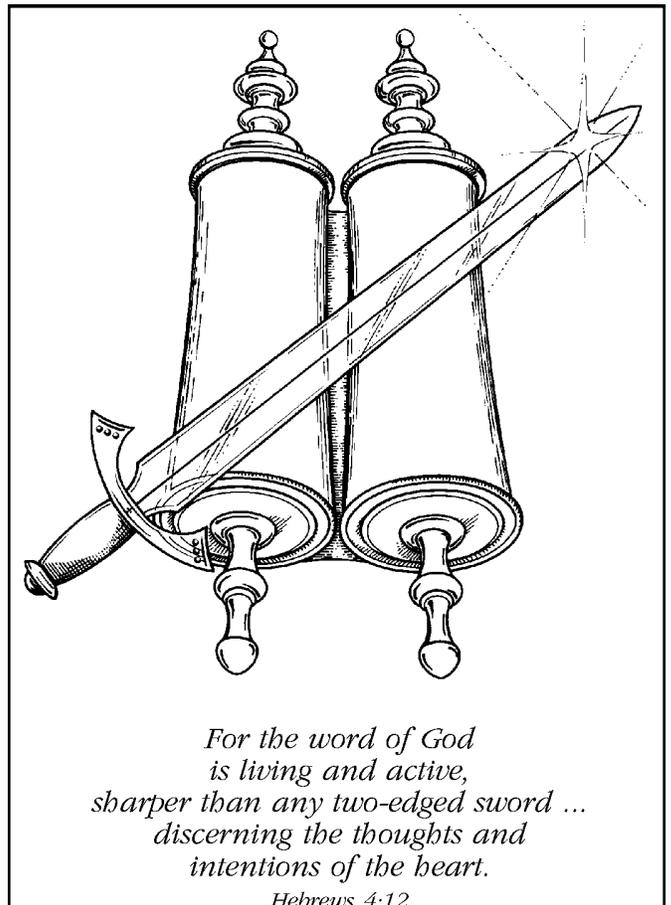
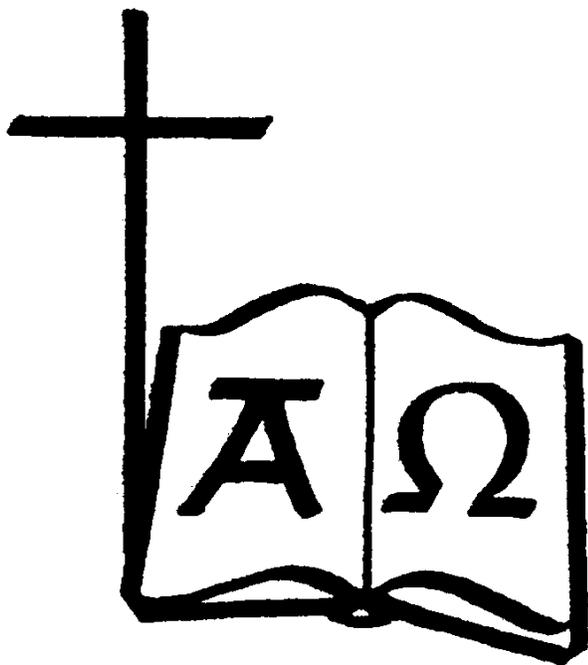
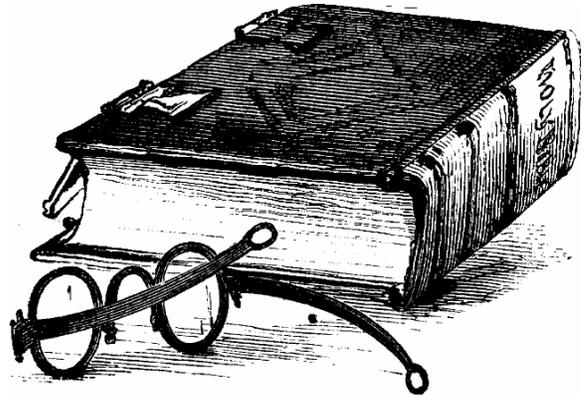


In Defense of the Bible

Compiled by Rev. Dan Domke

Sola Fide Sola Gratia Sola Scriptura



*For the word of God  
is living and active,  
sharper than any two-edged sword ...  
discerning the thoughts and  
intentions of the heart.*

