

Biblical Theology by Dr. Chuck Baynard

Lesson 3 (HCLD 7)

Preparation: Open and end all study times with prayer. Read all of the Scripture references given in footnote #3

Background reading: Read the Bible passages in footnote # 1, 2.

Vocabulary: Inerrant, Infallible, Canon, Confession, Creed, RPW, Piety/pious.

Question: What is the word of God?

Answer: The Holy Bible consisting of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God,¹ the only rule of faith and obedience.²

¹ - All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2 Timothy 3:16 AV)

We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost. *{in old time: or, at any time}* (2 Peter 1:19-21 AV)

² - And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; (Ephesians 2:20 AV)

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, 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 out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book. *{out of the bookY: or, from the tree of life}* (Revelation 22:18-19 AV)

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them. *{noY: Heb. no morning}* (Isaiah 8:20 AV)

Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. (Luke 16:29-31 AV)

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:8-9 AV)

And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2 Timothy 3:15-16 AV)

The right understanding of this verse lays the foundation for the entire system of Biblical theology. One cannot but admire the simplicity of the answer.³ Its simplicity causes it to rise above the prose of others through the ages. We see this same formulation from the very beginning of the Protestant reformation. Yet the simple fact remains within this one question rests the Reformed Principle of Worship⁴, our heritage, our hope, and our destiny. It is a fact then that in the Bible alone we find the answers to all questions concerning God and the church of Christ.

The absence of adjectives proclaims the truth louder than a volume of man's rhetoric. Here is God's word. How often do we hear men speak of the infallible word of God? When was the last time you had a serious debate without someone describing the Bible as an inerrant word? These comments from well meaning saints pale in the face of the simple statement the Bible is God's word. As such that which we call the Bible, the canon of the Scriptures is closed. It consists of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament. These books together or alone may not have additions or deletions.⁵

³ - Heidelberg Catechism -- Q19: From where do you know this?

A19: From the Holy Gospel, which God Himself first revealed in Paradise,(a) afterwards proclaimed by the holy Patriarchs (b) and Prophets, and foreshadowed by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law,(c) and finally fulfilled by His well-beloved Son.(d)

a. Gen. 3:15 b. Gen. 22:18; 49:10-11; Rom. 1:2; Heb. 1:1; Acts 3:22-24; 10:43 c. John 5:46; Heb. 10:7 d. Rom. 10:4; Gal. 4:4-5; Heb. 10:1

Q22: What, then, is necessary for a Christian to believe?

A22: All that is promised us in the Gospel,(e) which the articles of our catholic, undoubted Christian faith teach us in summary.

e. John 20:31; Matt. 28:20; II Peter 1:21; II Tim. 3:15

⁴ - Reformed Principle of Worship: This principle says that man is only to worship God as God has commanded in the Scripture and not to add to or take away from this Biblical worship of God. Others say that we must include what God has commanded, but may also add what God has not forbidden as permissible elements. Both deny creating forms or elements of worship from the imagination of man.

⁵ - Westminster Confession II.2 Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testaments, which are these:

Of the Old Testament:

Genesis	I Kings	Ecclesiastes	Obadiah
Exodus	II Kings	The Song of Songs	Jonah
Leviticus	I Chronicles	Isaiah	Micah
Numbers	II Chronicles	Jeremiah	Nahum
Deuteronomy	Ezra	Lamentations	Habakkuk
Joshua	Nehemiah	Ezekiel	Zephaniah
Judges	Esther	Daniel	Haggai
Ruth	Job	Hosea	Zechariah
I Samuel	Psalms	Joel	Malachi
II Samuel	Proverbs	Amos	

Of the New Testament:

The Gospels according to Matthew	Paul's Epistles to the Romans	the Thessalonians II	The first and second Epistles of Peter
Mark	the Corinthians I	Timothy I	
Luke	the Corinthians II	Timothy II	The first, second and third Epistles of John
John	the Galatians	Titus	
The Acts of the Apostles	the Ephesians	Philemon	The Epistle of Jude
	the Philippians	The Epistle to the Hebrews	The Revelation of John
	the Colossians	The Epistle of James	
	the Thessalonians I		

All which are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life.(7)

7. Luke 16:29, 31; 24:27, 44; II Tim. 3:15-16; John 5:46-47

Accept this truth, and it needs no man to prop it up, it stands because God said so. Dare any define the Biblical faith without first laying the foundation of God's sovereignty for it to rest upon? With sovereignty as its foundation and Scripture as the guy lines, the Christian faith dares to soar to heights of piety and worship only glimpsed by the most blessed ones before the birth of the reformation. From this lofty height the Protestant reformers dared to stare into the eyes of the potentate of the world and proclaim "Thus, says the Lord God." From this height, high not on new wine but the Spirit of God the standard of all true worship of God was established upon the unmovable word of God. Thus were the reformers enabled to partake of the glory of this God of the Bible and willingly march to the stake and lovingly embrace the flames. What poet, what orator among men could inspire man's heart to embrace the unseen, as brazenly as if it were past history? "Are the Word of God," was, is, and shall until that faithful day, be the rallying cry of the Christian church as she marches forth to battle for her Lord. This is not to deny or belittle the doctrine of the Bible where the terms infallible and inerrant are found. The point being made is that until a person can accept it as God's own word, that person has no foundation or rule of life in the Spirit.⁶

