 books that the Church has recognized as having divine authority in matters of faith and doctrine. The canon of scripture is the measuring rod that all truth claims are measured up against and either accepted or thrown out.
- B) In 397 A.D. the 27 New Testament books were accepted as part of the canon. They were accepted as part of the canon not because they *weren't* already being used, but because they *were* already being used.
- C) There was no debate over the New Testament books that were added to the 39 accepted books of the Old Testament making a total of 66 books which we have today.
- D) The Church didn't canonize the books of the Bible, but rather recognized what God had already canonized and agreed with Him and them. It could be said that "the Church no more gave us the canon than Sir Isaac Newton gave us the law of gravity. The law already existed, but was labeled by Isaac. "
- E) We trust the 66 books of the Bible, specifically the Old Testament because of how often Jesus spoke of it. Here are a few examples;

1) Genesis	Mark 13:19; Matthew 19:4-5; Luke 17:26-28
2) Exodus	Mark 12:26; Matthew 22:31-32; Matthew 5:21,27
3) Leviticus	Matthew 5:33, 43, 19:19, 22:39; Mark 12:31
4) Deuteronomy	Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:29; Luke 10:27
5) Numbers	Matthew 5:33, 43, 19:19, 22:39; Mark 12:31
6) Proverbs	Matthew 6:28-29
7) Ecclesiastes	" "
8) Song Of Songs	" "
9) Psalms	Matthew 22:42-44, 21:16, 27:46
10) Isaiah	Mark 4:12; Luke 4:17-18
11) Jeremiah	Mark 11:17; Matthew 21:31; Luke 19:46
12) Hosea	Matthew 9:13, 12:7
13) Zechariah	Mark 14:27
14) Malachi	Luke 7:27; Matthew 11:10
15) Jonah	Matthew 12:39-40

V) Do The Scriptures Contain Errors or Contradictions?

- A) As Christians we believe that all scripture is truth. Whether statements of fact about earth, heaven, humans, God, moral commandments, or divine promise. We believe this because the Bible is connected to God, who is truth and does not lie. The Bible is perfect, it has no errors.

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- B) The Bible’s accuracy is not only shown in the original work, but also with the copies that have been made. In the Gospel of Luke, Luke correctly identifies by name, title and job of such historical individuals as *Anna, Ananias, Herod Agrippa 1st, Herod Agrippa 2nd, and Felix and Festus, governors of Caesarea*. Even in archaeological discovery the truth of the Bible is strengthened, and never diminished.
- C) Many parts of the Bible that people reject, Jesus Himself preached and endorsed as being legitimate. These include: the creation of the Earth (**Luke 11:51**); the literalness of Genesis 1 and 2 (**Matthew 19:4-5**); Cain and the murder of Able (**Matthew 23:25**); Noah and the flood (**Matthew 24:37-39**); Abraham (**John 8:56**); Daniel the prophet (**Matthew 24**); Sodom and Gomorrah (**Matthew 10:15**); Lot (**Luke 17:28-32**); the manna (**John 6**); the wilderness serpent (**John 3:14**); Moses as lawgiver (**Matthew 8:4**); and Jonah in the belly of the whale (**Matthew 12:40**).
- D) The Bible declares that its words are perfect; but what isn’t perfect are the people who read it. Our error doesn’t come from the Bible, but from us who read it. This is why we must approach the Bible with humility, fear and trembling.
- E) In 1804 Thomas Jefferson went into the Presidential Office after his day of work and picked up the Bible, not to pray, but rather to cut. He then proceeded to cut everything from the Bible he didn’t agree with and kept the things he liked. He called this new work “The philosophy of Jesus” or “the life and morals of Jesus of Nazareth.” We don’t get to pick and choose what we like, all scripture is God breathed, perfect and without error and those that cut from the Bible have a special place reserved in hell by God Himself (**Revelation 22:18-19**).

VI) **Can We Write Scripture Today?**

- A) No. The only authors of the Bible were the apostles and prophets that actually saw God’s revelation in Jesus Christ, or who were in close relationship with an apostle, like Luke was with Paul.
- B) The other two reasons are: the Old Testament closes in Malachi and leaves us waiting for the coming of John the Baptist who will make way for Jesus Christ, God’s Son; and because the New Testament closes with Revelation telling us the next major event in world history will be the return of Christ for His Church and to the earth. We are kind of like the people in-between the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- C) The canon (measuring rod) of the Bible is closed with the 66 books, meaning there will be no other books added, not even one word.

VII) **How is Jesus the Hero of the Bible?**

- A) The opening lines of the Bible declare its hero in the Person of God. As we read through the Old Testament and come to the close of the New Testament, we see that God has

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revealed Himself to us through the incarnation of His Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ.

- B) Some have falsely assumed that only the New Testament speaks of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself plainly says that the Old Testament was about Him (**John 5:39-40**).
- C) After Jesus had risen from the dead, He appears to a couple of His disciples that didn't know He was alive and He begins to tell them about Himself using all the Old Testament writings.