*Hebrews 4:12*

## **Sola Fide:**

**Latin for “by faith alone”. Term referring to the Scriptural doctrine that “a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law” (Romans 3:28) cf. Philippians 3:9. Augsburg Confession IV, 1-2: “Men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works but are freely justified for Christ’s sake through faith when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven on account of Christ, who by His death made satisfaction for our sins.”**

## **Sola Gratia:**

**Latin for “by grace alone”. Term referring to the Scriptural Doctrine that man is saved by grace alone without the deeds of the law (Ephesians 2:8-9).**

## **Sola Scriptura:**

**Latin for “Scripture alone”. Term referring to the formal principal of the Lutheran Church (Formula of Concord Rule and Norm 3: “We pledge ourselves to the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments as the pure and clear fountain of Israel, which is the only true norm according to which all teachers and teachings are to be judged and evaluated.”**

Contend For The Faith  
Jude 3  
The Authority of the Scriptures

2 Timothy 3:16

*16* All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

What constitutes All Scripture? The answer lies in both testaments.

The Old Testament

The New Testament

Ephesians 2:20

20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

1 Peter 1:10-12

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

2 Samuel 23:2

David is given Gods Word

2 “The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue.

Mark 12:36 & John 17:20

Mark 12: *36* David himself, speaking by the Holy Spirit, declared... John 17:20 “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

The Old Testament

1 Kings 22:14

*Micaiah is given Gods Word.*

14 But Micaiah said, "As surely as the LORD lives, I can tell him only what the LORD tells me."

2 Chronicles 24:20

20 Then the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest. He stood before the people and said, "This is what God says: 'Why do you disobey the LORD's commands? You will not prosper. Because you have forsaken the LORD, he has forsaken you.'"

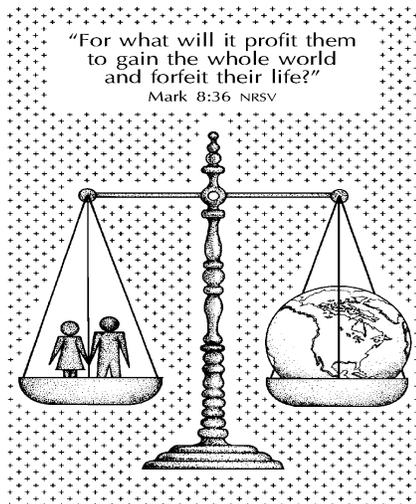
Jeremiah 1:9

9 Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put my words in your mouth."

Ezekiel 3:17

Ezekiel 3:17

17 "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me.



The New Testament

1 John 1:3

*All that is said or written by the Apostles is Scripture.*

3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us.

2 Thessalonians 2:15

15 So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

1 Corinthians. 14:37

37 If any one thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize the things that I write to you, that it is *the* Lord's commandment.

2 Peter 3:15-16

2 Peter 3:15-16

15 just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

## WHAT THEN IS THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION?

II Timothy 3:16

πάσα γραφή θεόπνευστο"

All scripture is God breathed

θεός = God

πνευστο" = Spirited, breathed; Πνευμα = spirit; πνεω = breath, refers to lungs; πνευμα = a blowing

Ηωρ = Spirit or wind.

Classical Greek translates a blast of wind

The scriptures by their own words say they were created by the divine action and direction of God.

### PETER 1:20-21

φερόμενοι - «as they were moved" v. - bring 34, bear 8, bring forth 5, come 3, reach 2, endure 2, carry 1, { φέρω } 1) to carry 1a) to carry some burden 1a1) to bear with one's self 1b) to move by bearing; move or, to be conveyed or borne, with the suggestion of force or speed 1b1) of persons borne in a ship over the sea 1b2) of a gust of wind, to rush 1b3) of the mind, to be moved inwardly, prompted 1c) to bear up i.e. uphold (keep from falling) 1c1) of Christ, the preserver of the universe

**Tense - Present      Voice - Passive      Mood - Participle**

Φερω - **To bear, to be carried.**

**Φερμα—That which is carried or given by birth through a mother. The fruit of the womb.**

**Φερομενοι - means that God bore the word to the writers of the Bible, as these holy men were carried along giving birth to the scriptures. Thus we can say the Bible was written by God. The scriptures are of divine origin, perfect, inerrant with no mistakes, infallible.**

Even if the scriptures are perfect, and God Himself has authored them, through holy men, how can we be sure it is indeed trustworthy and true?