⁶ - (John Calvin Institutes 1.8.1 In vain were the authority of Scripture fortified by argument, or supported by the consent of the Church, or confirmed by any other helps, if unaccompanied by an assurance higher and stronger than human judgment can give. Till this better foundation has been laid, the authority of Scripture remains in suspense. On the other hand, when recognizing its exemption from the common rule, we receive it reverently, and according to its dignity, those proofs which were not so strong as to produce and rivet a full conviction in our minds, become most appropriate helps. For it is wonderful how much we are confirmed in our belief, when we more attentively consider how admirably the system of divine wisdom contained in it is arranged - how perfectly free the doctrine is from every thing that savors of earth - how beautifully it harmonizes in all its parts - and how rich it is in all the other qualities which give an air of majesty to composition. Our hearts are still more firmly assured when we reflect that our admiration is elicited more by the dignity of the matter than by the graces of style. For it was not without an admirable arrangement of providence, that the sublime mysteries of the kingdom of heaven have for the greater part been delivered with a contemptible meanness of words. Had they been adorned with a more splendid eloquence, the wicked might have caviled, and alleged that this constituted all their force. But now, when an unpolished simplicity, almost bordering on rudeness, makes a deeper impression than the loftiest flights of oratory, what does it indicate if not that the Holy Scriptures are too mighty in the power of truth to need the rhetorician's art?

Hence there was good ground for the Apostle's declaration, that the faith of the Corinthians was founded not on "the wisdom of men," but on "the power of God," (1 Corinthians 2:5) this speech and preaching among them having been "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," (1 Corinthians 2: 5.) For the truth is vindicated opposing every doubt, when, unsupported by foreign aid, it has its sole sufficiency in itself. How peculiarly this property belongs to Scripture appears from this, that no human writings, however skillfully composed, can affect us in a similar way. Read Demosthenes or Cicero, read Plato, Aristotle, or any other of that class: you will, I admit, feel wonderfully allured, pleased, moved, enchanted; but turn from them to the reading of the Sacred Volume, and whether you will or not, it will so affect you, so pierce your heart, so work its way into your very marrow, that, in

comparison of the impression so produced, that of orators and philosophers will almost disappear; making it manifest that in the Sacred Volume there is a truth divine, a something which makes it immeasurably superior to all the gifts and graces attainable by man. (John Calvin Institutes I.viii.i)

How weak we moderns are compared to these martyrs of the past, who knew they had God's sure word before them. The modern church quibbles over words. Few men do not need the scholars, and wisdom of this world to prove this is God's Word. Men today also need the constant reminder that this is not only God's word, but that it is infallible, it is inerrant, it will endure forever as if the Word of God could have ever been less than this.

Our fathers understood the Gospel of John and the Divine Logos, God's Word become flesh. They understood how the Bible being God's Word was in this sense God and impossible to separate from His Holy Spirit. The Word is revered (not worshiped); shown respect; loved, and studied. Here is the wisdom man has sought since his expulsion from the garden so long ago. Here is the power needed to conquer this life, to overcome death. Such wisdom cannot be obtained from all the prophets of the world past, present, and future combined. Such power is not available by holding sway over all the armies of the earth. This book graciously given to man from the very hand of God, is no mere written record, but the God breathed Word of God in the flesh, continuously watched over, protected and illuminated by the Holy Spirit. Can we begin to see how the Puritans could devote so much time, energy, and prayer into the development of their creeds⁷? It was a time when piety⁸ was not a bad word used to heap coals upon the heads of foes, but a way of life. A time when God had spoken to His people and they heard His voice and answered with their lives. It was a period when the Reformed Principle of Worship was not a cute phrase to prove who was the most righteous, but was the rule of the Bible in the life of God's church. Our forefathers understood that God had spoken and there was no option that would please God, other than complete obedience to His Holy Word.⁹

⁷ Confession or creed - A statement of belief(s) that set the boundaries of faith. For example "I believe in God the Father almighty..." the beginning of the Apostle's creed. Like wise confessions set the doctrines of the Bible before us in concise statements so that all can hold to the same Biblical doctrines, and know why they believe. Confessions in setting the Biblical standard before us allow God's people to walk together in faith. Confessions and creeds are not Scripture. They are man's attempt to pull together scattered verses that make up a full Biblical doctrine. Reformed churches are confessional churches.

