

CHAPTER TWO

THE AUTHORITY OF GOD'S WORD

What would you do if obedience to the Scriptures jeopardized your possessions, your career, your family, or your life? Would you remain loyal to God? How would you decide what to do? Or have you, perhaps, decided already? In this chapter you will examine the authority of the Bible and its reliability in helping us make decisions.

THE AUTHOR OF THE SCRIPTURES

1. How do the writers of Scripture attribute their words to God in the following passages?
Deuteronomy 28:1-2 _____
2 Samuel 23:1-3 _____
Jeremiah 1:6-9 _____
1 Thessalonians 2:13 _____
2. What did Paul write about the divine authorship of Scripture?
2 Timothy 3:16 _____
3. What importance does God place on his Word? *Psalms 138:2*

“If it is a word from God, it has authority over men. For behind every word that anybody utters stands the person who speaks it. It is the speaker himself (his character, knowledge, and position) who determines how people regard his words. So God’s word carries God’s authority. It is because of who he is that we believe what he has said.”

—JOHN R. W. STOTT*

JESUS' VIEW OF SCRIPTURE

4. Read the account of Jesus' temptation in Matthew 4:1-11.
 - a. What use of Scripture does Jesus make? *Verses 10*

 - b. How much consideration did Jesus give Satan's offer before he made his decision? *Verses 9-10*

 - c. How did Jesus apply the verse he quoted—to himself or to Satan?

- d. If Jesus placed himself under the authority of Scripture, what meaning does this have for you?

5. How did Jesus use Scripture in the following situations?
Mark 7:6-9 _____
Mark 12:24-27 _____
Luke 10:25-28 _____

* From *Understanding the Bible* (London: Scripture Union, 1972), 183–184.

6. Why did Jesus believe it was necessary to go to the cross?
Luke 24:25-27

7. What else does Jesus say about the Scriptures?

Matthew 5:17-18

John 17:17

8. Using the material in questions 4-7, write a short paragraph explaining Jesus' view of Scripture.

9. In what ways is Jesus' example a challenge to you?

THE RELIABILITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

10. What do the following passages say about the reliability of the Word of God?

Joshua 23:14

Psalms 33:4

Proverbs 30:5-6

11. What conclusion about the reliability of Scripture can be drawn from Luke's introductory statements to his gospel?
Luke 1:1-4

12. Read 2 Peter 1:15-21.

a. What affirmation does Peter make in verse 16?

b. What unusual experience did Peter and others have? (Compare verses 17-18 with Matthew 17:1-9.)

c. What did Peter believe was more reliable than a voice from heaven? *Verse 19*

d. Why did he think the prophecies of Scripture were so reliable? *Verses 20-21*

13. What fulfilled prophecy do you think provides the most convincing evidence of the reliability of Scripture?

**THE SUFFICIENCY OF
THE SCRIPTURES**

14. What is the Word of God able to do in your life?

Psalms 37:31 _____

Psalms 119:130 _____

John 15:3 _____

Acts 20:32 _____

2 Timothy 3:16 _____

James 1:21 _____

15. A harvest begins with sowing. In order to reap a spiritual harvest, what did the sower sow? *Mark 4:14*

What are some ways you can be a sower during the next week?

16. Read Isaiah 55:10-11. Notice the parallel between water and the Word of God. Think through the process pictured and then record any new insights you have into the way God fulfills his Word.

17. Open your Bible to Psalm 119 and begin reading anywhere in the chapter. As you observe the benefits listed there of God's Word (also referred to as his commandments, testimonies, precepts, judgments, and law), list four or five of them below.

The ultimate reason for the authority of Scripture lies in the authorship of Scripture. It is God's Word; therefore it is authoritative. Do you desire greater faith in the Bible? Then seek a greater knowledge of God. Your concept of God and of the authority of the Scriptures will stand or fall together.

**APPLYING
THE BIBLE
TO YOUR LIFE**

18. What disappointed Jesus about the people of his day?

Luke 6:46 _____

Luke 24:25 _____

19. How did King Josiah put God's Word into practice?

2 Kings 23:2-4

20. What principles do you see in Psalm 119:59-60 that relate to applying Scripture to your life?

21. Here is a good plan to follow in taking specific steps to apply the Bible:

- State what the Scriptures say about some area of your life.
- Tell what your life is like in this area.
- Describe what you are going to do to bring your life into conformity with God's Word.
- Specify what practical steps you will take to check up on yourself.

Now use this plan:

a. What Scripture passage in this chapter has touched an area of need in your life? Explain what the passage means to you.
Question number ____ Scripture reference _____

b. What improvement is needed in your life in this area?

c. What specific steps can you take toward improvement in this area?

d. How will you know when you have completed your application?

Are you committed to following God and obeying his Word?

Remember These Points

Review the chapter subtopics and use them as an outline to write your own summary of the chapter.