Does God Lie?

Numbers 23:19

19 God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind.

Does he speak and then not act?

Does he promise and not fulfill?

2 Timothy 2:13

13 if we are faithless,  
he will remain faithful,  
for he cannot disown himself.

Note the contrast between man and God. God is only faithful and cannot, because of his nature, disown himself. In others He can not betray truth, honesty, or integrity.

Acts 1:16

ἔδει πληρωθῆναι τῆν γραφήν ἣν προείπεν τὸ πνεῦμα  
τὸ ἁγίον [ “Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the

Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus— ]

*Eδει* - is the imperfect of *δει*, denotes compulsion—Arndt pg 171, God is not a liar so he must fulfill His word. He, by His promise to keep His promises, must keep His word.

third person singular active present v

must 58, ought 31, must needs 5, should 4, misc 7, vr ought 1 ; 106

GK - 1256 { dei` }

- 1) it is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper
  - 1a) necessity lying in the nature of the case
  - 1b) necessity brought on by circumstances or by the conduct of others toward us.
  - 1c) necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end
  - 1d) a necessity of law and command, of duty, equity
  - 1e) necessity established by the counsel and decree of God, especially by that purpose of his which relates to the salvation of men by the intervention of Christ and which is disclosed in the Old Testament prophecies

## God's Word is absolutely Trustworthy

I Kings 8:56

56 "Praise be to the LORD, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses.

Psalm 18:30

30 As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him.

Psalm 19:7

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

Psalm 93:5

5 Your statutes stand firm; holiness adorns your house for endless days, O LORD.

Psalm 111:7

7 The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy.

Proverbs 30: 5-6

5 "Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. 6 Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.

Isaiah 40:8

8 The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."

Isaiah 45:19

19 I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob's descendants, 'Seek me in vain.'

Ezekiel 12:25

25 But I the LORD will speak what I will, and it shall be fulfilled without delay. For in your days, you rebellious house, I will fulfill whatever I say, declares the Sovereign LORD."

Matthew 5:18

*18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*

The Smallest Letter

Not one jot or tittle: the jot is the smallest letter of the Hebrew Alphabet. Not even the jot will be lost in terms of how God preserves His Word. Here is a comparison of the first letter of the Hebrew Alphabet and the jot. It is the

Ah-leph and the Yohd: **a y** this is the Word of God preserved by God Himself.

Isaiah 55:11

so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

God's Word always accomplishes what He wills it to do.

Word—דְבַר־יְהוָה n m

- word 807, thing 231, matter 63, acts 51, chronicles 38, saying 25, commandment 20, misc 204; 1439

- 1) speech, word, speaking, thing
  - 1a) speech
  - 1b) saying, utterance
  - 1c) word, words
  - 1d) business, occupation, acts, matter, case, something, manner (by extension)

Empty—רֵיקָן adv

- empty 12, without cause 2, void 1, vain 1; 16

- 1) vainly, emptily
  - 1a) in empty condition, empty, emptily
  - 1b) in vain, without effect, vainly

Luke 21:33

33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Romans 4:16

16 Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.

## The Authority of the Old Testament

### Old Testament quoted by New Testament

#### Messianic Prophecies

Ah LORD GOD! It is thou who hast made  
the heavens and the earth by thy great power  
and by thy outstretched arm!  
Nothing is too hard for thee...  
Jeremiah 32:17



### Isaiah 7:14 quoted by Matthew 1:22-23

Matthew 1:22-23

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”—which means, “God with us.”

### Hosiah 11.1 quoted by Matthew 2:14-15

*I* “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

Psalm 19:7

## New Testament Authority

1 John 1:1-4

*I* That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. *2* The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. *3* We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. *4* We write this to make our joy complete.

2 Thess. 2:15

*15* So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

## New Testament Authority

Galatians 1:8-9

8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! 9 As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned!

St. Paul refers to his word, his gospel as authoritative when warning about another gospel in contrast to his gospel. Paul has a clear sense of the authority of what he was writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

I Corinthians. 14:37

37 If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command.

I Corinthians 15:3

3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

Martin Luther writes concerning scripture: "You are so to deal with the Word that you bear in mind that God Himself is saying this..."

In other words God is speaking to you when you read the bible.

II Peter 3:15

15 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him.