⁸ Piety - In the Puritan sense of the word meant a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

⁹ - 1 John 5:3

The Reformed Principle of Worship (RPW - see footnote 4), you will hear it discussed at times, but seldom understood. Through the centuries the Reformed and Presbyterian churches have held to this doctrine, but the choice of name is unfortunate in that it is the way God commands all people to worship God alone in the way commanded by God, not just the Reformed churches. Here as we lay the foundation for the doctrine of the Scriptures, the RPW was born. First, it meant that Worship, Doctrine, and Polity to please God, is that which is revealed in the Bible, and thus alone of God. Any other method was to offer “strange fire” and invite the wrath of God, not His eternal blessings. However, our forefathers were no slackers either, for the Bible condemned such. They realized the Christian faith was not passive, it demanded action. Thereby, they took the RPW home from the church with them and applied it to this life of Christian action by the constant application of three other principles incorporated into the RPW. Namely concerning the Bible they asked, “What does it say? What does it mean? What am I going to do about it?” With prayer, fasting, and study of the Word of God, they then dared face death and proclaim to all this great truth, the Bible is God’s Word. We need such understanding and faith today. God has not changed, His word still stands despite all the efforts of man to destroy or corrupt it.¹⁰ God has never asked anything from us He did not first give us. Let us pray then for God to raise up the next generation of Puritans, willing to die because they have God’s Word. “Man shall not live by bread alone, but every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”(Matthew 4:4).¹¹

¹⁰ - Mt. 5:18

¹¹ - Calvin – Institutes 1.6.1 GOD BESTOWS THE ACTUAL KNOWLEDGE OF HIMSELF UPON US ONLY IN THE SCRIPTURES: Therefore, though the effulgence which is presented to every eye, both in the heavens and on the earth, leaves the ingratitude of man without excuse, since God, in order to bring the whole human race under the same condemnation, holds forth to all, without exception, a mirror of his Deity in his works, another and better help must be given to guide us properly to God as a Creator. Not in vain, therefore, has he added the light of his Word in order that he might make himself known unto salvation, and bestowed the privilege on those whom he was pleased to bring into nearer and more familiar relation to himself. For, seeing how the minds of men were carried to and fro, and found no certain resting-place, he chose the Jews for a peculiar people, and then hedged them in that they might not, like others, go astray. And not in vain does he, by the same means, retain us in his knowledge, since but for this, even those who, in comparison of others, seem to stand strong would quickly fall away. For as the aged, or those whose sight is defective, when any books however fair, is set before them, though they perceive that there is something written are scarcely able to make out two consecutive words, but, when aided by glasses, begin to read distinctly, so Scripture, gathering together the impressions of Deity, which, till then, lay confused in our minds, dissipates the darkness, and shows us the true God clearly. God therefore bestows a gift of singular value, when, for the instruction of the Church, he employs not dumb teachers merely, but opens his own sacred mouth; when he not only proclaims that some God must be worshipped, but at the same time declares that He is the God to whom worship is due; when he not only teaches his elect to have respect to God, but manifests himself as the God to whom this respect should be paid.

The course, which God followed towards his Church from the very first, was to supplement these common proofs by the addition of his Word, as a surer and more direct means of discovering himself. And there can be no doubt that it was by this help, Adam, Noah, Abraham, and the other patriarchs, attained to that familiar knowledge which, in a manner,

For the sake of clarity the Doctrine of God and the Doctrine of Scripture are two different topics. Different scholars have at times debated which should be presented first. One view says that without the acceptance of the existence of God and the Bible as God's word being a presupposition, there can be no Christian discussion. While this is a truth as such, we live in a world where many do not believe these things and if we proceed from this presuppositional foundation alone we would not be able to engage the unbeliever in meaningful discussion of their condition and the need of a Savior. However for a believer to not fully embrace these two truths fully is to have no foundation for their faith and to be unable to understand the Bible.¹²

There is however a very real sense where God's word is God and the two cannot be separated. John one indicates this though the context is that the Word is Jesus Christ. Because it is a divine word however, it cannot be divided any more than the Godhead or Trinity can be divided. Thus the doctrine of God and the doctrine of the Bible are in essence one doctrine since the Bible is the instrument God chose to reveal Himself to man through. Nonetheless, for the purpose of understanding we will often attempt to divide things that are in essence indivisible. We must understand and accept without doubt that the Bible is the foundation of the church and the church exists because God says so in the Bible and not that the Bible exists because of the church as the Church of Rome has always and continues to teach. In other words the Bible validates the church, not the church validating the Bible by any affirmation of man.