1) **Luke 24:25** *“Then He said to them, O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory? **And begging at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.**”*

2) Jesus could have said something like this;

- (i) “I walked with Abraham, visited Joshua as the Army of the Hosts, wrestled with Jacob, appeared to Moses and Isaiah, and joined Daniel in the fiery furnace. I am the second Adam; I prefigured the priesthood as your Great High Priest; I prefigured David and other Kings as the King above all kings; I prefigured Moses and the other prophets to become your ultimate Prophet; I prefigured the animal sacrifices to become the Lamb slain for you; I prefigured the temple which made God's resting place within My physical body; I prefigured the shepherds who care for sheep to become the Great Shepherd of your souls; I prefigured the judges to become the Great Judge over all things; and I am the true vine, the true bread and the true water. I'm the greater Jacob who wrestled with God in the garden and though wounded and limping, I walked away from the grave fully alive. I'm the greater Joseph who sits at the right hand of God and extends grace and mercy to those who are afar off, even to the ones who sold Me. I'm the greater Isaac who walked to the hill carrying My own wood on My back, so that you wouldn't have to. I'm the greater Abraham who left his father's house to build a place for others to come. I'm the greater Moses who stands before God and man offering Himself as the sacrifice. I'm the greater Job, being innocent, I also suffered, was tormented by the devil, and had dumb friends that didn't give Me any encouragement in My pain. I'm the greater David and have slain the giants that were in your way, up against sure defeat, I have conquered death hell and the grave. I'm the greater Jonah, who didn't spend three days in a whale, but three days in the grave. And I'm the greater Hosea, who married a prostitute I call My bride.

VIII) What is the Greatest Proof of Scripture?

A) The greatest proof of the accuracy of the Bible is found within the many prophecies of Jesus Christ. The only Man to ever have specific details given beforehand of His birth, life, ministry, death, burial and resurrection is the Lord Jesus Christ. These prophecies were foretold by 30 different people, over a period of 4,000 years before Jesus was even born. There are approximately 330 Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled in the first coming of Jesus Christ, most within 3 days of His death.

B) Here are 50 of them.

	<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
1. The seed of a woman	Gen. 3:15	Gal. 4:4
2. Of the line of Shem.	Gen. 9:26	Luke 3:36
3. Seed of Abraham	Gen. 22:18	Matt. 1:1
4. Seed of Isaac	Gen. 26:2-4	Luke 3:34
5. Seed of Jacob	Gen. 28:13-14	
6. Of the nation of Israel	Duet. 18:18	Luke 3:34
7. Of the tribe of Judah	Gen. 49:10-12	Heb. 7:14
8. Of the family of Jesse	Isaiah 11:1-2	Matt. 1:6
9. Of the house of David	2 nd Sam. 7:12-14	Rom. 1:2-3
10. David's Lord, David's son	Ps. 110 :1	Rev. 22 :16
11. Born of a Virgin	Isa. 7:14	Matt. 1:18-23
12. Created a new thing	Jer. 31:22	Luke 1:34-35
13. The mighty God	Isa. 9:6-7	John 1:1-3, 14
14. The Son Begotten	Ps. 2:7,12	John 3:16
15. To inherit the Throne of David	Isa. 9:6-7	Luke 1:31-33
16. The Son's name	Prov. 30:4	Matt. 1:21
17. To be born at Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matt. 2:1-8
18. Slaughter of innocents	Jer. 31:15	Matt. 2:16-18
19. The star of messiah	Num. 24:17	Matt. 2:1-2,9-10
20. Out of Egypt	Hosea 11:1	Matt. 2:12-15
21. Messiah's Forerunner	Isa. 40:3	Matt. 3:1,2-3
22. To be manifested after 483 yr.	Dan. 9:25	Mark 1:15
23. Messiah's anointing	Isa. 61:1-4	Luke 4:16-22
24. The fullness of the Spirit	Isa. 11:1-4	John 3:34
25. Ministry for 3 ½ years	Dan. 9:24-27	The 4 gospels
26. To be 30 years of age	Num. 4:3	Luke 3:23
27. Ministry in Galilee	Isa. 9:1-2,8	Matt. 4:12-16
28. The prophet like Moses	Deut. 18:18	Acts 3:19-26
29. To be a king and law giver	Gen. 49:10	Matthew 5,6,7
30. The Shepherd stone	Gen. 49:24	John 10:11
31. His zeal for God	Ps. 69:9	John 2:13-17
32. Must come to the temple	Mal. 3:1	Matt. 21:12-15
33. Ministry of miracles, healings	Isa. 35	Matthew 8, ,Matthew 11:4-5

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34. To come in Name of Lord	Ps. 118:26	Matt. 21:9-11
35. Gracious in the Word	Ps. 45:2	John 1:17
36. Speak God's word by comm.	Deut. 18:18	John 8:28, 38
37. To speak in name of God	Deut. 18:19	John 5:43
38. To speak in parables	Ps. 78:1-4	Matt. 13:3-35
39. Half brothers reject Him	Ps. 69:8	John 7:1-5
40. Rejected by leaders	Ps. 118:22	Acts 4:1-12
41. Not many believe	Isa. 53:1	John 12:37-38
42. Spiritual blindness	Isa. 6:9	John 12:39-41
43. Messiah to be cut off	Dan. 9:26	Mark 15:25
44. To be cut off for our sins	Isa. 53:8	2nd Cor. 5:21
45. Make reconciliation	Dan. 9:24	2nd Cor. 5:18-21
46. Sold for 30 pieces of silver	Zech. 11:13	Matt. 27:3-4
47. Silver cast down in God's house	Zech 11:13	Matt. 27:6-10
48. Ride on a donkey into city	Zech. 9:9	Matt. 21:1-11
49. Betrayed by a friend	Ps. 41:9	John 12:12-16
50. Cursed to hang on a tree	Deut. 21:23	1st Pet. 2:24

Though this is only 50 of 330 prophecies, this is the most impressive proof that the prophets were divinely inspired when they wrote the Bible.