16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

# The Purpose of the Word

## Conversion

John 1:7, John 20:30-31, I John 5:13

### John 1:7

7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that (ina— purpose clause) through him all men might believe.

### John 20:30-31

30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

### 1 John 5:13

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that (ina— purpose clause) you may know that you have eternal life.

## As Food For Feeding the Soul

Jeremiah 15:16

16 When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.

I Peter 2.2

2 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,

True milk of the Word, is the true mother's milk for the soul. It is all important for nourishment, immunity to spiritual disease, it provides the spiritual hormones for proper development of the soul, of the mind, and of heart. A Christian cannot live without it.

We are called by God to Study His Word

Isaiah 34:16

16 Look in the scroll of the LORD and read:

Seek you out the Book

John 5:39

39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me,

Search the Scriptures

Acts 17:11

11 Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Search the Scriptures Daily

Romans 15:4

4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

II Timothy 2:15

2 Timothy 2:15

15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

God's Word is authoritative, it is to be believed, and all of the Bible is to be believed from Genesis to Revelation. We can not believe part of it that fits our personal theology and reject other parts that make us feel uncomfortable or of which we disagree. Believing in part is to deny the whole or at the very least sets up the scenario of the slippery slope that ends eventually in denying the whole over time. The result is losing the Bible, and Christ and salvation.

Our approach to Bible study is attitudinal in part. Christians are given reason by God, but because of the fall into sin, reason cannot be trusted. So we submit our reason, mind, and intellect to the authority of the Word, and what can not be comprehended,

# The Power of the Word

Hebrews 4:12

12 For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

There are three aspects to this verse concerning God's Word of Power

It is living: Ζών

It is productive: ενεργη;"

It is sharp: τωμώτερο"

living: Zw`n Is life in the physical sense. It also means sustenance for the soul, which came from God through the living word.

Acts 7:38

38 He was in the assembly in the desert, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; and he received living words to pass on to us.

productive: ejnergh;" means productive as grain from a rich nutritious soil, fruitful.

sharp: τωμώτερο" - means as a two edged sword the power of the Word is such that it can divide between spirit and soul. The Word of God is a living active word. It will confront sin, cause guilt through conviction of the truth and restore by and through the Gospel. The living Word will penetrate the heart, and judge the thoughts of men. Nothing is hidden, all will be revealed. Such is the nature and power of the Word. Ever wonder sometimes why you get so very mad when sermon time comes? It is because God is at work in your heart.

Here is the promise of God that His Word will accomplish His goals

Isaiah 55:11

11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. and purposes to save the lost and to strengthen the faithful. So the faithful will carry His Word out to the world knowing that God will do His part through the Word (Gospel)

Promised Power as we witness

Isaiah 45:23

Acts 1:7-9

Isaiah 41:10

Matthew 24:35

Isaiah 40:31

The Word of God is the only builder of faith. Romans 10:17 “faith comes by hearing the word concerning Christ. (Gospel) The word of God is the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17) which is our weapon in spiritual warfare.”

## The Bible is the Owners Manual For the Operator that's You



## For Further Study

### The Attributes of the Bible

#### 1. The Bible is infallible

The Bible, in its entirety, has no mistakes. Specifically, in its original autographs it is without errors. In Psalm 19:7 the Bible says of itself, “The law of the Lord is perfect.” It is flawless because it was authored by God—and He is flawless. Therefore, if God wrote the Bible, and if He is the ultimate authority, and if His character is flawless, then the Bible is flawless and is the ultimate authority. You see, the fact that God is perfect demands that the original autograph, the original giving of the Word of God, must also be perfect. So, the Bible is infallible, and that’s the first reason to study it; it is the only Book that never makes a mistake—everything it says is the truth.

Not only is it *infallible*, but there’s a second word we use in describing the Bible, and that is:

#### 2. The Bible is inerrant

The Bible is not only infallible in total, but inerrant in its parts. In Proverbs 30:5–6 it says, “Every word of God is pure.... Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” So every Word of God is pure and true.