Conclusion: The Bible is God's word, God breathed, inerrant, and infallible. Therefore it is even by man's limited logic a reasonable statement that the Bible

distinguished them from unbelievers. I am not now speaking of the peculiar doctrines of faith by which they were elevated to the hope of eternal blessedness. It was necessary, in passing from death unto life, that they should know God, not only as a Creator, but as a Redeemer also; and both kinds of knowledge they certainly did obtain from the Word. In point of order, however, the knowledge first given was that which made them acquainted with the God by whom the world was made and is governed. To this first knowledge was afterwards added the more intimate knowledge which alone quickens dead souls, and by which God is known not only as the Creator of the worlds and the sole author and disposer of all events, but also as a Redeemer, in the person of the Mediator. But as the fall and the corruption of nature have not yet been considered, I now postpone the consideration of the remedy, (for which, see Book 2 c. 6 &c.) Let the reader then remember, that I am not now treating of the covenant by which God adopted the children of Abraham, or of that branch of doctrine by which, as founded in Christ, believers have, properly speaking, been in all ages separated from the profane heathen. I am only showing that it is necessary to apply to Scripture, in order to learn the sure marks which distinguish God, as the Creator of the world, from the whole herd of fictitious gods. We shall afterward, in due course, consider the work of Redemption. In the meantime, though we shall adduce many passages from the New Testament, and some also from the Law and the Prophets, in which express mention is made of Christ, the only object will be to show that God, the Maker of the world, is manifested to us in Scripture, and his true character expounded, so as to save us from wandering up and down, as in a labyrinth, in search of some doubtful deity.

¹² - Hebrews 11:6

is our only rule and guide for faith and practice. The Bible is sufficient for all our needs.

Suggested sermon outline: HCLD 7

What Is True Faith?

Will all men, then, be saved through Christ as they became lost through Adam? No. Only those who, by true faith, are incorporated into Him and accept all His benefits.

What is true faith?

It is not only a certain knowledge by which I accept as true all that God has revealed to us in His Word, but also a wholehearted trust which the Holy Spirit creates in me through the gospel, that, not only to others, but to me also God has given the forgiveness of sins, everlasting righteousness and salvation, out of sheer grace solely for the sake of Christ's saving work.

What, then, must a Christian believe?

All that is promised us in the gospel, a summary of which is taught us in the articles of the Apostles' Creed, our universally acknowledged confession of faith.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:
And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and
buried; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He shall
come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy
Catholic Church — the Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The
Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting. Amen.

I. Salvation Is Particular, Not Universal

A. Only the faithful have hope in Jesus. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But *as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name*: Which were *born*, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but *of God*. (JOHN 1:11-13)

B. If salvation were merely a cultural or social matter, Rabbinic Israel would still control the religion of Abraham. And if *some of the branches be broken off*, and *thou*, being a wild olive tree, *wert grafted in* among them, and

with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; **Boast not against the branches.** But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; **because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear.** (ROMANS 11:17-20)

C. Faith is the way in which God distributes new life. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but **the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.** (HEBREWS 4:2)

D. The great benefits of the Christian religion belong to those who live by faith. **Cast not away therefore your confidence,** which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and **he that shall come will come,** and will not tarry. Now **the just shall live by faith:** but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But **we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.** (HEBREWS 10:35-39)

E. The promise was always particular and not universal. He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: **by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.** (ISAIAH 53:11)

II. Only True Faith Counts with God

A. A believer must have a genuine knowledge of the truth. And **this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.** (JOHN 17:3)

B. It was through propositional revelation that God reached and transformed us. Of his own will **begat he us with the word of truth,** that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. (JAMES 1:18)

C. From the start, faith has been the normal context for grace. For **the promise,** that he should be the heir of the world, **was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.** (ROMANS 4:13)
Therefore **it is of faith, that it might be by grace;** to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of **Abraham; who is the father** of us all, (ROMANS 4:16)

D. God develops this faith in the believer. And Simon Peter answered and said, **Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.** And Jesus answered and

said unto him, ***Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, which is in heaven.*** (MATTHEW 16:16-17)

E. The Holy Spirit at work in our hearts is a sign to us of God's interest in us. Now ***he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*** (2 CORINTHIANS 1:21-22)

F. The Holy Spirit uses preaching to cultivate genuine faith. So then ***faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*** (ROMANS 10:17)

G. All these things occur out of sheer grace for the sake of Christ. But ***God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*** (EPHESIANS 2:4-9)

III. The Redeemed Will Believe the Revealed Gospel

A. God gave us the Scriptures so we would know and could then believe the truth. But ***these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*** (JOHN 20:31)

B. Genuine faith functions through propositions commanded by Jesus. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ***All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*** (MATTHEW 28:18-20)

C. The Apostles' Creed is the universally acknowledged confession of faith for the Christians.