The Bible is not only *infallible* and *inerrant*, but:

#### 3. The Bible is complete

Nothing needs to be added. Now that may be a surprise to some people, because there are those today who believe we need to add to the Bible. There exists a philosophy/theology combination known as neo-orthodoxy. It tells us that the Bible was simply a comment in its day on man’s spiritual experiences, and today man is still having spiritual experiences, therefore he needs another comment. One writer said that we need a Bible to be written today, just as we did when the Bible we have in our hands was written, because we need somebody to comment on what God is doing now. He also said that when Tom or Mary stand up in your church and say, “Thus says the Lord,” they are as equally inspired as Isaiah, Jeremiah, or any of the other prophets (J. Rodman Williams, *The Era of the Spirit*, Logos International, 1971). In other words, they claim that the Bible is not complete. That’s the current philosophical/theological thought. Let’s look at the end of the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation: “If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (18b–19). The Bible ends with a warning not to take away anything, and not to add anything. That’s a testimony of its completeness. It is *infallible* in its total, *inerrant* in its parts, and it is *complete*.

A fourth way to describe the Bible's attributes is to say that:

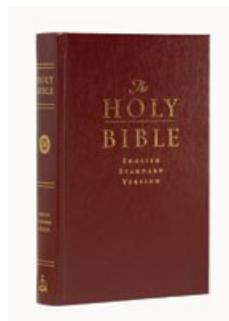
#### 4. The Bible is authoritative

If it is perfect and complete, then it is the last Word—the final authority. Isaiah 1:2 says, “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken.” When God speaks everybody is expected to obey, for it is written in Galatians 3:10: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” Amazing! Cursed was anyone who didn't continue in everything that was written in the law. That's a tremendous claim to absolute authority. In James 2:9–10 we read, “9 But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.” To violate the Bible at one point is to break God's law. The Bible is *authoritative* in every part.

More information:

The first area of evidence has to do with the available number of New Testament manuscripts. What we discover is that there are more extant New Testament manuscripts than any other document from antiquity. More than 24,000 partial and complete copies of the New Testament are in existence today. By comparison, the ancient document second in number of available copies is the *Iliad*, which has only 643 surviving manuscripts. And this number is extremely high compared to other ancient documents. For example, the *History of Thucydides*, the *History of Herodotus*, Caesar's *Gallic War*, Tacitus' *Histories*

In addition to New Testament manuscripts, there are over 86,000 early patristic (church fathers') quotations from the New Testament and several thousand Lectionaries (early church-service books containing selected Scripture readings) dating to the early centuries of the church. In fact, there are enough quotations from the early church fathers that even if we did not have a single copy of the Bible, scholars could still reconstruct all but 11 verses of the entire New **[Page 39]** Testament from



AUTHOR	When Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	No. of Copies
Caesar	100–44 B.C.	A.D. 900	1,000 yrs.	10
Livy	59 B.C.–A.D. 17			20
Plato ( <i>Tetralogies</i> )	427–347 B.C.	A.D. 900	1,200 yrs.	7
Tacitus ( <i>Annals</i> )	A.D. 100	A.D. 1100	1,000 yrs.	20(-)
also minor works	A.D. 100	A.D. 1000	900 yrs.	1
Pliny the Younger ( <i>History</i> )	A.D. 61–113	A.D. 850	750 yrs.	7
Thucydides ( <i>History</i> )	460–400 B.C.	A.D. 900	1,300 yrs.	8
Suetonius ( <i>De Vita Caesarum</i> )	A.D. 75–169	A.D. 950	800 yrs.	8
Herodotus ( <i>History</i> )	480–425 B.C.	A.D. 900	1,300 yrs.	8
Horace			900 yrs.	
Sophocles	496–406 B.C.	A.D. 1000	1,400 yrs.	193
Lucretius	Died 55 or 53 B.C.		1,100 yrs.	2
Catullus	54 B.C.	A.D. 1550	1,600 yrs.	3
Euripides	480–406 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1,500 yrs.	9
Demosthenes	383–322 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1,300 yrs.	200 <sup>+</sup>
Aristotle	384–322 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1,400 yrs.	49 <sup>+</sup>
Aristophanes	450–385 B.C.	A.D. 900	1,200 yrs.	10

From Josh McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, rev. ed. (San Bernardino, CA: Here's Life, 1979), 42.

Well, the Bible is *infallible, inerrant, complete, authoritative*, and:

#### 5. The Bible is sufficient

The Bible is sufficient for a number of things:

##### a) Salvation

In 2 Timothy 3:15 Paul said to Timothy, “*15* and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” First of all, the Bible is *sufficient* to make you wise unto salvation. Ask yourself this question: What is more important than salvation? Nothing! It is the greatest reality in the universe—and the Bible reveals that salvation.

##### b) Growth in Righteousness

Verse 16 of 2 Timothy 3 says, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable *for doctrine*”—that means “teaching, principles of wisdom, divine standards, or divine truths”; “*for reproof*”—

that means you're able to go to someone and say, "Hey, you're out of line. You can't behave like that; there's a standard and you're not keeping it." Scripture is also profitable "*for correction*"—that says to the person you've just reproved, "Now don't do that, do this instead; this is the right path."

You teach, you reprove, you show the correct way—and further it is profitable "*for instruction in righteousness*." Now you point to the new way and show them how to walk in it. The Bible is a fantastic Book. It can take somebody who doesn't know the Lord, who isn't saved, and then save them by telling them the Good News. Then it will teach them, reprove them when they do wrong, point out the right thing to do, and then show them how to walk in that right path.

The result is stated in verse 17: "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." The incredible reality of the Bible is that it is *sufficient* to do the whole job.

#### c) Hope

In Romans 15:4 it says, "For whatever things were written in earlier times [referring to the Bible] were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope." The Bible is the source of patience and comfort, ultimately giving us hope now and forever.

#### d) Blessing

I think of the tremendous text of James 1:25, "25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does."

That's great! When you read it and then do it—you're blessed. Back in verse 21, James says that we should "receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." The Greek text literally means it is able to "save your life." In other words, it will save your life as you receive the Word of God. He means that it will give you the fullest life imaginable. But it is possible also for a Christian that doesn't obey the Word of God to lose his life. In 1 Corinthians 11 some of the Christians in Corinth violated the Lord's Table, and some became ill others died. Verse 30 says, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Ananias and Sapphira disobeyed God's command and dropped dead in front of the whole church (Acts 5:1–11). So James said, "If you receive the engrafted (implanted) Word, and you obey it, and you continue in it, it has an incredible way of changing your heart and mind (the way you think), blessing you and of saving your life." All these things are true of the Word of God.

### 6. The Bible is effective

Listen to the words of Isaiah 55:11: "So shall my word be that goes forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please." That's great! God's Word is effective. One of the incredible things about being a teacher of the Word of God is that it will do what it says it will do. But be careful, be ready to test the spirits especially if someone comes with a new book or lost book of the bible. Consider the following as a help in judging such things.

### 7. Five Tests for Canonicity

(a) Is it authoritative? Did it come from the hand of God? Does this book come with a divine "thus says the Lord?"

- (b) Is it prophetic? Was it written by a man of God?
- (c) Is it authentic? The early church fathers had the attitude of “if in doubt throw it out” policy. This enhances the validity of their discernment in the placing of early writings into the Bible.
- (d) Is it dynamic? In other words did it come with a life transforming power of God? (The gospel).
- (e) Was it received, collected, read and used, was it accepted by the people of God?

### **Is your product always effective?**

There is an old story about the door-to-door salesman who tries to demonstrate his product, and then it doesn't work right. The story goes this way, a lady who lived in the country, and a vacuum cleaner salesman came by with a high-pressure sales pitch. He said, “Hey, lady, I've got the greatest product you've ever seen. This vacuum cleaner will eat up anything. In fact, if I don't control it, it will suck up your carpet.” Before she could say anything, he said, “Lady, I want to give you a demonstration.” He immediately went to the fireplace and threw some of the ashes in the middle of the carpet. He also had a bag of stuff which he dumped on the carpet. Then he said, “I want you to watch it suck every bit of that up.” Well, she was just standing there aghast. Finally, he said to her, “Lady, if it doesn't suck up every bit of this, I'll eat it all with a spoon.” She looked him right in the eyes and said, “Well sir, start eating, because we ain't got no electricity.”

Now it's pretty tough to be caught in a situation where your product doesn't work. But that never happens with the Bible—it is always effective—it always does exactly what it says it will do. That's a tremendous reality about the Scripture.

In 1 Thessalonians 1:5 we see a great verse about the effectiveness of the Scripture: “For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance.” In other words, when you hear the Word of God, it isn't just words. When the Word goes forth it has power; it is powered by the Holy Spirit, and we have the assurance that it will do what it says. We have seen that the Word of God is *infallible* in total, *inerrant* in its parts, *complete* so that nothing is to be diminished or added to it, *authoritative* so that whatever it says is absolutely true and commands our obedience, *sufficient* so that it is able to do to us and for us everything we need, and *effective*—it will do exactly what it says it will do.